Capability reconceptualized: Towards a landscape of practice approach in graduate employability

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To understand graduate employability, this paper uses a landscape of practice (LofP) lens, and methods including narrative frames, observations, and interviews to interpret capability development and identity construction of learners in a work-based learning masters program. It argues that learners enhance employability, capabilities, and knowledge through mutual engagement in practices of their communities of practice (CofP). Furthermore, it showcases that this process is enacted through learners' membership and negotiating boundaries of their community as they move from one community to another within their LofP. It then re-examines the definition of capability and argues that capability should be understood as a social construct through which individuals participate in the practices of their CofP and express knowledgeability of community norms and practices. It concludes that individuals build capabilities through a process involving problem solving, negotiation and learning, resilience, and reflection on their own and other members' actions as they engage in interactions.

Keywords: Graduate employability, capability, landscape of practice, identity, socialization

This paper takes a landscape of practice (LofP) perspective to redefine capability construction and examine the employability development of students through work-based learning in a masters degree in a higher education institution. Producing employable graduates is a concern for higher education worldwide (Tomlinson et al., 2021). In recent years, higher education institutions in many OECD countries have developed work-integrated learning (WIL) and work-based learning programs to demonstrate that higher education enhances employability attributes, generic attributes, key/generic competencies, and learning outcomes. These programs also aim to establish strong links between learners' educational experience and the economy, thereby improving the capabilities of graduates (Jackson et al., 2022; Sin et al., 2019). The common denominator of all these efforts is a strong focus on using WIL and work-based learning to enhance on employability outcomes and devising strategies to incorporate and embed them in the curriculum as a means of producing employable and work-ready graduates (Jackson, 2016).

Within the higher education sector, there are recognized capabilities that are widely accepted to foster graduate employability, including communication, team working, and initiative and enterprise (e.g., Allen Consulting Group, 2006; Cattani & Pedrini, 2021). The result of this work is the creation of lists of capabilities that claim to support graduates for the world of work (see, e.g., Suleman et al., 2023). However, there is little consistent consensus among educators and policy makers as to what the most sought-after capabilities or employability skills are (Tomlinson & Holmes, 2016), with numerous lists of desired skills, capabilities, and competencies (Jackson, 2016). The existence of these lists raises the question, does a capability approach do any justice to the complexity of graduate employability by reducing it to a rigid formula of capabilities or employability skills and graduate credentials? (Clarke, 2018; Jackson, 2016). Jackson (2016, p. 925) argues that a skills-set approach does not offer "direction and strategy" in a world associated with an uncertain economy, an increasing number of graduates,

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and a changing labor market. To redress this gap and by drawing on a LofP approach (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014), Jackson (2016), reconceptualized graduate employability to arrive at a holistic understanding of how learners could develop their pre-professional identities before entering the labor market. The concept of pre-professional identity draws on professional identity, that refers to how learners and graduates construct professional selves by performing the standards relevant to and expected in their profession (Tomlinson, 2012; Tomlinson & Anderson, 2021; Zegwaard et al., 2017). Professional identity shows how far a learner or a graduate has internalized the norms, regulations, ethics, ideologies, and a sense of belonging pertinent to that profession (Nadelson et al., 2017; Paterson et al., 2002). The outcome of developing a professional identity is evaluative judgment (Soltani & Zhang, 2024), critical reflection, and self-direction in learning and of professional practice (see also Paterson et al., 2002). Jackson (2016) defines a LofP as a complex array of communities that provide a context for the students to participate in different communities of practice including student clubs, professional associations, workplace contexts, and community clubs so they enhance their learning in different ways.

By reporting on a longitudinal study of a group of students in a work-based[3] masters degree in a New Zealand higher education institution, this paper contributes to the debate on graduate employability from a practice perspective. It first extends the concept of capability (Stephenson & Yorke, 1998) and then provides data on how capability could be reconceptualized. The concept of capability could help to develop learners' professional identities during their university years. Data from the participants shed light on the interrelationship among knowledge, skills, qualities, attributes, culture, professional practice, and ideologies underpinning learners' desired profession.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Graduate Employability

The orthodox skills-oriented definitions of graduate employability are rooted in an approach that regards capability as a sum of various elements put together (Pennington & Stanford, 2019; Trede & Jackson, 2021; Tsirkas et al., 2020). Stephenson (1992, p. 2) defined capability as a mix of "knowledge, skills, personal qualities, and understanding" that is utilized effectively and appropriately, not only in familiar and specialized contexts but also in unfamiliar and in response to new and changing situations. The concept of capability has been core to employability definitions within WIL and work-based learning, and its development has been key for entry to the labor market. Knight and Yorke (2004) define employability as a mix of personal attributes, understandings, and achievements that increases the likelihood of securing employment and achieving career success. In an attempt to provide a broader overview of employability, Romgens et al. (2019) found that the literature contained two broad schools of thought around employability, a) competence-based views and b) those including more social aspects such as human capital, life-long learning, reflection, work-life balance, and go on to argue that future research around employability needs to consider the broader dimensions.

The skills-based approach to graduate employability has been criticized by the researchers because it is conceptually, theoretically, practically, and evidently problematic (Holmes, 2015, 2023). More recently, the concept of employability has extended from a purely technical skills focus to a wider identity (Holmes, 2013; Khoo et al., 2020; Soltani & Tomlinson, 2024; Zegwaard et al., 2017), capital-based (Soltani, 2021a, 2021b; Tomlinson, 2017) including employability capital growth (Donald et al.,

[3] The institution refers to the degree as work-based learning, a term more commonly used in the New Zealand vocational education sector rather than work-integrated learning (WIL), however, this paper will use the term WIL where appropriate.

2023; Soltani & Donald, 2024), networking approach (Bridgstock, 2017), positioning (Isopahkala-Bouret et al., 2023) and governmentality (Hall, 2020; Hartmann & Komljenovic, 2021) where the focus is on the ability of individuals to gain desired and meaningful employment (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008; Pham & Jackson, 2020; Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017). The scope of employability is now more encompassing. For example, Oliver (2015) contends that learners and graduates are able to understand, acquire, adapt, and increase their personal attributes, understandings, and skills that enable them to secure and create paid and unpaid meaningful work that benefits them, the community, economy, and the workforce. In their definition, Oliver (2015) includes not only the ability of the individual to secure, maintain, and develop employment, but also to contribute to society as a good citizen, a conceptualization increasingly presented as a separate concept beyond employability called 'citizenship'. Scholars have underscored that generic skill development does not accurately reflect graduate employability and the higher education sector should seek additional ways to enhancing employability outcomes by developing career management competence of their students (Bridgstock, 2009; Nilsson & Hertzberg, 2022). This endeavor is the outcome of changes in the volatile work placement and graduate employment market, impacted by the pandemic and its impact on mental wellbeing (see, e.g., Donald & Jackson, 2022) and technological disruptions like large language models. Full time employment is no longer always the norm and increasingly short-term work or self-employment is common (Oliver, 2015). This has stemmed from sector restructuring, globalization, harsh working conditions, and delayering (Pham & Soltani, 2021; Pham et al., 2024). To present a holistic view, Jackson (2016) used a LofP approach to show how students could use their knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to position themselves more effectively as capable individuals in the labor market.

From Competence and Capability to Graduate Identity Within a Community of Practice

Looking at employability from a socially discursive process shifts the focus away from a single common framework of capabilities to a practice-based approach that focuses on things produced by WIL students in a workplace (e.g., emails, team meetings, reports, executive reports, memos, briefing papers, oral presentations) (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This is because workplace activities and practices inherently involve actions and products. A practice-based approach allows students to better engage in the social process of learning in the workplace and move from novice member status (Soltani & Loret, 2018) to an accepted practitioner with more familiarity with the social practices.

Higher Education as a Landscape of Practice

Lave and Wenger (1991) theorized the concept of a community of practice (CofP) as any group of people that have ongoing mutual engagement, a shared enterprise (i.e., shared goals), and a shared repertoire (i.e., values, an exchange of skills, knowledge, or repertoire of experiences). The interaction of different CofP practices results in the formation of a LofP (Wenger, 2010a; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014). LofP is characterized by "shared practices, boundaries, peripheries, overlaps, connections, and encounters" (Wenger, 2010a, p. 130). The unit of analysis in a LofP is 'practice', which is a unifying space bringing individuals including students together across the landscape. Practice refers to what students know (i.e., abstract) and what students do (i.e., concrete), which is both holistic and individualistic (Soltani, 2016). During WIL , practice refers to what students should know and should be able to perform successfully. A CofP approach, challenges essentialist, collective, fixed, homogeneous, individualistic, and static approaches to graduate identity (Soltani, 2018; Soltani & Tomlinson, 2024).

As a LofP, higher education is a complex system that consists of multifarious CofP and boundaries (i.e., the space between one community of practice and another) between them (student clubs/societies,

academics, student learning support, professional bodies, employability center, employers, academics, curriculum, and alumni) that exposes learners to the body of knowledge in their profession. A higher education LofP enables WIL learning students to participate in the practices and activities of all the above mentioned CofPs that helps them to negotiate their multi-memberships and hence their identities (Wenger, 2010b). The higher education sector has increasingly incorporated WIL into the curriculum (see, e.g., Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017; Zegwaard, et al., 2022) to familiarize students with authentic practices in the workplace. Internships, client-based projects, work placements, capstone projects, service learning, entrepreneurships, and enterprise are examples of these initiatives (McRae & Johnston, 2016; Zegwaard et al., 2023). Through WIL, students develop a clearer understanding of responsibilities, standards, and expectations of their chosen profession (Jackson & Cook, 2023; Simon, 2008) and enhance a critical awareness (Campbell & Zegwaard, 2011) to become reflective practitioners (Carpendale & Mitchell, 2023; Zegwaard & Campbell, 2014). In the higher education landscape, there are system convenors (e.g., lecturers, teachers, and tutors) that help to generate new knowledge, skills, expertise by "unlocking unexplored spaces, forging promising partnerships, building bridges, resetting boundaries, challenging established colonies, and creating new settlements" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014, p. 100). Hence, the role of facilitators is significant for WIL to support students' experiences.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a longitudinal multiple case study approach to investigate the capability construction and during-study professional identity construction of eight students enrolled in an 18-month Master of Professional Practice (MPP) at a New Zealand higher education institution. Students were required to do their masters project (thesis) in an area of professional practice with an external partner, with some students doing all the project in the workplace, whilst others only did some parts of their project in the workplace. The masters project focused on the relationship between the student, their employer/sponsor, and the tertiary provider. MPP was structured into three main phases: "Review of Learning" (15 credits), "Advanced Practitioner Inquiry" (45 credits), and "Advanced Negotiated Work-based Learning Project" (120 credits), totaling 180 credits. The intention was the development of self-directed learning, critical evaluation, as well as the ability to undertake work-based projects that align with the student's professional aspirations. Students were expected to complete their thesis by the end of the program.

The research questions were:

1. How did the students construct capabilities during the Master of Professional Practice program?
2. How did the students construct professional identities?

The study obtained Human Research Ethics Approval from the relevant institution. Of the eight students, two were from New Zealand (both males), one from East Europe (female), three from the Philippines (one male and two females), and one from China (female). The Master of Professional Practice is available to students from any discipline, with these students being from Financial Management, Marketing Management, International Business, Mechanical Engineering, Teaching, Philosophy, and International Studies.

Study Design

Grounded in a constructivist research approach, this study used narrative frames (Barkhuizen, 2016) and field notes (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018), focus group interviews with the students, interviews with the supervisor, and field data collected during site visits.

Narrative Frames

Narrative frames are written story templates that use sentence starters or prompts in the form of incomplete sentences to stimulate the written expression of ideas from the students (Barkhuizen, 2014). In this study, narrative frames included four parts (Appendix A). In Part 1, starters were used to elicit general information about students. In Part 2, Part 3, and Part 4, the students were asked about their professional self, what they do to develop their capabilities, learning models, and their workplace environment respectively. Students chose to fill out the various parts of the narrative frames in their own time. The frames were structured, and the goal was for the students to produce a coherent story by providing input based on their reflections on their WIL/work-based learning experience (Barkhuizen, 2014). The frames were effective in helping the students to reflect on their own experience and think about how they learned and developed their capabilities.

Interviews

Interviews were one of the primary data collection instruments in this research. Talmy (2010, p. 130) states that interview is "a pervasive feature of the discursive landscape." The term discursive means that it is conceptualized explicitly as a socially situated speech event (Mishler, 2009), where the interviewer(s) and the interviewee(s) participate in social practices, create meaning, and co-construct knowledge (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). The students were asked about how they learnt and developed capabilities, and the role of other social agents in their learning including their work-based learning academic supervisor. The study used 2.5-hour, semi-structured focus group interviews to probe further into the collective experience of the students (e.g., how do they know that they have learned?). The study also used 1.5-hour semi-structured in-depth interviews with the academic supervisor to understand supervisory practices further. The students were interviewed once and the academic supervisor twice.

Observations

As a non-participant observer, the researcher observed and took field notes of the academic supervisor interactions with the students during interactions, supervisory meetings and focus group interviews. Field notes were an important source of data because they provided information such as what topics, practices, and exercises the students were doing, how they engaged in the practices, the challenges they faced, and other multimodal practices that were difficult to notice otherwise. In total, 25 hours of interactions were observed.

Data Analysis

Discourse analytic methods (Jones, 2012) were used to investigate students' capability development. All the data sources were coded using NVivo 11. The field notes were reviewed 10 times. The interview data and narrative frames were coded, after which all the data sources were triangulated (Geertz, 1973).

FINDINGS

The findings of this study showed that students developed capabilities through using boundaries as learning assets, engaging in multiple CofPs in LofP, developing resilience, problem solving, navigating boundaries, and engaging with convenors and academic supervisors in their CofP across their LofP as shown below.

Boundary Encounters as Sites of Learning

The findings of this study showed that to develop their capabilities, students used boundaries as learning assets. Below a sample of an interaction between the academic supervisor and a student (European, Male1) is presented. The academic supervisor and the student were discussing the student's model of learning that he had developed in his thesis (researcher's field notes):

> Student: And what I've found even through my masters, is that we look at things through a particular lens, but then once you've actually put it out there and put that working prototype out there, which may be a commercial product, …
>
> Academic supervisor: [Nodding].
>
> Student: …and be viewed by many, as being fantastic, revolutionary and the next best thing.
>
> Academic supervisor: Yeah.
>
> Student: But as you actually go through that, you pick up these small signs in and around people in what they're naturally inclined to do, where you start to see the first sign of a work around or something similar like that, …
>
> Academic supervisor: [Nodding].
>
> Student: …and that just triggers the next stage, where you can say, wow, okay, if we brought this other element into there, then that will change things dramatically.
>
> Academic supervisor**:** Yes, but I think that what I find really interesting, is the framework which we've both defined on which that iteration or that change or that new technique can be built. (Student, Male 1, New Zealand, Interaction data).

In the above interaction, the student is talking about a commercial prototype that he has developed while in the workplace. Although his commercial product has received positive feedback in the academic community, when encountering the business community, he began to appreciate that he needed to add more features to it so he could improve his work and make it a more attractive product for the workplace. This informs the first research question that students build capabilities through encountering new boundaries, as boundaries are sites of learning that require students to devise strategies to overcome the challenges in their respected communities/workplaces.

Similarly, another student reflected on the daily commute to work:

> Like, me, coming from the Philippines and being here in New Zealand, I learnt to adapt to the ways of the people, how people go about here. In the Philippines, when you ride a public commute [to work], you don't say "hi", "good morning" or "good evening" with the driver. But

> here, when you start using the public transport, and you hear people thanking the driver, you also tend to do that. (Student, Female2, the Philippines, Interview data)

Albeit, this experience is on the periphery of the workplace experience, reflecting on this experience, the student referred to two different regimes of competence (Soltani, 2016; Soltani & Zhang, 2023), that of the Filipino society and that of the New Zealand society in which there existed different social practices. When people first encounter a boundary in society or a workplace, one of the first steps they take is to familiarize themselves with the community's processes and routines (Soltani et al., 2022). The student above referred to the cultural practices, or in her own words "how people go about here," that were different from those that she experienced in the Filipino context. Through crossing the new boundary, the student questioned how the new cultural practice (i.e., using public transport) was different from that of the Filipino context. Within the New Zealand context, the practice of thanking the driver served as a productive encounter for exploring and negotiating the boundary (Wenger, 2010b; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014), which impacted the student's sociocultural capability construction in the new context.

Multiple Communities and Multi-Memberships in a Landscape of Practice

The students in this research stated that they developed their capabilities through learning as an outcome of their engagement in multiple workplace CofPs, as indicated below.

> I am in several communities– In here [Name of the tertiary institution], I am a lecturer. I am part of the community here like I teach, attend meetings, and assess students' work. But I am also in motorcycle clubs. I used to be in a band, family, relationship, partnership, academics, work, friends–, the whole thing really. I mean, they are all interactions, aren't they? We are consciously in a different role, you know. So, one minute I'm a dad and next minute, I'm an uncle, next minute I'm a partner, next minute, I'm a son. We are always shifting into different roles every time and that's how we learn. (Student, Male2, New Zealand, Interview data)

Along the same lines, another student mentioned that she developed her capabilities through engaging with various offline and online communities as shown below.

> I am part of the [Company Name] people and performance community as a Talent Acquisition Business Partner for [Company Name]. I am also part of my church community at [Church] where I attend the service every Sunday. I'm still part of the [Tertiary Institution Name] Student community. I am also a member of some online group communities such as [social group for Filipinos in NZ] and [social group for married couples in the Philippines]. These online communities are my go-to place for queries I have from visa concerns, finding accommodation, cooking recipes, etc. (Student, Female1, the Philippines, Narrative Frames Data [NFD]).

The students considered learning as the result of their participation, interactions, and membership in multiple online and offline communities of practice in their social space and workspace (Soltani & Tran, 2021, 2023). So long as one participates in any given CofP, whether it is work or social, one becomes familiar with a new regime of competence, enacts their multi-membership in various communities, and as a result their identities are modulated in each context (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014). Developing one's capability, then, is a sociohistorical process and individuals carry with them the learning they have developed through membership in multiple CofPs across time and place. These developing capabilities requires individuals to negotiate aspects of their professional identities constructed in other contexts that could be expressible in new contexts (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014).

Resilience in a Community of Practice

To construct their professional capabilities, the students believed they gained resilience when engaged emotionally and cognitively in meaning making to acquire a body of knowledge in their complex workplace LofP, for example:

> I think you must be resilient and have a desire to learn something. For the learner, you must be open minded and listen to other people and to combine the thinking with your own and you must be open, not to refuse others, the knowledge, the technique or skill to come into your sight. But yours is yours, others is others, but how you can pick up from others and, you know, to put inside your heart, inside your body, then from inside out, and become your own language and everything. (Student, Female, China, Interview data).

The participant above indicated the need for resilience and being open to listening to others in her capability construction and learning. Significant for learning to occur is the development of resilience in LofP, as a significant learning outcome (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014). By being resilient and motivated, she owned the learning, embodied it, and made it her own. She further reconfigured that information, reproduced it, and used the medium of language to express it. What is salient in this process is the embodiment of knowledge and the role of body in this process as a medium through which knowledge becomes internalized and realized as one interacts with others in the workplace.

Another student also indicated

> [I have been] an experienced language teacher, always looking for opportunities to expand my knowledge and experience. I had many jobs – worked in admin, in the music field, education field in the past – so I would say [I have become] quite resilient and versatile. (Student, Female, Romania, NFD)

The student above is referring to becoming resilient and versatile as a developmental process through WIL experience. Lalonde (2013) argues that developing the capacity for a resilient and continuous sense of self across time and space is a core developmental task and a big challenge of identity work. Within a LofP, resilience is socially embedded and is a trait developed individually. Rather, it is a process that is a product of interactions with individuals within their social and work environments as indicated in the students' narratives above.

Workplace boundary encounters and transitions are not only the sites where individuals face challenges but a salient location where they develop resilience and build capacity for effective negotiation of identity change and continuity within a LofP (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014).

Problem-Solving in a Community of Practice

To construct their capabilities, students proactively engaged with others to solve problems. Wenger and Snyder (2000) state that, to solve a problem, members of a CofP know whom to ask for help within their community, how to ask questions, and what to include in their question so that they focus on and project the essence of a problem. In this regard, one of the students pointed out:

> After I began working in a sushi shop, everything is new for me, I know how to do customer service, buy product. So, I observed this problem. Something I didn't know, but I know how to ask a question. I can look for something from internet, how to make sushi or maybe the most efficient way is to ask your manager, or why you do it. Then to give yourself a plan and maybe

> you practice on it, practice on make the sushi – you practice the operation, and after that, maybe the first week, then you can reflect on the past week and how you do it, maybe your colleague or your manager give you some positive feedback and you can reflect on the good point and then you can move forward, keep it and move forward. (Student, Female, China, Interview data)

What is significant in the narrative above is how the student realized how to solve a problem in her new CofP. She first identified the problem, in this case the new practices of constructing sushi, and then she referred to a learning model she had developed for herself. Through reflection on her own learning, she had realized that she had to make observations to become familiar with the new method in the new boundary. She then, on her own, collected information about her challenge and sought the assistance of an established colleague who was already familiar with how to make sushi. Then, from practicing on her own, she moved to applying her learning to a real situation. Afterwards, through reflection on her learning and the support she gained from her manager, she thought about the next step in her own learning process.

Wenger-Trayner et al. (2014, p. 14) reiterate that "any new experience that does not quite fit the regime of competence may cause the community to inspect and renegotiate its definition of competence in that community." Members in a LofP not only learn to solve the immediate problems in their community, but they also come up with new solutions to a problem and convince other members in the community that their solution is more workable than the already existing practices in their community and encourage the community reconsider their practices.

Learning to Navigate from one CofP to Another and Develop Knowledgeability in LofP

The students in this study showed that they learned through crossing the boundaries and moving from one CofP to another as shown below:

> [I learn by adapting] to that culture. So, from one community to another, there will always be adapting mechanisms that you will need to be doing within yourself. Whether they like it or not, it naturally happens to yourself - that you adapt, because of what you are seeing. (Student, Male, the Philippines, Interview data)

As mentioned by the student above, learning occurred as he moved from one workplace CofP to another. He developed knowledgeability through socializing himself into the norms and values of the communities of practice he came across. There are always new practices in a new community of practice and as mentioned by the student, one learns naturally as he/she observes those practices.

Further, he illustrated that this learning is intertwined with thinking and communicating:

> I know I can move between different communities in my real life when I have a clear process of learning, thinking, and communicating. Perhaps an argument can be made about thinking and communicating being parts of the learning process, and I believe that to be so. (Student, Male, the Philippines, NFD)

As pointed out above, a significant aspect of learning as a social practice is claims to knowledgeability of the practices across the landscape. Learning from this perspective is a trajectory in a social landscape. Through this process the individuals use various strategies, and as the student above indicated, they used adapting mechanisms, so that they become the person who inhabits the landscape, in which they have constructed identities, that reflects their trajectory through the landscape (Wenger-Trayner et al.,

2014). Through observing and participating in workplace practices of a CofP, individuals become part of the community.

Convenors as Facilitators in Landscape of Practice

The students emphasized the role of convenors as agents who mediated workplace learning as shown below.

> The first person who came to mind were my parents – they were modelling my learning. They were people who I saw that valued education, learning – they were very intentional in teaching me, everyday stuff – life skills. I was also able to observe them interacting with other people. They were telling me, if you are going to talk to certain people, this is what you should do, this is a good idea to do, etc. So, that's second. Of course, teachers. But if I am trying to remember my teachers from when I was small, I couldn't remember anything that they taught – inside the classroom, but what I do remember them for, is how they relate with students. (Student, Male, the Philippines, Interview data)

As seen in the narrative above, the student referred to his parents and teachers as convenors and agents intentionally involved with his learning. As conveners, the student's parents forged new forms of interaction with other people, enacted best practice, and set forth the capabilities required to interact and work with others across the LofP, thereby, his parents were instrumental in helping him to forge workplace relationships and develop his networks.

The student's narrative also emphasized the significance of forging a good relationship with learners. As a convenor to make learning happen, one needs to

> manage a tension between the personal passion and charisma it takes to convince people to become involved on the one hand, and careful calculations on the other hand – to seed the right ideas, create useful connections, initiate appropriate activities and projects, and justify to organizational sponsors the resources it takes to make progress. (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014, p. 113)

Another student pointed out that she transformed and became an independent learner as a result of interacting with her academic facilitator:

> My consultations with [Academic Facilitator Name] and my regular [workplace] reflections made me aware of my learning model and now I feel more confident in engaging in my own learning independently. (Student, Female, the Philippines, NFD)

As seen above the facilitator promoted reflection on a regular basis when they interacted. To use the terminology of Wenger-Trayner et al. (2014), facilitators are systems conveners who work actively and intentionally so they reconfigure the landscape by forging new learning spaces that enable learners to become independent learners across the landscape.

DISCUSSION

This study presented a landscape of practice (LofP) perspective to examine the capability construction and employability of students from a practice perspective (e.g., Cattani & Pedrini, 2021; Jackson et al., 2022; Tsirkas et al., 2020). Stephenson (1992, p. 2) defined capability as a "combination of knowledge, skills, personal qualities, and understanding that is appropriately and effectively utilized in familiar

and unfamiliar contexts and in response to the changing conditions, which became the basis for skills-based approaches to graduate employability." The skills-based approaches of employability have been critiqued (Trede & Jackson, 2021; Tsirkas et al., 2020) since they are conceptually, theoretically, empirically, and pragmatically difficult (Holmes, 2023, p. 32). To bridge this gap and to provide a contextual framework (Donald & Jackson, 2022; Pham & Soltani, 2021; Tomlinson, 2017), this study redefined capability and provided a LofP framework to capture the processes through which capability was constructed. From a LofP perspective the real body of knowledge is referred to as "a community of people who contribute to the continued vitality, application, and evolution of the practice" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014, p. 13). Wenger-Trayner et al. (2014, p. 14) argue that "connection, engagement, status, and legitimacy in [a] community are all part of what makes someone a trustworthy practitioner." A responsible practitioner is able to demonstrate and reflect "the current competence of a community" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014, p. 14) when undertaking work tasks. Wenger-Trayner et al. (2014, p. 14) argue that "the community's social negotiation of what constitutes competence results in a regime of competence" and "membership in good standing entails accountability to that competence." Each CofP has boundaries. A boundary defines the regime of competence in that CofP. Those new to a workplace community need to master the regime of competence in that community in order to be regarded as a legitimate member of the CofP. Therefore, as in the case of the student in the sushi shop, for her to come across a boundary and a new CofP meant that she needed to negotiate learning. Boundaries are sites of struggle and power relations. The students in this study also took part in multiple CofPs (e.g., a band, family and partnerships, workplace, motorcycle clubs, and cuisine groups). A LofP consists of several CofPs. People participate in several communities of practice and have multiple memberships in their communities.

The findings of this research also emphasized the role of resilience as important for learning (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014). The findings suggest that relying on resilience the learners can better engage with new learning, and through the medium of language, they express, reconfigure, and reproduce that learning in their CofPs. What is salient in this process is the embodiment of knowledge and the role of body in this process. The body is a medium through which knowledge becomes internalized and realized. This occurs through encounters that occur in social and workplace engagements. Wenger-Trayner et al. (2014) argue that people cannot be competent in all practices of the LofP, but it is possible that people become knowledgeable about what is going on in other CofPs. Therefore, "claims to knowledgeability are an important aspect of learning as a social process" (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014, p. 19).

This brings us to the question of what learning is in a LofP. Wenger-Trayner et al. (2014, p. 19) state that

> as a trajectory through a social landscape, learning is not merely the acquisition of knowledge. It is the becoming of a person who inhabits the landscape with an identity whose dynamic construction reflects our trajectory through that landscape. This journey within and across practices shapes who we are.

As evident from the data, students in this study demonstrated that capability should be understood as a social construct (Soltani & Donald, 2024). Through this process, individuals participate in the practices of their communities of practice and express their knowledgeability of their community norms, rules, and expectations across the landscape.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that WIL students in a masters degree can build professional futures and capabilities through a process that involves problem solving, negotiation and learning across boundaries, resilience, and reflection on their own and other members' practice (Soltani & Tomlinson, 2024). Analyzing the students' learning through WIL experiences using the lens of CofP and LofP helps understand how students develop and self-realize their learning. As these students engaged in workplace practices, they socialize themselves and become socialized by their peers in their community of practice (i.e., the workplace). In this process, individuals participate with multiple CofPs, and not only express knowledgeability of the complex and varying regimes of competence in their communities, but also begin to demonstrate a capable identity as a trustworthy practitioner in familiar and unfamiliar contexts across the LofP. The Community of Practice (CofP), and in a broader sense, the Landscape of Practice (LofP), have the potential to shape the learning experiences of students in the workplace. This shaping occurs through the people they meet, the places where they live, the new boundaries they navigate, and the new skills they master. These experiences contribute to their professional identity development and provide a useful framework for analyzing student learning.

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APPENDIX A: Narrative frames used in study.

Part 1. Tell us a little about yourself.

1. I come from [Write your country name]
2. I have lived in New Zealand for
3. I have/have not lived in other countries than New Zealand. (*If you have lived in other countries, please write the names of those countries and how long you lived in each one.*)
4. The language(s) I speak at home is/are?
5. I started my Master of Professional Practice in (Write the year)
6. The language(s) I speak in the workplace is/are (Write all languages you use in your workplace)

Part 2. Please complete the four parts below by referring to your experience, understanding, and knowledge. Please explain your answers and give as much information as you can. If you have any questions, please let us know.

1. I am (write down about what you have done professionally to be the person that you are today).
2. I was (write about your experience and your capabilities in the past)
3. I want to become (Write down about the person you would like to become in future. Include capabilities you need to acquire to perform well in future).
4. In my everyday life, I belong to various communities such as (Name those communities and explain what your role is within them)
5. The community I really feel belonged to is (please mention its name)
6. The first thing I do when I enter a new community is
7. I learn many things in the communities I am a part of. For example, (Name some of the things you learn from other members in your communities and cite examples)
8. Through my experience I have learned I learn best through (Explain your learning model and cite examples.)
9. I know I have learned things when (Tell us how you know you have learned)

Part 3. To me being work ready means (write down what you personally think about this concept and give an example)

1. For me, being work ready means …
2. Something I learned at my program at [Name of tertiary institution] which I can use in my future workplace / interactions is (please explain it by giving an example)
3. From my experience, I think the best way students can become work ready is through (give examples please)
4. Some people have helped me to develop my knowledge, understanding, and abilities to become a more capable person. For example, (Tell us about the person(s) whom you think has / have been influential in your learning process and cite examples).
5. To be future (work)ready, I think students should be equipped with (write down what you think future would be like and the capabilities that the 21st century students need to be able to function effectively).

Part 4

1. At my workplace, there are people from all around the world. There are opportunities and challenges to work in this particular environment. Something I like about it is
2. Something I do not like so much about it is …
3. Something else I want to talk about is …