

MASTERS THESIS

MASTERS IN VOCATIONAL PEDAGOGY

**IMPROVING THE PROCESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH
LEARNING GROUPS**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis contains literature survey and original research work by the undersigned candidate, as part of his Masters in Vocational Pedagogy studies. The researcher obtained all the information in this document, and presented with consideration of the academic rules and ethical conduct.

I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, that I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this work.

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With pleasure, I thank my research assistants Kenneth and Moses for giving a hand whenever I called for one. My Colleagues like Ivan, Alice, Emmanuel, Bruno, Richard and Jalia were of great value during the several stages of the thesis. I therefore extend my heartfelt gratitude to them.

With great pleasure, I wish to forward thanks to all the participants in the project study, mainly the students of Interior Design, Kyambogo University, my colleagues at the department of Art and Industrial Design in the same University willingly contributing to this project study in the various ways but most importantly data collection.

DEDICATION

The start of this Master degree studies was a mixture joy and sadness. However Just like Roses that have thorns but still beautiful, I choose to settle for the joy bit. Then my spouse, made the choice simple when agreed that we postpone our wedding. I therefore wish to dedicate this thesis to especially my wife MRS Mukiibi Millicent Nakimuli and my wonderful family for the support rendered all through the two years of study. Every after a hill is a slope, thank you for climbing this hill with me. Here comes the slope for us to enjoy.

I also wish to dedicate this thesis to the educationist out there who thirst to have an education that is fully productive to the learner. The kind of education that will see our youths off the streets to well-paying jobs created by themselves or other entities.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find means of Working with students of Kyambogo University to improve the teaching and learning process through learning groups.

The researcher seeks to tackle the problem of unemployment among the youths in Uganda by devising means of passing on and sharing knowledge and skills to do with employability. The theme of this thesis is a result of recommendations from project three.

In the due course, the study employed a qualitative approach in line with the action research.

The researcher put data together with the aid of one on one interactions, observation of the participants, audio and video recording with emphasis on the learners, lecturers, and employers.

The class had twenty-two (22) learners who also doubled as participants.

During data analysis, the researcher aimed at identifying the different achievements of learning groups amongst the learners, and the influence to their skills even after leaving Kyambogo University.

From the findings and interactions with different stakeholders, it seems like learning groups are very good for both the teachers and the learners. However, this is only if the whole process is done democratically, with great attention given to the input of the industry.

With such coordination in place, the high rates of unemployed youths will come down, thus bring about development in the communities where the graduates operate.

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INTRODUCTION

1.0 : Theme of the thesis

The patent issue herein, is the teaching and learning process Visive the needs of the industry or world of work. We have always done the teaching but often neglect relating classroom activities with the desires of the world of work.

It seems like the gap between the school and the industry is wide and gets deeper by day. According to the National Planning Authority of Uganda, “Uganda has a challenge of a labour for that is largely under or unemployed due to inappropriate skills and the slow labour absorptive capacity of the economy. The result has been a large number of unemployed youth who are becoming a social and economic threat. The failure to match the skills needed in the economy creates a gap in the human capital, which is critical for economic and social transformation. (Vision, 2012, p. 26).

The industry blames the school for not doing enough during the teaching and learning process. Hence the production of learners with inappropriate unemployable skills among its graduates. While there are other factors responsible for the high levels of unemployment, inappropriate unemployable skills are a notable cause of this problem that that calls for great concern.

In the bid to equip learners with appropriate or better employable skills in order to bridge the competence gap between school and the workplace. This project, aims at practically working with students of Kyambogo University, to improve the teaching and learning of Advanced Paint-effects through andragogic approaches or call it the learner centered pedagogy based on learning groups. I hope that this will aid efforts to reduce or eradicate unemployment in Uganda.

1.1 : Background of the project

The project leans onto the backbone of several issues but mainly, the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, in relation to the production of graduates with appropriate employable skills. The kind of learners that will easily be absorbed into the world of work or call it the labour market. This entails both the future job seekers and creators because they both ought to possess these skills.

Several countries have been prone to the problem of joblessness. and find it an itching wound that may develop into a cancer. According to Hiim (2013), “vocationally relevant curricula can

only be developed through close collaboration between vocational schools and firms where the vocational teachers play a key role.

To dig deep into the matter, it is noted according to the Dalberg Global Development Advisors study that, “there is a massive mismatch between graduate skills and job market needs, often leading to under-employment of university graduates. According to researchers, many graduates end up in fields they were not trained for” (Kigotho, 2015). Uganda is not exceptional to this kind of situation and this made it paramount for the researcher to search into the possible remedies to this problem.

According to Schweisfurth (2013), in recent years, many African countries have been reforming the historically common teacher centered curriculum, which employs a lecture style, ‘learning by rote’ method of teaching. Botswana, Kenya, Senegal, and others seek to promote creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills in their students.

Uganda cannot detach itself from this kind of situation hence evoking the researcher to work with the students of Kyambogo University, professionals in the workplace and his colleagues to internalize this matter. That is to say, the teaching and learning process in relation to the quality of graduates, and their relevance in the world of work, with the aim of improving it to the kind that can produce learners appreciated by the world of work hence cubing the issue of unemployment.

According to Burnett and Jayaram (2012), “it is also worth noting that much TVE instruction is of relatively low quality, as well as expensive. None of this should imply that there should not be technical and vocational education rather that it must be of quality and linked as much as possible to labor market demand, in part through the involvement of employers”. While he acknowledges that the high cost of Vocational education and its low quality exist, he goes on to stress the fact that it must be quality, I guess good quality but most importantly linked to the labor market in every possible way.

Adams asserts that, “Very importantly, vocational education and training offers no guarantee as a solution to youth unemployment. Countries that have set targets for the share of TVE in secondary education (like Indonesia at 70% and China at 50%), should be aware that there is no correlation between the share in secondary enrolments and the subsequent integration of youth into the labor market” Adams in (Burnett & Jayaram, 2012). This is quite related to the situation in higher institutions of learning in Uganda but I think vocational education and training may not be a guarantee as a solution to unemployment only if it is of poor quality and has no close link to the needs or demands of the workplace. This is to mean that with the link in existence, VET can go a long way in solving the problem of unemployment.

By good quality I mean the kind that will not only avail learners with practical skills but also cater for other skills like employability. This is because a learner with both practical and employability skills is everyone's desire.

One of the ways of resolving the issue of unemployable skills among graduates is the implementation of the Learner Centered Education (LCE) which has a vast past. The kind that would leave one perplexed. According to Schweisfurth (2011), history of the implementation of LCE in different contexts, is riddled with stories of failures grand and small. He goes on to clarify that, practical barriers are daunting when teacher capacity is limited, when teachers themselves have not experienced it personally, and where classroom resources are low and pupil: teacher ratios are high.

Furthermore, "a culturally nuanced perspective raises questions about how teaching and learning are understood in different contexts, and about whether LCE is ultimately a 'western' construct inappropriate for application in all societies and classrooms.

In addition, Schweisfurth (2011) pages 425-432 unveils the fact that, in coming to understand how LCE has been conceived, researched, and reported in relation to developing country contexts. Starting with a wide range of articles published in IJED over the years, which address principles and practice of LCE directly in the studies they report. In all, 72 relevant articles were identified among the issues available on-line (i.e. from 1981 to 2010). The vast majority are studies exploring the issues – and problems – of implementation of LCE-based programs in particular settings. Emerging from these investigations is a variety of explanations for this perennial challenge: problems with the nature of reform and its implementation; barriers of material and human resources; interactions of divergent cultures; and the all-important questions of power and agency in the process."

Amidst all these arguments, there has to be change anyway, and it will not come to you or myself but rather we get up to it. Evidence is provided by Polat (2011) who states that, "great gains towards education goals have been achieved in sub-Saharan Africa since the adoption of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000".

According to Polat (2011), "the region's primary net enrolment ratios have increased by almost one-third, gender gaps have narrowed at the primary level, and more girls and boys are attending secondary school". Yet much remains to do because learners from the levels mentioned above will end into vocational institutions and Universities.

The narrowing of the gap at those levels, literally means that intakes at the university have also had an increment. However, the infrastructure has remained the same. Teacher to learner ratios has lost shape among other issues that call for attention from the concerned parties. An

explanation as to why the researcher picked interest in the topic at hand.

As highlighted in the report, 43% of the world's out-of-school children are in sub-Saharan Africa, gender disparities are still large, and the learning needs of young children, adolescents and adults continued to be neglected.

In recent years, building on the gains in access to education, the international community's focus has shifted to the challenge of improving education quality and learning.

However, levels of learning achievement in sub-Saharan Africa are still very low and vary across countries. Narrowing learning gaps requires concerted efforts, including fairer distribution of teachers and learning materials and deployment of sufficient well-qualified, motivated, and supported teachers in all schools. It is argued that, the relationship between learner, teacher, and materials is the heart of education quality, and teacher training to meet learners' needs is essential. Recent trends in teacher policy and practices have promoted more learner-centered pedagogy and curricula. However, UNESCO found a lack of research evidence in this area and urged further investigation.

Therefore, the researcher picks up on this note, to pinch deep into the how to work with the students of art and design to improve the process of teaching and learning. With hope that this will improve their employability skills which seem to be one of the major reasons as to why lots of youths in Uganda are not employed.

1.2: Personal background

I am bleed in a background of art and design from the way back in my pre-primary school, to primary school were crafts work was one of my main strengths. The love for this discipline went on to my secondary school that is at both level. I also hold a background of vocational studies in Art and Design with education. A bachelor's degree that I pursued for three years at Kyambogo University with emphasis in drawing, sculpture, printmaking, among others. Before all these am glad to have attained skills in interior design as well as Textile and Fabric Decoration from the same institution that is to say Kyambogo University in Uganda a diploma level.

After attaining Bachelor's Degree of Vocational Studies in Art and Design with Education, an opportunity to serve as a lecturer at Kyambogo University was presented to me. Mainly in the areas of Interior design, drawing, textiles decoration and Drawing. I gladly took on the opportunity and kicked off with work up to this day. Shortly before Kyambogo called for my services, another institution; Kampala University had shown interest in my services particularly

in the areas of Interior Design, printmaking, drawing plus teacher education. Am glad to mention that am still offering the same services at that institution.

In addition to the above, I also offered teaching services to Buganda Royal institute of technical and business Education Mengo, majorly in interior design, more so introduction to paint effects and advanced Paint-Effects amongst others like, space planning, soft furnishing and colour theory.

Besides the world of education as a world of work, I traversed the other side of work but still moving along the circles of Art. I practiced textiles and fabric decoration in a company where we produced several decorated fabrics for client of all sorts. I have also practiced graphics design, in one company called sign care Uganda limited where I obtained lots of knowledge to with graphics that I carried forward to the practice of interior design.

With great passion in Interior designing. I have always given special interest to Paint-Effects and landscaping irrespective of the type. This I have practiced through my own company called V.I.D Designers. I established the company over nine to eight years ago, and our target market has always been those who wanted to facelift their interiors and exteriors. Of late, we added party decoration to the list products that we offer to our clientele.

To my dismay, only three out of fifteen members of my class, at Kyambogo University carried on with the trade of interior design through all its disciplines. The question then would be, is it because of the poor teaching and learning process, could it be the kind of Education that provides learners with inappropriate employable skills, or is it the low absorption rate of our labor market?

Whatever the case maybe, I bark on the recommendations of project three for I believe that, a suitable teaching and learning process, results into an employable learner hence bridging the gap between the school and world of work.

Most of the patent issues in vocational education and practice affect me in a way or another. That being the case, am not to sit and watch but rather team up with stakeholders and endeavour to add a brick to many other researchers' efforts in the fight to improve teaching and learning more so in my motherland Uganda.

The experiences I went through, especially during the last one year or so, has also provoked me into taking a step in contributing to this great course in Uganda. Notably is when I learnt of the Norwegian system of education, which has four years of upper secondary but equally divided between school and apprenticeship.

In addition, the vocational training act of Norway lays out principles that would propel anyone to consider and step forward to make a change of some sort. The act stipulates that,

One; The Vocational Act aims to develop competence, understanding and responsibility in relation to craft, profession and society; to provide a basis for further education and to assist apprentices in their personal development (Hagness, 1997).

Two; Vocational training shall contribute to increased awareness and understanding of basic Christian and humanist values, our national cultural heritage, democratic ideals and scientific thought and method. Vocational training shall promote human equality and equal rights, intellectual freedom and tolerance, ecological understanding and international co-responsibility.

More to that, from a tour of the Norwegian education institutions, I witnessed learners producing real products in their various practices notably, the school canteen, state of art kitchen run by students and structures constructed by former students at the high school level.

It is from this moment, that I developed the desire to have a change in the way we conduct the teaching and learning process back at home. More so, in my area of operation which is the department of art and industrial design with focus placed on the discipline of interior design. The various lectures at HIOA and KYU also did a tremendous task in unfolding pedagogy to me. An approach I believe could serve the intended purpose in the best way possible.

From my roots in all levels of education, the practice has been that the teacher develops the content to be taught as he or she were taught and not many of them bother to make changes where need be. Teachers usually go by the A to Z of lesson plan, which involves; content, objectives, methods of delivery, materials and tools. We need to note that the teacher does all this solely. That is, with complete neglect of the end user, and that is the learner. Worse still, he or she fails to coronate this to the needs of the community or industry. This kind of practice is typical of a teacher centered pedagogy. One that cares less about the learner's past experiences which are key to his or her time of stay at school. This is to help the teacher to find out the strength and weaknesses of the learners hence providing an insight of what is useful to him or her.

Meta thinking as a line of thinking is supported by words of Maudsley (1979, p. 3) who is said to be the original author of the theory as "the process by which learners become aware of and increasingly in control of habits of perception, inquiry, learning, and growth that they have internalized". He sets the conceptual basis of his theory as synthesized under headings of assumptions, structures, change process, and facilitation. Maudsley sights five principles that are vital in facilitating Meta-learning. These include; learner's ability to have a theory, however

primitive, work in a safe supportive social and physical environment, discover their rules and assumptions, reconnect with reality-information from the environment and lastly reorganize themselves by changing their rules/assumptions.

Six years down the road, there surfaced Biggs, (1985) who described Meta-learning as a state of "being aware of and taking control of one's own learning". He goes ahead to define meta learning as an awareness and understanding of the phenomenon of learning itself as opposed to subject knowledge.

I therefore set off to a journey meant to dig into a teaching that can involve the learners' needs and desires with no neglect of his or her experiences. A teaching approach that will have the learners take part in the planning of the whole learning process, execution as well as the evaluation of their learning. This is with the major aim of equipping them with appropriate employable skills hence narrowing or call it bridging the gap between the school and the industry.

1.3: Reflections from project three

In project three, MUKIIBI (2015), the researcher, former students of the Diploma in Interior Design, other lecturers from the department of Art and Industrial Design plus members from the world of work purposed to investigate the underlying myths of what really brings about the competence gap between the school and the world of work. Hence the title "*How to Bridge the Competence Gap between the School and The World of Work*". In reference to that, the objectives of the project were: to analyse the content of advanced paint effects at Kyambogo University in relation to the world of work, Examine the gap between advanced painting effects at Kyambogo University and the world of work. Finally, yet important, to find means of addressing the competence gap between advanced painting effects at Kyambogo University and the world of work.

The journey through project three brought to attention several issues. Examples of this was, stakeholders acknowledging that the teaching content for interior design is available to provide the necessary training in advanced painting effects even though it does not fully embrace the expectations of the industry. More to that, the content limits the learners to use small surfaces and application of the effects on miniature accessories within the institution and does not sufficiently integrate the information required for the application of painting effects on walls or large surfaces.

The other point to note was that, the competence gaps in painting effects exist in the training

programmed of Kyambogo University and the stakeholders identified some of the issues responsible for the mess. Some of these included poor and insufficient tools and materials, limited hours of practice, more application or of theory than practice. Contrary to that, these materials and facilities are readily available for use in most of the industries since the designers deal directly with the clients and therefore use the right tools and materials of the trade.

The intervention measures were diverse and seek to minimize the existing gaps between the school and the world of work in advanced painting effects. Some of those identified in the process included; Collaborating with industry to use available resources in the field. Hoping that the attitudes of learners towards application of advanced painting effects would change when confronted with realities in the practical world of work (MUKIIBI, 2015)

Project 3 informed us that, the training content at the training institution is limited in scope and caters for the application of advanced paint effects on miniature accessories such as the flower vases, tables and stools using poor tools and insufficient resources during implementation or practice.

The project also brings to one's attention the fact that, the training content for painting effects has limited the trainees' potential to acquire the requisite skills beyond the boundaries of Kyambogo University.

Competence gaps in painting effects continue existing during training and thereafter when trainees are employed in the industry. An indication that, the training institution has continued to roll out half-baked products that are unable to meet the basic skills requirements of implementing advanced painting effects in the world of work.

The link between Kyambogo University and industry where trainees of interior design are absorbed would be paramount in minimizing the existing gaps in the training of competent professionals in Uganda. Where this is done, trainees will be able to carry out some of the training activities in the field to familiarize themselves with the tools and materials of the trade besides acquiring communication and managerial skills needed to interact with other people in the industry.

1.4: Narrowing the problem

Having diagnosed ways on how to bridge the competence gap between school and the world of work and sighted several issues there is every need to narrow down to a specific issue and find out of what impact this could have on the learning outcomes of vocational studies in Uganda. Picking a leaf from project three (MUKIIBI, 2015), we choose to lay emphasis on the researcher's or call them the projects' recommendations as the major point of concern. These

recommendations included the following.

The training content of painting effects should have widened to integrate views and opinions of industry so that trainees are able to get the necessary materials and tools for meaningful practice at Kyambogo University, content that is in conformity with the industry input minimizes the possible gaps that would emanate from the course details.

The existing competence gaps in creating and application of advanced painting effects should be minimized at the training institutions so that graduates comfortably apply the painting effects with the right tools and knowledge without causing doubt about the training. This could be effectively achieved through collaborative practices with related industries that deal with interior design and focus mainly on the creating and application of advanced painting effects.

A solid link should be established between Kyambogo University and the industry to provide additional training that can help bridge the competence gap thus meet the basic skills needs beyond the lecture rooms. This experience will improve the trainees' attitudes towards appreciating the needs and aspirations of the learners, and help to improve on their values beyond their traditions of training (MUKIIBI, 2015). Amidst all these recommendations, it is vital to note that in a country like Uganda, in its developing state, resources especially the tools and materials necessary for the teaching and learning of practical disciplines will still be very hard to attain given the rampant corruption that is derailing most of the efforts. Establishment or improvement of Infrastructure may also be far from reach still because of policy makers and implementers that are not for the good or the betterment of the education system.

Sighting all these issues, the researcher settled for what he and the stakeholders thought was attainable and could bring about positive change in the teaching and learning process thus enhance employability of graduates in Uganda. Learner centered pedagogy in the teaching and learning process. We therefore set off to this journey; Working with students of Kyambogo University to improve teaching and learning of advanced paint effects through learning groups for employability. After a trek through the background, I present the problem statement underneath

1.5: Statement of the problem

How to improve teaching and learning of advanced paint-effects through learning groups for employability?

1.6 Explanation of the problem statement

Here in the researcher throws more light on some of the keywords that form the problem statement. To start with, is the term improve;

Improve

This refers to bringing about a more desirable or excellent condition. Improve can as well mean an act of adding value to something or someone. Which improvement may be single sided or in three dimension. In this research project, we seek to add value to the teaching skills of the teacher, later referred to as the facilitator, working hand in hand with the learners, with the aid of learning groups.

Teaching and learning

According to the oxford dictionary, teaching is referred to as an act of imparting knowledge to or instruct (someone) as to how to do something.

C. M. University (2008) stresses out several principles that should be emphasized for effective and more efficient teaching, certain. The kind of principles that will support learning and minimize the need for revision materials, content and policies. These include; acquiring relevant knowledge about students and using the knowledge to inform our course design and class room teaching. Aligning the three major components of instruction: learning objective, assessments, and instructional activities is key in achieving the goals of the teaching and learning process.

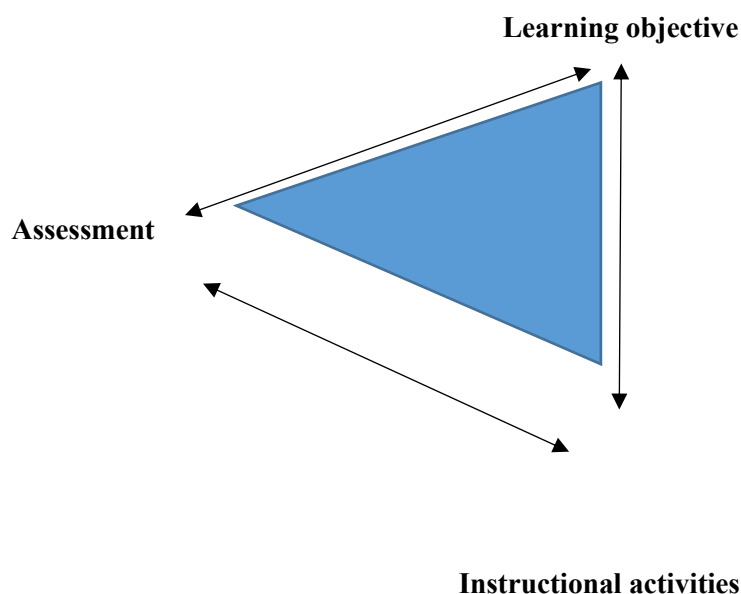


Figure: 1 Indicates the alignment of the three major learning components of instruction.

From my experience, classes with big numbers of learners are not that easy to cope up with as

the teacher will not have good knowledge of his or her learners' needs or objectives. This issue supports need for the use groups in the teaching and learning process because the groups bring the two closer to each and interaction becomes easier.

C. M. University (2008) also asserts that, articulating explicit expectations regarding learning objectives and policies is also very important. More to that, Effective Learning involves prioritizing the knowledge and skills we choose to focus on, recognizing and overcoming our expert blind spots, adopting appropriate teaching roles to support our learning goals, and progressively refining our courses based on reflection and feedback.

Advanced Paint-effects

Advanced Paint-effects is defined as; painting executed by any of various techniques, as textured paste, encaustic, tempera, fresco, marble, stucco and oil paint on several surfaces especially walls, often as an enhancement of the architecture of which the recipient wall is a part. Advanced to be specific points at the paint effects that are trendy or new in the world of painting and interior design.

Though I mentioned of the recipient wall, today these effects are creatively applied on objects to produce beautiful decorative items and yet functional. Such items include, flower vases, ashtrays, mirror frames, and all sorts of furniture.

Learning groups

Different scholars define the term learning groups, in a number of ways. To start with, Jaques (1984) defines the term learning groups as a people who come together to share knowledge or to learn from each other through discussion. He goes on to explain that, we use team when they are engaged in a task with a plan, product or decision as the end point (Jaques, 1984).

Small group teaching must be learner-centred, with all students joining in free discussion of a particular topic'. A typical view of a 'small group' is around eight to 12 learners facilitated by a teacher, (McCrorie, 2006).

The aspect of using learning groups for enhancing the teaching and learning, hence better outcomes, is supported by Johnson and Johnson in Gokhale (1995), he states that there is persuasive evidence that cooperative teams achieve at higher levels of thought and retain

information longer than students who work quietly as individuals.

Employability

Employability in the words of Yorke (2006, p. 8) refers to, “a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

As a teacher, this is a part of my man dent as I carry on with my profession. However, I may not achieve this effectively if I attend to large numbers of learners in a small learning space. I therefore think that conducting the teaching and learning process through learning groups will soften this task for me. I think of this because the learners will, most likely have lots of experiences as they take control of their learning, go through group dynamics, excise Torrence among their colleagues, combine efforts in all forms during the execution of the projects.

1.7: Objectives of the Study

Below are the objectives of the study which reflect the researcher’s main points of concern.

1. To examine the traditional teaching approaches implemented during the teaching and learning process.
2. To form groups and conduct the process of teaching and learning.
3. To analyse appropriate Employable skills exhibited by learners during industrial training.

1.8: Organization of the Project Report

This project report is based on seven chapters. Below is a summary of how this project report was is organized.

Chapter 1 presents both the project and personal background information. The problem statement, purpose, objectives as well as questions of concern. Next in line is chapter 2, which unveils the Theoretical concepts, the kind with a link to the problem statement. After which, comes Chapter three and this unfolds the literature from different corners or authors who have

addressed the point of concern in the past and recent times. Chapter 4 then brings to Your attention the methodologies employed in the due cause of the project with emphasis on Action Research. It also includes, research design, choice of data collection methods and tools, validity and reliability of the data as well as ethical issues are also embedded in here, plus the challenges that the researcher encountered during the whole process.

Underneath Chapter 5, the researcher lays down the data, or call it the data presentation, analyses and makes interpretation of the same. Encompassed in here is mainly the actual presentation of what really went on in the field and the researcher presented the data in form of phases. After this is Chapter 6. Herein is the discussion of the data presented in the previous chapter. In addition, this was done following key aspects in the problem statement like, the teaching methods or approaches, teaching and learning in groups and the appropriate employable skills. Chapter 6, is also home to the conclusion and the recommendation in which the researcher. Finally, yet importantly are the Appendices

THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

2.1: Overview

In chapter, the researcher unveils the theoretical and concepts that guide this research project. It is here that I diagnose the various theories in relation to the process of teaching and learning. I particularly look at the deeper meaning of the theories and their influence on the learners' output as well as the teacher's performance.

2.2: The relations model of didactics

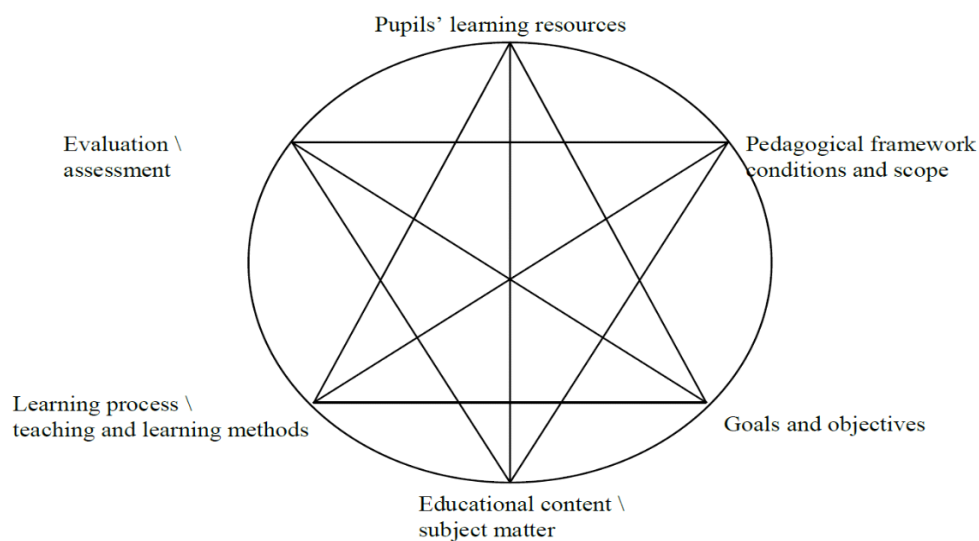


Figure:2 Shows a model of didactic relations model (Himm 2007)

Explanation of the relations model of didactics

Learning resources

The first learning resource to note are the students themselves. These learners were between 21 and 24 years of age, the class comprised of thirteen females and eight male learners making twenty-one learners. The twenty learners were continuing students in their final semester of the second and last year of study at Kyambogo University. This leaves us with only one other student who was retaking this course thus making the twenty-one.

Twenty learners were all direct entrants from A-level, also known as the advanced level of education and only one was a product of certificate criteria. This is to say that she had a certificate in Interior design before its abolishment from the same University.

Learners of this age group maybe referred to as mature or adult learners, which implies that their reasoning capacity is a mile away from that of an underage and they have goals to attain from their stay at school. As a result, these learners possess high levels of self-control and may abide by the available pedagogical framework

Prior knowledge was yet another learning resource due the fact that all the learners had a clue of paint effects since they were taken through an introductory level. This is usually done during their first year at the university. It is the introductory level that introduces them to the basics of painting and the basic tools and materials. One student had an edge over the rest of the class because, besides the introductory knowledge, he attended the second semester of the second year before but could not sit for exams due to financial challenges.

On top of that, the same student went for industrial training and pick up lots of knowledge pertaining advanced painting effects. Despite the fact that he had not graduated from university, this learner was already executing a few projects here and there.

The prior knowledge was instrumental in the teaching and learning process because the learners were not starting from scratch. They also made informed decisions in what they would love to learn and how best to learn.

None of the learners resided within the university. Most of them commenced from their parental homes with a few staying around the University suburbs. This posed many challenges during the teaching and learning process. For example, some learners would come very late and at time, they would not show up due to various challenges like lack of transport fares, lots of non-academic tasks given by their parents, political strikes around the city centre as a result of the

presidential and local government campaigns that were on in this period.

Because of these challenges, attaining the set goals and objectives became a hard nut to crack for some of the learners. This also affected the evaluation process or criteria given the fact we had agreed that one's attendance would award him or her a mark.

Learners had a number of expectations, luckily enough; these were not far different from set outcomes of the course unit. Most of them expected to gain skills that would enable them be self-reliant after graduation from the university.

Sources of information

Sources of information included the following; books, internet, displayed works of former students, the teacher and the industry or work places. The department has a sickening library not any books was available to offer knowledge about the current or call the advanced paint effects. Luckily, enough, at the learner's and teacher's disposal was the internet where lots of information to do with advanced paint effects was availed. As a result, the teaching and learning process eased.

Works of mosaic and a few other works of former students displayed in and around the department of art and design were vital in the teaching and learning process. This is so because we kept referring to these works making several comparisons and criticisms. Hence aiding a smooth and meaningful learning process.

My presence as a teacher cannot ignored as one talks about the learning resources. I happen to be a former student of the same program and now a teacher or lecturer of the same. The vast experience at both levels enrich me with lots to share. On top of that, I do practice this kind of art as a source of income, which in the end leaves me in check with the relevant skills and technicalities. This is supported by Hill and Hannafin (2001) who state that, resources are media, people, places or ideas that have the potential to support learning.

The other source of information was the industry. With no doubt, the industry had up to-date technology in terms of new or current techniques of Advanced Paint-effects. Not forgetting the available tools and materials needed in the execution of the same. This was very evident in project three where we saw several Advanced Paint-effects by those in the industry, most of which could not be traced in the school syllabus.

If the teacher continued to deliver as per the school syllabus, the learners might graduate but be resented in the industry or place of work. Therefore, it is vital that needs of the industry are highly considered during the teaching and learning process, to have our graduates relevant to

the needs of the market hence making them more employable. This is supported by Burnett and Jayaram (2012, p. 6) who asserts that Vocational education must be of quality and linked as much as possible to labor market demand, in part through the involvement of employers.

2.3: Pedagogical framework

Timeframe

Learners had a period of about four months to study and endeavor to achieve the set goals and objectives of the project. However, it is important to note that learners had other course units to attend to before that period ends. More to that, the four months were cut short by three weeks that were set aside for purposes of examinations, more so the theoretical bit of it.

A look at the methods of teaching indicates the use of largely conventional or traditional methods, the kind of methods that have the teacher dominating the teaching and learning process. Such methods usually ignore the learner's ideas or thoughts in the planning, setting of goals and objectives plus the evaluation. In the end, the learning outcomes are not reflective of learners' needs or even the community. Something that contravenes the codes of an effective teaching in accordance to Otaala, Maani, and Bakaira (2013a) who state that the learning tasks should be set with the involvement of learners.

While we might not necessary have co-curricular activities in this case, other employability skills can be good representatives of these. Meaning that, having the practical skills alone is not enough to have one absorbed into the labor market or call it the world of work. Making their accusation vital for any graduate hoping to find or create a job.

In addition, the most commonly used method of teaching at the university is the lecture method. In fact, 74% and 77.5% of lecturers and students respectively claimed that the lecture method was commonly applied in their classes. The term "lecture method", is used loosely to include the dictation of notes, talk and uninterrupted and prolonged dictation and issuing out of handouts. Lecturers defended the lecture method on the grounds of large classes (100 – 800 students) for Arts and professional courses on the ground of lack of equipment and materials for vocational and science subjects.

"This is what one Arts lecturer: asserted in defense of the lecture method: ...realistically, lecture method is my method of choice. In a situation where you've more than 800 students in any one

lecture, you do not have enough space even to walk around and glued to the small space around the chalkboard, you don't talk about your experimentation, group work ... because you don't just make it. Where will you get the space, materials, someone to help manage the groups? Yet you've to cover certain, in content before the semester ends? So realistically, lecture method is the way to go". (Otaala, Maani, & Bakaira, 2013b)

Under the pedagogical framework, teaching and learning environment is key to the end results. In this case, we could lay our hands on only a few tools and materials necessary in the teaching and learning process. This tremendously slowed down the whole teaching and learning process. On a positive note though, the lecture room was always available for us to carry on with the learning and teaching. Accessing the surfaces on which to carry out the practical was not a tug of war as it. Though the learners did not want to do the practical within the department, we later managed to agree after weighing the merits and demerits of doing them in against doing them out of the university.

Some of the major concerns were; the University being a central meeting point for most of us, would help in saving transport costs. Since we were to work around our own department, it would help us avoid the several bureaucracies of finding another site for the projects. This went a long way in supporting the teaching and learning process.

Course goals and objectives

- (i). Produce professionals that have deeper understanding of Interior Design
- (ii). Train personnel for self-employment
- (iii). Train personnel who will conserve and improve the environment; upgrade and beautify the interiors of public or domestic structures/interior.

University Vision and Mission

The vision of Kyambogo University is; "To be a Centre of Academic and Professional Excellence".

The Mission of Kyambogo University is stated as; "To advance and promote knowledge and development of skills in Science, Technology and Education, and in such other fields having regards for quality, equity, progress and transformation of society", (K. UNIVERSITY, 2016)

Although the syllabus of Interior design is well stated, but we need to note that this was formulated over seven years back and there has been nothing added to it since then. This literally means that it is not up to date with the trend of interior designs especially Advanced Paint-effects. Hence leaving the learners are at the mercy of the lecturer. This means that if the lecturer

does not keep up to the current trends in the world of paint effects yet not mandated by to syllabus and the rules governing the programme, the learner is bound for possible failure in the world of work.

Goals and objectives of the project

- (i) To examine the traditional teaching approaches implemented during the teaching and learning process.
- (ii) To form groups and conduct teaching and learning using learning groups.
- (iii) To evaluate appropriate Employable skills exhibited by the learners during industrial training.

Educational content

Diploma in Interior Design (DID) which started as a Certificate of one year in Packages now run as a Diploma of two years. This programmed is very popular because we are the only higher institution of learning offering it in Uganda and every year the Department witnesses an increase in the intake of students. Upgrading the programmed to a degree status is in the pipeline. (K. UNIVERSITY, 2016).

This course unit stipulates the content, objectives plus the goals that the learner is likely to attain during his or her stay at the university. By the end of the study, the learner will;

- (i). Produce professionals that have deeper understanding of Interior Design
- (ii). Train personnel for self-employment
- (iii). Train personnel who will conserve and improve the environment; upgrade and beautify the interiors of public or domestic structures/interior.

Teaching and learning methods

What has been dominant in the teaching and learn process in the area of Advanced Paint-effects is the lecture method which usually fronts theory other than practical. In this case, the teacher is the lead in most part of the learning process. A teacher centred approach has also been employed in the past times giving less opportunities for the learners to make contributions more so from their past vast experiences. The stakeholders have also been left out in most of the

planning process and later in the learning process. This style of teaching has led to negative returns, especially when it comes to the relevance of the University graduate to the world of work.

In this project, we laboured to focus on a Learner Centred Approach. We employed this with a fusion of both pedagogy and andragogy techniques. A number of three (3) groups each with a leader were formed in a democratic manner and learners largely directed their learning with the teacher as a facilitator.

Andragogy, which is defined as “the art and science of helping adults learn, was contrasted with pedagogy, the art and science of helping children learn” Merriam (2001). In this project, the researcher employed both andragogy and pedagogy as techniques of vocational skills as the major practicing activities. In line with pedagogy, there was minimal dependence of learners upon the facilitator for all the learning. The facilitator or the teacher did not assume full responsibility for what was taught and how it is learned and finally both parties did evaluation of learning.

In reference to andragogy, the facilitator left the learners to be self-directed; the learners were responsible for their own learning and in most cases carried out self-evaluation. In line with pedagogy, since the learners did not have that much of experiences to do with the subject of concern that is to say, Advanced Paint-Effects, the facilitator’s experience was the most influential as a resource for learning. However, the learners brought in some reasonable volume of experiences. They acted as sources of learning for one another due to the diversity of experiences among them as adults working in groups. Finally, experience for each of them became the source of self-identity. In line with andragogy, many changes triggered the readiness amongst the students to learn. The need to know increased and this definitely led to effectiveness by assessing the gap between where they are currently and where they want to be. Learners were able to perform different tasks, solved problems, and learned in a more satisfying way. All the learning was relevant to real-life tasks. Learning in groups was organized around life and work situations rather than subject matter units. All these activities and measures led to high esteem, individual recognition, better quality of life, self-confidence and self-actualization amongst the different groups.

The teacher or lecturer was a facilitator in the whole process while the learners took on the driving sit. Mode of delivery was largely English and inevitably some local languages or both. Luganda is neither the national nor the official language of Uganda but the learners mostly used this especially in their study groups. This was an indication that they preferred having lectures conducted in this language. The teacher however kept using the official language for most of

the lectures since it is the nation's official, it is a universal or call it a neutral language. Learning is one of the highly valued important activities that most humans engage. It is a core of educational process. Learning is a process that goes on both within and outside the classroom and far away the school environment. Many philosophers like Turner G, Boettcher, J.V and psychologists like Robert L. Greene, Jean Piaget, have done so much to understand the nature of learning. The process that people go through to learn, how learning takes place and how one individual influences the learning of other individuals through teaching and other incidental activities that can finally stimulate the occurrence of learning. Different scholars have suggested many theories of learning, though these theories differ for a variety of reasons. However, theories based on scientific evidence are regarded more valid based on opinion or personal.



Figure 2: Students of Group A participate in painting the undercoat base onto the surface.



Figure 2: shows learners during execution of projects at Kyambogo University.

As earlier noted, the teaching and learning process was largely participative and learner centered. All learners actively took part in the different activities that went on as shown above in figure 3 and 4. This exercise was dependent on both personal evaluations by the learners and later on from the facilitator as an assessment technique in evaluation of learning in groups.

Learning environment.

It was a free learning environment which gave room for interaction and learning amongst the learners themselves and the facilitator. I did observe teaching and learning take place. I also practically got involved in the process. The environment was largely favorable, different learners kept on checking on both their progress and that of other colleagues in other groups. The exercise was full of consultations, at every phase of the projects.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the collection of, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a programmed of education or training as part of a recognized process of judging its effectiveness, its efficiency and any other outcomes it may have. (Crompton, 1996)

Rowntree (1992) in Crompton (1996) makes comment on this definition as, Evaluation is not Assessment, we should not ignore the unexpected, Evaluation is a planned systematic and open endeavor.

Evaluation and assessment although often used interchangeably, refer to different levels of investigation. Evaluation is concerned at the macro or holistic level of the learning event, taking into account the context of learning and all the factors that go with it, whereas assessment can be seen as the measurement of student learning and is one of the elements that go into an evaluation, the micro-level. One aspect of any sound evaluation is the allowance for the unexpected. Above all an evaluation is a designed and purposeful enquiry which is open to comment.

“In the traditional way of learning facilitation, only the subject matter is evaluated by the teacher”. Nganda (2010). Contrary to that, the relations model of didactics emphasizes a holistic approach of evaluation. According to the model, evaluation should be done by both the student and the teachers with the help of group projects, individual work and the learner’s final results if for the student to benefit.

This is what exactly went on during the execution of the projects. Learners came in at different intervals to evaluate their teacher and so did the teacher. This increased commitment to quality as well as completion of the work in time. The teacher created a basis of evaluation by giving tips to all learners of what good work should be. This included all the different techniques the learners were supposed to use to maintain quality and style without killing the fashion of the final product. Therefore, the learners and the teacher were working hand in hand freely to achieve the best out of the exercise.

2.4: Experiential Learning

This is a learning technique usually parallel to the likes of lecturer learning where the teacher takes lead and basically dominates the teaching and learning process. Kolb (2014) asserts that, a common usage of the “experiential learning” defines it as a particular form of learning from

life experiences. In support of this view, Keeton and Tate (1978) in Kolb (2014) defines experiential learning as learning in which the learner is directly in touch with the realities being studied.

This form of learning is very much related to the project at hand, putting in mind the fact that we had to encounter the problem of low employable skills among the graduates of Interior Design at Kyambogo University. Having the learners interface with the real world, that is to say, training with the actual tools and materials as there is in the world of work, will definitely yield results in the efforts to curb the, problem of concern.

According to Yardley, Teunissen, and Dornan (2012) “experiential learning is constructing knowledge and meaning from real-life experience”. I found this theory relevant to the teaching and learning process especially in line with learning groups. This is mainly because Advanced Paint-effects is a largely a practical discipline that necessitates its practice in real-life experiences. We agreed with learners to have our learning in open space, and work on real setting rather than the small objects or Items that have not favored their colleagues in the past. According to Vygotsky (1978), “much important learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skillful tutor. The tutor may model behaviors and/or provide verbal instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this as cooperative or collaborative dialogue. The child seeks to understand the actions or instructions provided by the tutor (often the parent or teacher) then internalizes the information, using it to guide or regulate their own performance”.

In his own words, Piaget explains that, “If there is any area in which active methods will probably become imperative in the full sense of the term. It is that in which experimental procedures are learned”, [he goes on to elaborate that], for an experiment not carried out by the individual himself with all freedom of initiative is by definition not an experiment but mere drill with no educational value. [He emphasizes that], the details of the successive steps are not adequately understood. (Piaget, 1973, p. 20)

Similarly, but yet different theory here is Constructivism. According to Gupta (2011) Constructivism is an epistemology of learning. The theory states that knowledge is constructed rather than received from an objective world or external reality. More to that he theory states that “people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. To do this, one should ask question, explore and assess what we know. It involves learners in a real, authentic world or context. Students learn to question things and to apply their natural curiosity to the world”. (Gupta, 2011, p. 32).

Constructionism

Construction of knowledge by learners themselves is vital in the teaching and learning process. This way of thinking is backed up by this very theory, that is to say constructionism. Maybe similar to Constructivism but this theory fronts the aspect of learning by doing. Its inventor asserts that, “In Constructionism, the N word as opposed to the V word – shares Constructivism’s view of learning as “building knowledge structures” through progressive internalization of actions. It then adds the idea that this happens especially felicitously in a context where the learner is consciously engaged in constructing a public entity, whether it’s a sand castle at the beach or a theory of the universe” (Ackermann, 2001) Like I have explained earlier, talking about the teacher as a facilitator, the theory of Constructionism also defines the teacher as a facilitator.

2.5 Summary of the theory concepts

The theoretical concepts chapter has covered theories to do with the teaching and learning process in line with its improvement. It has mainly grounded on the relations model of didactics, the experiential learning theory and contrasted this with other supporting theories like constructionism and constructivism. From this chapter, the researcher then leads to the review of related literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

It is very true that learning is vital to anyone, more so to those seeking a future in the professional world of work, or call it the elite world. Usually, leaning or Education intends to aid the accusation of a job for one's smooth living. Accusation in this case may be through application for a post in a given company or setting off to the route of job creation. In as much as one can survive with informal education, majority of the world of work call for a form of certificate to authenticate one's said skills.

Coordination between skills development and enterprises is required to match skills supply and demand. Labour market intermediaries identify skills needs and communicate this information to schools, training institutions and apprenticeship systems to create the required skills. Labour market information systems or labour market observatories, for example, identify skills needed in the economy.

Public and private employment services communicate information to workers, support job placement, brokering and recruitment, and guide workers' training decisions and careers. Institutions that provide credible assessment and certification of workers' skills help enterprises more easily recognize workers' skills and match them with their demand.

The large question that the researcher picks on is whether the education provided goes hand in hand with the requirements or desires of the industry. I also go on to question the mode or approach of delivery, wondering if it could be the root cause of the high levels of unemployment especially among the graduate youths of Uganda.

Unemployment is a major problem for Ugandan youths, with several of the youths resorting to casual jobs which do not match their qualifications. Experts say there is need to re-direct the education system to vocational skills training to ensure job creation.

Uganda's unemployment rates are among the highest in the world, with 32 per cent of young people unemployed. After youth-led revolts across the Arab world, some warn that sub-Saharan Africa, need to improve young people's prospects to avoid social unrest. According to statistics

from the Uganda Bureau Of Statistics (UBOS) and Uganda Investment Authority (UIA), of the more than 400,000 young Ugandans who enter the labor market each year, only about 113,000 are absorbed in formal employment, leaving the rest to forage for jobs in the informal sector.

The paper goes on to state that, “while the national unemployment rate stands at 3.5 percent, that of the youth is a whopping 32.2 per cent and higher for degree holders - 36 per cent. These worrying figures are, however, not conclusive as the government department in charge of labor does not have current aggregate figures on unemployment and underemployment”.

According to SSENKABIRWA (2012), “The unemployment story is playing in an environment where Uganda’s population growth rate is the third highest in the world at 3.5 per cent. The youth and young people constitute almost 78 per cent of 34 million Ugandans”. With such percentages existent in a country, it's prudent that one looks into the matter and to find possible causes and remedies.

The issue of unemployment is further grounded by an analysis of Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) which presents the “unemployment rate at about 61.6 percent”, UBOS (2010). One needs not to forget that the greater population of Uganda is made of Youths below 25 years of age and this is the average age range of learners that I usually attend to as a lecturer at Kyambogo University.

Data based on the UBOS (2010), “also showed that rural employment to-population ratios were consistently higher 87 percent. More to that, Gaps in Youth Policy and Programming in Uganda points out that the key challenges for youth in this regard include the lack of jobs to do, lack of skills, difficulty in obtaining a first job, under employment and job quality”.

While there are several other factors responsible for the high unemployment levels which no one can dispute like poor economic sector, corruption, embezzlement, tribalism, poor industrial sector, politics colliding directly with the employment boards, high population growth rates to mention but a few. The Education system and mode of delivery are notable factors that need immediate attention if we are to curb unemployment in Uganda. One of the sought about solutions is the learner centered pedagogical mode of teaching and learning with the aid of learning groups.

Pedagogy This chapter discusses the main aspects of my main research question: How to use cookery-learning exhibitions as a work based learning strategy of food production subject in the hotel and tourism training institute. Different theories have been written about these aspects but I will focus on main theories that allow me to discuss my project scope which are learning exhibitions, work based learning strategy and food production. First, it is necessary to see this from the perspective of Uganda education. I present literature for each part of the concepts in

the problem statement directed towards the specific objective. The idea in this chapter is to discuss concepts with reference to different authors' views and experiences in order for me to build my theoretical understanding of my study and create scientific integrity to another scholar's works.

Siraj-Blatchford, Muttock, Sylva, Gilden, and Bell (2002) Siraj-Blatchford et al. (2002), is often referred to as “the practice (or the art, the science or the craft) of teaching but in the early years any adequate conception of educative practice must be wide enough to include the provision of learning environments for play and exploration”.

Siraj-Blatchford et al. (2002, p. 10), goes ahead to define Pedagogy as, “instructional techniques and strategies that allow learning to take place. It also refers to the interactive process between teacher or practitioner and the learner and it also applied include the provision of some aspects of the learning environment (including the concrete learning environment, and actions of the family and community”.

3.2 Vocational education system

Education in Uganda stems from the times of indigenous knowledge, teaching and learning. Indigenous in this included what is today known as Informal Education where members were taught several aspects in life. This kind of education was well organized to the extent that it had a set content to be taught to all ages of one's life. The teachers were also known to the societies. This largely went on until the coming of the western world version of education.

In line with the indigenous Education, Ssekamwa presents under stated definition “Education is a process by which one generation purposefully transmits culture to the young, to the adults and to the old for their social, cultural and economic benefit and for the benefit of the whole society.” Ssekamwa (1997). Culture which is the main content line entails lots of other aspects of life and what is vital to note to here is the education was meant to add value to one's social, cultural and economic benefit. Which literally means that the education was an all-round package. We should also note that most of the Indigenous education was done in groups due to the fact that the teachers were usually in small numbers compared to the number of the learners. This helped the pass on information or content to all the learners in the limited available time. In reference to the above said, the researcher took on this study project, with the desire to mainly have a graduate that is packaged in all ways instead of having a single line of thought or practice hence the resulting into the main question of concern; that is to say, improving the process of

teaching and learning using learning groups.

I presume that learning in the field of vocational studies has been taking place over the years. Learners including myself have continued to graduate from several institutions across the country. Basing on my interaction with several pedagogics and Vocational teachers, I came to a conclusion that vocational Education inspires the learners directly after school since it motivates them to put whatever they studied into practice. This improves on their performance in the employment circle and a step to enable them develop their skills. Therefore, the graduates from Vocational institutions should be given priority in the employment circles. It is from this point therefore, that the teachers in Vocational Institutions should fully equip learners with all the skills required to make them of great importance to communities.

According to Ngware, Oketch, and Mutisya (2014) “it is important that education and training systems legitimize pre-employment training as an important component. This changes the attitudes and work habits in order to prepare learners adequately for the world of work and positioning them practically for self-employment after graduation”. It is from this point that we note that, vocational education is good for both individual and the society at large. In many ways, it leads to the development of the society since most of the graduates start up small scale businesses that can employ other skilled persons in the society.

Kagaari (2007), supports the idea of vocational skills. He argues that, “the acquired skills enable workers to attempt to implement a self-concept by underscoring the importance of job creation. It leads to acquisition of skills that enable individuals to discover their environment or surroundings and harness the resources within”. I agree as several scholars have noted that it is necessary for every individual to acquire a given skill that can enable them survive in the society as well as contribute to the development of the same.

How to improve the process of teaching and learnings so as to produce graduates with appropriate employable skills remains a question of concern. The very reason as to why the researcher took on this study project with hopes of finding a viable answer.

3.3 Examining the Teaching approaches implemented during the Teaching and Learning Process.

Teaching is a wide term that has been defined differently by different scholars, but all the definitions zero down to mean; the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for both classroom and outdoor instruction. The methods you use to teach depends on what fits you most basing on your educational philosophy, classroom demographic, subject areas and

the mission statement of the institution.

Teaching always takes on two approaches; these include Teacher Centred and Learner (Students centred). The illustration below indicates the reasoning in both Teacher Centred and learner Centred approaches.

Lecturing/ teacher-centred approach	Experiential learning/ Student- centred Approach
The student/ learning person is a more or less active recipient of knowledge.	The student is an active and self-reliant subject, constructing her own knowledge and competence.
The teacher is regarded as the active part and expert, and the subject in the learning situation.	Both the teacher and the learner are subjects in the learning situation.
Learning is mainly a mental or cognitive process.	Learning is a complex process including mental, social and emotional elements.
Words and texts are the main source of knowledge.	The teacher delivers the knowledge Former concrete experience is a basis for learning process, and is a point of departure for learning.
Learning is seen as transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes.	The learner is able to construct her own knowledge and competence based on experiences.
Focus is on the teacher as the most important person in the learning process	Focus is on the learner and the learning process as well as the learning result.
The learning product is regarded as the most important	Both the learning process and the learning outcome are regarded as important
Instructional technology and ends-means thinking underpins the 'model.	A process –oriented thinking underpins the model.

Table:1 shows the reasoning in both Teacher Centered and learner Centered approaches. From (Nganda, 2010)

Sabina asserts that; James and Pollard (2011) puts forward the argument that learning outcomes are aligned with what is generally expected from teaching and learning, encompassing cognitive and affective aspects. Studying in groups directly dictates on the approaches to employ by the teacher during the teaching learning process. Nelsen (2014) argues that, through teaching and

learning in groups, desirable habits that are positive through interaction with the world and our efforts and those of the learners to reach the desired ends.

Nelsen (2014, p. 90) notes that, in line with social patterns, Dewey 1985 argues that “habits emerge in response to problems that arise in our social and physical environments; habits are the resources we use to solve real problems”. The above authors have got very good arguments regarding learning in groups as related to teaching and learning. In most cases, when the teachers encourage participation of all learners, definitely, there will be easy ways of solving things practically.

Wolff, van den Bogert, Jarodzka, and Boshuizen (2014) explains that; “Learning to teach is not simply learning how to survive the first week of school. It is primarily about learning to codify knowledge in order to draw on it again. And it is probably to complicate and not simplify the world”. This comment holds water in relation to what Dewey 1985a asserted that habits emerge in response to problems that arise in our social and physical environments.

3.4 To form groups and conduct teaching using learning groups

History of learning groups

The formal teaching of university students in small groups has a number of origins. (Mills, 2013, p. 5). He continues to state that, it can be traced back to the German research seminars of the 1700s, to the oxford tutorials of the 1800s, or the action learning groups of the mid twentieth century. Some might want to go further and traced it back to Socrates and his (often one sided) dialogues.

Learning groups can sometimes be referred to as small groups. This is supported by Mill David’s views of what small group as are. He states, “small groups teaching is not defined by numbers. We define it as any teaching situation in which dialogue and collaboration within the group are integral to learning. The teacher is still key to this learning. But now their role is to facilitate rather than to direct, to coordinate as much as to communicate, to inspire rather than to inform (Mills, 2013, p. 4)”. Therefore, as a lecturer my role in this class of 22 learners was to facilitate and coordinate but make sure that all the activities in these groups result into learning.

However, according to (Clark & Wareham, 1998, p. 40), “Other than large lectures and small groups, intermediate sized groups of 20 to 40 for teaching straight forward skills such as statistic and the use of IT. The small group of 6 to 20 students can also be divided into quarters for project work, pairs of buzz groups and discussions, and individual work for essays and oral

presentations. They note that small groups teaching can and should use a range of group sizes depending on the purpose of the meeting; it need not to be restricted to any one size”.

This literally means that, the purpose of groups created is one of the key factors that determine the size of the group. In simple terms, one should not be restricted to any number of members for a group though I think the smaller the better because with small groups, the chances of having everyone involved in the learning processes are higher than when the case of big numbers where some members of the group will dodge and have others produce work for them. With big groups, even those willing to participate might not get the chance to do so because the task at hand might call for minimal effort from a few members of the group.

Contrary to Clark and Wareham (1998), with some similar views though, Mills (2013) asserts that, “there is no one right size of a group. You might not have much control over your class size either some insist that the magic number is six, others that it is between 5 and 8. We don’t think the precise size matters. A small group could be as small as one. But we use small group techniques as a way of dividing up larger classes, involving students in smaller groups working together. (Mills) continues to note that, the larger the group the more complicated the dynamics and the likelihood that some remain silent.

In one way or another, all scholars seem to agree with each other about matters of group size, how and why one should come up with a particular size.

How to be an effective small group teacher.

While there may be a number of ways to teach with the help of small group, Mills suggests that, “there is no one right way to teach in small groups. What happens in any teaching situation depend on your interests and objectives, the subject at hand and the engagement of the students. You might want to promote discussion, focus on single text, use PBL (Problem Based Learning) techniques, or ask the students to evaluate work they have prepared beforehand. Discussion and dialogue are at the heart of small group teaching. If everyone is actively contributing to the conversation, the challenge of student engagement is solved Mills (2013, p. 5)”.

Recent research suggests that individuals in small groups learn better than they do on their own or in isolation. In light of the research on active learning, this is not surprising, as a small group initiates collaborative learning and its resulting activities: students generate questions, discuss and arrive at conclusions, etc. any class size can benefit collaborative learning. With some modifications, groups can be successful even in very large lecture classrooms.

Shepard (2000, p. 13), encourages learning in groups as a strong step that inspires research amongst students. He emphasizes that these learners become eager to explore so many things above their knowledge circles. He further writes that learning in groups initiates the idea of self-

assessment amongst the students. They develop the zeal to evaluate themselves before the teachers intervene to assess them.

Shepard (2000, p. 11), motivates teachers and supports them to use Learning groups, he is quoted to have said cited that; “There is a close relationship between truly understanding a concept and being able to transfer knowledge and use it in new situations”. He further writes that all this can be done or achieved through groups. Lorrie further supports this argument by writing that the transfer of knowledge by different groups will definitely enable them to memorize and conceptualize most of the concepts handled.

Ramsden (2003, p. 18), writes that, teaching students in groups emphasizes the subject matter they are supposed to understand. It promotes sharing of ideas and views by both students and the Lecturer. The problems or challenges of learning may be approached through groups where all learners interact freely with a lot of openness. Ramsden points out that working in groups is a direct motivation of freeing the minds of all learners to make vital contributions passionately. The learners enjoy relating with others, comparing what they can do better to what their friends can do best.

Harasim (1995) puts it forward that, students’ responses are always endowed with rich speeches when they learn in groups. Linda compares group learning to a mini conference that inspires students to share ideas freely and directly. From a technical point of view, Linda writes that, learning in groups discourages redundancy amongst learners as they all give their consent and experience however perfect it may be.

Kaye and Brewer (2013, p. 17) indicate that, teacher and student relationship increases during the practice of teaching in groups. They further assert “It is possible that a teacher’s own experience of education and in particular their own approach to studying may impact on the way in which they teach and interact with students”. p.13. It is from this assertion that they support it clearly that students should be given enough time to do most of the work in Learning groups as it creates innovativeness and creativity amongst them without the teacher’s influence. Chickering and Ehrmann (1996, p. 2), in line with practicing learning in groups, they are quoted to have emphasized that; “Good Practice Develops Reciprocity and Cooperation Among Students Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race” They further wrote that collaborative learning improves on social relationship amongst learners, it yields very good work which is not competitive or isolated. They look at learning in groups as the best

approach in Vocational subjects as it limits individualism. From the above argument, learning groups seemed the best approach, several other scholars like Linda Kaye and Gayle 2013 have come up to recommend evaluation and teaching using Learning groups.

Chickering and Ehrmann (1996, p. 3), they explain that learning in groups above leading to team work amongst the students, it helps students to solve their own problems especially in vocational subjects. It inspires teammates to interact that finally builds and encourages acquaintanceship. From their analysis, learning groups encourage surveys of prior experience of the students and brief personal introductions. This creates a genuine cause for direct unity and all this directly enhance proper flow of knowledge amongst the students and sharing of everything for their own good.

3.5: Appropriate employable skills.

According to McQuaid and Lindsay (2005), “Employability is the relative capacity of an individual to achieve meaningful employment given the interaction of personal circumstances and the labour market”. As the researcher took on this project, the major concern is the interaction of personal circumstances and the labour market. This is due to the fact that; our labour market is starving in the areas of interior design but not willing to take on non-performing graduates or call all them graduates with inappropriate Employable skills.

The researcher believes that all these high rates of unemployment among the youths in Uganda can drastically drop if there are good relations between the school and the world of work. ILO supports that; Coordination between skills development and enterprises is required to match skills supply and demand. Labour market intermediaries [should] identify skills needs and communicate this information to schools, training institutions and apprenticeship systems to create the required skills.

“Labour market information systems or labour market observatories, for example, identify skills needed in the economy. Public and private employment services communicate information to workers, support job placement, brokering and recruitment, and guide workers’ training decisions and careers. Institutions that provide credible assessment and certification of workers’ skills help enterprises more easily recognize workers’ skills and match them with their demand”.

According to DHFETE,2002, in McQuaid and Lindsay (2005), “Employability is the capability to move into and within labour markets and to realize potential through sustainable and accessible employment. For the individual, employability depends on: the knowledge and skills they possess, and their attitudes; the way personal attributes are presented in the labour market; the environmental and social context within which work is sought; and the economic context within which work is sought”.

To conclude this, most of the views seem to hint on: factors that influence one’s capability to get into the labour market, readiness to work or personal attributes, but it is important to note that all these can possibly be addressed if learners do the learning in small learning groups. This is mainly because the groups avail the opportunity to share a wide range of experiences in practice.

3.6: Summary of the related literature

In this chapter, I have basically brought forward thoughts from various scholars. Thought or call them views to do with vocational education and particularly the approaches and methods of conducting the teaching and learning process. To be specific, the Learner centred approach versus the teacher centred approach. I have also sought the scholars’ views on how the teaching and learning methods and process influence the quality of graduates.

Within this chapter, I have digested the aspect of learning groups. Through this, I concentrated on what they really mean, how to form them, their pros and cons and their possible contribution to the desire at hand, that is to say, the teaching and learning process

Employability skills is another aspect that I have endeavoured to address in this chapter, looking at its meaning and how this affects the absorption of learners into the world of work.

METHODOLOGY

4.1: Overview

This chapter entails the research design and the nature of approach used, methods of data collection that were employed and the ethical issues that were considered during the project are also embedded in this chapter. The population and sampling technique is also found here. This chapter also entails the data collection tools. Lastly, the chapter tackles validity and reliability, ethical issues and the challenges.

4.2 Research design

In the bid to understand the meaning in this project, I opted for a qualitative research design. This is mainly because; qualitative research is designed just for this kind of task. By this I mean the researcher's desire to understand how he can work with students, with the help of learning groups to improve the teaching and learning process for purposes enhancing employability skills among learners thus cubing the mushrooming rate of youth unemployment in Uganda. A descriptive approach was utilized to describe events as they occurred. The occurrences of events were recorded by the researcher and later transcribed into meaningful data presented in the data presentation chapter.

This is supported by words of Avis 1995 in Bailey and Tilley (2002), who states that; "qualitative research fronts 'meaning' rather than 'truth' as the legitimate end product of inquiry. Avis goes ahead to explain that, in the qualitative paradigm reality as meaning is understood as '...a representation [of reality] from one particular point of view'. The goal of qualitative researchers is to provide ways of understanding experience from the perspective of those who live it (Schwandt, 1994).

In this project, the researcher employed a descriptive and explanatory research design where the information collected was narratively presented, to explain the prevailing circumstances in the processes of documenting this report. According to R.B (2008), the descriptive research design is vital in explaining situations using words to narrate the situation that unfolds during the processes of conducting research.

According to Guba et al in Bailey and Tilley (2002). “Qualitative inquiry is based on the assumption that knowledge as meaning is relative and a creation of the interaction between the researcher and the researched”. Interaction between the teacher and his learners who happened to be the centre of focus in one of the reasons as to why I picked on this design.

Qualitative constructivist theory is based on the premise that reality as meaning is not only subjective in nature, but essentially the construction of individuals as they interact within a social environment. Interpretation of this reality by qualitative researchers is yet another construction. Qualitative researchers contend that ‘...objective knowledge about reality is a myth’ Avis 1995 in Bailey and Tilley (2002).

4.3 Action Research

According to Mc Taggart (1988) in Zireva (2013) “Action research is a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out.” In action research, the educator-researcher tries to find a solution to his/her problem by means of cycles (never only one) of planning, acting, data generation and reflections.

Action research cycle

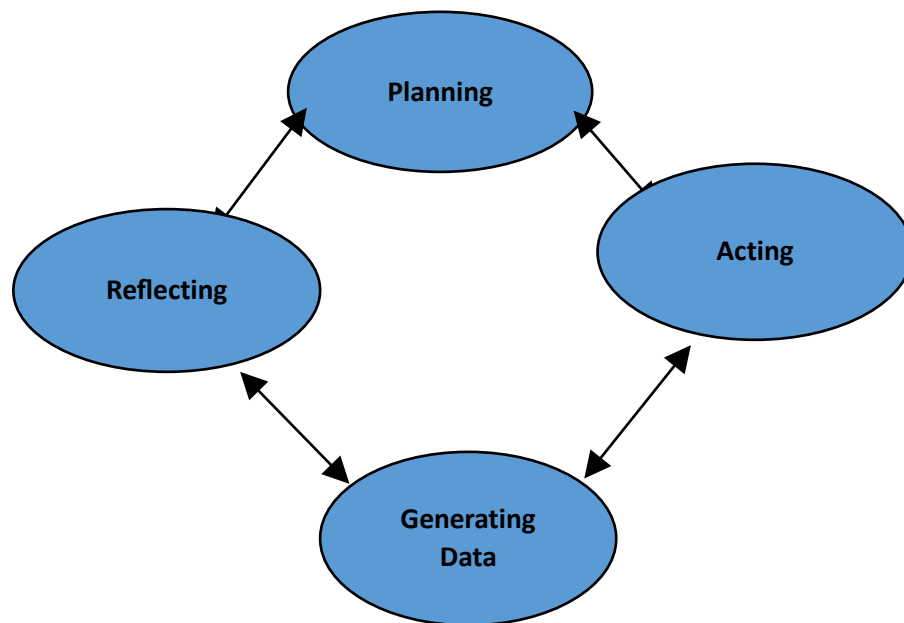


Figure:3 showing the four key components of the Action research cycle, drawn from Tamuka Shumba and Davison Zireva in (Zireva, 2013)

Planning is the most common stage described by theorists. However, there is no agreement on the position of this stage. Cohen and Manion (1994) regard it as the first stage. Ebbutt (1983) and Stringer (1996 in Schulze, Kamper, Mellet & Smit, 2002:58) place planning a little further down the sequence of activities. The disagreement is a trivial issue since cyclical events can be started at any point.

Schulze et al. (2002: 58) point out; Action research is not a neat, orderly activity that allows participants to proceed step by step to the end of the process. People will find themselves working backwards and forwards through routines, repeating processes, revising procedures, rethinking interpretations, leapfrogging steps or stages and sometimes making radical changes in a different direction.

I seem to agree with this because the various situations or environments of practice were dynamic in several ways. We went through various stages and surely went back and forth, repeating several stages and surely carried on with planning even if we had done so at the very beginning.

I choose this type of research, mainly because it best suits the task at hand. That is to say improving the process of teaching and learning for purposes of equipping learners with appropriate employable skills on top of the academic content spelt out in the curriculum. It is

important to note that Action research aims at solving a particular problem. This is supported by the words of Glanz (2014), who states that; “action research, a type of applied research, is conducted by practitioners to improve practices in Educational settings”.

He also throws light on some characteristics of Action research and these include; “action research is often less sophisticated than traditional methods that incorporate, complicated statistical techniques. Action research is utilized primarily by practitioners to solve specific problems and lastly, findings from action research are often not generalizable to other groups and actions” Glanz (2014).

4.3.1 Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Reason (2001, p. 1) defines PAR as “a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes”. In relation to this project, I chose participatory action research because it digs into knowledge acquisition for social action.

More to that, according to Reason (2001), “participants are collaborators in the research project because action researchers assume that people who participate and are committed to the process will generate more-thorough social accounts and will be more invested in the successful application of the findings”. It was therefore paramount for the researcher take on this approach for the betterment of the situation or call it the problem of concern about the set objectives of the project.

4.4 Study Population and sampling technique

The population was comprised of twenty-eight (28) participants. Twenty-two of these were learners from the training institution, that is to say Kyambogo, two (2) from the industry and two clients. The twenty-two were second year students pursuing a diploma in interior design. The population sample was drawn from current students undertaking the course at Kyambogo University. The employers of these graduates were also consulted. This was done for purposes of providing information on what they think of the learners in relation to the execution of advanced paint effects and employability skills to enrich this project.

Clients to some of these learners were also consulted to avail information on their performance in the field in relation to employability skills. Purposive techniques were used to choose the willing respondents.

Purposive sampling in making a choice for his study population. Purposive sampling is at times referred to as judgment or selective sampling. The researcher has got the right to make selections of who in the society is liable and capable of giving him or her the best answers to his questions. In most cases, the researcher can depend on the seniority of individuals in a certain field, the authority held by an individual in each institution or even how the position of the selected individual judges the final product. For this case, the researcher looked at the consumers of the final product, the supervisors and employers of the students or learners especially those in the field, similar companies or related institutions that depend on the same skills for survival either at employment or training level. The other party who the researcher looked at as having important information was the clients who had already witnessed the skills and performance of learners in the field.

He based on several factors to pass his final judgment on who to consult and who to be interviewed. However, he based on several factors to make these choices based on a list of qualities that some of the participants had. Some of the selected population had characteristics of self-evaluation, some companies employing these students had evidence regarding the performance of the students. The clients in most cases had already consumed the end-result of the skills of these learners, therefore, they were in the best position to give a clear judgment on the performance of these learners in the field.

The researcher in most cases consulted from learners, the different companies and organizations they work for then he got in touch with the employers. However, at certain intervals, the companies referred the researcher to their clients for more details. All these parties played an important role in offering quality, dependable and valid data by the researcher.

Purposive sampling is cost friendly and it consumes little time compared to other types of sampling. The researcher spent little money to move from one place to another, this is because he had a clear destination for data collection. Since the researcher was gathering primary data especially from the participants and consumers of the project, he had no option but to use purposive sampling as a technique, that is how he had to talk to the clients, employers of the learners to see how these people judge the performance and employability skills of all the learners. Though to the disadvantage, the researcher became vulnerable in the course of data collection. He was to entirely depend on the mercy of the respondents at all costs in their convenient time. And at times, the researcher discarded some information that seemed irrelevant hence, in purposive sampling, the researcher may not rely on all the data received directly from the respondents as it is the case in other sampling techniques. Therefore, the researcher was able to screen and sieve the information received in order to see the validity and

reliability of such information especially in areas where the judgment from the respondents seemed to be subjective based on bias. Regarding the case of vulnerability, the researcher was so flexible and ready to adjust his programmed to fit in those of the respondents, and this enabled the researcher to get all the data from his study population he had selected.

4.5 Choice of data collection tools

These included; interviews, observation, documentary analysis and logs. The instruments of data collection include the still camera, interview guides, observation guides and questionnaires as important tools for recording the data.

4.5.1 Procedure of data collection

The procedure of data collection involved the work process analysis at the workplace to get needed information about the appropriate employable skills vital in producing a skilled interior designer who can be absorbed in the world of work after undergoing training at the University. One on one interviews were conducted with the managers at the workplace to gather more information on the organization's assessment of employees who underwent training at Kyambogo University. This information was important in identifying the missing links in the teaching and learning process, as well as making the necessary suggestions to address the prevailing situation.

Similarly, a work process analysis was conducted with the students in the department of art and industrial design to establish whether they are aware of the appropriate employable skills needed to become a competent interior designer.

Semi structured interviews were carried out with the stakeholders in the department of art and industrial design which provided information from which the three objectives of the project were generated. The information highlighted the weaknesses in the training content and its limitations to acquiring the competence that fits the requirements in the world of work practices.

4.5.2 Documentary analysis

As a tool of data collection, documentary analysis, it is broken into two main categories which is episodic records and running record. In this project, the researcher opted for the running record because its merits. For example; it is more likely to be produced by organizations than by private citizens. It is carefully stored and easily accessed; and it is available for long periods

of time. A good example would be government employment records or other statistical records. The three primary advantages to using the running record rather than the episodic record include: the cost, in both time and money; accessibility of records; and it covers a more extensive period of time. However, there are also three disadvantages of using the running record and these include: The researcher is at the mercy of the data collection practices and procedures of the record-keeping organizations themselves; some organizations are not willing to share their raw data with researchers; and it is sometimes difficult for researchers to identify organizations' record-keeping practices.

One can use the written record as evidence in different ways. Sometimes researchers extract excerpts, quotations, or examples from the written record to support an observation or relationship. Alternatively, a researcher might measure the number of times the president references the economy in his State of the Union address. This use of the written record is an example of content analysis.

According to Corbin & Strauss, (2008) in (Bowen, 2009), "Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge".

Advantages of this tool include:

This tool is efficient because it is less time-consuming and therefore more efficient than other research methods. It requires data selection, instead of data collection. The other advantage of document analysis as to tool of data collection it that of... availability: Many documents are in the public domain, especially since the advent of the Internet, and are obtainable without the author's' permission Merriam (1988). This makes document analysis an attractive option for qualitative researchers. She argued that, locating public records is limited only by one's imagination and industriousness. An important maxim to keep in mind is that if a public event happened, some official record of it most likely exists.

Cost-effectiveness: Document analysis is less costly than other research methods and is often the method of choice when the collection of new data is not feasible. The data (contained in documents) have already been gathered; what remains is for the content and quality of the documents to be evaluated.

Lack of obtrusiveness and reactivity: Documents are 'unobtrusive' and 'nonreactive' that is, they are unaffected by the research process. (Previous studies found in documents are not being considered here.) Therefore, document analysis counters the concerns related to reflexivity (or

the lack of it) inherent in other qualitative research methods. With regard to observation, for instance, an event may proceed differently because it is being observed. Reflexivity which requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings attached to social interactions and acknowledgment of the possibility of the investigator's influence on the research is usually not an issue in using documents for research purposes.

In addition to that, unlike humans, documents are good for repeated reviews since they do not react to emotions or feelings of the research or even the researched. This is in line with the words of (Merriam, 1988), who asserts that, "As a corollary to being non-reactive, documents are stable. The investigator's presence does not alter what is being studied".

Last but not of less importance, in some moments, it holds water for one to criticize something after it's been given some reasonable time or say, after it has been tried out for some time. In this project, the curriculum of interior design was one of the points of concern. The fact that it has lasted for over ten years down the road, makes it viable for one to look into its relevance to the current time especially in the world of work. This line of thought is backed up by, Yin (1994), who stresses that, "Documents provide broad coverage; they cover a long span of time, many events, and many settings".

4.5.3 Participant Observation

According to MARSHALL and ROSSMAN (1989) in *Barbara B. Kawulich*, "observation is the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for study". This method was very helpful to me as I used it to describe on going events with the help of my five senses. Even if I was a teacher, I had to maintain a certain level of deception and have great control of impression because these are some of the key principals of participant observation. This was to help me stay focused and objective.

Employing participant observation to collect data comes along with a number of benefits.

These may include;

They provide researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other, and check for how much time is spent on various activities (SCHMUCK, 1997), in *Barbara B. Kawulich*

Participant observation allows researchers to check definitions of terms that participants use in interviews, observe events that informants may be unable or unwilling to share

(MARSHALL & ROSSMAN, 1995). In *Barbara B. Kawulich 2005* for purposes of validity

especially if one is to carry out research with a group of people he is familiar with, BERNARD (1994) presents a few reasons that make this method viable.

It makes it possible to collect different types of data. Being on site over a period of time familiarizes the researcher to the community, thereby facilitating involvement in sensitive activities to which he/she generally would not be invited.

It gives the researcher a better understanding of what is happening in the culture and lends credence to one's interpretations of the observation. Participant observation also enables the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data through surveys and interviews.

It is sometimes the only way to collect the right data for one's study
Limitations of observation

The researcher must determine to what extent he/she will participate in the lives of the participants and whether to intervene in a situation. Another potential limitation they mention is that of researcher bias. *Dewalt, and Wayland (1998)*.

4.5.4 Qualitative Interviews

According to S. Kvale (2006), “social scientists investigate varieties of human experience. They attempt to understand the world from the subjects’ points of view and to unfold the meaning of their lived world. The interviews give voice to common people, allowing them to freely present their life situations in their own words, and open for a close personal interaction between the researchers and their subjects”. Learners in this case, can be referred to as the common people as they may not be that free to share some information especially like that about their teacher.

At the same time, though persons in the world of work are most likely to give out information with this format of interviewing, since they are not so friendly to structured questions even with the wealth of knowledge that they posse. This is backed by the words of Rubin and Rubin (2011), Who states that, the essence of responsive interviewing is picking people to talk to, who are knowledgeable, listening to what they have to say, and asking new questions based on the answers they provide.

In this case, the researcher asked most of the question and the participants offered the answers. As one of the principles of responsive interviewing, the researcher kept focus on the problem statement and avoided deviating.

Among those interviewed were the employers of the students at Coral industries. These do

manufacturing and application of decorative paints in Uganda. So far, they were the immediate employers of the students of interior design especially during internship. While at this industry, students get in contact with the clients of the company and are deployed to carry out most of the work concerned with decorative painting. They are usually accompanied with other employers at the industry who usually give them feedback about their work in the field in addition to that of the clients.

The researcher made an interview guide to help guide during the interviews. This included open ended questions though it was very flexible. Although the researcher had to follow the questions on the interview guide, where necessary, the researcher had to change the questions depending on the answers provided by the respondents. The interviews were conducted in English language and where necessary Luganda was utilized to ensure that the respondents understood the questions clearly. This was because the employers understood Luganda language better than English which the researcher had more knowledge.

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher greeted the respondents to draw their attention to the subject matter. During the interview, the researcher maintained a good eye contact and made sure the respondent understood the question before answering. The interviews lasted for 30 minutes and were conducted at the preferred place of the respondents. During the interview the researcher noted whatever the respondents said and where necessary audio recordings were made for further reference.

4.5.5 Logs

Table:2 Shows a sample of the log employed during the proceedings of the teaching and learning process.

D A T E	ACTIVITY	EXPERIENCE	REFLECTIONS	SUGGESTIONS / COMMENTS

Logs are normally used to record the progress of the lessons and how they happened and in most cases, suggest better ways of doing the same. It is a way of reflection about a given task or activity. It can be done by both the teacher and the learners.

You may consider use of logs during the teaching and learning process to record the progress of the lessons and eventually evaluate it.

Students could write one log. Students discussed their ideas in groups and came up with one idea which they later discussed during the normal class meetings. Different groups had different ideas and through their student leaders, they could present their views to other group members. Each group had a task to come up with their unique designs to be different from other groups. Each group therefore had to organize their group meetings through which they made decisions on the goals and key areas to handle. During classroom meetings, the researcher wrote a universal log concerning the progress of the lessons and where necessary noted key areas which needed improvement. The challenges faced in each phase were handled by both the students and the teacher before continuing to the next phase.

Students divided themselves into three groups. Each group had two group leaders, one as the head and the other as an assistant. Gender was quite necessary while choosing the leaders. The leaders were responsible for organizing group meetings and discussions. During the meetings, students drew the plans to achieve the set targets, they set goals and objectives and assessed the contribution of each member. The student leaders were also responsible for writing whatever each member contributed during the meetings and later discussed them during the general class meetings. This was done to reduce on time wastage especially during the meetings since we did not have much of it.

4.6 Validity and reliability

The validity and reliability of the results was guaranteed by ensuring that different methods of collecting data during the research process are put to use. To attain this, a triangulation of the data collection methods was adopted where stakeholders were interviewed, held group discussions and made observations during the entire process of conducting this project.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), “the criteria for validity and reliability is to ensure that credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability are catered for. This criterion was followed to ensure that the information collected through these methods was done by the

stakeholders.

The validity of the instruments was ensured throughout the process of integrating views and opinions of the participants on the three objectives of the project based on the methods adopted for collecting information. The objectives were the basis of discussions and interviews and these reflected the concerns raised by the participants in support of the pressing issues that affected the process of teaching and learning as well as affecting appropriate employable skills exhibited by graduates in the world of work.

According to Morse (2002), “the concepts of reliability and validity are overarching constructs that can be appropriately used in all scientific paradigms.” This notion affirms Steinar Kvale (1989) assertion that; “to validate is to investigate, to check, to question, and to theorize.”

4.7 Ethical issues

Before carrying out action research in the Department of Art and Design, I obtained permission from the Head of Department to carry out this project with the then current second and final year students of interior design. I had to do this even if I work at the same department so as to avoid controversies and clashes with the authorities and make it easy for the class to get a helping hand where need be.

Since action research respects the aspect of giving room to the concerned to set aims that are patent to them, the researcher asked the participants to set goals of their preference. This was for purposes of avoiding unrealistic expectations from the participants to do with the research. I also sought the views and opinions of the participants in form of consent and willingness to take part in the study. The researcher did this through asking them to willingly take part in a research I was undertaking to do with, working with them to improve the teaching and learning process for purposes of have a better graduate ready for the world of work in all forms. Learners had the liberty to refrain from taking part in the research process.

In order to avoid possible coercion, I requested one colleague of mine at the department to help me in the collection of data. I did this because I had to take on two roles, that is to say, a teacher and a researcher at the same time.

I sought permission to interview the manager at coral paints Ltd with the help of an introductory issued to me by Kyambogo University as the corresponding institute with HIAO. He gave me an appointment, I responded to it and therefore conducted the interview. I honored aspects of confidentiality and anonymity as asked and therefore refer to him as the employer. I also made the goals and objectives of the study known to him as one of the prerequisite of conducting

interviews research.

4.8 Challenges

Coordinating the various tasks was not that easy. By this I mean, being the lecturer as well as the facilitator or call it the researcher. One of the most tempting part was when the learners were putting money together for their various projects, I wanted to contribute so as to help them but feared that this would affect what they were to write about me during the interview hence affecting the results of the research.

My position as a researcher limited my involvement into the learner's` activities given the fact that I had to observe learners` mobilization skills, communication skills with their peers, tolerance with those that could not contribute on time, those that could not work at the same rate as well as those who were that cooperative.

Time was yet another challenge all through conducting the projects with the students plus the period of writing this thesis. This because the learners had other course units to attend to, meaning that they had to divide the time accordingly.

The site where the learners produced their final work was always occupied by my colleagues at the department especially during day time. This left us with no other option but work at night or over the weekends. This did not favour some of the learners like those who talked to about the fact that they had to work over the weekends.

4.9 Summary of the Methodology

In this chapter the research tackled the research design employed, in here has also unveiled action research. It is here that t the researcher has described the sample population and the sampling technique. The choice of data and tools of data collection are all entailed with in this chapter. Under this were the procedure of data collection, the tools employed like the documentary analysis, participant observation, qualitative interviews and learning groups are all enclosed with this chapter. More to that, this chapter is home to the other vital parts of this thesis like, validity and reliability, ethical values and challenges encountered during the process of data collection.

Having led us through the various tools and techniques of data collection, plus the procedures

of its collection, attended to sensitive matters like, validity and ethical issues not forgetting the challenges, this chapter leads us into the chapter of data presentation.

DATA PRESENTATION

5.0 Overview

This chapter is all about findings obtained or transcribed from the data collection methods like logs, observation and qualitative interviews. The data is presented in phases due the fact that the project itself was conducted in form of phases. These findings are representative of learners, workplace and the researcher's workmates who took part in the whole process.

Based on action research, this project was carried out at Kyambogo University with hopes of working with the students of interior design to improve the teaching and learning process so as to enhance the quality of graduates sent to the world of work by the University.

Before and during the process of conducting this research as well as the project, the didactical model of relations was a vital point of reference. This is because it puts light to the need for ensuring all aspects involved in the learning process are well catered for. That is to say, the learning environment, learning resources, sources of information, among others, are well attended to if we are to have proper learning.

Presented below therefore, are the mighty grittiest of what went on in the various phases of the project. To be specific, planning, execution and evaluation phase.

5.1 Phase one: Planning

During the planning phase, the researcher, learners and members of the industry analyzed the curriculum in details and it was the basis of or reason for our desire to change what is to be learnt, where to learn from, how to learn and why we choose particular methods of teaching and learning. For the detailed curriculum, See appendix Y. As for the general objectives, the researcher and the participant picked a leaf from the detailed curriculum. That note therefore, the general objectives of the programme were; "To Produce professionals that have deeper understanding of Interior Design, train personnel for self-employment and to train personnel who will conserve and improve the environment; upgrade and beautify the interiors of public or domestic structures/interiors." (Kyambogo, 2000).

It is these objectives that raised the concerns of many like the researcher together with the concerned parties. Key to note, is the issue of deeper understanding of Interior Design. This might not be achieved if most of the time is dedicated to theory work, especially theory on what

could be outdated content. In addition, the aspect of training personnel for self-employment, while this is a good idea, there is no guarantee to this effect given the fact that most of the practical works that the learners have done have always been on very small items. Not only small but also produced to limited professionalism. Proof to this is that most of these items end up on the dust bin found at the department. An indication that the learners are not proud of this work, literally meaning that they can't go ahead to market the work.

Specific Objectives of the course state that;

“A student should be able to: -Plan, Design and execute interior/exterior Design projects by working for and with other partners or by self-employment. -Design and make soft furnishing to enhance interior/exterior Design and related fields. Clean, restore and decorate furniture and interior spaces. -Impart the acquired knowledge and skills to other interested persons for cottage in the conservation, improvement, upgrading and beautifying the environment”, (Kyambogo, 2000).

We need to note that some of the rules that guide this course and the rest in the same department don't give enough freedom to the lecturer and his learners to explore several other possibilities. This is because an external examiner is expected at the end of each year of study. As he or she does the marking, the main guide line he or she follows is the course outline which might be far from the needs of the world of work. To make the matters worse, the internal examiner who doubles as the lecturer is not permitted to attend this exercise.

“Brief Description: The course provides students with a broad spectrum of colour: theory, types of colour and their effects on various surfaces. A study on advanced painting effects and finishing. Course Objectives: The course aims provide students with: Knowledge on colour as a multipurpose medium in design. Knowledge about Painting media and decoration”. Kyambogo (2000)

The fact is these objectives were set way back with exclusion of the learner more so the current user of this manual or course outline. Chances that this will reflect the learner's interests are minimal as they, learners are not part and partial of the whole process.

The course does not mention need for employability skills and one wonders how the learners are going to fit into the world of work without at least basic knowledge of what to do, when to do it, where to do it and for whom during their day to day operations in the world of work.

A detailed course description of advanced paint-effects picked from the broad document from the Department of Art and Design is state below.

“Advanced look on decorating rooms and furniture. Application of plain colours and wall paper designs. Decoupage technique, mosaic technique, Marbling techniques. Fresco technique- Matt finishing, Silk vinyl and gloss finishing. Methods of delivery; Presentations, discussions, critiques, excursions, demonstrations, assignments, coursework and examinations”, (Kyambogo, 2000).

In as much as the methods of delivery maybe be the right ones, it does not necessarily mean that the teaching and learning process will be learner centred. In addition to that, the detailed course description does not reflect what is in the world of work. For instance, Paint-effects like Stucco, rough and tough, elephant technique, patina and many more are nowhere to be seen. It sometimes becomes hard for the teacher to include new content as he or she will be mandated to explain why or will be misunderstood by colleagues.

Rules observed during the project

Regulations and guidelines set by the group were purposed to act as the campus for direction during the operations in the project. These were democratically set after agreement between the facilitator and the parties concerned. Learners and the facilitator and later the stakeholders. Learners raised their views in class at this level and one of them took on the responsibility to note them down.

Some of the views or rules initially aired out included,

First, a member who missed a meeting was to pay a fine of five-thousand-shillings, which is an equivalent of about thirteen kroners. The intention of this was to prohibit members from missing group meetings with the intention of attaining free marks.

Secondly, Late comers were to form a group of their own which was group three. This was so with the aim of having the two groups of seven each move on with limited hindrances.

We also agreed on how much work to produce at the end of the project. These were two group projects and two individual works. While most of the members wished for only group work,

some opted for individual work sighting laziness from some members. This raised concerns and we ended up with some sort of balance though the group projects were to weigh much more than the individual work.

Learners were to be awarded marks on completion of each task. We took on this decision with the thought of having everyone involved up to the end of each project.

A bonus mark was set for any member who superseded the rest of the team members in production of quality work based on effectiveness. This mark was to range between one to five marks.

Time was a major factor; therefore, completion of the projects was to be ensured in the pre-set time by the University. This is due to the fact that, besides the projects learners had end of semester exams to attend as scheduled on the normal University time table.

Responsibilities of key members

There are special responsibilities taken on by some members of the groups. These included group leaders and their assistants. Their responsibilities included; mobilization of their members in every activity, collection of funds to purchase the various materials and tools to be used in the execution of projects, conduct discussions on both academic matters and other issues patent to the group members. It was a collective responsibility to see to it that the projects are executed as planned. The facilitator's role was to do the guidance as the different groups planned and discussed on the various issues.

Time frame and participates

While we wanted this to take about one week which is five working days, the planning phase lasted for two weeks or call it ten working days. This was due to the fact that most of the learners reported in the second week of the semester. Main participants here were the learners with the facilitator as the guide through the process.

Learning space

We were flexible in terms of learning environment. That is to say, where to conduct our learning. By this, I mean that we had our lectures both indoor and outdoor though outdoor dominated the period of our projects. Outdoor in this case is represents any space away from our usual study

space. These included the open space outside the department, the staff room and two other studios. The learners enjoyed the exposure and it motivated them to spread their abilities.

Teacher's responsibilities

The teacher was a facilitator throughout the proceedings of the project. Why a facilitator is because Andragogic Pedagogy embraces the learner as one who is mature enough to make decision and take control of his or her learning. When the teacher takes on the role of a facilitator. Learner centred based learning is put at the forefront because then the learners have great room for inclusion of their needs in the whole course of studying, beginning with the planning phase.

5.1.1 Resolutions

We agreed to come up with two projects, one in the Paint-effects, to do with the application on the walls and then Mosaics to be applied on floors or call it exteriors. It is from these two projects that the evaluation would be done, by both learners and the facilitator not forgetting the input of the other stakeholders from the industry and colleagues at the department of Art and Design, Kyambogo University.

Several challenges and achievements of this stage were noted and some of them are describe below.

Like earlier noted, most of the learners reported in the second week of the semester. This hindered a quick progress of the planning phase as we had to wait for the number to raise above average.

The Idea of have the learners take control of their learning, was not so familiar to the teacher but more so having them buy the materials was a hard nut to crack.

Most of the members suggested to lead the were nervous so it took us some time before we raised the number of leaders that we required to head the groups and have to projects ran.

On a brighter end, though, there were some achievements registered at the planning phase and these included;

The goals of this phase were achieved as the groups were successfully formed and the leaders put in place in a democratic manner.

Knowledge of group formulation and organizational skills were attained by both the learner and the teachers.

Several lessons were learnt by both the teacher and the learners at this phase. The teacher was attaining knowledge of group dynamics and how best to deal with them. The teacher also experienced what it really means to have learners take control of their own learning. The kind that every teacher ought to experience because it lets the learners so free to interact and learn from each other's experiences. As a teacher, I learnt that it's very vital to respect the various desires of the learner. In other words, the need to appreciate learners and their differences came through to my knowledge in a more profound manner.

On the other hand, learners were learning how to express themselves in yet another way. The learners also picked on a number of managerial skills. This though was of much benefit to those leading the group operations.

Collection of raw project requirements

Project requirements were in several categories. That is to say, tools, materials and human resource. Particularly the kind that were needed for the smooth completion of the project.

A number of materials and tools were put together for the anticipated project. These were mainly materials thought to be relevant in the execution of advanced paint effects. Discussions on which materials and tools to utilize were carried out between professionals in the industry, the facilitator and learners themselves. An agreement was reached with prioritization of material relevance and affordability.

These materials included; primer base coats, stone finishes both big and small, stucco paste, filler or whitening powder, masking tape, vanishes, water based paints, glossy based paints among others. The tools included; sandpaper of various grades, scrapers, and roller brushes, steel floats, plastic floats, soft sponges, measuring tape, roller sticks, gloves. We also agreed that learners should find protective clothing in the name of overalls and nose masks.

5.1.2 Funds and acquisition of materials and tools.

Materials and tools were acquired mainly by the learners, through their groups with the group leaders at the forefront. We had various trials of the projects in order to minimize costs of tools and materials. This was also done to enable all learners have an idea of each paint effect before picking on which to carry on with in their respective small groups of eight.

Two learners were forwarded for a vote of who was to act as the general leader and one was voted at the end of the day. From an interaction with his colleagues, they informed me that it because of his trustworthiness, self-esteem and other leadership skills that he owned. This

means that they acknowledged the attributes possessed by their colleague. In the end, they also picked lessons from him on how to handle other issues outside class as mentioned earlier but mainly the handling of finances.

We agreed on how much money the learners were to contribute for materials and tools, plus when this much was to be collected by the general team leader.

Before the date came to pass, three quarters of the learners had already forwarded their contributions. This proved that it was an affordable venture for them compared to buying all these materials and tools on an individual base level. After all the money was gathered, the group leader together with three other learners selected by the class took on the procumbent task.

As noted in the pedagogical framework, the school is not in position to provide all these materials to the learners. Yet the materials are also very costly if each learner is to purchase them independently or individually.

This phase offered a great platform to the learners in the excise and acquisition of employable skills like communication skills, leadership skills, time management, managerial skills amongst other attributes.

These were mainly acquired through group interaction, interface with the operators in the marketplace where the learners purchased the materials and tools required for the project. Inputs from my colleagues at the department also contributed to the attainment of these skills. This simply means that learning was not limited to the classroom but evident in three dimension.

There was no formal or concrete evaluation done at this phase but reflections were presented by willing participants. Reflections were mainly for purposes of sharing experiences.

5.2 Phase two: Execution of the advanced paint effects

We took a critical look at the surfaces that we were supposed to work on or call it design. As we did this, we put emphasis on the areas that needed special attention, these included areas with glue remains, glued papers or posters, very dirty areas plus spots with depressions because we had to get rid of all these in the best way possible. Learners did this by themselves as the teacher played the facilitation role to make sure that the learners fully gain or learn from their experiences as emphasized by the constructivist theory that learning is best when done by doing. After this, the learners went on to attend to those areas by ways of scraping, filling, sanding and applying undercoat onto the walls with the help relevant tools and materials like, rollers, basins, sand paper, scrappers, fila and the undercoat itself.

We then left the undercoat to dry up for 24 hours as recommended by the manufacturer about the instructions found on the label. At this phase, each group worked on a different room with similar surfaces. Group A worked on the staff room, B on the Graphics studio and group C attended to the textiles room. While creativity is good, it is vital that one follows the manufacturer's instructions to avoid misuse of the product or cause damage to those using it. As we left the undercoat to dry, we used this ample time to set off to another task, which was the production of samples. Samples of the paint effects that we were to apply of the walls. This was still done in the small learning groups for purposes of making it possible for the facilitator or teacher have reasonable one on one contact with the several learners. In the due course, learners kept on asking several questions and teacher would either answer or ask the colleagues to express their thoughts about the same. The facilitator let this be, because it is another important learning process. All this went on in different environments and this was dependent of the group's preference.





Figure: 3 Showing some of the sample of boards that were produced by the learners before embarking on the walls or call them large surfaces.

It is from these trails that each of the three groups choose which Advanced Paint-effect to take on to the larger surfaces. The group members then went on to apply the second coat of undercoat, left it to dry then started on the application of ideas, that is to say, Advanced Paint-effects. Group A, applied the stucco Paint-effect, B, rough and tough and C applied the Patina technique. All these were applied in the staff room of Art and Industrial Design Department. At this phase, we settled for one room due to financial constraints. Each group member had the liberty to watch and take part in the application of a given paint-effects. The good news is that each group produced its task at different times. This was done to help each learner learn a thing or two from what the colleagues were doing. Having applied under undercoat or primer and left to dry, the learners proceeded with the effects application.

Surface Preparations



Figure: 4 Learners in a practical session, applying primer on the surfaces be application of the paint effects.

The Rough and Tough or Stone Finish Technique



Figure:5 Lecturer demonstrate to the learners how to produce the stone finish technique.

This is yet another technique that learner managed to produce or execute. It is designed by first, applying a special undercoat or primer on to the surface. special because the material use for the technique has very high gripping power. This means that, if the one uses ordinary primer, chance s of the final work peeling is high which literally means failure. When the primer dried up a rough, a textured material was applied with help of a steel float. Areas that were not supposed to receive the textured paint were protected with the help of masking tape to ensure a production of excellent work.

Since the rough and tough technique gives a wide range options like, horizontal, vertical,

diagonal, spiral, radiating and random. The movement or flow of the artist's hand is key in determining the outcome of this technique. This can also be termed as one's creativity. Learners choose the vertical over all the other techniques with the aim of creating an imitation of built bricks on a wall. They laid marking tape onto the wall with specific measurements and then applied the textured material with the help of a steel float and immediately used a plastic float to level the material as well as create the desired pattern. A spongy is key here and learners used it to clean the plastic float. the cleaning helped them get rid of excess materials.

The Patina Technique

Under this technique, the learners started by applying soft white cement onto the surface. After which, patterns were drawn in preference to the group's desires. These patterns were drawn with the aid of relevant tool like, scrappers, painting brushes and knives. They left the white cement to dry and painted a base coat over it. This was left to dry for over twenty-four hours and the final touch was the applied with light touch of semi dry brushes. The final touch is made of material with some contents of varnish.



Figure: 6 One of the learners executing the patina paint effect.

EXECUTION OF THE MOSAIC TECHNIQUE.

Mosaic is the other technique that learners choose to take on and it had its own procedures.

Sketches of the images were drawn and this started by each group choosing a source of inspiration. Group A, opted for a Crested Crane, group B, for composition of a woman feeding birds while Group C, picked on a landscape composition. We did this as a class to avoid duplication of ideas.

We agreed that each of the learners develops a composition of the group's choice of inspiration. They all developed sketches from which we choose the best drawing. After that, all members took on the mantle of duplicating the best composition, and then develop a motif or breakdown of this. From the several breakdowns, we still choose the very best, which was the enlarged to fit the actual physical size of the area.



Figure:7



Figure:8

Figure:7 showing the enlarged version of several breakdowns by group A. **Figure:8** Showing learners of group A Transferring the drawn patterns onto the tiles before the cutting.



Figure: 09



Figure:10

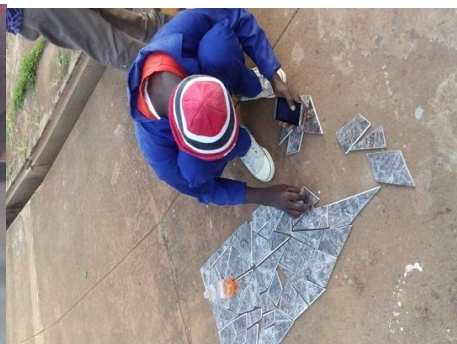


Figure:11

Figure: 09 Showing members of group A arranging and sorting out the cut pieces in accordance to the numbers initially marked onto them as the facilitator observes the procedures. **Figure:10** showing one of the members in group a cutting the tiles in accordance to the sizes marked by his colleagues. **Figure:11** Showing members of group A trying out the assembling of the cut pieces of tiles to form their composition.

This was to help the learners find out the missing pieces if any, so that they cut them then go

ahead to the next stage.

We did all this to make sure all the learners have an input, which would automatically result into learning. The act of agreeing with others that your work is good but not the best comes along with lessons of humility and positive thinking, which is a key aspect of employability skills. This phase took a period of two weeks.



Figure:12



Figure:13

Members of group A clearing the ground before they start on the construct. In **figure 13**, is the final work produced by members of this group.

GROUP: B



Fig:14



Fig: 15



Fig: 16

Figure:14 Showing members of group B discussing the way forward as far as the breakdown

is concerned. **Figure:15** Showing one of the group **B** members marking tiles with the help of papers cut from the expanded sheet. **Figure:16** Showing members of group **B** trying out the assembling of the cut pieces of tiles to form their composition respectively



Figure:17

Figure:18

Figure:17and 18: Showing the facilitator guiding some of the group members through the construction process and the final work respectively.

GROUP: C



Figure: 19



Figure: 20



Figure: 21

Figure: 19 Showing the facilitator guiding one of the group members through the process of transferring images onto the tiles. **Figure:20** Showing group members in the process assembling the cut pieces of tiles. **Figure:21.** Showing one of the group members cutting the tiles to size.



Figure: 22



Figure: 23



Figure: 24

Figure:22 Members of group C, setting the trial of the composition before executing the final project. **Figure:23** One of the learners setting the ground as the final step before laying the tiles. **Figure: 24** Show the final appearance of the artwork created by **Group C**.

5.3 Phase three: Evaluation

During evaluation, awarding of marks was done with agreement between the facilitator and the participants. This was because all parties were part and partial of the whole process, and this would enable learners to own their learning.

One group awarded marks to the other through study critics. This was done with the purpose aiding learning amongst the learners and the facilitator.

The evaluation process was carried out by the learners, facilitator as well as the stakeholders. However, because the whole study process involves a theoretical exam, which exam is marked solely by the teacher or facilitator, the facilitator had an upper hand in the evaluation phase due to fact that he was responsible for the final mark. After an agreement between the learners and the facilitator, other lecturers were occasionally invited to participate in the evaluation process. Learners evaluated the various phases of the executing the project with guidance of the teacher as the facilitator. The teacher or call him the facilitator awarded the final marks to the three different groups after a discussion of the whole work with the group members plus thought from colleagues at the department of art and design.

Learners also evaluated the teacher with the help of brief interviews conducted by their class coordinator. The interviews were carried out with the help of interview guides. This was for purposes of helping the teacher aware of how effective his delivery skills were. By evaluating the teacher, learners most probably get to address the patent issues at hand since some of them propose possible ways forward. Evaluation of the teacher done by learners also went a long way in influencing operations of the next phase of the project.

We need to note that the Idea of involving learners always is vital and supported by theories like constructivism as earlier stated in chapter two. Where Gupta (2011) stated that, people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. To do this, one should ask question, explore and assess what we know. It involves learners in a real, authentic world or context. Students learn to question things and to apply their natural curiosity to the world.

Evaluation was done at every phase and a final mark was generated with the addition of the various marks obtained from the other phases. This is because the process was very vital in the entire process. At the end of the project, learners who did not manage to sit the theory test or exam had a mark to show in the practical bit of their study time.

The marks awarded at the different phases helped in motivating the learners towards completion

of the whole project hence attaining more skills met for their survival and relevance to the world of work. In simple terms, increase their employability skills.

5.4 summary of the presentation.

This chapter has brought forward the various findings picked from the data which was collected from the field. The said data has been laid down in phases one, two and three. One (1), being the planning phase of the project study and this has showed us all to do with this phase. For example, the rules observed during the project study, views aired out by the participants, the responsibilities of members, the time frame, the learning space, teachers' responsibilities, the resolutions by all the participants and the researcher, collection of tools and materials, then the aspect of funds and acquisition of tools and materials ended the particular section.

After the planning phase is the execution of advanced paint effects which doubles as phase two. Under this are the various procedures taken to produce paint effects. All this was done with emphasis on learner centered approach. The same can be substituted for, the andragogic based pedagogy. Lastly is the evaluation phase. this is where participants took on the evaluation of the work done by the learners most importantly their show of appropriate employability skills.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

In this chapter, I would like to remind the reader, of the problem statement. As earlier stated, the problem is: *How to work with students to improve teaching and learning of advanced paint effects through learning groups for employability?* It is this question therefore, that the researcher seeks to answer with reference to different theories explained under the theoretical concepts and picking on the vital findings brought forward in under presentation. The discussion emphasizes different accomplishments that different participants got engaged in, based on learner-centered methods. From the reflections of the didactical relations model, the main target in this model touches the contribution and systematic approach on teaching and learning. The model further explains several factors that have influence on teaching and learning based on active methods.

This chapter also brings forward the relevance of the Experiential theory in reference to the study project. This was contrasted with similar yet divergent theories like constructivism and constructionism. Therefore, under discussion, the researcher explains how the theoretical concepts contribute towards the teaching and learning process of all participants during the excursion of different activities.

In simple terms, the researcher seeks to answer the question, not only in a focused manner, but also involving creativity, thoughtfulness, and in a profound manner. Since the presentation of findings was done in form of theme 1, 2 and 3, the same criteria shall be followed during the discussion of the findings

The chapter is also home to the conclusions and recommendations made by the researcher emanating from the presented data and discussion of the same.

6.1 Phase 1: The teaching approaches

Several approaches used during this project involved a two-way communication benefit profit of give and take between all the participants and the facilitator. All parties equally benefitted from this project, knowledge and skills acquired helped in the internalization of all processes that lead to the production of the final product in the necessary quality.

The methods employed in the teaching and learning process of Advanced Paint-effect are not far from the what should be implemented in accordance to a learner centered approach, in order to have the very best from the learners. However, it has been noted that this is left on paper but not really put to action or the classroom setting and its operations.

A good example in this case, is myself as a lecturer in this very discipline of Interior Design. Learners always consumed what I have prepared for them with very minimal input from them and the workplace personals. This literally means that in as much as I made the teaching and learning process practical, learners would not benefit that much if they were not involved from the start. As noted earlier in accordance to the relations model of didactics by Hiim, every phase is of great influence to the result of the learner's achievements as well as the teacher's style of content delivery.

It is wise for especially the teacher to give great attention to all levels or stages of the relations model of didactics. For Example, if the there are no materials and tools necessary for carrying out a given practical lesson or lecture, the teachers professionalism might be compromised especially if there is not any substitute to those tools and materials. In the same line, if the learning environment is poor, a proper process of teaching and learning might be hindered.

Having known this for a fact, the researcher together with the learners and other participants from the world of work opted to curb this problem, by having thoughts combined and come through with workable solutions.

First to note, is the issue of deeper understanding of Interior Design.

This might not be achieved if most of the time is dedicated to theory work, especially theory on what could be outdated content.

In addition, the aspect of training personnel for self-employment, while this is a good idea, I discovered that there is no guarantee to this effect given the fact that most of the practical works that the learners have done have always been on very small items. Not only small but also produced to limited professionalism. Proof to this is that most of these items end up on the dust bin found at the department. An indication that the learners are not proud of this work, literally meaning that they can't go ahead to market the work.

I think the most probable solution to this, is the employment of the experiential theory. As noted earlier, Kolb (2014) who asserts that, a common usage of the "experiential learning" defines it as a particular form of learning from life experiences. For that reason, therefore, this theory was borrowed during this study project so as to help learners take on learning in the real setting thus enhancing the process of teaching and learning.

6.2 Phase 2: Teaching and learning in groups.

Teacher-learner ratio improved even though the class was still big. This was because working in small groups helped the facilitator to closely relate with most of the learners and unlike my previous students, these always opened up to me in lots of ways. That is; academic and non-academic issues and this helped me carry out my mentoring role as a teacher in a much better way.

While working on all the three projects, learners were self-motivated and their drive was amazing. For example, they mobilized funds, looked around for sellers and service providers, purchased and organized transport to that brought these materials at the University. The materials included cement, sand and some stones. The facilitator here came in to give hints to the learners on where to find the materials and, at what cost but not commanding them to buy from any particular item.

6.3 Phase 3: Appropriate Employable skills

As earlier noted, according to Yorke (2006), Appropriate Employable skills refers to, “a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

In reference to this, the researcher went ahead to interview the professionals in the world of work. I was specific on who to interview and this was one of the managers at Coral Coatings as noted earlier. This is where most of the learners in this program went for their industrial training.

The same manager at Coral Paints who was interviewed in project three, was re-interviewed this time. when asked of what he thought about the learners in reference to Appropriate Employable skills, the manager responded as reported below;

“I would like to thank you Mr., Mukiibi for the great work done. These students are far better than all their colleagues who we have trained here in the past. It was glad to find out that this time around, the students are aware of and had already used most of the tools and materials required in the production of the various paint-effects.

This time the students have great teamwork. When we send them to the field with our colleagues, the reports are far better compared to previous students that you have always sent us for industrial training.

Most of them express themselves with great confidence before we their trainers and before the clients where we send them for practical work.

Like you already know, he added, we do not pay these students, and in the past lots, some of them would not show up for training claiming not to have money to take them through the day but such excuses have been unheard of with the current students up for training”.

When the researcher asked him if he would go ahead and employ or recommend these learners for jobs, he responded as follows;

“Without any hesitation, my answer is yes. Especially if we had vacancies to take up all of them. As for recommend them for sure because they have exhibited professionalism of very admirable standards and am proud of them myself.”

Given the fact that the manager was contented with the learner's' output, I would wish to commend the Constructivism theory which emphasizes the learning by doing, for this must be the secret behind these learners' success during Industrial Training. We should note that, these learners had experiences above average during their study time at the University and experimented with several materials and tools to do with the execution or application of advanced paint effects which was not the case for their colleagues in the past. This conforms to the constructivism theory as stated by Gupta (2011), “People construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. To do this, one should ask questions, explore and assess what we know. It involves learners in a real, authentic world or context. Students learn to question things and to apply their natural curiosity to the world”.

6.4 Conclusion

From the findings and interaction with different stakeholders, as a researcher, I conclude that, the teachers should recognize the difference between groups and teams and understand when each is more appropriate to be applied or used. The roles played by the learners or all individuals in groups encourage active participation and this largely creates a big impact on the quality of the final product.

These team roles enhance identification of different stages of team development and how managers in different teams can support the team at each stage. This will enable a teacher to understand and identify team process, ranging from inputs, during the process and the final output. The role of the teacher will be manifested through the perfect results seen and this will

train all the different groups and individuals to manage any conflict in different societies.

I wish to conclude by saying; it is largely true that the likeness of reducing unemployment, based on inappropriate employability skills is attainable. However, this is only if the learners get sufficient training based on real life experiences and practice like the constructivist and experiential theories recommend.

I would also like to add and say, in addition to proper training of learners, coordination between skills development and enterprises is required to match skills supply and demand. Labor market intermediaries should identify skills needs and communicate this information to schools, training institutions and apprenticeship systems to create the required skills. Labor market information systems or labor market observatories, for example, should identify skills needed in the economy. Public and private employment services communicate information to workers, support job placement, brokering and recruitment, and guide workers' training decisions and careers. Institutions that provide credible assessment and certification of workers' skills must help enterprises more easily to recognize workers' skills and match them with their demand.

6.5 Recommendations

Teachers or lecturers should adopt the use of learning groups during the teaching and learning process, especially the small learning groups because this enables them to tap into every learner's needs and ability hence better ways of attending to each learner for purposes of professionalism in the practice of teaching.

Teachers should always encourage group participation of all learners. This unfolds a lot of potential among learners, contrary to the teacher centred approach where the teacher dominates the teaching and learning process with the assumption that they know it all.

Learners need to be given time and the freedom to explore their skills and capabilities. I propose this because of the surprises I witnessed during the conduct of this project. There are learners who pulled through due to the freedom they had having to present before their colleagues opposed to asking them to stand before the whole class to make a presentation.

Companies and relevant training institutions should work hand in hand to make proper planning, mentorship and assessment of the learners so as improve on their skills.

Learning groups have so much in line with benefits to both the teachers and the companies that employ these learners after school, this is because the final products made by learners represent so much to do with the different stakeholders who contributed to the shaping of the learner (Hansen, R.S, 2006).

Having carried out fieldwork activities and presented research findings, to do with “improving teaching and learning through learning groups”, I recommend the following to all readers of this thesis.

Teachers should emphasize the importance of teamwork to all the different learning groups. This will be a good basis for association and cooperation amongst the learning groups during the execution of the activities in their respective groups.

Teachers should also emphasize teamwork among their learners. The teachers should always encourage learners to live and work with others despite the differences in character, behavior, strengths or weaknesses of other learners in the group. This is mainly due to the fact that learners are most likely going to face similar challenges when they get to the world of work.

Teachers should teach interpersonal skills and good communication skills to all the learning groups so as to simplify the aspect of association with other people. This can be achieved through the use of team-building exercises. This will help in building cohesive groups thus cultivating good relationships and cooperation amongst all learners in the different learning groups. This mainly because it is these aspects that enhance appropriate employable skills.

Teachers together with learners and the professionals from the world of work, should make the workload reasonable and manageable or call it achievable. This is in the sense of, better finish a small project than leave a big one half done.

Learning goals should also be clear and set with Learners involvement plus views from the professionals in the world of work. This will provide direction to all the teams which finally influences the quality of the output. The teachers should encourage at least all the Learning groups to set clear goals, aims and objectives so as to have a single path to focus on. The teacher should consider roles for group members in order to achieve the desired goals of each learning group. As a researcher, I realized that the best way to achieve the best out of the learning groups, is by democratically allocating roles to different learners, it is a direct motivational factor.

I also recommend that the teachers should provide some class time for meetings with all the different learning groups. These meetings can be the platforms for different discussions like challenges faced, way forward and other crucial issues. These meetings also help so much in planning and assessment of progress

When employing a learner centred approach with the help of small learning groups, interim reports and groups process feedback from each individual learning group should be a prerequisite. This practice, gives a clear mind set to all learners to work towards perfectionism and quality work. The zeal to improve and produce good work is seen from the planning level to the implementation level.

Teachers need to encourage individual members to keep track of their contributions in their learning groups. Each individual member should be trained to keep records of whatever they contribute to the success of any project that the group participates or takes part in. This should be a task implemented by all teachers so that learners are able to carry out self-evaluation and assessment.

The teachers should also include peer assessment in the evaluation processes in the guidelines they give to the different learning groups. This improves on efficiency and effectiveness amongst the learners and it creates a sense of accuracy. This develops confidence amongst these learning groups and instils a sense of leadership and enhances one's managerial skills.

In a nutshell, this study would have held much more water if I had enough time to work with and around it. For instance, I was on my way back to Norway for my last semester, when the learners were heading for their industrial training as dictated by the school calendar. As a result, I asked a colleague to help me visit the industry where most of the learners were having industrial training and conduct the interview with the trainers or supervisors, on the learners' practical effectiveness and their exhibition of appropriate employable skills.

Now that this was done by someone else, I may not ascertain the concreteness of the data collected due to the fact that it could have been distorted

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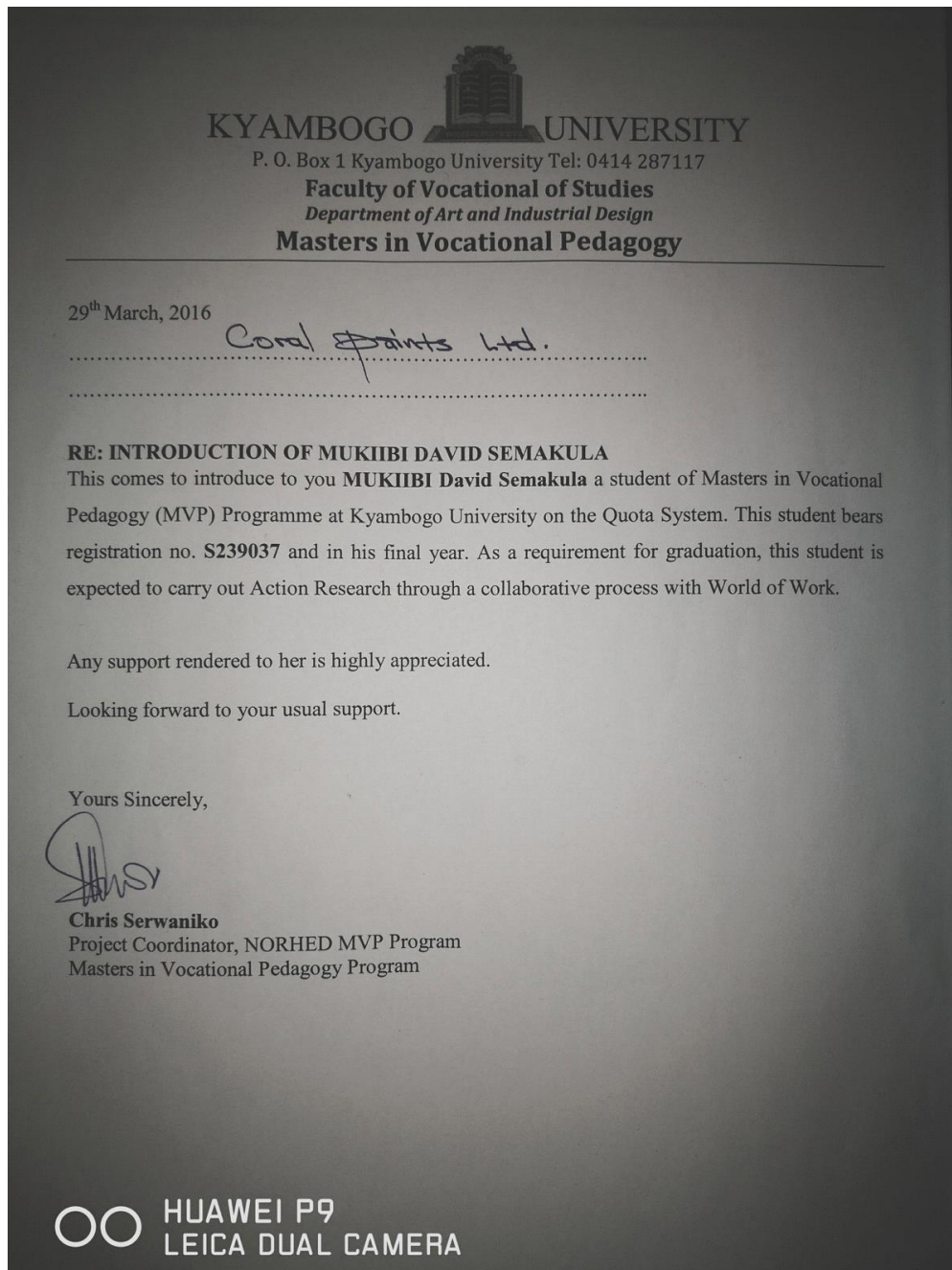
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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview guide questions for lecturers at the department of art and industrial design, Kyambogo University

- What is your take on the current process of teaching and learning in Interior Design?
- Given an opportunity, would you add or change anything about this teaching and learning process?
- Actively involving learners in the planning of content and setting of objectives and goals is not vital. What do you think of this statement?
- Do you think conducting the teaching and learning process in groups can help in fostering employable skills among learners?

Appendix Y: Recommendation letter.



Appendix W: DETAILS OF THE COURSE

3.0 OBJECTIVES

3.1 General Objective

The general objectives of the programme are to:

Produce professionals that have deeper understanding of Interior Design;

Train personnel for self employment;

Train personnel who will conserve and improve the environment; upgrade and beautify the interiors of public or domestic structures/interiors.

3.2 Specific Objectives

By the end of the programme a student should be able to:

Plan, Design and execute interior/exterior Design projects by working for and with other partners or by self employment;

Design and make soft furnishing to enhance interior/exterior Design and related fields;

Clean, restore and decorate furniture and interior spaces;

Impart the acquired knowledge and skills to other interested persons for cottage in the conservation, improvement, upgrading and beautifying the environment.

4.0 RESOURCES

4.1 Staffing

The programme shall be carried out by the existing and part-time staff of the Art & Industrial Design Department of Kyambogo University (KYU) (Appendix A) and other institutions within and outside Uganda shall be sought when and where required.

4.2 Facilities

The programme shall largely depend on scholastic material available in the University library and other institution libraries within and around Kampala. In addition to these sources, Department books banks, Educational Resource centres, and workshop will be used.

4.3 Space

The programme shall utilize the existing lecture rooms, studios in the department and other physical structures within the University.

4.4 Funding

Funding shall come from government and privately sponsored students. The University Council shall determine tuition fees and other charges. Other sources of funding shall include internally generated revenue.

5.0 GENERAL REGULATIONS

Kyambogo University and special Faculty regulations shall govern the programme.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Admission to the programme shall be in accordance with the University and Faculty regulations.

6.2 A candidate shall be eligible for admission to the programme on meeting any of the following minimum requirements:

Candidates must have obtained a Principal pass in Fine Art at 'A' Level and preferable passed it at 'O' level OR

Certificate in Interior Design from a recognized institution or its equivalent, OR

Degree or Diploma in any field.

7.0 DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme shall be for (4) semesters. A semester shall be seventeen (17) weeks with fifteen (15) weeks of learning and two (2) weeks of examination. The academic year shall be arranged as follows:

8.0 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

8.1 Coding and arrangement

Course codes indicate the year of study, semester and course number.

The **1100** series are for the first year, and the **2100** series are for second year.

Details of the courses offered are specified below where L, P, CH and CU represent, Lecture, Practical, Credit Hours and Credit Units respectively. One (1) lecture hour is equivalent to two (2) Practical hours and one (1) Credit Unit is equivalent to fifteen (15) Contact Hours.

The official hours spent studying under the supervision of a lecturer are two (2) practical and theory courses per week. The rest of the hours are of self-study in the studio/library on assignment/projects.

Year Two Semester Two

Code	COURSE TITLE	L	P	CH	CU
VDID 2201	Selection and Application of Materials	15	30	45	3
VDID 2202	Practical Project in real setting	15	30	45	3
VDID 2203	Advanced Paint Effects	15	30	45	3
VDID 2204	Advanced Computer Aided Design	15	30	45	3
VDID 2205	Interior Design Business and Careers	15	300	45	3
	Total semester load				15

9.0 PROGRAMME LOAD

To be eligible for the award of the Diploma in Interior Design a candidate should obtain a minimum of 60 credit units as follows:

First Year 30 CU

Second Year 30 CU

Total 60 CU

10.0 ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

10.1 Assessment of Courses

Each course shall be assessed out of a total of 100% marks as follows:

Progressive assessment / Course work 30%

Written examination - 30%

Exhibition - 40%

Industrial attachment for second years only. 100%

Each of the above is equally important and the assessment will NOT be computed if any of the above is not done; examined and awarded marks.

Progressive Assessment / Course work

Coursework in a number of forms for each course shall be used in progressive assessment. A combination of the following may be used: tests or quizzes; written assignments; projects; library/field research; practical and fieldwork.

A minimum of two assignments/tests shall be required per course.

Progressive assessment course work shall carry 30% of the total mark of the course.

Written Examination

There will be a written examination of three (3) hours duration it shall carry 30%.

Exhibition/display

The practicals done by the students during the semester will exhibited and be marked by a team of examiners to critically evaluate the auothesity of students performance.

Exhibition work 40%

Industrial attachment (for second years only)

The industrial attachment shall be of 4 weeks and shall be marked out of 100% as follows:

- Supervisor's assessment 60%
- Student's Report 40%

Certificate of Due Performance

A candidate shall be denied sitting the examination if he/she fails to attend 75% of supervised contact hours or complete set practical assignment or both.

10.2 Grading of Courses

a) Each course shall be graded out of a maximum of 100 marks and assigned appropriated letter

grades and grade point average as follows:

Marks	Letter Grade	Grade Point
80-100	A	5.0
75-79.9	B+	4.5
70-74.9	B	4.0
65-69.9	B-	3.5
60-64.9	C+	3.0
55-59.9	C	2.5
50-54.9	C-	2.0
45-44.9	D+	1.5
40-44.9	D	1.0
35-39.9	D-	0.5
Below 35	E	0