

A STUDY ON HOTEL MANAGEMENT STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS INDUSTRIAL EXPOSURE TRAINING IN TELANGANA

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ABSTRACT

Industrial exposure training or internship has emerged as a crucial component of the educational experience across different institutions and universities. Internship programs have been implemented in a variety of tourism and hotel management focussed undergraduate and postgraduate programs in our country in order to provide students with an opportunity to gain practical exposure and experience in their field of study. Internship programs empower students with great zeal in a seamless transition from the realm of academia to the working world. This study attempts to analyse the influence of different components in internships namely, scope for learning, skill development, support from superior, relationship with peers on their intention to take up career in hotel management. The sample of the study included 252 students who have undergone internship programs in different hotels recently in the Hotel management institutes of Telangana. The results of the empirical analysis has revealed that all the components in internship have significant and positive impact on career intention of students in hotel management programs. This study is a part of larger research work and the findings have significant implications for different stakeholders like students, hoteliers, government agencies, parents and educational policy makers.

Keywords: Internship Programs, Peers, Career Intentions, Skill Development, Stakeholders, Experience.

Introduction

A student internship is one of the main requirements in hospitality and hotel management programmes offered by different institutions in India. Kim, Park (2013) the students who participate in internships gain awareness and deeper understanding and what it would be like to work for business enterprises in the industry. In addition, students gain practical knowledge and skills through hands-on training and networking with peer groups during internships. However, the internship presents challenges and opportunities at the same time. Giousmpasoglou (2021) the students gain an understanding of the internal operations of the hotel business and are interested in continuing their careers in the hospitality sector after graduating from their courses. On the other side, Qu (2021) some students decide against pursuing a career in the hospitality business as a result of negative experiences they have encountered while doing internships in different hotel departments. Koc (2014) the most significant supply of workforce in the hospitality business comes from students. Consequently, it is essential to investigate the factors that influence the students' career goals while they are participating in the hotel internship experience.

Literature Review

National Association of Colleges and Employers NACE (no date) - "An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent".

Gault. (2000) the internships have the potential to be advantageous for all parties involved, including the student, the educational institution, and the employer. This is because internships are considered to provide better quality education and career preparation.

Tyran, Ross (2005) benefits of internships are acquiring important abilities and profession-related experience, applying knowledge to real-world situations, increasing the relevance of coursework, and building a network of contacts while also beginning to network professionally. Cord (2010) there is a lot of advantages, including the fact that it can offer self-confidence and professionalism by combining classroom learning with professional practice, that it may speed up employment after graduation, that it can improve comprehension of realistic expectations in the workplace, and that it can increase job satisfaction.

Gupta (2010) the student has a more profound understanding of their own personal development as well as their attitudes and behaviours as a result of the internship, which serves as a transition between the classroom and the real world. ChanLin, Hung (2015) the Students will improve their non-cognitive abilities such as time management and self-management by participating in an experiential learning activity in a professional context. Internships provide students with experience and skills linked to the business. Zopiatis, Theocharous (2021) the internships help students better manage their career aspirations and create the groundwork for future professional success in hands-on sectors. This is one of the many benefits of participating in an internship programme. As a people-oriented service industry, the hotel business requires its employees to have a high level of practical experience so that they can respond appropriately to unforeseen challenges that may arise during the course of providing customer service. Students may benefit from having the opportunity to study and get experience via internships at hotels.

Kim, Park (2013) internships have emerged as an essential component of education at the postsecondary level due to the fact that they enable students to better comprehend and respond to the changing requirements of the labour market. Zopiatis, Theocharous (2013) an internship is “a brief time of practical work experience during which students get training as well as obtaining crucial job experience in a particular subject or possible vocation of their interest”.

Mahadik, Chavan (2016) the trainees are exposed to exploitative conditions, including unjust treatment, lengthy and physically demanding work hours, and a very meagre pay. They stated that issue of trainees could not be simply solvable and eliminated without the participation of government authorities, educational institutions, and businesses in the hospitality and tourism industries in concerted efforts. They recommended that sincere effort should be put into the development and administration of policies and legislation.

Joshi, Tyagi (2019) respondents held more positive attitude towards internship programmes and their institutes were are a significant component of the internship opportunities available to students. The data also revealed that the vast majority of respondents were really content with their internship experiences since they felt that they made a meaningful contribution to the development of their personalities during those times.

Pusiran. (2020) it is necessary to pay close attention to the factors that lead to conflict between the two parties (students and industry).

Shetu, Sayeda (2020) the students place a significant amount of importance on the planning and training that goes into their internship programmes. The completion of the training programme with flying colours has a beneficial influence on future employment opportunities in the hospitality business. Interns, on the other hand, are often dissatisfied due to the job hierarchy and the lengthy hours they are required to work.

Sihombing (2021) the three individual factors namely academic readiness, a positive attitude, and students' level of self-initiative and their level of satisfaction with their internship programmes, have a positive and significant effect on perceived importance towards job satisfaction, perceived importance has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, and perceived importance influenced individual factors in job satisfaction.

Qu (2021) seven factors influenced students' satisfaction with their internship experience and their intention to pursue a particular career path. These factors include internship achievements, mentorship and assessment, interpersonal relationships, compensation, hotel features, hotel internship programming, and curriculum requirements. The results of the regression showed that interns' career intentions were significantly affected by curriculum requirements, interpersonal relationships, and internship achievements. Satisfaction with the internship experience was significantly influenced by internship achievements, curriculum requirements, hotel internship programming, and mentorship and assessment.

Objectives of the study

1. To evaluate the students' perception towards different aspects of perceived learning potential during industrial exposure training in hotel management courses.
2. To examine the students' perceived skill development opportunities during industrial exposure training in hotel management courses.
3. To analyse the influence of supervisory support that students receive during industrial exposure training in hotel management courses.
4. To study the students' perception towards relationship with peers during industrial exposure training in hotel management courses.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis framed for testing the model is given below:

- H1: Students’ perception towards relationship with peers impacts their perception toward career intention
- H2: Students’ perception towards learning potential impacts their perception towards career intention.
- H3; Students’ perception towards skills development impacts their perception towards career intention.
- H4: Students’ perception towards supervisory support impacts their perception toward career intention.

Methodology:

Research Design

The study used descriptive research method. A quantitative questionnaire was used as a primary data collection tool for data collection from the respondents. The respondents were students who recently finished the industrial exposure training from star hotels. Students from different hotel management colleges of Telangana were distributed with a series of structured questionnaires to complete. The research included a total of 252 students from a variety of hotel management institutes.

Instrument Design

The items used to measure the variables were designed from the insights gained from the review of literature on different studies on the effectiveness of internship programs in hotel management and traditional theories like social cognitive theory, social learning theory, Behavioural intention, etc. D’abate (2009), Felicen. (2014) Perception towards learning opportunities focus on the education and learning about new things that interns gain during the training. To, Lung (2020) “Supervisory Support” focus on perceptions of how supervisors value their input and care about their well-being of interns. Song. (2012) “Relationship with Peers” has strong role in shaping interns in order to integrate with the organization and peer team. Warsaw, Davis (1985) the career intention is the degree to which a person has established deliberate intentions of getting involved in a profession in the future.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model of the study is shown in Figure 1. The model proposes that different perceptions of hotel management students in internship training including “Learning Potential in internship”, “Skill Development”, “Supervisory Support”, and “Relationship with Peers” has direct and positive impact on “Perception toward Career Intention”. To test the model several hypothesis were framed and tested.

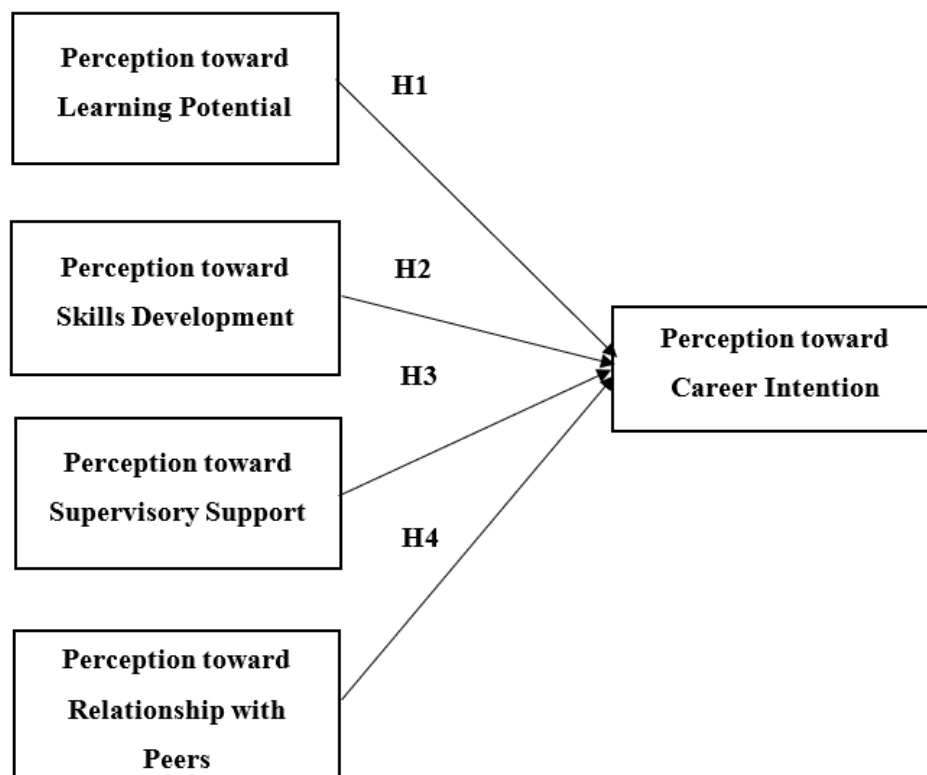


Figure 1 Conceptual Model (Generated by the researcher)

Data Analysis

| Variable | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 212 | 84.1% |
| | Female | 40 | 15.9% |
| Region | East | 9 | 3.6% |
| | West | 16 | 6.3% |
| | North | 45 | 17.9% |
| | South | 171 | 67.9% |
| | Central | 8 | 3.2% |
| | North East | 3 | 1.2% |

Table 1 Demographic Detail (Source: Primary Data)

The above table shows the information related to gender of all students. Out of the total 252 respondents, 212 students representing 84.1% were male and 40 students representing 15.9 % were female. Out of 252 students, 67.9 % were from south, 17.9% were from north, 6.3% were from west, 3.6% were from east, 3.2% were from Central and 1.2% were from North Eastern parts of India.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the Hotel Management Student's Perceptions towards Industrial Exposure Training is presented in Table 1. The parameters considered for measurement included mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. Both Skewness and Kurtosis were used to measure normality of the data. Skewness value between +/- 3.0 and kurtosis value between +/- 3.0 is considered acceptable for meeting the requirement of normality in measuring psychometric constructs. The Table 2 also shows the internal consistency of the variables measured using reliability coefficient using Cronbach's Alpha.

| S. No. | Variable | No. of Items | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | Kurtosis | Cronbach's Alpha |
|--------|---|--------------|------|----------------|----------|----------|------------------|
| 1. | Perception toward Learning Potential | 5 | 3.86 | 0.68 | -1.49 | 2.52 | 0.94 |
| 2. | Perception toward Skills Development | 5 | 3.80 | 0.64 | -1.08 | 2.72 | 0.92 |
| 3. | Perception toward Supervisory Support | 5 | 3.70 | 0.88 | 0.59 | 0.92 | 0.90 |
| 4. | Perception toward Relationship with Peers | 5 | 3.69 | 0.82 | -0.99 | -0.20 | 0.76 |
| 5. | Perception toward Career Intention | 5 | 3.75 | 0.54 | 0.65 | 0.06 | 0.82 |

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis (N=252) (Source: Primary Data)

From the above table, it is inferred that the mean values for all the variables in student's perceptions towards industrial exposure training are above 3.5. This shows that the students of the study hold positive attitude towards the industrial exposure training in general. The students of the study have given highest mean rating for the variable "Perception toward Learning Potential" (M=3.86, SD=0.68), followed by "Perception toward Skills Development" (M=3.80, SD=0.64), "Perception toward Career Intention" (M=3.75, SD=0.54), "Perception toward Supervisory Support" (M=3.70, SD=0.88) and "Perception toward Relationship with Peers" (M=3.69, SD=0.82). From the Table 2, it is evident that the value of Cronbach's Alpha are higher than the threshold value of 0.7, Nunnally (1967), indicating that the measurement scale is reliable for all statistical measurements.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The impact of the independent variables like "Perception toward Learning Potential", "Perception toward Skills Development", "Perception towards Supervisory Support", and "Perception toward Relationship with Peers" on the dependent variable "Perception towards Career Intention" was analysed using Multiple Regression Analysis.

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t-value | p-value |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 0.03 | 0.09 | | 0.31 | 0.75 |
| Perception towards Learning | 0.25 | 0.01 | 0.67 | 37.83 | 0.00** |

| | | | | | |
|--|------|------|---------|--------|--------|
| Potential | | | | | |
| Perception towards Skills Development | 0.24 | 0.01 | 0.33 | 16.93 | 0.00** |
| Perception towards Supervisory Support | 0.27 | 0.01 | 0.38 | 19.84 | 0.00** |
| Perception towards Relationship with Peers | 0.22 | 0.02 | 0.25 | 14.01 | 0.00** |
| Model | R | R2 | Adj. R2 | F | |
| | 0.96 | 0.93 | 0.92 | 768.55 | |

Table 3 Multiple Regression Analysis (Source: Primary Data)

Dependent Variable: Perception towards Career Intention

Table 3 shows R=0.96 and R2 value = 0.93. This means that 93.0% of the variation in the dependent variable (Perception towards Career Intention) can be accounted by the predictor variables like “Perception towards Learning Potential”, “Perception toward Skills Development”, “Perception towards Supervisory Support”, and “Perception towards Relationship with Peers”. All the four predictors have significant impact “Perception toward Career Intention”. Compare to other factors, “Perception towards Learning Potential” has a higher impact on “Perception towards Career Intention” (B=0.67), followed by “Perception towards Supervisory Support” (B=0.38) and “Perception towards Skills Development” (B=0.33).

Findings of Objectives

The findings clearly showed that students of internship programs hold more positive perception different factors like Learning Potential, Skills Development, Supervisory Support and Relationship with Peers. All the perception factors have positive and significant effect on the intention to take up career in hotel industry.

Following are the findings of the research objectives:

- Related to Supervisory Support: Supervisor support is important for effective hotel employees. Employees who receive support from their supervisors are more likely to have higher job satisfaction, deal with work-related problems successfully, acquire new skills, and have a positive attitude towards work. In the hotel industry, supervisor support can help trainees develop their skills, attitude towards work, and behaviour, which can ultimately help them choose a career in the industry.
- Related to Trainees learning potential in Hotel: Participating in an internship will assist an individual become more responsible, self-assured, devoted, and adaptable, in addition to helping to refresh their technical abilities.
- Related to Skill Development: Respondents were in agreement that interns learned and improved their abilities as well as their technical knowledge when they were devoted to their job throughout their internships.
- Related to trainees relation with peers: Trainee’s relation with their peers also impact their career in hotel.

Findings of Hypothesis:

Based on the results of multiple regressions, the summary of the hypothesis testing is presented below:

- Students’ perception toward Learning Potential impacts their perception toward Career Intention” was accepted.
- Students’ perception toward Skills Development impacts their perception toward Career Intention” was accepted.
- Students’ perception toward Supervisory Support impacts their perception toward Career Intention” was accepted.
- Students’ perception toward Relationship with Peers impacts their perception toward Career Intention” was accepted.

Limitations

The study was conducted with a small sample of 252 interns in the state of Telangana. The focus of the study was limited to students of hotel management courses undergoing industrial exposure training in different hotels in Telangana. Hence proper care should be exercised when the findings are interpreted for different industry and different settings.

Recommendations

The study made following recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of industrial exposure training to hotel management students:

- Students who have concerns or queries about their internships need to have access to appropriate counselling services.
- A point of contact for the industry or agency responsible for an internship should be established for the students.
- Pre-internship lectures really need to be held so that students may have concerns answered that they might have.
- The students of the following cohort would benefit from first-hand knowledge if the interns from the previous batch shared their experiences of their internships with the students of the next batch. This would allow the students to make more educated choices about their internships.

Future scope for the study

The focus of the study was limited to students of hotel management courses undergoing industrial exposure training in different hotels in Telangana. The study could be extended by involving larger sample sizes from different parts of the country. The future studies may also include qualitative interviews to gain deeper insights from student experiences in internship training programs.

Conclusions

For students who underwent industrial exposure training in hotel industry, scope for learning potential, opportunities for skill development, perceived support from their supervisors during internship period and the nature of relationship with peers have greater impact on their reflective thinking and shape their attitude toward taking career in hotel (career intention).

Consistent with previous studies, Qu (2021), Nguyen (2021), Ng (2023), this study also established that “Learning Potential” and “Skills Development” were the top-rated factors for students in terms of internship training in hotel management courses.

Basically, Students are in the moulding stage of their career path whether they in hotel management institutes or doing training in the hotel. Relation of trainees with their peers in hotels also impacts their career in the hotel. Support from supervisors in developing trainee’s skill, attitude towards work, behaviour etc. help trainees in choosing their career in Hotel Industry. An appropriate counselling of students while pursuing course in the institutes and also while doing training in the hotels may help to meet the demand and supply of the hospitality industry.

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