

**Dr Olugbenga Adeniyi  
Olumuyiwa Aderibigbe**

University of the Free State

**Dr Moeketsi Simon Mosia**

Centre for Teaching, Learning,  
and Programme Development,  
University of the Free State &  
Sol Plaatje University

Moeketsi.Mosia@spu.ac.za

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# Understanding the nature of learning and opportunities to learn created by work-integrated learning: A perspective in vocational education

## Abstract

*Increasing concern about the work readiness of graduates of higher education institutions, including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, has led to a greater focus on workplace learning as a means of preparing students for the world of work. Research suggests that work-integrated learning (WIL), as a form of experiential learning, is characterised by certain elements that give students the opportunity to acquire skills and competencies and develop aptitudes that could enhance their ability to fit into the workplace. This paper presents the findings of a focus group study that explored the perceptions of TVET business studies students regarding their experiences of the learning that takes place during WIL and the opportunity to learn presented to them by the WIL. Results from the study show that the WIL curriculum implemented in TVET business studies is characterised by the elements identified by the literature, namely, application of theory, hands-on practice, integration of theory into practice and authentic real-life experience. The TVET business studies students reported that the learning going on during WIL makes greater cognitive demands and is deeper in nature than college-based theoretical learning. The discussion section argues that experiencing a “high” and “deeper” form of learning at the workplace, even though there is a shift of focus, from the students to the organisational objective, suggests that the experience of learning may be key to learning. This idea contrasts with a focus on the student, as is prevalent in traditional, classroom-based learning. The paper concludes by advocating that the focus of learning at the workplace should be redefined and articulated, to balance the multiplicity of expectations of WIL. This process should involve multiple stakeholders.*

**Keywords:** *Opportunity to learn, work integrated learning, authentic experience, workplace learning*

## 1. Introduction

Technical and vocational education and training, as a means of achieving sustainable development, employability and improvements to individual capabilities, continues to receive global attention (Eichorst, Rodriguez-Planas, Schmidtl & Zimmerman, 2015). The South African government has also adopted the global trend, which has led to an intensified

focus on vocational education by policymakers (DHET, 2013: xii). The upsurge in interest in vocational education is largely due to the benefits that are deemed to derive from vocational education. The desirability of vocational education has been attributed, specifically, to its impact on skills acquisition by individuals and the benefits it offers to employers to recruit and deploy work-ready individuals within a relatively short time and with minimum capital outlay (Dickson & Ladefoged, 2017).

Work-integrated learning (WIL), as an experiential learning strategy, is one way of achieving the goals of providing students with exposure to the world of work and enhancing their learning outcomes (CHE, 2011: 4). Measuring and exploring the effectiveness of WIL is well documented by literature. For instance, Whelan (2017) measured the perceptions of students, their host-supervisors and teachers on the importance of, and students' skill levels of graduate attributes developed during WIL. Ibrahim and Jaaffar (2017:13) investigated student attributes developed through WIL; however, their work examined "the relationship between self-management and interpersonal skills, self-confidence, and motivation". Henderson and Trede's (2017) study aimed to develop a WIL collaborative governance framework. Reinhard and Pogrzeba (2016) conducted a comparative study between Thailand and Germany, on how WIL was implemented in the two countries. Whereas the German model emphasises an active collaboration between the state and the industry, the Thailand model emphasises collaboration between educational institutions and the industry (Reinhard & Pogrzeba, 2016). Despite the increase in documented evidence of research on WIL, including the studies referred to above, and others, little is known about the opportunities to learn (OTL) created by WIL as a pedagogical strategy to facilitate students' experiential learning. This may be partly attributable to the limited empirical research into the interrelationship between curriculum and knowledge within the TVET sector (Wedekind, 2008), and the over-emphasis on the structure of the TVET sector, the college system and the economy, to the detriment of students and staff within the TVET system (Powell, 2013).

Thus, this paper aims to examine how TVET business studies students perceive the nature of learning that goes on during their participation in WIL. The paper, furthermore, examines how the process construct of OTL can be used to understand and explain the students' experience of learning during WIL.

## 2. Background

The primary purposes of TVET education in South Africa has been reported to include providing education that has "direct application to the workplace" (DNA Economics, 2015:1); providing students with practical skills and competencies in vocational and occupational disciplines (RSA, 2006); and broadly developing the skills base of the economy (Roopnarain & Akoobhai, 2014). Teaching and learning in the TVET sector is premised on the application of technical knowledge and skills in the contexts of workplaces and communities. The business discipline curricula of National Diplomas awarded at National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 6 by TVET colleges emphasise the integration of theory and principles and include a mandatory practical, on-the-job experience period of 18 months, without which a certificate will be issued at NQF Level 5 (SAQA, n.d.). The 18-month workplace-based learning experience is referred to as WIL. In practice, WIL takes many forms, such as internships, professional practice and work-based learning (Holtzhausen & Du Toit, 2009). The worksite plays an important role in WIL, as it serves the multiple roles of learning resource, avenue for learning and link between the formal teaching and learning experienced by students and professional practice within their fields of study (CHE, 2011:7, 9).

Rapid changes in the economic, skills and labour landscapes of countries because of globalisation and fast-paced developments in technology have presented challenges for vocational education institutions. These challenges revolve around the ability of vocational education institutions to meet the needs of the rapidly changing skills and labour environment and to deliver on institutions' mandate of producing individuals who possess competencies needed by employers (Wallenborn, 2010). There are, equally, concerns about the ability of higher education institutions, in general, to prepare students for the world of work (Holtzhausen & Du Toit, 2009). These concerns stem, in part, from the reported inability of TVET colleges to provide positive learning experiences for students (Mmako & Schultz, 2016). Similarly, literature reveals that there have been challenges relating to poor vocational provision and misalignment of the TVET curriculum with industry needs and with other spheres of learning (DHET, 2013: xii; Field, Musset & Álvarez-Galván, 2014:1; McGrath, 2011; Gewer, 2010).

It is the position of Banicky (2000) that students needed to be given adequate "opportunities to learn" (OTL) if they are to succeed in their educational pursuits. Chabongora and Jita (2013:175), however, note that OTL are "are generated by how instruction is structured and delivered". WIL, as a pedagogical approach, is acknowledged as one of the ways to provide students in the higher education sector with OTL, as WIL incorporates "curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices, across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns" (CHE, 2011:4). It has, further, been reiterated that WIL, as a learning strategy, offers students the opportunity to acquire competencies that could ensure "work readiness" (Taylor & Govender, 2013). The implementation of WIL in practice may, thus, present OTL for students, or constrain their abilities to achieve the intended learning outcome. Mthembu (2013) notes that there is not much empirical evidence available in South Africa to show that WIL, as an experiential learning model, works better than other pedagogical strategies in realising educational outcomes.

Stols (2013) argues that the lack of OTL may be one of the contributors to poor performance by students. Considering that students can only be held accountable for their performance to the extent that they have been offered tools to master the content expected of them (McDonnell, 1995), a paper of this nature may help to determine if the learning that goes on during WIL offers students sufficient opportunity to acquire the skills, competencies and attitudes that lead to the attainment of learning outcomes.

### **3. Literature review**

The review of literature related to this paper seeks to present what is currently known about the process construct of OTL and WIL. Studies have revealed that there is a positive association between OTL and students' performance (see, for example, Cueto, Guerrero, Leon, Zapata & Freire, 2014; Cueto, Ramirez & Leon, 2006; Ruiz-Primo, Shavelson, Hamilton & Klein, 2002; Schmidt, Burroughs, Zoido & Houang, 2015). OTL, according to Martinez, Bailey, Kerr, Huang and Beauregard (2009:2), may be conceptualised to include all those factors that may influence student learning such as "curriculum, resources, teacher quality, instructional practices, and remediation efforts". This fits into the definition of OTL as offered by Herman and Klein (1996:246) as "the range of variables likely to influence students' performance". OTL as a concept has historically been used to determine if differences in mathematics achievement could be explained by the learning experience provided to the students by the educational system, rather than the ability of the students themselves to learn the curriculum content (Schwartz, 1995). The concept of OTL suggests, further, that the attainment of learning outcomes is dependent on the

content of the curriculum, the extent of coverage of the curriculum content and all related factors that make for good learning (Cueto *et al.*, 2014; Kurz, Talapatra & Roach, 2012; Schmidt *et al.*, 2015; Wang, 1998). Issues concerning instructional practices and student learning, specifically, have gained prominence as the move towards greater accountability has gained momentum within the educational system (Leithwood & Earl, 2000).

The process construct of OTL may be seen as providing a way of understanding what goes on in the schooling process. This may be in terms of the student learning experiences (Chabongora & Jita, 2013); the quality and intensity of instruction (Cawthon, Beretvas, Kaye & Lockhart, 2012); utilisation of instructional time, instructional practices and pedagogical approaches adopted (Kurz, Elliott, Kettler & Yel, 2014); and cognitive demand of learning activities (Stols, 2013). Bruce-Davis, Gubbins, Gilson, Villanueva, Foreman and Rubenstein (2014) argue that instructional strategies and practices represent important ways to facilitate student learning through the manipulation of curriculum content, process and learning environments. Cognitive demand that captures the complexity of the learning activities that the students are engaged in, has also been found to be positively associated with students' achievement (Cueto *et al.*, 2014). Literature on learning suggests that pedagogical quality influences student achievement in a similar way (Polikoff & Porter, 2014) and that pedagogical quality is one of the most important predictors of students' test achievements (Wang, 1998). The study thus uses the OTL as a lens through which to examine the learning experience of students as it relates to the characteristics and the form of learning embedded in the WIL placement. This is in line with Walkowiak, Pinter and Berry (2017) who conceptualised OTL as focusing on the student's learning experience.

It is the contention of Fisher, Zeligman and Fairweather (2005) that the adoption of alternative instructional methods to the lecture enhances learning outcomes. Suskie (2015) notes that, when out-of-classroom experiences are organised correctly and integrated with academic experiences, they help students achieve critical learning outcomes. The WIL model of experiential learning is considered an instructional strategy that could facilitate the provision of the required skills for individuals (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010:4). Defining WIL, according to Edwards, Perkins, Pearce and Hong (2015), is a difficult task to undertake because of the various forms it could take. Blom (2014:5) defines WIL as "[a] pedagogical approach adopted and integrated into curricula to enhance student learning and to enrich such learning through the incorporation of the latest practices from commerce and industry". Cooper, Orrel and Bowden (2010:12), on their part, provide a broader description of WIL as:

*a complex integration of the learning that happens in the higher education and workplace contexts, not simply as a cross-fertilisation or transfer of theory and practice, but as a whole learning experience that requires conscious planning and effort on the part of all involved, from university policymakers and host organisation managers to professional accreditation bodies and students.*

Smith (2012:247) differentiates WIL from work-based learning and work experience, because the latter two do not specifically require students to, "learn, apply or integrate canonical disciplinary knowledge" during workplace experience. WIL has been credited with the capability to drive innovation in organisations and industries, and boost the attainment of learning outcomes and engagement with learning as well as motivate students to learn (Cooper, Orrel & Bowden, 2010:4, 5). For example, teaching practice as a form of experiential learning has been found to be positively related to gains in knowledge (König, Ligtoet, Klemenz & Rothland, 2017).

The importance placed on WIL for the preparation of students for the world of work derives from the position that it may be difficult for students to acquire authentic learning experiences in a simulated workshop outside the actual workplace (DHET, 2013:9). To this end, students need to be immersed in the situation or circumstances where performance is required (Billett, 2015:22). This is in line with the conceptualisation of WIL by Cooper *et al.* (2010:12), as involving the integration of learning at school and in the workplace.

Learning in WIL builds on the lived experiences of the learner. Experience, in the view of Jernstedt (1980:12) serves “as a means of reconnecting the structure of knowledge with the process of using knowledge”. However, not all experience undergone by an individual equals learning (Dewey, 1938:23). For an individual, if immersion in experience is to constitute experiential learning, the nature of the learning experience must, for example, be such that it gives the individual the opportunity to develop the skills to identify what, when and how to apply integrated knowledge when carrying out activities (Smith, 2012). It should also give the individual the opportunity to engage in a practical activity or task (Walter & Marks, 1981:2).

This paper, drawing from the literature on OTL and experiential learning, argues that the nature of instructional practices experienced by students during WIL may indicate the OTL available to students to acquire the skills, competencies and attitudes that could make them employable. This argument may suggest, furthermore, that the ease with which students can tap into the OTL presented by experiential learning will be influenced by the extent to which the implementation of workplace learning is guided by the characterisation of WIL as described by the literature.

#### **4. Methodology**

The study employed a qualitative research method that gave consideration to the view that the perspectives of the social actors and the meaning they make is one way of understanding their world (Hesse-Biber, 2017:6). Central to the current study is engaging critically with the social actors' text and talk in an attempt to find out how WIL is used to create OTL for TVET students. The epistemological conception of knowledge constructed through understanding social actors resonates with Merriam's (2014:124) argument, that understanding social actors' text and talk (perceptions) involves making meaning of the reality constructed by individuals concerning the phenomenon being studied. Thus, this paper presents findings from an in-depth case study at one university in South Africa, where focus group discussions were conducted.

In order to guide and focus the discussions, an interview protocol was conceptualised and developed through the conceptual lens of OTL. The case study design was well suited for investigating how WIL was implemented, and the nature of the OTL created for a group of 12 TVET students working as interns at one university. During the focus group discussions, the participants were able to share their experiences of and perceptions about the OTL embedded in the WIL model of experiential learning. It is worth noting for contextual purposes that all participants had completed matric and the N6 theoretical component of their TVET diploma. Moreover, at least eight participants had been in the internship programme for more than 8 months, whilst two of the eight had completed their minimum time of 18 months to obtain diplomas, as prescribed by policy. Only two of the 12 had spent less than 3 months in the internship programme.

Our decision to gather data by means of focus group discussions is supported by scholars, such as Barbour (2010:331), who contend that focus group discussions provide opportunities for participants to consider matters beyond their usual assumptions. Smithson (2008:368) supports Barbour's claim, and adds that focus group discussions lead to deepening and broadening of data, as participants are able to interrogate each other's ideas and perspectives.

Data generated were audio recorded and later transcribed for analysis. Drawing from Szczerbinski's (2007) work, the analysis was done by closely reading and annotating interesting sections of the transcript, and listening to the audio recording again and taking notes. The data were taken apart and re-synthesised to form categories and generate themes. Furthermore, researchers situated the categories and themes generated from the data analysis within the existing body of knowledge on WIL, experiential learning and OTL. This was done through continuously contrasting and comparing the categories, themes and methods with relevant literature and empirical research in the areas of the study. Owing to the high volume of data generated during the focus group discussion, the researchers constantly returned to the research question guiding the study. Units of data were then extracted in line with the research question, in order to shed light on participants' perceptions of the nature of learning experienced during WIL (Szczerbinski, 2007:75).

## 5. Findings

The findings reported in the paper are geared to respond to the questions, "how do TVET business studies students perceive the nature of learning that goes on during their participation in WIL as a model to facilitate their experiential learning? and "how can the process construct of OTL be used to understand and explain the students' experience of learning during WIL?" Data were generated in the focus group discussion in response to these questions, and through the summaries of themes, which are presented in the form of tables. Table 1 presents the general thematic analysis of how learning during WIL is characterised through the perspectives of the students, and Table 2 presents the thematic analysis of how OTL are created for students through the learning process.

**Table 1: Students' perception of the nature of learning in WIL**

| Empirical evidence   | Defining subthemes                  |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| We learn in a high way/go deep, deep, deep/It's very high training here  | Higher cognitive demand             |
| The difference is only that now I'm doing practical/ there is a difference because, eh, at the college you are channelled by the book/ sometimes you see something and say hey this I have not seen before/here it is all about the company/Here it is not about you | Shift in learning and/or focus      |
| Before we went to the boardroom we went to the office of the assistant dean, so, he told us that we should not work with the marks for the students, we should not make tea for the colleagues and that we are here to have our working experience                   | Authenticity of learning experience |

Table 1 shows that the students' experience of the learning going on during WIL had certain characteristics. One of these characteristics is the relatively higher cognitive demand of learning that goes on during the WIL, compared to the learning at the college. Learning at the workplace is regarded to be of a "higher" nature, as the students are able to experience first-hand what they learnt at the college through being immersed in a setting where theoretical knowledge is applied. This realisation is captured in the words of Pulane,<sup>1</sup> when she was asked about her experience of the difference between college learning and workplace learning:

*We learn in a high way what we have been taught at TVET. Really, we experiencing these things, we experience them.*

Another participant, Mpho, corroborated Pulane's view, that learning during WIL involved higher cognitive demands. According to Mpho, learning experienced at the worksite goes deeper than learning experienced at the college. This experience may be attributable, amongst other reasons, to the opportunity to engage in the practices of work, As Mpho explained,

*Us, we go deeper, we attend seminars, we attend conferences, we do all the practical, go deep, deep, deep. It's very high and, wow, we are growing.*

Students were also of the view that as they move from the formal college environment into the workplace the focus of learning activities shifted from being exclusively student-centred into one that emphasises the attainment of organisational objectives by the host company. Buhle, another participant, had the following to say about the focus of learning at the worksite:

*And sometimes you see something and say, hey, this I have not seen before. You are told that, here it is all about the company, you leave yourself at home. Here it is not about you, we are we, that's what I've told myself about the company.*

The participants' perception of the authenticity and meaningfulness of the learning experience that they were immersed in during WIL also emerged strongly in the focus group discussion. The students perceived the work carried out during WIL as being meaningful, because the assignments and tasks assigned to them contributed to the attainment of organisational goals of the host employer. A participant, Ayanda, reflected on their contributions as follows:

*Some of them, I do not want to say they [bursary applicants] do not understand or they don't know how to, but they feel pressurised when filling in forms, so we have to guide them step by step. But we know that a large number of students receive funds. We know, because it starts by us first, then it goes to office, then it goes to the head of Finance, so that is all.*

Participants in the focus group discussion also revealed their perception of the alignment of their experience at the host organisation with the intended outcome of the WIL programme. This alignment feeds into the authenticity and relevance of tasks and activities for future work engagement. Pulane had the following to say in relation to the expectations of tasks and activities that must be engaged in during WIL:

*Before we went to the boardroom we went to the office of the assistant dean, so, he told us that we should not work with the marks for the students, we should not make tea for the colleagues and that we are here to have our working experience.*

Participants also held the view that the tasks executed during the WIL reflected what may be encountered in the real world of work. Participants in the focus group discussion spoke of the

transferability of the theoretical knowledge gained at college across different organisations, because of the WIL experience. As Emily stated,

*I feel that I'm prepared, because it's all about practices and policies. In HR [human resources] we were taught that everything is confidential, so I feel prepared. Even if you can take me to another company. They taught me everything, especially personnel, but payroll, I'll do, because I have a bit of information, but personnel, I'll do everything.*

Table 2: Students' perception of the OTL embedded in the WIL learning process

| Empirical evidence  | Defining subthemes    |
|---|-----------------------|
| experiencing these things/you are applying that theory/ yes, you are applying that theory that you learnt now   | Application of theory |
| putting application into it/We experience them/nor I'm experiencing it/practical is very valuable/all about practices and policies/we do all the practical  | Practical application |
| They also guide me step by step on what I should do and what I should say or not say, because, at times, I was also a bit hard and strict on students and they told me you can be lenient on certain things on their forms, so I slowly adjusted. | Mentoring/Coaching    |

One of the findings of the study is that students were involved in the practical application of theoretical knowledge. Practical application goes hand in hand with integration of theory into practice. The participants were of the view that the activities and tasks they were engaged in during WIL are based on what they learnt at college. Jabulani, responding to a question about whether the knowledge gained at college was useful in the workplace, answered as follows:

*It helps, because at school it was theoretical work. Is it? Did I say it correctly? Now you are putting application into it, yes, you are applying that theory that you learnt now.*

Further probing by the interviewer prompted Emily to volunteer that the key difference between college learning and workplace learning is the practical nature of the learning that takes place at the workplace. As Emily said:

*The difference is only that now I'm doing practical.*

Emily's comment confirms the practical nature of workplace learning. The emphasis participants placed on the practical nature of learning at the worksite may suggest that the learning taking place at the college is devoid of practical activity or workplace scenario simulation.

The participants characterised their experience during WIL as diverse in terms of the activities and tasks they were exposed to. The opportunity to engage in diverse activities has the potential to offer multiple learning experiences, broaden their exposure and enrich their learning experiences. Buhle shared her experience of involvement in different activities and functions in the organisation, as follows:

*In general, in marketing I do everything, eh, the clerical duties and the marketing as well. If they have the events, I am engaging with them, they include me in everything they do.*

The variation in duties and responsibilities serves as a reminder to students of the difference between learning at the college and the experience they are undergoing at the workplace. Pulane, when asked how it feels to be working and no longer being a student, responded by referring to the scope of activities she engaged in at the worksite:

*Uhm, it's the different duties and responsibilities that have been assigned to us by our supervisors.*

The mentoring role played by the supervisor, as gleaned from the comment above, featured prominently in the students' experience of OTL afforded by participating in WIL. It emerged that the supervisors contributed to student learning by providing support and guidance. The support provided by the workplace supervisors enhanced the students' experience of learning and fuelled the perception that they learnt a great deal during the WIL. Sangiwe, another participant, explained the contribution of the supervisor as follows:

*I feel that I learnt a lot. We have such a great supervisor because she goes a great length to help us with our duties and she makes sure that we understand our duties.*

In addition to the mentoring support, the students equally experienced coaching support, as the supervisors assisted the students in acquiring specific skills. It emerged that the students were able to experience learning through demonstration by the supervisors of how to perform specific tasks. According to Buhle, one of the participants, the supervisors actually demonstrated what needed to be done, and afterwards gave the students the opportunity to put what was demonstrated into practice.

*OK, in the department I'm working in they show me things step by step, and after that, they let me do it, they leave me.*

The results of the study as presented above suggest that the participants' perceptions of the OTL during WIL placement was shaped by the nature and form of learning taking place at the worksite.

## 6. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the nature of learning going on at the workplace as experienced by TVET college business studies students reflect all the important characteristics of WIL documented in literature. These characteristics, as found in this study and corroborated by literature and earlier studies, include integration of theory into practice (Abdul Hamid, Islam & Abd Manaf, 2014); interconnectedness between theory and practice (Melender, Jonsén, Sandvik, Hilli & Salmu, 2012); preparatory role of college learning for experiential learning (Jackson, 2015); deeper learning (Cheong, Yahya, Shen & Yen, 2014) and exposure of students to multiple contexts or realities of the world (Barends & Nel, 2017). A comparative study of the WIL placement in the Marketing and Human Resources Management fields further confirms the findings of this study that WIL gives students the opportunity to put into practice the knowledge acquired in the classroom (Govender & Wait, 2017). The opportunity to put theory into practice in turn develops the skills of the students in practically applying theoretical knowledge (Aldridge, Callahan, Chen & Wade, 2015). The importance of the

emergent curriculum in the implementation of WIL may be reflected in the deep learning that goes on during WIL (Hattinger & Eriksson, 2018), and which goes beyond what is in the textbooks (Cheong, Yahya, Shen & Yen, 2014). The meaningfulness of tasks undertaken (Cheong, Yahya, Shen & Yen, 2014); variety in tasks (Cheong, Yahya, Shen & Yen, 2014); importance of the task (D'Abate, Youndt & Wenzel, 2009) and the mentoring role played by the supervisors (D'Abate, Youndt & Wenzel, 2009) combine to define the OTL available to students during the WIL learning process. The findings, thus, align broadly with the literature, that there is a link between the learning process (instructional technique and instructional quality) and the OTL available to students (Fisher *et al.*, 2005; Polikoff & Porter, 2014).

The findings of the study may have serious implications for the delivery of learning in the business field, because anecdotal evidence suggests that learning in business programmes have, generally, been largely class based. An interesting twist in the findings is the indication that workplace learning may, indeed, offer business studies students a better OTL and prepare them for the workplace better than college-based theoretical learning can. This finding points to the resolution of the dilemma expressed by Mthembu (2013) in relation to the efficacy of WIL as a pedagogical method. The reported superiority of workplace learning may, however, be explained by the authentic and real-life tasks and activities students are involved in at the workplace. Findings from the study also question the adequacy of classroom experiential learning embedded in business curricula. The fact that students who participated in this study considered workplace learning as being “deeper” and “high”, despite the focus of learning at the workplace shifting from the students to organisational objectives, may suggest that, contrary to the current position of the literature, that focussing on students may be key to learning, the learning experience itself may be more important to learning than the focus of learning. While classroom experiential learning may facilitate work readiness, the notion of this paper is that authentic and real-life experience, which is absent in classroom experiential learning, may be key to the pedagogical advantage of WIL in offering OTL to students.

## 7. Conclusions

The increased emphasis on WIL as a strategy to facilitate the learning outcomes of vocational education is accompanied by a need for constant evaluation of its effectiveness as a pedagogical strategy. Literature on learning suggests that OTL can be created for students through the learning process and, especially, through the way the delivery of learning is structured (Chabongora & Jita, 2013). The effectiveness of WIL in assisting to realise the intended outcomes will, however, require greater collaboration between stakeholders, so that the learning process is articulated and refined properly, in line with the curriculum expectation. Proper redefinition of the focus of learning within organisations, with the aim of accommodating the multiple expectations of stakeholders, may lead to balance between the profit objectives of the organisation, and the imperatives of achieving learning outcomes, and could enhance OTL available to students during WIL.

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(Endnotes)

- 1 Pseudonyms are used instead of participants’ real names.