



## Satisfying All Stakeholders: Incorporating the Restaurant Industry into the Dual Education Programs

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### Abstract

Updating the curriculum to meet the needs of the marketplace is one of the main issues facing most educational institutions. The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the potential of a dual education program (DEP) as a type of work-based learning to link academia and industry, with a focus on the restaurant sector. The current research carried out a case study on the DEP launched by the College of Tourism and Hotels at Alexandria University. A qualitative study was employed, and the primary stakeholders—students, the university, and a restaurant company—were interviewed in-depth and through focus groups to retrieve data.

The results demonstrate that DEP boosts graduates' functional skills and professional preparedness to a level that all stakeholders deem satisfactory. The results also highlight how well the DEP fosters collaborations between the university and the employer in the restaurant sector. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the necessity of tackling several obstacles to enhance the DEP's results. The research finally concluded that universities might better prepare graduates for the workforce, improve employability, and ultimately support wider economic development by applying DEP in place of traditional education. To properly apply DEP, the research offers useful implications for educational institutions and businesses alike.

**Keywords:** Dual education, work-based learning, restaurant industry, university, stakeholder perspectives.

### 1. Introduction

Theoretical understanding is valued more highly than actual application in many educational programs. According to Cheng et al. (2010) and Muhambetaliev & Kasymova (2016), this can make it challenging for graduates to move seamlessly into the industry environment that calls for various practical skills and problem-solving abilities. Employers' expectations and graduates' qualifications diverge when educational institutions and industry don't work together in a systematic

manner (Abdien & Jacob, 2019; Ankrah & Omar, 2015; Rayter & Davlikanova, 2017). One of the biggest obstacles to businesses' expansion is a shortage of competent workers (Hogeforster & Wildt, 2020). The restaurant business in particular is a thriving and dynamic sector that is vital to both employment and the global economy. Nonetheless, the restaurant business is well-known for its high rate of staff turnover and dearth of qualified workers (Even and Macpherson, 2014; Slonaker et al., 2007). According to studies by Bufquin et al. (2018), Langove et al. (2022), and Lee & Liu (2021),

this can have serious negative effects on firms, such as higher expenses, lower productivity, and worse customer service.

As the gap between theory and practice has grown, it is imperative to eliminate the deficiency of conventional learning (Cheng et al., 2010; Rayter & Davlikanova, 2017; Salas et al., 2012). Educational institutions strive to improve students' practical skills and keep their curricula up to date with shifts in the industry. This helps the nation's economy remain stable and competitive on a global scale (Ankrah & Omar, 2015; Kolodiziev et al., 2023; Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021). Dual education (DE) and work-based learning (WBL) are actions for bridging the knowledge gap between academia and business in order to satisfy employers (Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021; Rakhimovna, 2024). Under these actions, students receive both supported theoretical instruction and practical instruction (Ciobănică, 2023; Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021). Businesses and educational institutions may work together to make full use of all the prospects for a nation's technical, economic, and social well-being (Kulalaieva & Leu, 2019). DE is considered a social construct with a significant social component. It assumes that government institutions and economic agents jointly have the obligation of investing in and facilitating the professional training of youth (Ciobănică, 2023; Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021).

Although there is available literature about DE in different fields such as engineering, nursing, technology, teaching, etc. (Ertl, 2020), there has been relatively little exploration of their application to the hospitality industry. This sector presents unique challenges and opportunities, including seasonal fluctuations, fast-paced environments, and customer-centric demands, which necessitate customized educational approaches (Even and Macpherson, 2014; Lee et al., 2016; Slonaker et al., 2007). The gap in existing literature emphasizes the importance of conducting research that examines the distinct advantages and challenges of integrating the hospitality industry, especially the restaurant sector, into dual education programs (DEPs).

Additionally, over the past thirty years, the Egyptian labor market has encountered difficulties. One of the most pressing problems faced by the Egyptian government is the high unemployment rate (Assaad and Crafft, 2018; Bremer, 2018; Omran & Bilan, 2024). As a result, Egypt's strategy now prioritizes encouraging young employment. Although active labor market initiatives such as training programs and funding projects are widely used to overcome unemployment, there is currently little proof of their efficacy (IZA et al., 2018). Furthermore, whereas DE is becoming more common in many nations, it is still uncommon in Egypt, which represents another gap in previous research. Consequently, the primary goal of the current study is to draw attention to the issue of DE while evaluating the perspectives of the various stakeholders, such as the Egyptian employers in the restaurant sector, the university, and the students. It also aims to assess the challenges of its implementation.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theories of Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning (WBL) is an effective learning approach that incorporates a number of well-established learning theories. In addition to theoretical knowledge, WBL offers a comprehensive approach to learning that equips students for successful professions by fostering social interaction, practical skills, and situational understanding (Guo et al., 2020; Lester & Costley, 2010). The section that follows provides an overview of a few of these theories:

#### *Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)*

According to David Kolb's definition of ELT, learning is the manner by which experience is transformed into knowledge. ELT holds that understanding and changing experience together produce knowledge (Morris, 2020). A student must go through four stages in order to effectively absorb the content. These stages include abstract conceptualization and concrete experience, as well as contemplative

observation and active exploration, which are the two polar opposites of understanding the content. Creative tension between all four learning skills is a key component of experiential learning (McCarthy, 2016).

In order to enhance undergraduates' readiness for entering the workforce during this turbulent period, experiential learning trips abroad with specific goals might be incorporated into programs to facilitate the learning process (Jonathan and Laik, 2021). According to Castro et al. (2022) and Rayter & Davlikanova (2017), students enrolled in the dual education program (DEP) receive practical training in real-world environments. This program enables them to apply theoretical information and reflect on their experiences, therefore reinforcing learning and proficiency achievement.

#### *Social Learning Theory (SLT)*

Social contact and observation are critical components of learning, according to SLT. Within an actual work environment, students may pick up knowledge from experts in practical scenarios. Educators may provide a social learning environment that promotes engagement, information acquisition, and enhancement of skills by using components such as sharing knowledge, tutoring among classmates, and role-playing exercises. Conversations with peers and mentors can help students grasp concepts more clearly, get performance evaluations, and polish their social skills—all of which are shaped by social contact (Daniels, 2012).

Students who work for companies might gain confidence and experience a positive work atmosphere. Employees who possess greater self-confidence would persevere through difficult circumstances and may even achieve exceptional performance in their assignments (Abbas & Nawaz, 2019; Abdien & Jacob, 2019; Zeb et al., 2023). Employees with more self-confidence are better equipped to solve problems and deal with challenging circumstances (Abbas & Nawaz, 2019; Dabuke et al., 2023). Furthermore, employees with elevated levels of self-confidence showed less

vulnerability, which improved job performance, participation, and commitment (Zeb et al., 2023). When employing SLT, educators should set an example for adult learners and help them learn via social interactions and indirect experiences in a group setting. Applying SLT to education requires both human relations and social engagement (Chuang, 2021).

#### *Constructivist Learning Theory (CLT)*

CLT is founded on scientific research and observation on human learning. According to this theory, students build their own knowledge and understanding of the world via interactions with their surroundings and firsthand experiences (Bereiter, 1994). One of the key concepts in education is constructivism (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). In order to implement CLT, educators should take on the role of a mentor, helping students to become self-directed and build knowledge via experiences and interpersonal interactions (Chuang, 2021). Within constructivist environments of education, students participate actively in the learning process, lead learning activities, collaborate with classmates, and assume responsibility for the classroom. Furthermore, students can voice their opinions regarding the educational environment (Do et al., 2023). According to Muhambetaliev and Kasymova (2016), dual education gives students the chance to actively participate in their education and to collaborate with mentors and peers in both professional and classroom contexts.

#### *Situated Learning Theory (SLT)*

Learning and its environment are closely related, according to SLT theory. Engaging students in real-world circumstances is the greatest way to teach them (Abdien & Jacob, 2019; Lave & Wenger, 1991). According to the notion, explicit knowledge is formal and abstract, but situated knowledge is practical and context-specific. As noted by Jugdev and Mathur (2013), SLT highlights the significance of these two pieces of information for successful learning. Teaching as a social practice holds that learning cannot be

accomplished or examined in isolation from the context in which it takes place. Teachers are responsible for establishing genuine learning environments for their students as well as for supporting them during activities that fall under the umbrella of cognitive apprenticeship (Bell et al., 2013; Chatterjee et al., 2018; Gnyawali & Stewart, 2003). The emphasis of situated learning is on giving students the chance to showcase their skills and abilities. Students are given access to a learning environment that is modeled after real-world settings and equipped with resources that are appropriate for everyday usage (Chatterjee et al., 2018; Murdoch-Kinch et al., 2017). Accordingly, SLT maintains that students have to participate in progressively more difficult assignments inside social networks (Gnyawali & Stewart, 2003; Korthagen, 2010).

## 2.2 The Concept of Dual Education

One type of work-based learning is dual education (DE), which entered the academic terminology in its homeland of Germany in the middle of the 1960s (Castro et al., 2022; Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021). According to Rakhimovna (2024), higher education in Germany is offering a growing number of dual education programs, or DEPs. The selection of these programs is primarily influenced by the existence of several possible partner enterprises working in partnership with universities to offer a radically novel training system (Lavía et al., 2024). In contrast to apprenticeships, DE allows "dual students" to get training in the firm while pursuing a bachelor's degree at a university (Hogeforster & Wildt, 2020; Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021). This idea holds that companies have a leading role in creating a dual program, putting it into action, choosing dual students, and evaluating their performance (Rayter & Davlikanova, 2017).

DEP permits students to spend around 70–80% of their time learning and working in the field directly and just 20–30% of their time in college taking classes (Bogush et al., 2024; Muhambetaliev & Kasymova, 2016). Thus, DEP is acknowledged as a type of employee training that blends classroom instruction at one

academic university with practical experience gained on the workplace (Castro et al., 2022). The close collaboration and involvement of several parties as well as the unique agreements made between an employer and an educational institution are further characteristics of DEP (Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021; Rayter & Davlikanova, 2017). Therefore, DEP is a learning process that blends classroom instruction with on-the-job training in a typical educational setting as well as part-time work in production (Kravchenko, 2021; Kravchenko et al., 2023). In this, employers may provide a student with an employment contract, and students participate in the production process as employees (Kravchenko et al., 2023; Rayter & Davlikanova, 2017).

There are three basic processes that must be followed in order to deploy DEP. The first step is referred to as "*the preparation and planning*"; it entails searching and determining the firms that are most able to meet the labor market's requirements (Jenkins et al., 2002; Pogátsnik, 2021). It also entails creating the rules and legal framework that will support the DEP (Mongkhonvanit, 2017). Subsequently, this phase should create a curriculum that ties theoretical knowledge to practical skills and conforms to industry norms. Additionally, this phase is to look for corporate and university collaborations and supply any equipment or materials required for DEPs (Kulalaieva & Leu, 2019; Sapogov, 2020).

In the second stage, known as "*the program implementation*," employers and students are selected to take part in dual education programs. During this phase, teachers, mentors, and students receive orientation and training on the fundamentals and procedures of DE (Jenkins et al., 2002). Tracking of the dual students' development allows for evaluating the DEPs' efficacy (Kulalaieva & Leu, 2019). The third step, "*expansion and sustainability*," entails receiving ongoing assessment and feedback in order to guarantee the sustainability of dual education and to highlight DEP's advantages to the public, employers, and policymakers (Sapogov, 2020).

### 2.3 Benefits and Challenges of DEP

According to Kravchenko et al. (2023), a DEP promotes the interests of all parties involved, including the educational institution, industry, and students. First, it may ensure that graduates find rewarding jobs; many of them take jobs straight out of the training programs they completed (Romanyshyna & Dunduk, 2021; Kravchenko et al., 2023). Students that get this kind of instruction have better soft skills, practical knowledge, and customer interactions (Succi & Canovi, 2019, Hogeferster & Priedulena, 2014, Hogeferster & Wildt, 2020). Furthermore, work-based learning provides students with social experiences as they receive feedback from a variety of sources, including classmates, mentors, coworkers, and clients (Pogatsnik et al., 2019). This makes it possible for students to become acquainted with actual workplace settings (Kravchenko et al., 2023). Students can save several years of further training and considerable financial costs by joining DEP by putting their theoretical knowledge into practice (Abdien & Jacob, 2019; Pogatsnik, 2018; Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021).

Furthermore, DEP assists employers in obtaining the precise resources needed for their task (Muhambetaliev & Kasymova, 2016). It enables them to meet their need for skilled workers and guarantees hiring professionals (Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021). The company has the chance to pick the top experts for the job while cutting expenses associated with hiring, training, and retraining staff (Romanyshyna & Dunduk, 2021; Kravchenko et al., 2023). This kind of learning makes the company's knowledge and experience better, promotes corporate culture, and fosters "networking" by bringing together senior staff members with specialized expertise and experience and students who are digital natives (Z generation).

Finally, this is a valuable experience, even for the professors. The DEP students return to their academic institution with the most recent practices. According to Kocsis & Pusztai (2021) and Pogatsnik (2018), this kind of WBL

enables universities to have more engaged and motivated students as well as regular, high-energy cooperation with businesses, students who are more socially conscious, recognized, and interested. It also allows for regular, formalized contacts that can extend beyond dual training and involve collaborative research and development initiatives.

However, DEP is not without its difficulties. Students, in particular, find it challenging to balance work and study, which calls for a prominent level of motivation and a specific level of maturity (Muhambetaliev & Kasymova, 2016). Additionally, not every student is suited for the dual type of education because it demands more work and self-organization (Sapogov, 2020). DEP's educators or supervisors must also visit workplaces and evaluate students' reports; this requires them to have a deeper grasp of how relevant the curriculum is to employers' requirements (Rayter & Davlikanova, 2017). Furthermore, companies bear the responsibility of providing opportunities for students to acquire real-world job experience and practical skills (Kravchenko et al., 2023). As a result, in order to deliver an effective curriculum and maintain integration with academic units, this method necessitates close communication between instructors and administration participating in DEP, as well as between administrative personnel and students (Kravchenko et al. 2023).

### 3. Method

The purpose of the current study is to assess the DEP from the viewpoints of all stakeholders, drawing on four years of implementation experience. The study was better able to comprehend the general sentiments that the university community has on DEP by compiling data from all available sources. This is qualitative research; focus groups and interviews were used to gather data from students, DEP educators, and industry representatives between February and July 2024, when the program's first class of students were set to graduate. The observations of the DEP's coordinator (the researcher) and the

supervision team were also kept an eye on. Table 1 summarizes the tools utilized to collect data and the sample selection.

The student, who is referred to as an employed student, has all the responsibilities and privileges of any employee in the organization, according to DEP. Following four years of

**Table 1: Data collection tools and sampling**

Tool	Target	Description of the participants	Sampling
Focus groups	DEP Students	The sample includes 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> levels	70 (ten for each focus group) participants were selected by a stratified random sample
	Educators in the DEP	All lecturers, associate professors and professors who participate in teaching in the DEP	11 participants represent all the population
In depth interview	The industry representatives	Restaurants managers and human resource directors of the company	27 participants were selected by convenience sampling
	The responsible members of the DEP	The directors of the program in the college	3 participants represents the whole population
Observation	Students during their practical training in the restaurants	Students are observed during their work by a supervision team	35 restaurants that involve dual students

The present study carries out a case study on DEP, which is initiated by Alexandria University's College of Tourism and Hotels. A new dual education program (DEP) called "restaurant operations and management" has been launched by the college. In the academic year 2020–2021, the program was launched. This curriculum of this DEP is focused specifically on the restaurant industry to satisfy the growing need for trained workers, accommodate the growing number of businesses, and address the industry's high turnover rate. The initiative was carried out in collaboration with Americana Company, the biggest operator of quick service restaurants (QSRs) and out-of-home eating in 12 operational nations in the Middle East, North Africa, and Kazakhstan. Global brands like KFC, Pizza Hut, Hardee's, Krispy Kreme, Costa Coffee, and Tikka are operated by the firm.

In line with the terms of the agreement between the two parties, the student works five days a week in a single restaurant under a single brand of the firm to learn practical skills that complement the theoretical portion of the curriculum and attends class one day per week to acquire theoretical and academic knowledge.

study, the student graduates from the college and gets a bachelor's degree in restaurant operations and management.

The DEP in the college of tourism and hotels was selected for the current study for a number of reasons. First of all, since it is the first college in Alexandria University to launch DEP. Secondly, the researcher functions as the DEP coordinator, making it simple to oversee and gather information from each partner. Third, according to the rules set forth by the DEP, the practical part of the program is closely observed and tracked by the DEP coordinator and the supervision team through frequent visits to the company restaurants. So, they often receive comments and interact with both restaurant managers and students.

#### 4. Results

A systematic method for the analysis was used to glean the important insights from the qualitative information gathered. All of the audio recordings were turned into written text by the researcher, who then coded areas that represented important topics. Reviewing the coded data allowed for the thematic analysis to be conducted, which involved finding recurring themes and classifying related concepts into

larger themes. Within each primary theme, several subthemes were also identified. Content analysis was also taken into consideration to see how frequently specific themes or words appeared.

#### 4.1 Focus Groups with DEP Students

Seven focus groups were conducted in order to learn what the students thought about joining the DEP. The two primary topics of discussion for the focus group are (1) the advantages of DEP and (2) the difficulties they encountered. Ten students from the second, third, and fourth years participated in each focus group. First-year students were not admitted because they lacked sufficient experience. The focus group research concluded that DEP provided the participating students with a number of valuable benefits, including academic enrichment, industry connections, real-world exposure, and job preparedness. Nevertheless, they face difficulties, including a heavy workload, inadequate mentoring and communication, and a lack of flexibility. A summary of the themes that came out of the focus groups is as follows:

- selected and being able to apply theory to practical settings.
- Industry Connections: The significance of establishing connections with professionals in the sector was emphasized by several students. These relationships opened doors for networking, mentorship, and possible employment.
- Career Readiness: Because of the real-world experience and exposure to the business that came with joining DEP, students felt more equipped for the job. They conveyed assurance in their capacity to make a smooth transition into their selected professions.
- Academic Enrichment: A few students said that DEP improved their academic standing. Their comprehension and retention of the course content improved due to the actual application of academic principles.

<b>Subtheme</b>	<b>F.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Representative Quotes</b>
Experience & skills	60	86%	- It's fantastic to acquire real-world experience while still in education. - I have learnt so much more by working in a real restaurant than I could have from reading a textbook.
Career readiness	50	71%	- I think I'm much more equipped for this sector of work in the future. - My confidence to work has increased.
Relationships with professionals	4	57%	- It has been quite beneficial to network with industry experts.
Academic enrichment	45	64%	- It's easy to grasp the coursework because it directly relates to my line of work.
Earning money	30	43%	- Even if I'm still in college, I can make money.

#### *Theme 1: Advantages of DEP (Table 2)*

- Practical Experience: Most students said that internships and apprenticeships provided them with practical experience. They reported having a stronger comprehension of the subjects they had

#### *Theme 2: Challenges of DEP (Table 3)*

- Workload: Students expressed worries about academic exhaustion and time management. One frequent problem was juggling the demands of coursework and the on-the-job training.



- Communication and coordination: There have been cases of students reporting that practical and academic requirements are not aligned. It was occasionally challenging to maintain efficient coordination and communication between the college and the restaurant.

#### 4.2 Focus group with the DEP educators

Eleven academic educators participated in one focus group to provide their thoughts on the DEP. They were asked two primary questions: (1) How does DEP vary from traditional learning? and (2) What difficulties do they confront? Consequently, we divided their responses into two primary themes:

Subtheme	F.	%	Representative Quotes
Workload	65	93%	-Working long hours at a restaurant is difficult. -Ccoordinating both my employment at the restaurant and my classwork is difficult. -At this moment, I feel overburdened.
Communication	40	57%	-Sometimes there's confusion between the restaurant and the college about scheduling. -The college and the restaurant should communicate more effectively, in my opinion.
Supervision	42	60%	-My supervisor should have provided me with more direction and assistance.
Flexibility	59	84%	-When I have a lot of class assignments, it's difficult for me to modify my job schedule.
Work life balance	61	87%	-With this curriculum, I find it difficult to find time for my personal life. -When I have a family issue, it's difficult to adjust my work schedule.

- Mentorship and supervision: A few students conveyed their want for further direction and assistance during their practical learning experience. Among the brands, there were differences in the standard of industry specialists' mentoring and supervision.
- Limited flexibility: Some students believed that their options for pursuing multiple professional routes or specializing in particular fields were restricted. Students with unique needs or preferences may find the structured style of DEP to be limiting.
- Work-life balance: students said that because DEP frequently experiences major obstacles in maintaining a healthy work-life balance, it may be challenging to maintain solid relationships with friends and family. They expressed dissatisfaction about the DEP's habit of having lengthy workdays that lack personal time.

#### Theme 1: Perception of the DEP:

Positive opinions of DEP are shown by lecturers, who acknowledged their general pleasure with dual education. They conveyed their contentment with their positions in dual education initiatives. They emphasized the sense of fulfillment that comes from seeing pupils succeed and improve.

- **Practical experience:** The benefit of dual education, according to lecturers, is that it gives students hands-on experience and allows them to apply what they learn in the classroom.
- **Variety of Skills:** Instructors observed how students' soft skills—like cooperation, communication, and problem-solving—were developing.
- **Student engagement:** Many instructors have noticed that because DEP offers opportunities for hands-on learning and relevant content, students are typically more motivated and engaged in class.
- **Self-development:** Several instructors stated that their students' work satisfaction was influenced by the



practical aspect of dual education and the chance to interact with business partners when conducting interviews and exams.

*Theme 2: Challenges of the DEP:*

The following are some of the difficulties that the DEP’s educators discussed regarding the DEP that need to be addressed in order to maintain and improve its sustainability:

- **Curriculum and industry relevance:** They emphasized the necessity of on-going professional development to keep abreast of market developments and guarantee that their instruction is in line with contemporary approaches.
- **Teaching methods:** They acknowledged that DEP demands they build fresh and innovative teaching approaches to successfully combine practical experience with academic knowledge.
- **Assessment methods:** They believe that creating efficient evaluation techniques that gauge both academic knowledge and practical abilities is a difficult undertaking.

**4.3 Results of Interviews and the Self-Observation**

It was helpful to conduct interviews with the responsible members engaged in DEP to get an understanding of the implementation, efficacy, and difficulties of these initiatives. Also, the self-observation of the researcher himself as a DEP coordinator was considered. They stress the advantages of establishing solid contacts with industry partners through DEP, as this may result in chances for student research projects, internships, and job placements. They anticipate that DEP will help industry and the college work together to develop an innovative and entrepreneurial culture. To elucidate, they were asked three questions, to which they responded as follows:

*Q1: What is the college's intention in implementing DEP?*

What the DEP hopes to provide is a distinctive and cutting-edge educational experience, according to the participants. The program's objective is to enhance students' employability and work preparation by offering them a hands-on, practical learning experience that blends academic study and on-the-job training. Additionally, they said that DEP is implemented as a means of the institution fulfilling its social duty; it helps to cultivate a workforce with the necessary skills, which is advantageous to the economy and society at large.

**Table 4: DEP from the educators’ perspective**

Theme	Subtheme	F.	%	Representative Quotes
Perceptions	Overall satisfaction	10	91%	- I consider dual education to be beneficial. - The program is very pertinent to what the industry requires.
	Practical experience	9	82%	- Through internships, students acquire important real-world experience.
	Variety of Skills	8	73%	- Students gain proficiency in communication, cooperation, and problem-solving. - .Students get the specialized skills that are in high demand
	Student engagement	7	64%	- When students realize the real-world implications of their education, they become more motivated.
	The lecturers’ development	7	64%	- Working with industry partners has helped me acquire new skills.
Challenges	Curriculum & the Industry relevance	11	100%	- To effectively meet the demands of the industry, the curriculum should be revised on a regular basis.
	Teaching methods	9	82%	- To fit students with varying styles of learning, novel methods of instruction must be modified.
	Assessment methods	9	82%	- It is necessary to evaluate both academic knowledge and practical abilities.

Opportunity to support social inclusion and equity may be made available to students from low-income classes through the DEP's implementation. Therefore, DEP may promote sustained economic growth and development by training students for professions that are in demand.

**Q2: How are candidates for DEP chosen?**

Common criteria may be used to choose students for DEP. Interviews with students are conducted by college and industry representatives to evaluate them. Along with having personal attributes like ambition, effective communication, and cooperation, students should show a sincere interest in the subject matter of their studies. The candidates should also possess dedication and appropriateness. Besides, the applicants must complete an application, which may ask for details about their family and financial situation, as priority may be given to students from low-income families. Furthermore, they show that selecting the best candidates is crucial to preventing the program's high turnover rate.

**Q3: What obstacles did the college encounter when putting the DEP into practice?**

Despite the program's substantial benefits, the DEP's responsible members stressed that they frequently encounter implementation-related obstacles, including:

- The partner Selection: It takes a lot of effort and is quite difficult to locate an industry partner who is acceptable and fits the program's requirements.
- Continuous coordination with the partner of the industry: Even though it might be challenging, this is necessary to make sure the curriculum and on-the-job training correspond.
- Resource Allocation: Setting aside enough funds for both the academic and professional components of DEP implementation—such as college time, facilities, and equipment—can be difficult.
- Student Engagement: Keeping students engaged and motivated during the program can be difficult, particularly when considering the heavy workload.

- Evaluation and assessment: it might be difficult to come up with efficient ways to evaluate student performance and learning in both academic and professional contexts. Cooperation is needed from academic and professional participants.

- Continuous supervision: to oversee students' job placements and make sure their experiences complement the academic program, there is extra effort needed. Additionally, throughout their training in the restaurants, students must put in extra effort to address difficulties.

- Regulatory Compliance: It might be challenging to follow essential rules and guidelines, such as labour laws and educational requirements.

#### **4.4 Interviews with the Industry Representatives**

Interviews were conducted with industry professionals, including restaurant managers and human resource directors, through a special meeting and a follow-up visit to restaurants. The purpose of the interviews was to gauge their opinions about the DEP. They shared the following favourable views and experiences:

- Skilled Workforce: The representatives from the industry were pleased with the quality and abilities of the joining students in DEP.
- Reduced Training Costs: They emphasized the advantages of employing recent graduates who have completed dual education and have already gotten on-the-job training.
- Improved Retention: According to them, people who have taken part in DEP are more likely to be long-term employees of the company.

However, the participants expressed a few challenges about the DEP, such as the rate at which students drop out of the program; this calls for careful selection. Also, they voiced worries over the program's cost-benefit analysis, especially if it calls for large expenditures from business partners.

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

Work-based learning (WBL) has become a viable strategy for bridging the gap between academia and business, especially when implemented as dual education (DE). This kind of learning offers several advantages to a wide range of stakeholders, including companies, students, universities, and society at large (Kocsis & Pusztai, 2021; Pogatsnik et al., 2019). In agreement with SLT and other research, involving students in real-world situations in the DEP is the most effective approach to teach them (Abdien & Jacob, 2019; Chatterjee et al., 2018; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Murdoch-Kinch et al., 2017). It blends formal education with on-the-job training. Giving students real-world experience improves their employability and helps companies and society as a whole. Thus, DEP can help create a workforce that is more talented, creative, and fair. According to the findings, the restaurant industry is an excellent fit for WBL since it offers several opportunities for students to gain real-world experience and develop crucial skills. This is consistent with CLT and other studies such as (Kravchenko et al., 2023; Muhambetaliev & Kasymova, 2016; Romanyshyna & Dundiuk, 2021), as DEP allows students to actively participate in their education and collaborate with mentors and peers in both professional and classroom settings.

The results also confirmed that through partnerships with the restaurant industry and the college of tourism and hotels, DEP was able to give students insightful knowledge about the management and operations of restaurants. Experience may be gained by students in front-of-house service, culinary arts, and restaurant management, which includes marketing, operations, and financial management. This is consistent with Castro et al. (2022) and Rayter & Davlikanova (2017). DEP's graduates can pursue possibilities to work as consultants or launch their own restaurant enterprises by learning about entrepreneurship in this program. The findings further revealed that in order for DEP to reach its full potential,

difficulties must be resolved, and these programs must be carefully planned, executed, and evaluated. This is consistent with Kravchenko (2023) and Rayter and Davlikanova (2017).

Through comprehension and resolution of these issues, interested parties may collaborate to develop fairer and more successful WBL initiatives that benefit companies, employees, and the community at large. Every stakeholder that took part in the current research agreed that the DEP has bright future prospects. According to the DEP's stakeholder perspectives in this research, it was noted that including the restaurant business in DEPs provides an appealing combination of academic study and practical experience. All stakeholders affirmed that this method is consistent with the shifting needs of the labor market, which is increasingly looking for qualified workers with both theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience. This is consistent with SLT and other studies, which found that students who work for corporations may build confidence and enjoy a favorable work environment. Graduates with stronger self-confidence will endure in challenging situations and may even achieve outstanding performance in their assignments (Abbas & Nawaz, 2019; Zeb et al., 2023).

## 6. Implications

The study provides theoretical and practical implications for academic institutions and industry partners in developing and implementing DEPs that effectively satisfy the expectations of both students and the restaurant industry.

### 6.1 Theoretical Implications

The existing research contributes to the literature by utilizing WBL theories such as SLT, CLT, SLT, and ELT in the restaurant sector. These theories can lead to the generation of context-specific knowledge, active knowledge construction, observational learning, and deep learning within the

restaurant industry. Through the integration of these components, DEPs can effectively prepare students for successful careers in the restaurant sector. Specifically, by integrating the restaurant industry into DEP, it can significantly improve the human capital of the restaurant sector. By imparting students with a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, these programs can equip individuals with the competencies required to thrive in the industry. In addition, incorporating the restaurant industry into DEPs can promote stronger relationships between academic institutions and business employers. This could result in more appropriate educational programs, shared materials, and possibilities for those in the industry to participate in the educational process. Furthermore, DEPs can improve graduates' job opportunities by ensuring they have the necessary skills and knowledge for the restaurant sector. This can help to reduce unemployment as well as boost labor quality in general. DEPs can also inspire creativity and entrepreneurship by exposing students to the restaurant industry's difficulties and potential. This can lead to the creation of new business models, products, and services, all of which can help the sector grow and compete.

## 6.2 Practical Implications

This research has numerous practical applications for educational institutions, industry stakeholders, and the government. First, academic institutions/universities should recognize that incorporating the restaurant business within DEPs necessitates the development of suitable curriculum that is in line with industry standards and optimal practices. This could include developing new courses, integrating industry-specific information into current courses, and creating hands-on educational programs. Furthermore, the findings reveal that effective DEPs necessitate strong collaborations between academic institutions and restaurant enterprises. These collaborations can help students gain real-world employment experience, mentorship, and networking

opportunities. The findings highlight the value of using good evaluation and assessment tools to ensure the quality and efficacy of dual education programs. This could include a blend of traditional evaluations like tests and assignments, as well as practical assessments like job simulations and industry accreditation.

Second, the industry partners (the restaurant companies) should work hard to provide students with valuable practical experiences while also guaranteeing the curriculum's relevancy to industry demands. Students can receive on-the-job training in a variety of disciplines, including front of house, back of house, and management. They should give students access to their training facilities and tools so they can apply what they learned in a real-world context. They can also connect students with highly qualified professionals who can offer advice, assistance, and mentorship. Finally, the government must support DEP by establishing precise regulations and procedures for DEPs that ensure superior standards of quality and accountability. It can also offer monetary advantages, such as tax exemptions or subsidies, which motivate businesses and educational institutions to participate in dual education programs. Furthermore, the government should strive to enhance collaboration and exchange of resources between industry and educational institutions.

## 7 Limitation and Future Research

This study was conducted on one case study; generalization may be difficult to draw from a study of a single case. So, subsequent investigations ought to involve other cases, considering a wide variety of establishments and regions. In order to fully comprehend the efficacy of DEPs, future studies must assess the long-term effects on students' career outcomes, such as employment rates, incomes, and work satisfaction. Further, it is advised that studies compare the benefits and drawbacks of dual and traditional learning to be done. Future research endeavours might benefit from a meta-analysis study that synthesizes findings from several

studies to discern patterns and trends in diverse situations.

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