

Green Skills in Action: How Internships Shape Sustainable Leaders

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Abstract

Green skills, also known as evergreen skills, are fundamental, ageless characteristics such as leadership, critical thinking, communication, and problem solving—all of which are in constant demand across industries. Through practical experience, real-world challenges, and professional exposure, internships are essential in assisting people to develop these timeless talents. They lay the groundwork for long-term professional development by giving people the flexibility, collaboration, and strategic decision-making skills they need. The ability to hone skills in a professional setting in a structured environment is one of the main advantages of internships, as it lays the foundation for long-term career development. Long-term success depends on these experiences because they develop problem-solving skills, leadership potential, and a growth mindset. Internships help people develop their decision-making skills and prepare for leadership positions in their industries by giving them a platform for learning through real-world application. The study also looks at how internships help develop candidates who are prepared for the future. Internships foster long-term professional development by fusing leadership skills with industry expertise. According to the study's findings, including evergreen skills into internship programmes guarantees ongoing professional development in a world that is constantly changing while also improving employability. In today's volatile job environment, businesses are increasingly looking for applicants with strong evergreen skills, recognising their value in handling workplace

challenges. Internships are an essential first step in advancing one's career since they provide individuals with a competitive edge through critical thinking, effective leadership, and role adaptation.

Keywords: Green Skills, Evergreen Skills, Leadership, Internships

Introduction

Green skills are the backbone of all employability skills. Ageless skills such as communication skills, leadership skills, and interpersonal skills are some of the skills that human beings will need no matter which career streams they opt for. Communication skills shape one's personality, character and their abilities to perform tasks; in the absence of this they will only do the routine tasks which can be easily done by systems. When a team is worked with for an organisation or the company itself, leadership skills will motivate the workforce to meet goals and objectives. But whenever technological adversity is brought about, thinkers possessing evergreen skills will be able to find a way out of the crisis. Critical thinking, communication, adaptability, problem-solving, etc., are some of the evergreen skills. Though the big companies are changing and beginning to depend on technology to get their future requirements, an individual with green skills will become increasingly important, and this will strengthen the sustainability of the employee force. Interns with green skills and evergreen skills will have

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the best fit for the demanding requirements the job market seeks.

Green skills are essential for the transition toward environmentally sustainable industries, ensuring workforce adaptability in a rapidly evolving market (Sern, Zaime & Foong, 2018). The in-the-field experience gained from internships gives direct insight into how actions and decisions affect results. Students can comprehend the impact of their actions, both positively and negatively, enriching their understanding of the critical thinking process (Azis et al., 2023). Green skills and evergreen skills interns will be the best fit for the challenging needs the job market demands. Interns with green skills and evergreen skills will make the best suitable role for the challenging needs the job market requires. In essence, carrying these skills with the job relevant skills will make an employee thrive in their career (Brown & Taylor, 2021).

Methodology

The study presents a quantitative approach to examining the performance of the Social Immersion Internship in developing students' knowledge and outlook in judging the surrounding people. The method offers a basis for the statistical analysis of the student feedback, which offers insights into the effect of the internship. The study examines the contribution of green skills and evergreen skills to students' learning process. Internships serve as a bridge between higher education and employability, equipping students with leadership experience and industry-relevant skills (Jackson, 2017).

- *Participants*

A descriptive research design was utilised in order to record systematically the experience and learning of the students. A total of 328 responses were gathered from a Google Form survey that consisted of several faculties and various programmes. The approach of this survey was more hopeful than general impressions.

- *Survey Administration*

The Google Forms were used to carry out the survey and were made available to participating students of the Social Immersion Internship. The link was distributed through

academic media to make it accessible. To motivate the students, they were given a deadline to fill out the survey, and periodic reminders were sent to ensure maximum responses. The students were promised anonymity, and they could provide candid feedback without fear of privacy breaches.

- Compulsory key questions were included to prevent insufficient submission.
- The confidentiality of data was ensured to tackle privacy issues.
- The data gathered was further well categorised and automatically documented for analysis.
- *Informed Consent*

All the participants were made aware of the purpose of the research, which was to assess the effect of the Social Immersion Internship on their learning and skill acquisition. They were also aware of the nature of questions in the survey, i.e., regarding their pre- and post-internship experience and that the responses would be utilised for research and academic purposes.

- *Anonymity and Confidentiality*

The survey was made anonymous so that no personally identifiable information was associated with the responses. Any demographic information gathered (e.g., faculty or programme) was utilised solely for aggregate analysis and not for individual identification. Data were handled confidentially, and responses were not disclosed to faculty members and internship coordinators.

- *Data Security and Storage*

All the answers were safely kept in Google Forms with restricted access, available only to authorised researchers for analysis. Appropriate data handling procedures were adhered to in order to avoid any unauthorised access, data breaches, or misuse of information.

- *Neutrality and Non-Bias in Question Design*

The survey questions were carefully structured to be neutral, non-leading, and non-discriminatory to ensure objective responses. A common questionnaire was designed to ensure all programmes get their objective for answering.

Survey Results Analysis

The survey analysed various perspectives of the internship experience based on student ratings. The results indicate the overall impact of the internship on students' learning, development of evergreen skills development, and alignment with their expectations (Fig. 1).

Key Findings

- *Comprehension of Social Problems:* The internship was immensely successful in gaining firsthand experience in social problems, as reflected through the highest 5-star reviews (125). Moreover, the total average score of 3.95 indicates the positive response that leads to influential experience.
- *Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:* With a score of 3.99 and 132 respondents. This indicates that the internship effectively helped in the formation of real-world problem-solving skills with the application of critical thinking skills.
- *Interpersonal Skills:* With a rating of 4.04 and 143 participants having a 5-star rating, the information indicates that the internship positively impacted social interactions.
- *Social and Professional Behaviour:* With a rating of 4.11 and 152 participants having a 5-star rating, the information points towards an appreciable change in professional communication, ethical behaviour.
- *Giving Back to Society Attitude:* Being highly rated at 4.02 and receiving a 5-star rating from 137 participants, the results reflect that the internship had a greater sense of social responsibility and an active involvement in the community (Table 1).
- *Communication and Self-Confidence:* Being rated the highest with a score of 4.13 and receiving a 5-star rating from 157 students, the results reflect an overall growth in terms of communication skills and building self-confidence and interpersonal skills.
- *Matching Expectations:* With a score of 3.9, the results indicate that though the internship generally satisfied students' expectations, there was room for improvement to more closely meet their needs.
- *Knowledge of Real-World Problems:* The internship, rated at 3.93, assisted students in addressing the disconnect between theoretical and practical application. The 128 participants who provided a 5-star rating further attested to its real-world usage.
- *Facilitation of Academic Learning:* Having a 3.93 rating, the 128 students that gave it a 5-star rating also increase its relevance in real-life situations and efficacy within their own scholarly work assisting them in future.

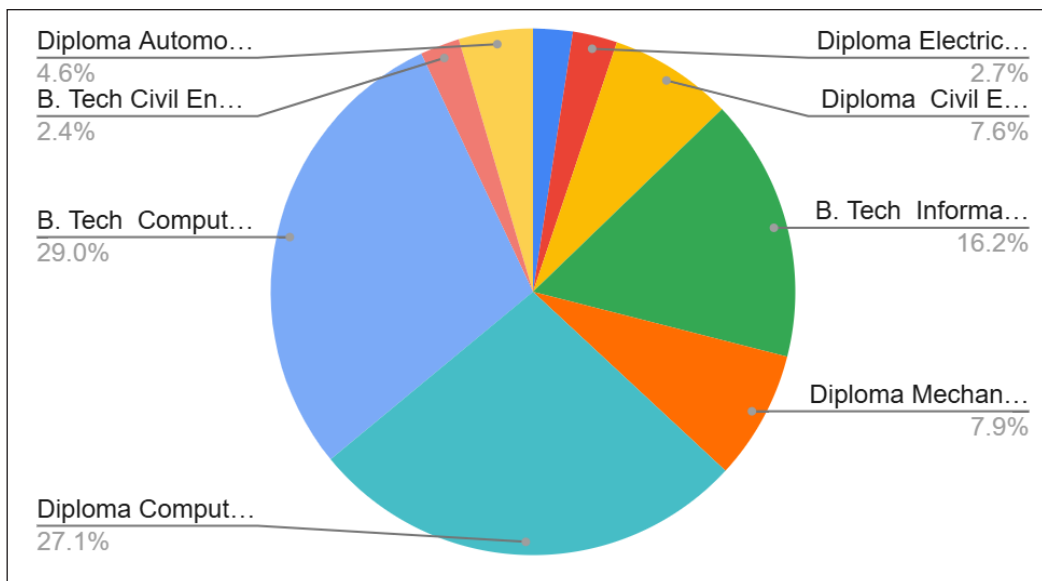


Fig. 1: Pie Chart Showing of How Many Students Participated from Each Programme

Table 1: Table That Shows the Rating of the Questions in the Survey

Survey Question	Avg. Rating	1 (Lowest)	2	3	4	5 (Highest)
Understood the social issues in depth through first hand information.	3.95	13	12	80	98	125
Developed critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.	3.99	14	16	61	105	132
Developed interpersonal skills.	4.04	16	6	69	94	143
Developed social and professional behaviour.	4.11	12	10	61	93	152
Nurtured an attitude of 'giving back' to society.	4.02	14	10	68	99	137
Improved communication skill and self confidence.	4.13	12	9	61	89	157
To what extent did the internship align with your initial expectations?	3.9	13	16	79	103	117
Contribution of internship to your understanding of real-world issues in your field of study.	3.93	15	13	79	93	128
The internship experience complemented/ supported in your academic learning.	3.98	22	7	64	97	138

Discussion

Summary of Findings

The findings of the survey transparently reflect that internships substantially develop significant evergreen competencies such as communication, leadership, critical thinking, and flexibility. Interns rated the impact of internships on numerous competencies higher, with communication skills (4.13) and interpersonal skills (4.04) receiving the top ratings, followed by critical thinking (3.95) and problem-solving (3.99). Overall, interns were satisfied with their experiences, and many indicated that they were better prepared to understand real-world problems and were better prepared for their professional futures. Sustainable development relies on green skills and lifelong learning, which are being integrated into modern education systems increasingly.

Interpretation of Results

Based on these findings, internships are crucial for the cultivation of critical, transferable skills to ensure long-term professional success. Such experiences are vital for the development of employability, increased confidence, and work readiness. Internships cultivate evergreen skills such as flexibility and problem-solving that aid long-term career progress. Critical thinking and problem-solving,

key evergreen skills, are developed through internship experiences that challenge students in real-world scenarios (Anderson & Clark, 2018).

Literature Comparison

These results affirm the significance of internships in competency improvement. Education is necessary to provide future generations with the information and skills needed for sustainable development. In addition, the direct relationship between internships and workforce readiness highlights that internships that match are critical to preparing students to deal with the demands of the job market. This view is also reinforced by the high scores achieved in problem-solving and critical thinking. By promoting the development of leadership competencies and occupational skills, internships and work-based learning enhance students' employability. As industries evolve, professionals with these skills can navigate changes effectively and stay competitive (Thompson & Rivera, 2018).

Limitations

While the survey offers useful data, there are some significant disadvantages. To begin with, the sample size and scope could be limited in how well they reflect the variety of experiences interns might have across various

industries. Results may not be generalisable to every internship programme and are confined to the survey participants.

Implications

The findings underscore the significance of internships as a deliberate strategy for building important skills. To be as effective as they can be for preparing individuals for their future careers, internships should be designed with precise objectives that prioritise particular skills such as communication, leadership, and critical thinking.

Future Studies

Future research could examine the effects of internships on career trajectories in the long term and the gaining of transferable skills from such an experience makes people stronger. The decision-making and leadership skills acquired during internship have a significantly impact on career progression. The impact on long-term career achievement. Decision-making and leadership skills gained through internships significantly impact long-term career development and success (Fleming & Lawrence, 2020).

Conclusion

Internships are crucial in developing the skills necessary for long-term career achievement and adaptability in an evolving labour market, as documented here. Green skills are pivotal to the transition towards green industries and in workers' adaptation within a more changing market. As companies evolve, practitioners with such skills can adapt accordingly and stay competitive. Through encouraging leadership development and the application of practical skills in real-world settings, internships improve career preparedness (Kauffman & Hargrove, 2019).

This study emphasises the importance of internships in the acquisition of transferable skills needed to attain long-term occupational success and mobility in an unstable labour market. Green competencies are needed in order to transition into the sustainable industries and

worker adjustment. For a more vibrant market. Green skills are now becoming a necessity for new college graduates searching for employment in an increasingly sustainability-oriented job market. Green skills are becoming fundamental for young graduates seeking employability in an increasingly sustainability-driven job market (Belloc, 2023). With changing industries, experts can gain skill of adapting with the change and continue to flourish. Green skills are no longer voluntary but essential, particularly since internships in environmentally friendly industries are becoming more and more sought after. Education plays a crucial role in equipping future generations with the knowledge and skills needed for sustainable development (Rowe, 2007).

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