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MAKERERE UNIVERSITY MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
BUSINESS SCHOOL
FUCULTY OF COMPUTING & INFORMATICS

DEVELOPMENT OF A WEB-BASED EMPLOYMENT LINKAGE SYSTEM FOR
GRADUATE JOB SEEKERS IN UGANDA

By

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A project proposal submitted to the Faculty of Computing and Informatics of Makerere University Business School in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Business Computing of Makerere University.

October 2025

DECLARATION

We, the undersigned, declare that this proposal is our original work and has never been submitted to any other institution for any award in any other University.

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APPROVAL

This proposal has been submitted with my approval as the supervisor.

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Makerere University Business School

Table of Contents

DECLARATION.....	ii
APPROVAL.....	iii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	2
1.3 Project Goal & Objectives.....	3
1.3.1 Project Goal.....	3
1.3.2 Project Objectives.....	3
1.3.3 Research Questions.....	3
1.3.4 Project Scope Summary:.....	3
1.4 Anticipated Significance of the Project.....	4
1.5 Project Assumptions.....	4
SECTION TWO.....	6
REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	6
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	6
2.2 Theoretical Framework.....	6
2.3 Empirical Review.....	6
2.4 Existing systems and the employment context.....	7
2.5 Gaps Identified.....	7
2.6 Conceptual Framework.....	7
2.7 Conclusion.....	8
SECTION THREE.....	9
RESEARCH METHODS.....	9
3. PROJECT METHODS.....	9
3.1 Design and Approach to the study.....	9
3.2 Project Organization.....	11
3.2.1 Sampling Design / Sampling Technique:.....	11
3.3 Sources of Project Data.....	12
Primary Data.....	12
Secondary Data.....	12
3.3.1 Data collection.....	13
3.4 Analyzing systems and designing for them.....	14

3.4.1 Methods of collecting the data.	14
3.4.2 Design Techniques.	14
3.7 Ethical Considerations.....	15
3.8 Timeline & Milestones.	15
REFERENCES	16
APPENDICES	18

SECTION ONE.

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1 Background of the Study

Graduate unemployment is a chronic, worldwide issue which spans the globe and affects both developed and underdeveloped countries. According to the World Bank (2023), some 43% of university graduates face difficulties in finding work worldwide because of a lack of fit between their education and what the market requires. According to the African Development Bank (2024) on the African continent, youth unemployment is one of the continent's primary socio-economic challenges with an average of more than 13%, and a number of recent graduates in irregular or underpaid jobs.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2024) estimates that about one-third of graduates are still unemployed over a year after finishing university in Uganda. The issue is primarily due to poor labor-market information systems, incoordination of job advertisements, and reliance on informal recruitment networks. Employers face challenges with attracting qualified candidates, as well as with quickly and effectively identifying candidates.

Globally, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has changed the game on finding employers for job seekers through various online platforms (ILO, 2023). In Uganda, however, employment portals online are scattered with existing web portals that look static and are not designed with graduate-specific employment challenges in mind. Therefore, we must also create a localized, web-based employment linkage solution to facilitate communication between employer and graduates, in order to keep recruitment efficient and transparent.

Key Terms Defined:

Information and Communication Technology (ICT), or digital technology, the group of digital technologies, ranging from computer to internet, to facilitate the communication, information processing, and data handling to other industries (Davis, 1989; Rogers, 2003). Unemployment of graduates is a long-standing concern for universities in Uganda and throughout sub-Saharan Africa. However, higher education output has surged, the number of formal jobs has not. And many graduates do not have trustworthy labor-market information or support channels to provide them

with access to what they might need to land opportunities. The widespread utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) has revolutionized recruitment worldwide but local mechanisms are still fragmented. Most employers still rely on informal recommendations or static job boards; hence, little of what recent graduates find visible anymore is forthcoming. A web-based employment linkage system provides the chance to bridge this information gap by linking up job seekers directly with employers, using a structured, searchable and interactive digital system.

1.2 Problem Statement.

A functional labor market should allow competent graduates to find positions in their field and allow employers to efficiently employ competent employees. In practice, however, Uganda's population of ICT-literate graduates, who remain unemployed, is rising. UBOS (2024) data and more recent research by the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2023) suggest that one-third of graduates stay unemployed and underemployed for want of accurate information about the labor market, as well as labor pool management that is conventional and manual. Lack of centralized digital employment (especially with graduate-focused initiatives) has led to inefficiencies/deficiencies, delays and high costs in recruitment and job searching. It is always challenging for employers to verify academic credentials and objectively assess employment applicants. However, if this dynamic continues, Uganda could suffer from high youth unemployment, wasted human capital, along with lowered productivity nationally. Hence, the research aims to design and develop a web-based employment linkage system to fulfil the information gap regarding graduates with employers, and ensure an efficient, credible, and transparent recruitment process.

Despite growing numbers of ICT literate graduates, youth unemployment rates remain elevated (UBOS 2024). Graduates are commonly confronted with delays in obtaining job information, cumbersome and expensive paperwork to apply for work, as well a non-existent central platform to align the skills that students have been given against jobs offered to them by employers. Employers have as much difficulty in identifying eligible candidates quickly and efficiently whether they can find the best person for a suitable job. The lack of a coherent digital channel for connecting graduates and employers not only leaves graduates with time wasted, but also results in skills inchoate and persistent unemployment.

1.3 Project Goal & Objectives.

1.3.1 Project Goal.

To design and build a web-based employment linkage system that connects graduate job seekers with employers to optimize hiring and job placement.

1.3.2 Project Objectives.

- i. Identify existing job-matching processes and their challenges.
- ii. Design a database model to store and handle graduate and employer information.
- iii. To create an interactive web interface for job posting and application.
- iv. To test and validate the system for functionality, usability, and efficiency.

1.3.3 Research Questions.

- i. What are the current challenges faced in existing graduate job-matching processes?
- ii. How can a database model be designed to effectively manage graduate and employer information?
- iii. How can an interactive web interface be developed to enhance job posting and application efficiency?
- iv. How can the developed employment linkage system be tested and validated for usability and effectiveness?

1.3.4 Project Scope Summary:

The scope of the research project is defined in terms of subject scope, geographical scope, and time scope to ensure clarity on what is involved in the project and the scope within which this research is carried out.

Geographical Scope:

The study is carried out in Uganda, focusing on graduates and employers working in specific higher institutions and organizations in Uganda. Participants from such geographic area information for requirements gathering and prototype testing will be accessed. Thus, the findings are most relevant in terms of job context based on labor market conditions prevailing in Uganda, though the principles of the system's concept could be applied to a wider range of applications.

Time Scope:

The study will be undertaken over four months; study will entail requirement analysis, system design, prototype development, testing, and documentation. This period is the academic project timeframe and it constrains the extent of user test and overall system monitoring, or the wide use of this technique long-term.

1.4 Anticipated Significance of the Project.

The importance of this study is that by structuring and using technology-driven methods to match graduates with jobs, it proposes an important solution to the longstanding challenge of graduate unemployment. As a centralized system, graduates would be able to access verified employment opportunities, create profiles, and submit applications conveniently. This saves time, money, and uncertainty of the previous fragmented job search systems. Employers also gain a better recruiting experience, since the system's function allows them to post vacancies, obtain qualified candidates, check the profiles filed and make shortlisting and selection faster. At the institution level and at the academic level, the system provides valuable indicators of graduate employability trends for university professionals in order to facilitate its own training program and further establish collaborations with the sector. On a national level, the project contributes towards the digital transformation agenda presented in Uganda Vision 2040 and National ICT Policy. Through driving transparency, accountability and inclusiveness in the recruiting process, the system promotes social and economic progress and increases the success rate of youth employment systems. All in all, this platform could improve job matching, improve access to current labor market information, lower administrative costs, and support regional efforts concerning ICT infusion and human capital initiatives.

1.5 Project Assumptions.

- a) Stakeholder Participation: The Job Linkage System Stakeholders will actively participate throughout the development and use of the work.
- b) Availability of Resources: It is assumed that resources needed for developing and running the Job Linkage System will be available at all times.

c) Availability and commitment: It is assumed the Job Linkage System will be available and committed to the project by all of the project key stakeholders throughout the life of the Project.

SECTION TWO.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The review in this section focuses on available research, concepts, and networks of systems, such as related studies related to employment linkage and the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in recruitment procedures. The review aims to assess the current knowledge base, to identify shortcomings in the literature and in systems, and to explain the motivation for the suggested employment linkage platform. The reviewed literature strongly underpins the aims of the project and is informed by core theories of technology adoption and dissemination.

2.2 Theoretical Framework.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) and the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) (Rogers, 2003) drive the research. TAM holds that the perceived usefulness and the perceived ease of use of new technology influence user acceptance. This helps to contextualize the implications that will affect the adoption of the proposed platform by both graduates and employers. IDT extends TAM by explaining the general diffusion of innovations via a population. It helps to comprehend the uptake of a new ICT-based recruitment system in the Ugandan employment setting and how it works. Thus, these theories are quite effective when viewed under a socio-technical angle to analyze the socio-technical part to the deployment of a digital job-linking system.

2.3 Empirical Review.

Based on recent empirical studies, web-based recruitment systems improve accessibility, transparency and accuracy for job pairing substantially (Namubiru & Kato, 2022; ILO, 2023). Such findings highlight a potential for digital platforms to connect job seekers with employers. The National ICT Policy (MoICT, 2022) stresses the digital transformation necessary for all spheres and fields including public and private employment service provision. While there seems to be a policy drive in place, a systematic approach to most existing systems including general online job boards highlights the gaps in system integrations, and checks of systems. This paper

attempts to alleviate these shortcomings by incorporating particular features as authenticated user registration, automatic matching algorithms and user-friendly interface.

2.4 Existing systems and the employment context.

These global platforms, such as LinkedIn and Indeed, provide big time job listings, but generally neglect the localized subtleties of the Ugandan setting. There are also local platforms, such as Brighter Monday, which provide a general service for online recruitment, without the tailored approach to the specific concerns of most recently graduated university students. Research by Atwine et al. (2021) proposed that graduate-oriented localized systems are better able to cope with the particular imbalance between academic output and industry requirement. Several other local projects such as Ever Jobs, were initiated since the time of the establishment, but these are predominantly aimed towards formal employment sector (Kisaka, 2022). At present, there remains a considerable digital divide in terms of the matching need by casual labor; particularly by microenterprises in Uganda. An innovative platform could fill this void by presenting employers a quick short-term, job alert, system to provide job rating and verification ability that build trust amongst the workers and the businesses (Lwanga et al., 2023). The application can be one way of dramatically reducing unemployment and underemployment, with special attention to the youth sector in Uganda.

2.5 Gaps Identified.

A literature- and system-based review identified multiple specific blind spots that the proposed study attempts to fill. These gaps represent a glaring gap in locally specific, graduate-facing systems based on what industries require. There are also fragmented collaboration between the universities and their employers on existing digital platforms. In addition, the currently available platforms usually lack usability and adequate verification processes leading to distrust in users. Ultimately, low digital literacy of rural job seekers has also been acknowledged as still another constraint to extending and maximizing the effectiveness of current digital employment alternatives.

2.6 Conceptual Framework.

This was discussed in terms of mapping the intended flow and relationships of system components. The system connects specific inputs, such as comprehensive graduate data as well as detailed

employer data. Such inputs are passed through the core systems functions, including the matching algorithm and interactive web interface. The outputs we seek are successful job matches and quantifiable decreases in local unemployment rates. The framework includes a feedback loop with end-users for iterations of the platform to improve upon.

2.7 Conclusion.

The theoretical basis has been established through this literature review where existing digital recruitment practices in Uganda and the identification of key shortcomings in the current Ugandan employment landscape was explored. Integrating the newly discovered literature highlights the opportunity for a customized, ICT-focused employment linkage solution targeting the unique job needs of graduates from universities and local employers. The gaps in localization, integration, and verification identified provide a clear rationale for the proposed system.

SECTION THREE.

RESEARCH METHODS.

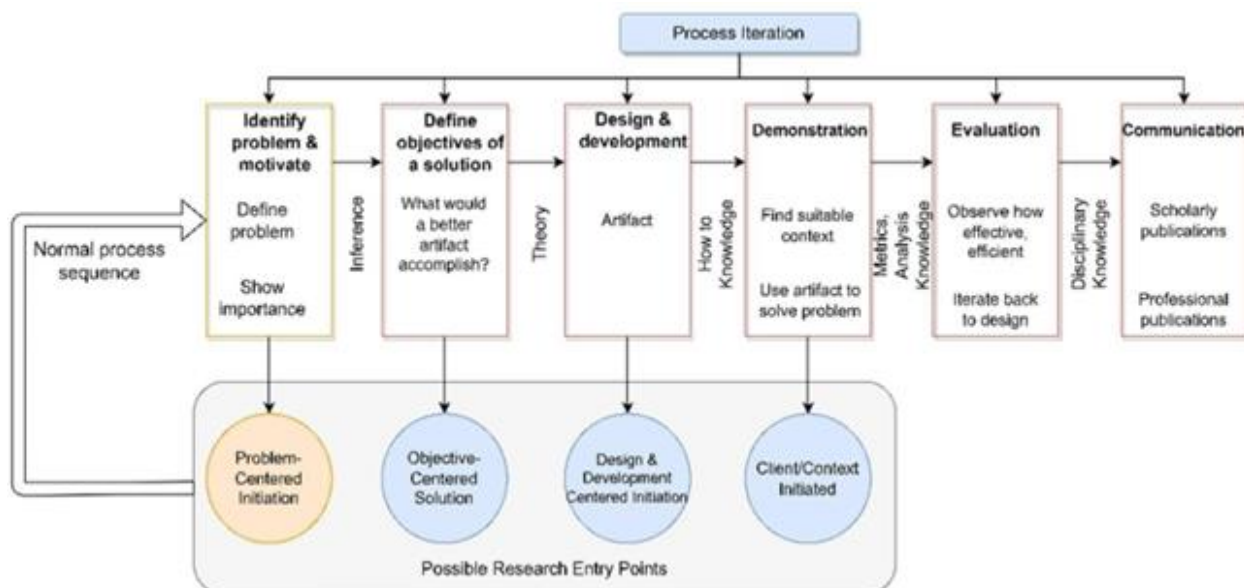
3. PROJECT METHODS.

This section introduces research methods, research design, target and sample population, sampling, project development, and requirement elicitation methods.

3.1 Design and Approach to the study.

The research focuses on problem, solution, system and evaluation and adopts the Design Science Research Methodology (DSRM) for this project. By refining the prototype based on user feedback with this method, it's an iterative experience. The team will be working to develop an Information System artifact that will determine the demands of the employment linkage challenge and hence developing a pragmatic way of tackling the existing problem in the Ugandan setting (Hevner et al., 2004; Peffers et al., 2007). The research team will formulate realistic models of an ICT based recruitment system and then perform a prototype of a working implementation that would enhance the job matching of graduates in universities.

Illustration of the design science research process diagram



Stage 1: Problem Identification.

This stage involves clearly identifying and articulating the research problem. In this study, the problem of high graduate unemployment in Eastern Uganda will be investigated through various problem definition techniques. These will include focus group discussions and interviews with recent graduates, university career officers, and local employers. Questionnaires will also be administered to unemployed graduates from the selected districts of Mbale, Jinja, and Busoga. From these engagements, the key causes and barriers to graduate employment will be determined. The insights gathered will guide the development of a web-based job linkage and skills enhancement platform.

Stage 2: Objective definition.

After identifying the core issues, the next step is to set clear and achievable objectives that the solution must address. The platform to be developed will aim to bridge the gap between employers and job-seeking graduates. It will be designed to allow users to access job postings, apply directly, access career guidance content, and enroll in skill-building courses. These objectives will be refined in alignment with the findings from the problem identification stage

Stage 3: Design and Development.

This stage involves the actual design and technical development of the web-based system. Based on the specified requirements, a prototype of the platform will be developed. It will include user registration, employer profiles, job listing modules, training content access, and application tracking features. Design tools and techniques such as use case diagrams, data flow diagrams and entity relationship diagrams will be applied.

Stage 4: Demonstration.

In this stage, the developed system will be deployed and tested in a controlled environment. Selected users (graduates and employers) will interact with the platform to demonstrate its functionality and usability. Their interaction will show whether the system meets the outlined objectives and effectively supports job search and skills development.

Stage 5: Evaluation.

The demonstration will be followed by a detailed evaluation of the system's performance, usability, and user satisfaction. Feedback will be collected through user testing sessions, interviews, and post-usage questionnaires. Based on this, necessary adjustments and improvements will be made to enhance the system's effectiveness in solving the problem of unemployment

Stage 6: Communication.

The final stage involves documenting and communicating the findings, process, and outcomes of the research. This will be done through a comprehensive report and presentation of the study, which will be submitted for academic assessment. Additionally, the solution may be shared with stakeholders such as universities, government bodies, and employment agencies for potential adoption.

3.2 Project Organization.

This project will be designed for university graduates interested in seeking work as well as career guidance officials, and certain staff from private or public organizations to work in Uganda. The project owners comprise a team of five university students and employers, and the users in question are mainly the university graduates and HR personnel employed by the target organizations.

3.2.1 Sampling Design / Sampling Technique:

Because the target was 50 stakeholders, a sample size was calculated according to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table to ensure that participants formed a true representative study population. There will be a random sample of 21 members in the study and the project requirements elicitation. Stratified sampling will be used to ensure selection of the sample. It would be advantageous to conduct a stratified sampling to address various subgroups of the population (graduates, employers and career officers) so their perspectives of the employment challenge are balanced, and therefore can be represented.

3.3 Sources of Project Data.

The study will rely on both **primary** and **secondary sources of data**. These sources will provide both diagnostic insight and input for artifact design, testing, and evaluation. The following subsections outline the sources and methods of obtaining this data.

Primary Data

Primary data will be collected directly from respondents through field-based research in the selected districts. The following methods will be used:

Questionnaires. Structured questionnaires will be administered to a sample of unemployed graduates in the selected districts (Jinja and Mbale). These will gather quantitative data on educational background, duration of unemployment, job search efforts, digital literacy levels, and the types of jobs being sought. The questionnaires will be both printed and made available online to increase accessibility and response rates.

Interviews. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders such as university career officers, district labor officers, and selected local employers. These interviews aim to capture qualitative insights into the causes of unemployment, the readiness of graduates for the job market, and the challenges employers face in recruiting skilled graduates.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). FGDs will be organized with groups of unemployed graduates to encourage open discussions about their lived experiences, frustrations, and suggestions for improving employment opportunities. These sessions will help the researcher explore recurring themes and understand the collective challenges faced by job seekers

Secondary Data

Secondary data will be obtained from existing literature, organizational records, and government databases. These will support background understanding, context validation, and triangulation of primary data. The following sources and approaches will be used:

Government Reports and Publications. Reports from the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), and National Planning Authority (NPA) will be reviewed to obtain up-to-date information on employment trends, labor force participation, and policy frameworks related to youth and graduate employment in Uganda.

Academic Journals and Research Articles

Peer-reviewed articles from recognized databases and university libraries will be studied to understand existing theories, research findings, and proposed solutions related to graduate unemployment both within Uganda and globally. These will help provide a scholarly foundation and validate the study's approach

University Career Service Reports. Internal reports and graduate tracer studies from universities within the selected districts (Jinja and Mbale) will be examined. These contain data on graduate outcomes, employment timelines, and challenges faced in transitioning from education to the job market.

Labor Market Surveys and Statistical Abstracts. Surveys and statistical abstracts published by UBOS will be used to gather numeric data on the unemployment rate by region, education level, and gender. This will help quantify the severity of graduate unemployment in Eastern Uganda and support evidence-based decision-making.

3.3.1 Data collection.

Questionnaires. Structured questionnaires will be distributed to recent graduates, university students, and potential employers. These will capture quantitative data such as levels of unemployment, job search experiences, preferred platform features, and challenges faced during the transition from school to work. Google Forms or printed versions may be used, depending on accessibility.

Interviews. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key informants including university career officers, district labor officers, and human resource personnel from local

companies. These will provide deeper qualitative insights into the employment landscape, skill gaps, and possible features to integrate into the system.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). FGDs will be organized with groups of unemployed graduates in Mbale and Jinja districts. These sessions will explore their perspectives on existing job-seeking platforms, barriers to employment, and expectations for a digital solution. Discussions will help prioritize user-friendly and relevant functionalities.

3.4 Analyzing systems and designing for them.

The students will adopt an object-oriented architecture for system development. This approach was chosen rather than having a more structured approach because it corresponds to the design of most web apps today, which can be modular, reused and is easier to maintain. The methodology applies to the project using the System Development Life Cycle (SDLC), predominantly stressing on a prototyping design approach. Prototyping permits accurate requirements to be gathered and users to be involved in a functioning model early to ensure the resultant system fulfills the purpose of the project.

3.4.1 Methods of collecting the data.

Based on section 3.3.1 project will study the existing system closely by observation, interview and participatory approach for data collection in the form of focus groups. This enables the researcher to implement a new system which will allow organizations to enhance their recruitment management.

3.4.2 Design Techniques.

The project will be designed and implemented using a variety of techniques. The techniques include use case diagrams to design in system functions and Entity-Relationship (ER) diagrams to design the database, wireframes to visualize the user interface, system architecture diagrams to outline the entire infrastructure (Hoover-Gage & Schürer, 2002). These tools ensure that the design process is structured and comprehensive. 3.5 Project Constraints to Be Observed.

A few of the common barriers to large projects are:

There may be limited access to recent literature and evidence from local Ugandan employment settings for the project. We will be using university library databases/online sources to get as much information as we can. ii. The busy nature of employers could make it difficult for the team to receive timely feedback. To combat this, a structured communication plan and interview scheduling will be put in place. iii. The team will anticipate some user resistance at early phase of use of the new software. This is where User acceptance will be ensured and testing the program before implementation. This project process follows the steps described in the DSRM process model presented in Section 3.1. This iterative approach supports the computing solution generation through the identification of the first problem, evaluation of the outcome, and finally documenting the results, leaving this section only a nice one, optional.

3.7 Ethical Considerations.

When processing personal and employment data sensitive enough to affect others, ethics are paramount. All participants will provide informed consent. As per Uganda Data Protection and Privacy Act (2019), confidentiality and data protection will be strictly maintained. It will be up to the team to maintain the ethical and secure management of user data throughout the system.

3.8 Timeline & Milestones.

The team is going to follow Gantt chart design and map these out for tracking and the final deliverables and submission of each stage into the project lifecycle.

Statement of Disclosures and Declaration.

AI utilities like those from the Gemini family can be used for grammar checks, report construction and for clear written data. All sources will be attributed to maintain the academic and research ethics. All core content, ideas and system code stem from in-house original work -- the result of sustained research and a multitude of readings. Documents will be uploaded to anti-plagiarism tools to ensure academic integrity. This is a general users' project. There are no conflicts of interest involving either team members or family businesses.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Proposed Budget

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost (UGX)	Total Cost (UGX)
Domain & Hosting	1	150,000	150,000
Development Tools	—	100,000	100,000
Internet & Data	—	120,000	120,000
Printing & Binding	—	80,000	80,000
Miscellaneous	—	50,000	50,000
Total			500,000

Appendix II: Gantt Chart

Activity	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4
Requirement Analysis	✓			
System Design	✓	✓		
Development		✓	✓	
Testing & Evaluation			✓	
Documentation & Submission				✓