

Effectiveness of Internship for Hospitality Students and the Post Pandemic Analysis

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Abstract

Internship programme is an integral and essential part of almost all courses run by various universities and institutions in the field of hospitality management. During internship, an on job training is imparted in all major operational department of the hotel which not only helps in real time industrial exposure, but also in developing the technical skills & practical competences of the students of hospitality management. The paper is proposed to evaluate the importance & effectiveness of internship programme, the students of Hospitality Management goes through during their course of studies. This includes the analysis of acquired technical knowledge post-internship, sharpened skills, and the employment opportunities they were considered for in the organizations/ hotels, they have completed their internship from. On the other hand the study also tries to identify the opportunities created through internship for interns to choose their department of specialization. The study was descriptive in nature as it attempts to collect information and statistically analyze it & permits the researcher to collect data and describe the demographics of the same with the help of statistical analysis. Based on the findings of the survey, it is concluded that the internship programme is a productive exposure, having a benefiting impact on intern's technical & practical understanding of the industry thereby enabling them in selecting their career specialization and utilizing the employment opportunities created through internship.

Keywords: Internship, Hospitality, On Job Training, Industrial Exposure, Pandemic

Introduction

Industrial training is the eternal platform that bridges the gap between the classroom hospitality education and real industrial work environment, in general words industrial training can be stated as an activity which changes the student's behavior (McClelland, 2007). The

duration of industrial training provides students with the competencies and knowledge which assists individual in working environment (Sommerville, 2007). The Hotel management curriculum of all the universities across the globe have industrial training as an essential & integral component, duration of which ranges from 18 to 24 weeks but the acceptance of industrial training as a vital part of course structure is found in all the universities and higher educational institutes.

The major objectives revealed during the study of internship programme for hotel management curriculum are:

- To get the college students exposed to real world working environment.
- To assist students in acquiring the skills & knowledge required, which would help them in their career development.
- To transform knowledge gained during the classroom studies into real time practical experience.
- To enhance the confidence and morale of the students during changing scenario due to pandemic.
- To assist the students in identifying, understanding & choosing their area of interest.

According to National Association of College and Employer (NACE, 2010) Industrial training is a process investigation learning that incorporate theoretical knowledge with the practical application for skill development in a professional environment. industrial training provides students with a platform in which they can use their knowledge gained from the reputed institute and universities to the real industry The phenomenon of industrial training has various benefits for all the stake holders.

The growth in the hospitality industry has boomed in the past few decades with the drive to hire hospitality trained

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graduates, is on the peak. For the people who want to begin their career in the very same industry must think twice before they do, as the initial few years start with a real struggle, especially before the completion of the course, the internship one has to go through. Though getting shortlisted with one of their dream organization is easy, working in the industry or hotel for long fifteen to eighteen hours, makes it challenging. Here, Darwin's theory "Survival of the Fittest" is the real-life example. However, there is the more positive impact of industrial training and On the Job training that may help an intern to learn more and develop their skills for practical exposures.

Nowadays, hotel and tourism sector offer a number of work opportunities for the beginners, and people select their career on the basis of their area of interest, the work that they feel they may excel into according to the talent they seek and skill they have developed. To do a work, you do not like, will not make you happy. In case one work where they are interested into, they will be happy and will never get tired to work (Woods, 2003).

Although a number of government hospitality institutes like IHM's, State Institute of Hotel Management, FCI's, etc., & private institutes like IITTM and Frank Finn offers various degree, diploma & certificate courses in various trait like different departments of hotel, Tour Guide, Travel Agents, Flight Attendants, Cabin crews, Ground Staff and Ticketing, but the training provides students not only good hands on experience but also transform them professionally and also helps them find a better organization to work with.

Irrespective of numerous hours spent on classroom studies during a hospitality management course, the actual practical knowledge & skills are acquired only by experiencing the real situation & circumstances during the internship programme, as hospitality management is thoroughly a practical based course. So, the researcher has chosen expectantly to study & analyze the role of internship program for Tourism & Hospitality students in relation to the current scenario of the course requirement and the employment opportunities that may arise therein.

Literature Review

As trending, nowadays almost all hospitality management colleges need at least four to six months of internship program. This helps the student to understand the industry

and choose his/her area of interest which they may like to work in future. The industrial training given to students is usually the mid part of their academic term. A few organizations pay stipend, whereas some not. But this is totally independent on the category of the organization, there are a few good hotels that may pay very less stipend but also are one of the best places to learn to work. A few basic learning, they take from the internship includes gaining experience by applying their knowledge and skill development in the type of task they perform.

Internship also helps to gain knowledge by observing other employee and learn to be a problem solver. At times in case the interns show a good professional behavior, learns things they may utilize in future & also get a chance to work in the organization, as it becomes a pre-recruiting tool for the recruiter hiring them.

Datta and Jha (2015) - Authors in their work recommended that students who are pursuing their industrial training should take industrial training as the learning platform where they can actually learn the practically whatever they have studied in their class room, the tenure of provides awareness about the industry to the students which they are not able to get in classroom learning, students should have basic knowledge and skills in order to have their industrial training successful and fruitful.

According to study done by (Lualhati & Buted, 2008) they appealed that leisure industry agendas include some topics in professional organization though mainstream of the major courses are laterally tourism. The package includes three groups of learning task such as general education subject, specialism subject and implements. The first bunch has subjects like social science and mathematics, and service training programs. So, tourism is disciplinary in orientation. The second bunch comprises the specialism of tourism that revelations the scholars to a career-oriented course of tourism. The third feature of the course is practicum which provides the students with experimental learning in the practice of tourism business.

Industrial training given to the hospitality graduates provides the real example of the industry, with respect to how to handle situation when working in a firm. Here the students get opportunity to get an exposure to the see the real situation of how things carry out in an organization, to find opportunity in them and to develop more on their skills and strengthen up their knowledge. Interacting with

the employees of the organization help them to learn practically and allow them to handle situations. There are enormous benefits of learning practically. They not only get experiment learning but also develop their co-relation with the people they work with (Gunlu & Usta, 2009).

The effectiveness of internship is that nowadays one could get better opportunities and varied careers in the hospitality industry. This is the reason it is becoming stronger with new concepts thus making it arise the need of next level industries (Celis & Magno, 2007).

Olumese and Kennedy (2016) - The author conclude that students industrial/internship training is very important to the students, college, teachers as well as to the organization because students gets actual idea how to do the work which helps teachers to easily explain the different subjects and also helps at a time of job also they not require training to learn the how to work.

Mohammad (2017) - Industrial Training with or inside the hotel is taken into consideration to be the sensible facet of the research on this field of hospitality, as it's miles prepared and nonstop activity that ambitions to educate college students and industrial trainees of hotel sectors, and to provide employees in hotels of numerous classes with the understanding and competencies vital to offer excessive fine hotel services.

Kiran Mayi Immaneni and Vedala Naga Sailaja (2017) - Training gives the exposure to the students which they not get in college, here they have chance to deal with the guests and they learn how actual work done in hotel. Trainees has to report daily to supervisor about what they did and learn, according to that they are assign for new work to learn.

Aini Najwa Azmia et al. (2019) - Duration of industrial training acts a platform for universities and higher education students to expand all knowledge & skills including technical skills and non-technical skills and definitely to gain as much as industry knowledge for their future development which assist student with a possibility to be shown in the industry and finally get employed after completing course.

As many employers now a days, too for experienced candidate with a fair knowledge and academic achievements of the industry, by completing their

internship with industries they become more potent to get better opportunities and gain a good job. Through this related study, colleges and universities would be aware of what kind of internship should their students go through to get experience that may help them to get a proper job that identifies their chosen academic skills. After internship is completed it will help them in getting a desired job that matches their skills (Roa, 2010).

To know the employees of the organization a few of them are already aware of the knowledge and skill needed in the tourism and hospitality industry. Their previous internships will be a boon to them in helping them to cope up in the industry. Observing for the advantage of the training given to trainees and employed people (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 2000) (Zhao, 2004) all of them say that employees who are more potential and capable learn more professional work and meet the organizations value and improve on their working skills (Marhuenda, Martinez, Navas & Muskett, 2004). Instead, the workers also relish working with the talented and trained employees, who possesses more energy and shows higher level of raising quality of the service learning from the trained staff. By this, the effectiveness of the training of the interns is seen where they are trained to meet the guest satisfaction of the customers that they learn in their internship with the employees of the organization.

There are many jobs available in this sector with the very similar profile but the only gap lies among the people is that they need to choose wisely and understand the job profile they are looking for. Consequently, the aim of the organization is to coordinate between what the interns have studied and the work they will be doing in the organization, at one side; and at the other end, learn how to meet the guests need to fulfill it in one go. Thus, there is a need to assure that education and training make individuals employable, help them gain access to relevant work, to escape poverty and marginalization (Syjuco, 2006) by taking the internship program the student will undergo on such training programs, meeting the market and they may boost their inner skills in facing these sectors.so , to make the people perform very well they must kept really happy and contented , in order ,they can make the customers contented .One can seek employment and perform better only if he/she possess the skill and knowledge. Once it is done, it is easy to get employment evolutions. This helps to identify about the performance

of the intern who may be further employed, it becomes easy to the employer to put aces on places or put the right person in the job that fit him (Roa, 2010). Many future employees who have relation with the industry have already the knowledge and skills one requires. The earlier done intern will help them to be identified that they had such a good background before entering the industry. So, the development of tourism and hospitality sector will be such that will result in the need of more trained people. For this the students who have already studied Tourism and Hospitality courses and also possess a skill is the only thing required by the tourism industry.

Research Objective

The main objective of the study is to examine & determine the importance & efficiency of internship programme for hospitality students. The objective is further divided into the below mentioned sub-objectives:

- To examine the employment opportunities created through internship & opportunities given to interns to choose their department of specialization.
- To evaluate the ability & skills of the interns, developed during internship.
- To determine the efficiency factor & the effectiveness of the internship programme for hospitality students.
- To compare the rate of achieving the objectives of internship among pre-pandemic & post-pandemic interns.

Research Methodology

Research Design

We as a researcher has adopted descriptive research methodology to find the efficiency level of the interns who had completed their training from the batch studied. It includes the collection of data to test the hypothesis with diverse set of questionnaires to be studied. The descriptive research provides insight on the effectiveness & the efficiency of the internship programme in developing the skills & abilities of an intern help them choose their department of specialization & seek for a better job opportunity.

Sampling Method

The sampling is done randomly, which helped us in gaining the generalized information for the study.

Sample Size

The sample data of 400 respondents have been sub-categorized as:

- 100 respondents from 2016-17 batch;
- 100 respondents from 2017-18 batch;
- 100 respondents from 2018-19 batch;
- Remaining 100 respondents from 2019-20 batch – Pandemic & Post Pandemic Batch.

Data Collection

Data collection was done by primary sources. The tool used for data collection was a set of questionnaires that consisted self-made questions by the researcher in consultation with H.R.s for various hotels. The questionnaire was well designed by in-depth reading of research literature other related studies & consulting various Hotel H.R.s. It consisted of four sections;

- The first was the demographic outline of the people who gave sample in which age, gender, and the marital status of the respondents were asked.
- The second section consisted of the profile of the respondents related to the hospitality industry and the employment opportunities created during internship.
- The third part consisted of internship experience, which includes the information in reference to the knowledge acquired, skills, abilities, attitude, personality developed during internship and effectiveness of the internship program.
- The fourth part of the questionnaire is designed to find the response of pre-pandemic & post pandemic interns on the achievement level of internship objectives

Procedure

The framed questions were given in hard copy and collected together after they were answered. The answers

were collected, that was then examined to understand the outcome. After the results were processed from the gathered relevant information, it was collected, prearranged and tabularized. The information was exposed to arithmetical action to give relevant answers.

Data Analysis Parameters

The data was then checked, determined and understood by using descriptive method. Frequency distribution was the method that was used to know the employment position of the students of the given institutes and then mean was done to examine the efficiency of the Industrial training.

The given scale was rummage to read the collected data: 4.00 –5.00 = Excellent; 3.00 – 3.99 = Very Good; 2.00 – 2.99 = Good; 1.00 – 1.99 = Fair; Less than 0.99 = Poor

Analysis of Data and its Interpretation

Table 1: Demonstrates the Respondent’s Demographic Nature

Criteria	Parameter	Respondents %
Age	18-25 years	79%
	25-30 years	21%
Gender	Male	68%
	Female	32%
Marital Status	Never Married	95%
	Married/Divorced/Separated	05%

The above table shows the age group, gender, & marital status of the respondents; approximately four fifth percent of the respondents were of 18-20 years age group, which shows that mostly the younger age group people are doing courses in hospitality management. Almost one fifth respondents who responded were in-between 25-30 years. High fraction of the respondents was of 18-25 years of age and a lower percentage of 25-30 years age group.

This was followed by the masculine respondent’s fraction as compared to the feminine that had the ratio of almost three fourth of the respondents and one third. It shows that more males are doing courses in hospitality management and going through internship/industrial training.

Lastly, the marital status of the respondents was compared out of which married respondents were dominated by the single respondents, as the above table shows that most of the respondents were single. This is because majority of the respondents prefer to marry after completing the course and having a secured job.

Table 2: Shows the Profile of the Respondents Who Were Questioned and the Employment Opportunities Offered during/after Internship

Criteria	Parameters	Response in %
Respondent has done/ doing a degree /diploma/ any course related to hospitality or tourism	Yes	100%
	No	0%
Respondent gone through industrial training/ internship programme in pre-pandemic or post pandemic era	Pre-Pandemic	75%
	Post Pandemic	25%
Respondent was studying or employed at the time they were surveyed	Studying	43%
	Employed	57%
Respondent was offered any employment opportunity during/ after the internship from the organization they did their internship	Yes	64%
	No	36%

As the above table shows that all the respondents have a field related educational background & have done or doing a degree/diploma/any course related to hospitality industry. Little less than half of the respondents were employed at the time they were surveyed & remaining half were still studying, the time they were surveyed. The data shown in the table reveals that all the respondents are exposed to the industry and have gone through the internship programme of which two third have done their internship in pre-pandemic era and the remaining one third of the respondents have done their internship in post-pandemic era. The same is linked in the study of (Celis & Magno, 2007) which specifies that getting employed

in a trade opens chances in one occupation, whereas students have to compulsorily undergo training thus opening opportunities for their future careers. Employees recognized that career ranking is likely to have control on their work efficiency & any person with required skills, abilities and knowledge has a better work efficiency & is desirable for the employment.

The above table also shows that majority of the respondents i.e. more than three fifth of respondents who have gone through internship or industrial training were offered employment opportunities from the same organizations they did their internship and the remaining either not shown any interest in accepting the organization or were under performed in some specific areas hence were considered for a later evaluation.

Table 3: Abilities & Skills Development of the Respondents during the Internship

<i>Development in Skills & Abilities</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The intern comprehends/follows instructions easily.	3.82	VG
The intern is able to understand operating procedures and methods.	3.33	VG
The intern is modest enough to perform his/her duty.	3.75	VG
The intern is able to correlate the practical knowledge that he has attained with the theoretical studies that he has done.	2.88	G
The intern has gained the knowledge of relevant department and expertise.	2.5	G
Composite Mean.	3.256	VG

The Table 3 shows the development with respect to skill and abilities of the interns, the table clearly depicts that the interns performed really well in terms of following instruction given by their supervisor and they had shown good interest. The table also shows the level of understanding of the operating knowledge and techniques they applied in their current job are quite satisfactory. Also, the interns have shown competitive abilities in the job roles assigned. On the other hand, they were well organized in their assignment work and a better analysis was done. The interns also had a good command of the relevant information and technology as indicated by the grade shown.

This suggests that with the knowledge gained in an internship, being competitive enough in his/her job task is most favored. The idea is reinforced in the learning given by (Buted & Lualhati, 2008) where it demanded that tourism plans include roughly themes in professional administration though major of the courses are, laterally tourism. Through this, the internship programs would help students to be modest enough for them to survive in the real world of an industry.

Table 4: Efficiency Shown by the Interns and Effectiveness of the Programme

<i>Efficiency Shown by the Interns and Effectiveness of the Program</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Grade</i>
Punctuality & integrity of Interns.	3.52	E
Intern's self-dependability & responsibility taking abilities.	3.7	E
Intern's interpersonal relationships during internship.	3.8	E
Intern's honesty & trustworthiness with superiors & the organization.	3.66	E
Interns positive attitude towards criticism.	3.5	E
Intern's departmental learning.	3.9	E
Intern's satisfaction to the time given to the program.	3.74	E
Responsibilities given during the program to the intern.	3.6	E
Intern's view on the orientation of the organization before program.	4.6	HE
Intern's satisfaction to the facilities given by the organization.	3.2	ME
Assignment & programme scheduling by the organization.	3.26	ME
Intern's acceptance to the department specified by host organization.	4.42	E
Composite Mean.	3.741	E

Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 = Highly Effective (HE); 3.50 – 4.49 = Effective (E); 2.50 – 3.49 = Moderately Effective (ME); 1.50 – 2.49 = Less Effective (LE); 1.00 – 1.49 = Not Effective (NE)

Table 4 shows that the interns are punctual and sincere for their work, they also are reliable enough and show a sense of responsibility towards the organization they work. They are highly comfortable in working with the employees of the organization, and do carry a positive attitude and coordination towards the work place. They

learnt to be efficient enough; also the management and the coordinators helped the interns in every aspect from induction to proper scheduling and allotting them to specific department. This shows that the internship programme was very effective & efficient.

Table 5: Comparison between Pre-Pandemic & Post-Pandemic Interns on the Basis of Internship Objectives Achievement Level

Attainment of Internship Objectives	Criteria	Response of Pre Pandemic Interns in %	Response of Post Pandemic Interns in %
Enough opportunities & exposure given to work in guest area	Yes	78%	89%
	No	22%	11%
Acquired skills & knowledge required to boost the career development	Yes	69%	62%
	No	31%	38%

Attainment of Internship Objectives	Criteria	Response of Pre Pandemic Interns in %	Response of Post Pandemic Interns in %
Extra/Special training imparted	Yes	23%	96%
	No	77%	4%
Aware of new trends & recent changes in the industry	Yes	67%	89%
	No	33%	11%
Enhanced confidence & moral of students	Yes	91%	98%
	No	9%	2%
Assisted in identifying, understanding & choosing their area of interest	Yes	63%	59%
	No	37%	41%
Employment opportunities created through internship	Yes	76%	52%
	No	24%	48%

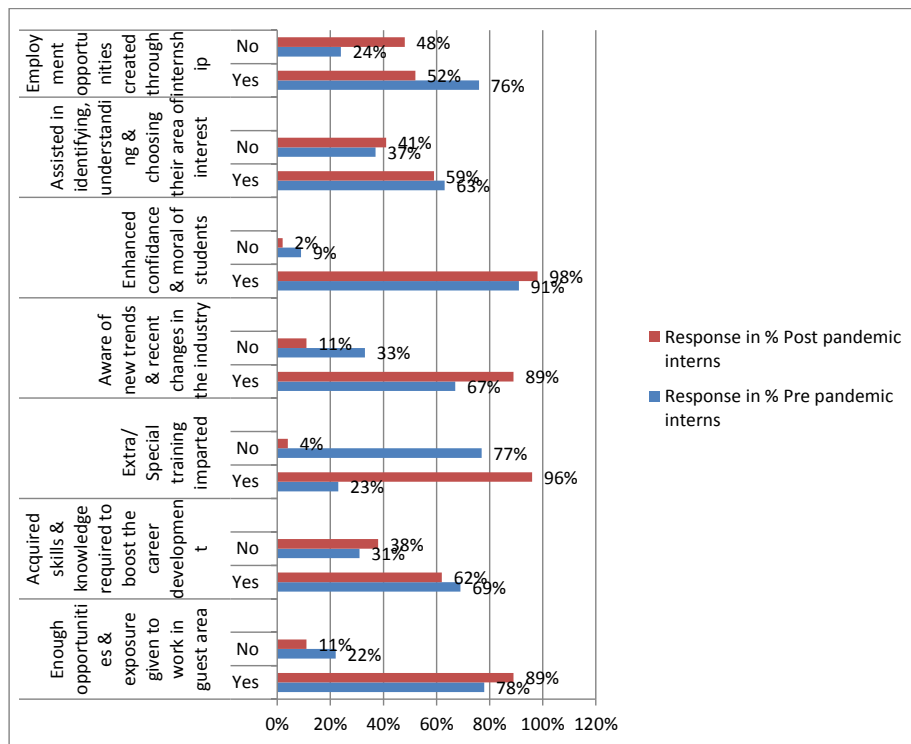


Fig: 1

Research Findings

After interpreting & analyzing the data it has been revealed that majority of the respondents were young, single males and all the respondents belongs to hospitality related educational background, of which little less than half were employed at the time they were surveyed. All the respondents have gone through internship of which two third have done their internship pre-pandemic & one third in post-pandemic era and more than three fifth of the respondents were offered job opportunities by the host organization after completing the programme. The findings of table 3 reveal that most of the respondents have shown a considerable development in terms of skills & abilities acquired as they were graded as very good in the table. Also the interpretation of table 4 shows that the internship programme for hospitality students was very effective & efficient as most interns were found effective in most of the efficiency factors such as punctuality, integrity, self-dependability, responsibility taking abilities, honesty, interpersonal relationships, departmental learning, responsibilities given, acceptance of department specified. The comparative study of pre-pandemic & post-pandemic interns reveals that there is only a marginal difference in the achievement level of most of the internship objectives, but a remarkable difference in some of the objectives such as additional training imparted & opportunities created through internship.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the component of industrial training is very much essential for courses in the field of hospitality management as the compiled data collected through the questionnaire survey states that industrial training not only assist students in their professional development, but also imparts practical skills to the students which are beneficial for the students when they start working in the hotels. All the respondents have done their industrial training in all four major operational department of the hotel which not only assisted them in enhancing their overall hotel knowledge and managerial skills but also enables them to perform better at the time of job placements. After completing the industrial training interns are aware of new trends and post pandemic changes in the industry which makes them more confident and competent during placements.

The study also concludes that internship creates considerable employment opportunities for the interns during the internship itself as most of the organizations prefer to employ interns who had done internship training with them and shown their keen interest & enthusiasm to work with them. This proves that internship program is highly effective in almost all aspects and helps the respondent to opt for a better job opportunity in their current organization or to seek a better one in another brand. Internship not only creates job opportunities, but also helps interns in identifying their area of interest and choosing the department they want to excel their career in.

On comparing the response of pre-pandemic & post-pandemic interns on the basis of the objectives of internship, it can be concluded that because of pandemic there is a noticeable difference in the achievement level of some of the internship objectives such as additional training imparted & employment opportunities created through internship.

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