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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CHALLENGES OF INTEGRATING WORK RELATED LEARNING AMONG OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING STUDENTS AT THE ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The present study was aimed at exploring potential challenges faced by ODL students at the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) in fulfilling the requirements of industrial attachment. The study focused on all the four faculties of ZOU. The study employed questionnaires and interviews to solicit data from the 100 respondents chosen through convenience sampling. Results showed that the majority of the students, while in favour of the attachment programme, felt a number of challenges militated against the effectiveness of the programmes. Among these challenges were that they were fulltime employees and their employers were not prepared to release them for the duration of the industrial attachment. Some employees in the field were also reluctant to disclose important information to students on industrial attachment. Some supervisors were too busy to provide effective supervision. In some instances, the ZOU supervisee was much older than the supervisor leading to the supervisor not providing effective supervision. Some employees regarded the students on attachment as potential threats to their positions. The study recommended that those students studying programmes relevant to their current jobs should be supervised whilst on the job by both university lecturers and work supervisors. However, those who are doing programmes not in line with their jobs should apply to go for attachment with the support of the university.

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Introduction

In order that trainees are accepted in industry, they are required to have undergone industrial attachments to acclimatize with the real world of work. However, it is the ODL student who is found on the receiving end as certain expectations inhibit their undertaking of the attachment programme. While at most the ODL student is already at work and practicing while learning, arguments have continued to surface on the need for industrial attachment. This is an issue that has caused debate at Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU), thus the thrust of this study was to interrogate the challenges that are faced by students in fulfilling requirements for internships.

Background of the study

ZOU is an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institution in Zimbabwe, established to cater for a substantial component of people who, by design or unintentionally, could not be accommodated in conventional universities, by offering them the opportunity to study in their homes and in their workplaces through distance education. ZOU was established on 1st March 1999 through an Act of parliament (Chapter 25:20), with an initial enrolment of 624 students registered for the Bachelor of Education degree programme. By 2004 ZOU had become the largest university in the country and second largest in Southern Africa compared to University of South Africa (UNISA), with a student enrolment of approximately 13 000. In 2013, the time this study is being carried out ZOU has four faculties;

- the faculty of Arts and Education,
- the faculty of Science and Technology

- the faculty of Commerce and Law and
- the faculty of Applied Social Sciences,

These faculties are offering more than 30 undergraduate degree programmes, over 3 diploma courses, over 5 masters' degree programmes and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in all the four faculties. Over the years ZOU has been producing graduates but of great concern are the challenges of integrating work related learning and open and distance learning especially for those students who are pursuing degree programmes which are not related to their current jobs or those who are not employed.

Conceptual framework

Definition of Distance Learning

Distance Learning has a long history going back to the use of correspondence courses by mail for learning shorthand in the 19th century. The key premise of distance learning is that it makes it possible for an individual to learn outside the traditional boundaries of a classroom, school or college. This gives learning opportunities to students who may be restricted by time, geography or other factors from participating in formal education. Distance learning, then, is not dependent on the use of ICTs. However, the growth of the Internet and other digital technologies has expanded the potential of distance learning in terms of access, quality and support. Unisa (2008) defines ODL as "a multi-dimensional concept aimed at bridging the time, geographical, economic, social, educational, and communication distance between student and institution, student and academics, student and courseware and student and peers. Open distance learning focuses on removing barriers to access learning, flexibility of learning provision, student-centeredness, supporting students and constructing learning programmes with the expectation that students can succeed. Work related learning as one of the several learning approaches at ZOU is a strategy of applied learning that integrates the rigor of an accredited academic program with periods of supervised and relevant experience in the workplace. Work related learning, also referred to as experience-based learning (Beard et al., 2002), is described as a partnership among students, educational institutions and employers, with designated responsibilities for each party (Abeysekera, 2006). At ZOU, Work related learning is regarded as a form of experiential learning where experiential learning is an educational method to expose students to realistic experiences. The focus of this research is only on challenges faced by open and distance learners of the Zimbabwe Open University in performing and securing work related learning in organizations

Research questions

The study aimed at answering the following research questions:

1. What are the types of attachment which students attend?
2. What are the challenges faced in internship?
3. What is the importance of work related learning to the ODL student?
4. What should be addressed by work related learning in the community?

Review of related literature

Numerous studies have illustrated that work related learning programs provide important benefits for students, employers and higher education institutions alike (Braunstein & Loken, 2004; Dressler & Keeling, 2004; Weisz & Chapman, 2004). Fallows and Stevens (2000) stated that the most important benefit of a work related programme is that it builds employability skills of students into the higher education curriculum. Work related programs are perceived as components of undergraduate study across a host of academic disciplines, and although the terminology used to describe these programs differs, the underlying component is student involvement in a practical placement (Heerde & Murphy, 2009). Work related learning is of equal importance as other modes of teaching and learning at ZOU. The curriculum of some of ZOU qualifications especially in the faculty of applied social sciences includes one or more compulsory work related modules. Although distance learning has a long history, recent developments in ICT alongside changes in the world economy and patterns of employment, have led to an explosion in the number of e learning and distance learning courses and programmes available (Capper and Potashnik, 1998). Many major corporations use e learning or distance learning to train their staff. Many universities now offer some or all of their courses online (e.g. MIT through their Open Courseware programme have made all of their courses freely available on the Internet). The increased use of distance and e-learning has led to an internationalisation of the training and education market where students from one country can theoretically gain a qualification from another country using distance learning.

In the words of Singh (1999), society today is undergoing a transformation of unprecedented magnitude and speed, affecting all spheres of economic and social life. Knowledge, skills and competencies of all men and women have become the cornerstone of personal growth and employability, enterprises' competitiveness, and society's economic and social sustainability. In a competitive environment, the comparative advantages of every individual, enterprise and country will increasingly depend on the asset of intelligent workers, based on knowledge, practical skills, innovation and technology. Investment in education, training and development of human resources has become more crucial than ever before. Education today must see clearly the dual objectives: education for living and education for making a living. It is in this context that open and distance learning has afforded many people the opportunity to develop and compete for jobs in the global village. Distance learning offers great potential for personal upgrading. The learning of open and distance learners is likely to take place alongside professional responsibilities, so training activities need to be flexible and accessible. Work-based learning plays an important role in meeting the demand for reskilling and upskilling the workforce. Previous studies – Brennan (2005), Brennan & Little (2006) and Connor (2005b) – clearly demonstrate that work-based learning is very critical for the development of any country. Perceptions of work-based learning show that it is still seen by some as belonging to more vocationally oriented institutions. Indeed, it is very much a contested area especially when one considers the challenges of a distant learner with regards to work related learning. Of particular interest, are the challenges met by distant learners as they engage in work related learning. With regards to work related learning, open and distance learners fall into two broad categories, that is, those who are doing educational programmes related to their current jobs and those who are doing educational programmes which are not related to current jobs or they are not employed at all. However, in some institutions, work-based learning is seen as a means by which to pull together learning, teaching, and research. While we know institutions are engaged in work-based learning, baselines are difficult to establish. It should be recognised that this investment to improve competitiveness through work related learning includes the development of basic and intermediate skills, as well as higher level skills. Much of the learning and development is job-specific although leading edge firms are also supporting development beyond the needs of the current job, which tends to be at a higher level.

Types of work related programmes

According to the Employers' Internship Toolkit (2005), internships are commonly used term in experiential education. Internships take place during different times of the year: summer, winter or spring. These may be part-time or full time internships over different durations. Typical internships are entry-level, educational jobs that can be paid or unpaid and usually give you college credit for your work (but not always). Usually, these internships last for one semester, although sometimes you can find internships that last for two semesters.

Cooperative work related learning

Some colleges and universities use the term Cooperative Education for a certain type of workplace position that is experiential, that is, experience-based education. In this way co-ops are fundamentally similar to internships; students learn while applying knowledge and skills from the academic setting to a work setting.

Connotations of these two terms (internships and co-ops) are often unique to the persons or organisations using them. What an organization may call 'internship' may be referred to by a college or university as a 'co-op'. The different uses of these terms sometimes cause confusion between the university, the employer and the student. Generally speaking, co-ops or cooperative education programmes involve paid positions. These cooperative education experiences are internship programmes that are usually required and are available only to students in certain majors. Usually, they are full-time, and you're much more likely to be offered a full-time job. If your college requires an internship, they usually have a cooperative education programme. These positions are easier to get than typical internships and externships. They sometimes entail two six-month assignments, with an academic semester or year in between rotations, but they are not always structured on this timetable. Co-op programmes are often, though not always, run at engineering schools.

Paid and Unpaid work related learning

Internships are sometimes paid and sometimes unpaid. Ultimately, this is a decision of the employer. Some schools may have a policy on paying interns from their institution, but most will facilitate both types of internships for employers. The "market" will typically drive the issue of paid and unpaid interns. For example, in the fields of accounting and engineering where students provide very tangible benefits to employers and competition for interns is keen, most internships positions are paid. On the other hand, internships in human services and advertising are most often unpaid. The same goes for interns who are attached to government departments. However, when students

are under unpaid internships, the following factors need to hold true for a legitimate internship where a company is not paying the student:

- The work of the intern is an integral part of the student's course of study.
- The student will receive credit for the work, or the work is a requirement of graduation.
- The student must prepare a report of his/her experience and submit it to a faculty supervisor.
- The employer receives a letter or some other form of documentation from the school indicating that it approves of the internship and it's educationally relevant.
- Learning objectives are clearly defined.

Independent and College Sponsored work related learning

It is possible for students to engage in internships experiences either through the school, college or university that they attend or independent of them. Schools can have both loose and close relationships with various employers. Most will advertise internship opportunities to students. How closely they monitor internship programmes, varies. Most colleges and universities will allow students to earn academic credits for participating in internships. It is also entirely possible for students and employers to arrange internships independent of schools. This approach is better suited for situations where internships are paid and learning objectives are secondary to performing a job.

Challenges faced by students in work related learning

Most students in previous studies felt confused on who should arrange the internships (Gault et al., 2000). Asked who should be responsible for arranging their internship placement, the majority of interns feel faculty should work for their placement (Tackett et al., 2001; Maskooki et al., 1998). Previous research studies also show that internship periods were too short and the majority of interns think that the most appropriate internship period should be six months (Oliver, 2010; Mihail, 2006). Mihail (2006) also found in his study that most of the interns preferred to have internship periods ranging from six to nine months instead of three months. This indicated that interns are willing to have a longer internship period and believe that they can learn more within a six month period. Oliver (2010) remarks that the short amount of time an internship lasts really never lets the student become a fully functional employee because there is not so much to take in for them. According to some, internships bring about discord among workers in a variety of ways. Perlin (2011) says this is sometimes so since internships displace paid workers and allow companies to dodge liabilities through the non payment of intern labour. Interns accept the post at no price to survive the duration of the internship.

According to Rothman (2007) and Cannon and Arnold (1998) at times complaints have been raised against employers for treating the interns as cheap labour. Supervision of interns has been cited as being problematic. Qualified staff to supervise the interns has been in short supply (Tackett et al., 2001; Gault et al., 2000). Universities should be responsible to ensure that internships are offering meaningful learning experiences for their students. According to Tackett et al. (2001), students feel that there should be careful examination of feedback from employers and interns followed by the modification of the internship programme accordingly.

Finding a place for work related learning

In Zimbabwe finding an organisation to do work related learning is very difficult in general due to the closure of many industries but the task becomes even more challenging for the open and distance learner. The distant learner who is not employed or is doing an educational programme different from his current job finds himself or herself moving from one organization to another due the negative perceptions held by the general populace on distance education in general. Many employers especially in Zimbabwe do not want to release their workers for attachments; they prefer a case of students doing the attachment on the job which presents some challenges to those who might be doing a programme which is not directly linked with the current job. At times supervisors are not willing to share some important knowledge with the students on attachment.

Internal supervision of work related learners

In most industries where the primary motive is profit making the people who are supposed to supervise the trainee do not have the time to properly supervise these trainees such that the mentoring process is not properly done thereby compromising the quality of the granduants at the end of the day.

Importance of work related learning

Furco (1996) pointed out that internship has been viewed by different researchers as offering a diversity of benefits to the student intern. They engage the intern in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing them with hands-on experience that enhances their learning or understanding of issues relevant to a particular area of study. They assist the internee to bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practical reality (Furco, 1996; Lam and Ching, 2007). McMahon and Quinn (1995) note that internship is supervised work experiences where students are closely supervised. Research highlighting the importance of relevant practical experience for students has been carried out (Mounce et al, 2004) but the effects of these internships on the success of the intern to transfer the field practice into the actual workplace engagement needs follow up (Beard and Morton, 1999). The importance of internships have also been established in recruiting decisions by employers (Pasewark et al, 2001) and research studies in accounting internships have shown improved subsequent academic performance (English and Koeppen, 1993). The internship programme contributes significantly and positively towards enhancing the knowledge base and motivational level of students (Beard, 1998). The best outside classroom learning activities are through an internship attachment (Burnett, 2003). Several studies have reported the benefits of internship programmes in conventional colleges and universities on the rationale in offering attachments as part of the academic programme, to the conventional student who at most is graduating out of high school he/she benefits through gaining experience and exposure. Further benefits include improvements in career-related direction, gaining practical experience (Lubbers, 2001), improved marketability of graduates (Swift and Kent, 1999; Hymon-Parker, 1998), interpersonal skills (Beard and Morton, 1999) and understanding of the theories of classroom learning (Cook et al., 2004; Hymon-Parker, 1998). However, unlike the conventional student intern, the ODL intern is at times already an experienced employee and has already made up his/her mind on a career choice. Scott (1992) stated that internship is the best way for students to explore the suitability of a particular job. It follows therefore that the benefits accruing to conventional students may not apply to the ODL student.

In a study by Nevett (1985), students argued that attachments bridged the gap between the theory of the classroom and the world of practice. Internship programmes are perceived as a valuable way to acquire broad competencies where the practical knowledge obtained supports and complements the theoretical studies learned in the classrooms (Mihail, 2006). According to Knechel and Snowball (1987), internship attachments were found to enhance students' performance in their courses. But with some of the internship programmes coming at the end of the final semester (for example in the Master of Science degree in counselling at the ZOU), internships of such nature would not contribute much to their academic attainment. However, other interesting benefits general to both conventional and ODL interns are provided by various researchers. The internships have been seen to be beneficial in socialising the student through training and teamwork assignments at the workplace (Lubbers, 2008). Mihail (2006) noted that interns have successfully developed their personal skills, particularly relating to information technology, time management, communication skills, teamwork, specialist knowledge and ability to prioritize tasks. According to Cannon and Arnold (1998), internship may pave the way for permanent employment upon graduation as well as providing an in-depth understanding of actual business practice. Students hope to receive monetary rewards and be treated as regular employees Hall et al., 1995). Knechel and Snowball (1987) found that the internship has successfully enhanced the interns' understanding of content

Research methodology

The study employed questionnaires and interviews to solicit data from the 100 students chosen through convenience sampling.

Population and the sample

The population for the present study consisted of a total of 150 students who were identified to have just gone through the internship programme during the January to June 2012 semester, 100 made it into the sample. Stratified and convenience sampling techniques were adopted so each faculty was accorded proportional representation. In each stratum that is where convenience sampling was adopted. The respondents were drawn from the Zimbabwe Open University's four faculties of Arts and education, Applied Social Sciences, Science and Technology and Commerce and Law.

Data presentation and analysis (N=100)

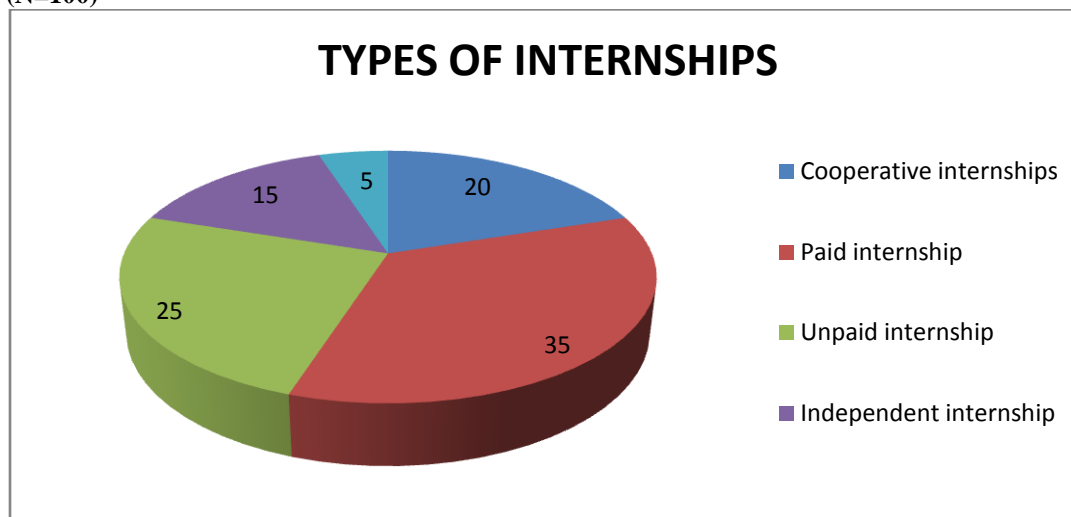


Figure 1: Types of work related learning students attend

Results show that most students are familiar with the paid internship as shown by 35% of the respondents 25% of the respondents also indicated that they are aware of unpaid internship, and this is very common in Zimbabwe, since most organisations in are no longer willing to pay students on internship. The least known internship is the college sponsored, with only 5% of the respondents being aware of its existence.

Challenges faced by students on work related learning

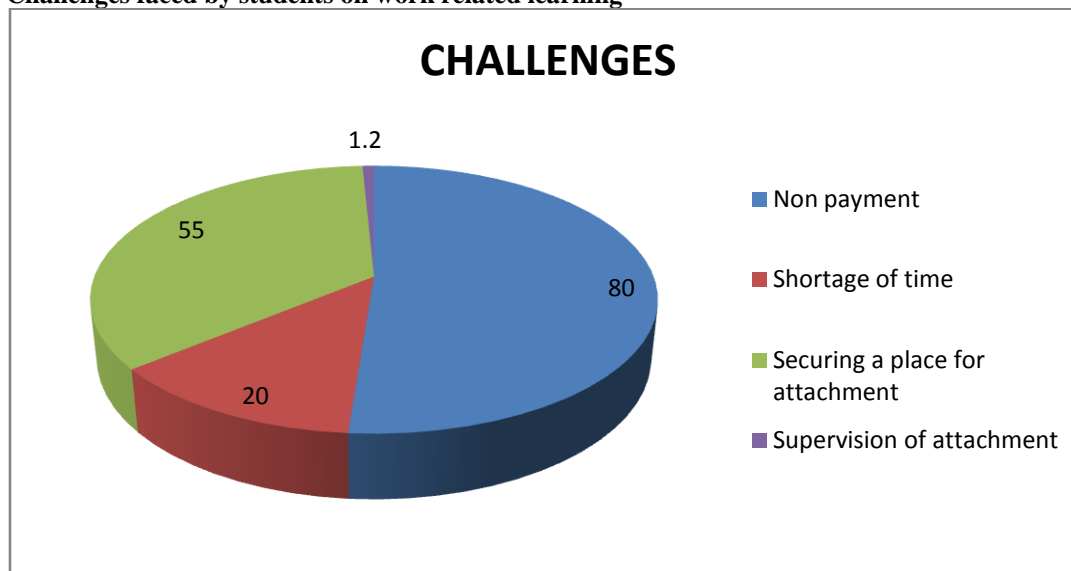


Figure 2: Challenges faced by students on attachment

On the problems faced by students on attachment, the majority of students 80% of the respondents pointed out that nonpayment of interns on attachment is very common and, this is in harmony with Perlin (2011), Rothman (2007), Cannon and Arnold (1998) who argued that some companies treat interns as cheap labour, and do not pay them as expected. Twenty percent of the respondents pointed out that the time the student is on attachment is too short, and most of them proffered a longer period whilst on attachment. This sentiment is in concurrence with Mihail (2006) who found out that most of the in terms think that the most appropriate internship period should be longer than three months. 55% of respondents argued that securing a place for attachment is a problem. The respondents pointed out that at times, the internal supervisors do not dispose important information about the job.

Table 1: Importance of work related learning to students**(N=100)**

Benefits occurring to the students undertaking internships	Responses from the four faculties	
	NO	%
Internships provide interns with hands on practical experience and exposure	57	57
They assist the interns to bridge the gap between the academic leaning process and the practical reality	54	54
Internships contribute significantly and positively towards enhancing the knowledge base	59	59
Interns benefits through career related direction	50	50
They boost motivation levels of students	47	47
Internships help to improve the marketability of graduates	20	20
Internships enhance students learning of the theories learn in classroom settings	59	59
Internship enhance students learning and understanding of issues relevant to a particular area of study	62	62
The internee gains interpersonal skills in the real work situation	10	10
Internships are of no benefits at all to an ODL students	8	8

Responses from across faculties are in general agreement that internships provide interns with hands-on practical experience and exposure. The majority, 57(57%) felt the internships were of benefit through the experience and exposure gained by the student. This finding is in agreement with those by Gault et al. (2000), Mounce et al (2004) and Beard and Morton (1999) where interns responded that they experienced greater exposure to a variety of experiences on the job. Another majority of 54(54%) also felt that internships assisted the interns to bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practical reality. These findings concur with those by Nevett (1985) in which students argued that attachments bridged the gap between the theory of the classroom and the world of practice. Furco (1996) and Lam and Ching (2007) concur with these findings when they remark that internships assist the internee to bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practical reality. Such exposure would likely make the students require little or no induction upon taking up full time jobs.

All the students from the Faculty of Arts and Education subscribed to this perception. Interns remarked in interviews that they were likely to benefit from the internship programme if thorough arrangements were being made by the university and the various departments. When it came to the view that internships contribute significantly and positively towards enhancing the knowledge base, 59(59%) agreed to the assertion and most of these respondents were from the Faculty of Applied Social Sciences and Arts and Education. This finding replicates those by English

and Koeppen (1993) and Knechel and Snowball (1987), which suggest that an internship programme is able to improve the academic performance of interns. The student teachers learn while on the job for a long time and most likely they are exposed to vast tracts of knowledge by the experienced teachers they work and interact with on a daily basis. Of the 100 (100%) respondents, 50 (50%) felt that interns benefited through career-related direction. Of these, (33%) were from the Arts and Education faculty, who by virtue of the nature of their diploma programme, have to stay on teaching practice for the duration of the course, that is, three years. They thus benefitted from their lengthy stay on teaching practice through interaction with the qualified and experienced teachers who assisted them on mapping their career aspirations. This benefit was also established in studies by Beard and Morton (1999) and Gault et al. (2000). However, Cook et al. (2004) and Lam and Ching (2007) found that interns do not perceive the internship experience as an important element regarding career choice for students. This is probably due to the fact that most would have already made their career choice decisions and internships would be the first step into the chosen career. That internships boost motivational levels of interns was a perception subscribed to by 47(47%) of the student interns. The Faculty of Arts and Education had the majority of 23(23%) while only 3(3%) came from the Faculty of Science. This is in contrast with the findings elsewhere (Swift and Kent, 1999; Hymon-Parker, 1998) and according to Cannon and Arnold (1998), internship may pave the way for permanent employment upon graduation as well as providing an in-depth understanding of actual business practice. The result is not surprising given the fact that in Zimbabwe, the student teachers are already guaranteed a teaching vacancy with the Ministry of Education, Arts, Sport and Culture soon after graduation. Besides, most of the students at the Zimbabwe Open University are already in employment and their furthering of qualifications is due to their desire to position themselves comfortably at their place of work.

According to 59(59%) respondents, internships helped them to understand theories learnt in classroom settings while 62(62%) indicated that internships enhanced their learning and understanding of issues relevant to their particular areas of study. Mihail (2006) and Knechel and Snowball (1987) concur.

Since internships are programmes meant to marry theory and practice, it is the period during which the interns actually put into practice whatever will have been exposed to them in classroom. The majority of the interns were of the opinion that they gained interpersonal skills in the real work situation. This is probably so in situations whereby they interact and communicate on issues that may need group approaches (Lubbers, 2008; Mihail (2006). Bearing in mind that conflicts are always in existence in organisations, the interns are therefore exposed to situations which assist them to develop the interpersonal skills for use in their present and future organisations. A minority of 8(8%) of the respondents remarked that internships were of no benefit at all to an ODL student. All these were from the Faculty of Applied Social Sciences. They probably had problems with whole process of the internship programmes. This finding is similar with the finding in Lam and Ching's (2007) study, which indicated that student's expectations before and after the internship was unmet. Students do not benefit from the internship attachment in obtaining the relevant knowledge and practical experience to assist them to better adapt to their future working environment. This might indicate that students are not being treated as regular employees and, thus, are not being given appropriate or specific tasks to expose them to a proper job setting and experience. As highlighted by Lam and Ching, the majority may be attached to small firms which may not expose them to the more meaningful job experiences.

What should be addressed by work related education

The majority of the respondents indicated that internships should address the needs of people in the community and should also appeal to informal sector so that those people who are in poverty-stricken areas can also partake in economic and productive activities. The respondents pointed out that the task of technical and vocational education in the community should be to adapt and respond to the needs of people in the community by offering relevant and quality education; and also to provide access to new competencies and technological literacy, and thus preventing any further processes of social exclusion. In designing effective programmes of work related education for the community, there is a need for insuring an education for economic development. In poverty areas, particularly in the rural sector, the concepts of 'work' and 'employability' have a specific meaning. Work, especially in the informal economies, is closely linked to people's everyday life, their economic and productive activities and their daily survival strategies.

Within the framework of globalisation and technological development, work takes on a broader connotation than "regular job" or "occupation" in the traditional sense. In the context of the community this means the acquisition of new competencies to face the diversity of work in everyday life. Lifelong education refers to knowledge and abilities needed for productive work, for eliminating social exclusion, for the betterment of living conditions, and for enabling access to mainstream codes. Educational training needs to provide people with abilities that are not solely

oriented to the formal economy. It is important that work related education takes into account the nature and possibilities of work in poverty regions. In view of the constraints that developing countries nowadays face in integrating the growing number of young adults into the labour market, it is imperative for work related education to develop a strategy in poverty areas that supports and strengthens people's everyday economic endeavours, and is based on the idea of local development. Supporting these small economic enterprises will certainly not solve the problem of unemployment, but it can give people the means to practice their citizenship by generating spaces for their economic and social participation. Programmes of work related technical education for people in poor areas need to have a strategy with a clear focus. To be effective, technical education must provide on-the-work-training because only such a strategy is oriented to specific needs that emerge from peoples' own small economic projects and values peoples' knowledge and abilities, their own way of doing things and their common sense notions. In addition, technical and vocational education programmes must enable people in poverty areas to undertake economic and productive activities that are based on an integrated approach (marketing, production, organisation, accountability, legal procedures). This strategy would increase the possibilities of small entrepreneurs to develop small economic activities merely as subsistence activities. Unfortunately, this basic premise has been absent in the development of work related technical and vocational education programmes in poverty areas. Technical education must be supported by inter-institutional work among the programmes. For example technical education must be linked with other institutions such as financing and/or marketing. In this way, work related technical education programmes would not only disseminate knowledge and abilities, but also promote the integration of people into productive work by encouraging people to set up small economic projects. Institutional co-ordination increases the possibilities of technical education, by complementing its functions with activities within the fields of health, housing, basic education, skills development and so on.

Conclusions

From the results, it is concluded that

- The majority of the students, while in favour of the attachment programme, felt a number of challenges militated against the effectiveness of the programmes.
- The students were fulltime employees and their employers were not prepared to release them for the duration of the industrial attachment.
- Some employees in the field were also reluctant to disclose important information to students on industrial attachment resulting in little or no benefit for the intern.
- Students did not get much assistance from the programme since some supervisors were too busy to provide effective supervision.
- In some instances, the ZOU supervisee was much older than the supervisor leading to the supervisor not providing effective supervision.
- Students did not get much assistance as some employees regarded them as potential threats to their positions.
- Students on internship were regarded as cheap labour that should not be paid but whose labour should be exploited at the expense of the learning programme.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, this study recommends that:

- The university should be actively involved in assisting students in getting organisations where they can enrol for their internship.
- Some employees in the field were also reluctant to disclose important information to students on industrial attachment.
- Supervisors for interns should be appointed for that purpose to avoid a situation where supervisors are too busy to provide effective supervision.
- Employees holding posts in organisations where students seek attachment should be oriented on how to deal with the interns.
- Credible organisations should be approached by the university to offer places for the interns and there should an audit of these organisations to establish the levels of personnel qualifications.

- Organisations accepting the interns should offer to pay the interns a small token and funds permit these should be paid for the duration of their stay.
- Legislation should be enacted to protect interns against exploitation by unscrupulous employers.
- Supervision of interns should improve with more visits to the sites of internship and those programmes where Programmes Coordinators do not visit interns should re-visit their regulations so that visiting the interns becomes compulsory.

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