

Internship Program: Does it Strengthen or Weaken Tourism Students' motivation?

Rosita

Resort and Leisure Management
Indonesia University of Education
Bandung, Indonesia
rosita@upi.edu

Muhammad Zaky Umadi

Management Resort & Leisure
Indonesia University of Education
Bandung, Indonesia

A. H. Galih Kusumah

Management Resort & Leisure
Indonesia University of Education
Bandung, Indonesia
galih@upi.edu

Abstract—One of the students' orientations in choosing a department in college is their future career. However, several previous studies confirmed that learning experiences can influence students' future interest in continuing their careers in line or even leave it. This study aims to investigate the influence of tourism students' internship experience on their motivation to pursue career in the tourism and hospitality industry. Respondents were 72 tourism students of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia who have finished their internship programs in 2015. Data collection was carried out for one month in two methods by sending questionnaires to the email of each respondent and self-administrative questionnaires. Simple linear regression was employed to analyze the data. The result showed that internship program experience did not have significance influence on students' motivation to pursue career in Tourism Industry.

Keywords—internships; tourism students; tourism industry; motivation

I. INTRODUCTION

Internship program for tourism students has been well known as a skill development element in curricula for career preparation. It is usually done in a short-term period where students are trained in a specific field they are interested in [1]. It integrates work with learning experience to facilitate students in their transition from student to employment [2]. It also helps students to gain practical experience which they cannot acquire in learning at class [3], [4]. In turn, organizations or companies who participates in this program can get benefits in reducing employment recruitment and costs [5]. Researchers found that Internships can improve students' academic performance and also motivate them to study [6], improve their self-confidence [7] and adaptability to their work environment [8] especially for tourism students where the industry requires skilled labor in its highly competitive and dynamic environment [9]. However, other researchers found that students also had negative experiences while they were in their internships and it influenced their intention to work at the same industry [10], reduced their confidence to pursuit career in the industry [11] or even it made them leave the industry after they finished their internships [12], [13]. Those findings are confirmed by further studies which concluded that negative internship experiences influenced students motivation

to work in the tourism industry [1], [9], [14], [15]. This study tries to investigate how much influence is the internships experience on tourism students' motivation to work in the tourism industry.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been several studies which found that internship as one of the elements in curricula is giving positive values on students' career development. For instance, psychologically internship is able to increase students' self-esteem [7] because they have already familiar with their work and work environment, so that they will tend to adapt more easily [8]. Internship also has a positive and significant impact on the readiness of students to work [16], increase the market value of students in the industry and their expectations of getting a good and appropriate job in the future [14], [17]. Students are also able to recognize discrepancies between their internship experiences and what they have learned in class and make them more aware of the problems in the industry [18].

However, extent studies focused on the students' negative internship experiences found that there are several issues identified in contributing to students' unsuccessful internships such as, interns' abilities which is connected to inadequate skills perceived by students at schools, low payment or even zero incentives, poor reward and support from the industry especially in mentorship during the internships [18], [19].

The successful internship is the combination between student expectations and interns' perceptions of their internship experience [20]. There are several factors that can influence student expectations and perceptions of their internships. Expectations which do not fit with perceptions will naturally arise dissatisfaction and it may influence the students' motivation on pursuing career related to tourism and hospitality.

Several studies show that successful internships are able to enhance the students' intentions to pursue tourism and hospitality related careers after their graduation [7], [14], [21]. In the contrary, negative internship experiences will lead the students to leave the tourism and hospitality industry or pursue another career [14], [15]. Discrepancies between the pre-

internship perceptions and the actual experience can influence students not to pursue his or her career in tourism [22]. Depending on their experiences, students may have either a positive or a negative perception of their internships, negative perception will usually decrease their motivation to remain in the industry [23]. Other previous study also confirmed that internships experience can make students rather pessimistic regarding their future jobs [17]. However, students may also pursue careers in the tourism and or hospitality industry when the industry manifests work values that fit to what they desire [24].

III. METHODS

This study aimed to examine how much the influence of internship learning experiences is on the students' motivation pursuing career in tourism industry. A quantitative research framework was employed in this research. The data gathered through online and self-administrative questionnaires which consisted of 15 questions about students perception related to the three main dimensions of internship, 1) pre-internship, 2) internship, 3) post-internship and 6 questions about both students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Respondent were 72 students who studied at Resort & Leisure Management Department of Indonesia University of Education and joined the internships program for four to six months in tourism or hospitality industry. Simple linear regression analysis was employed to analyze all the data obtained in this research.

TABLE I. VARIABLES

Dimensions	Indicators
Pre-internship	Internship purpose & outcome Pre-internship seminar Pre-internship training Learning outcome - Job description suitability
Internship	Industry orientation Mentoring/supervising Work done Industrial treatment Adaptation ability
Post-internship	Internship learning outcome Industrial appreciation Satisfaction on learning experience
Intrinsic motivation	Urge to work in tourism industry Needs to work in tourism industry
Extrinsic motivation	Work environment Work opportunity

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

A. Internship Process

Research participants' internship period was for 4 to 6 months. The process of internships consist of the pre-internship, internship, and post internship process. Pre-internship process starts by attending a pre-internship seminar

where seniors inform their internship experiences from the company profiles, job description to their own self-experience. Junior students find that the information make them easier to make choices which company they will apply to according to their interests and abilities. The school also provide them briefing of academic and behavioral guidance. When students accepted by the company as intern students, the learning process in the field has just begun. Students will try to apply what they have learned during the class both soft and hard skills they have in doing their internships at the company. After they finished their internships program and go back students must review and reflect on their experiences and identify personal and professional developments from their internships experience in the form of written reports.

B. Respondents' characteristics

As shown in Table 1, 52.8% of the 72 respondents of this study were male and 47.2% were female. Half of them or 52.8% had their intern at Hotels which mostly placed at Food & Beverage department. Rest were various at resort hotel, recreation area, tourism bureau, and the other 6,9% had their intern at tourism research center and architecture consultant.

TABLE II. PROFILES OF RESPONDENTS

(n=72)	Profiles	n	%
Gender			
	Male	38	52.8%
	Female	34	47.2%
Intern Placement			
	Hotel	38	52.8%
	Resort Hotel	12	16.7%
	Recreation Area	7	9.7%
	Tourism Bureau	10	13.9%
	Other	5	6.9%
Intern Department			
	Food & Beverage	15	20.8%
	Front Office	12	16.7%
	Accounting	3	4.2%
	HRD	7	9.7%
	Marketing	10	13.9%
	Guest Relation	4	5.6%
	Research & Development	4	5.6%
	Training	3	4.2%
	Hotel Operational	8	11%
	Other	6	8.3%

C. Simple linear regression analysis

The constant value means that when internships program (x) is zero or work motivation (y) is not influenced by internships program, then the constant value is 20,379, while the regression coefficient b is 0.059 which means that if the internships program variable (x) increases by one unit, then the motivation to work in tourism industry (y) will increase by 0.059. The regression coefficient is positive, meaning that internships program (x) has a positive influence on work motivation (y) but does not have a significant effect.

TABLE III. REGRESSION CALCULATION

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	20.379	4.087		4.987	.000
PPL	.059	.079	.089	.748	.457

Based on the above results, the adjusted R value in this study is 0.008 which indicates the Internships Program variable (x) has a positive influence on students' work motivation (y) 0.008 of 1 with a percentage 0.8% which shows the correlation is in the very weak category.

TABLE IV. DETERMINATION COEFFICIENT

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.089 ^a	.008	-.006	3.722	1.874

The T-test results $T = 8.015$ where $0.748 > 2$ (t table) which means that the internships program variable (x) individually influences the working motivation variable (y) of 0.748. It can be concluded that H_0 is accepted, meaning that there is no effect of the internships program variable (x) on works' motivation variable (y).

TABLE V. T-TEST

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	20.379	4.087		4.987	.000
PPL	.059	.079	.089	.748	.457

F table value is 0.559 where $0.559 < 4$ which means H_0 is accepted or the internships program variable (x) does not affect the students' work motivation in the tourism industry.

TABLE VI. F-TEST

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	7.741	1	7.741	.559	.457 ^a
Residual	969.759	70	13.854		
Total	977.500	71			

Based on the participants' opinion on the implementation of the internships program, the post-internship dimension gets the highest percentage (80%). It where the students get good appreciation and assessment from the industry, students can reflect and apply their knowledge obtained from studying in class, and both made them satisfied.

TABLE VII. PARTICIPANTS' OPINION ON INTERNSHIPS PROGRAM

Sub Variable	Percentage	Category	Score
Pre-internship	66%	Fair	1431
Internship	78%	Good	1403
Post-internship	80%	Good	1165
Total	74%		3990

The lowest percentage is in the pre-internship stage (66%). At this stage students think that they have not received enough information from the industry where they will have their internships, either information about the position or job description they will do. The percentage of job suitability with their knowledge and abilities obtained in the class is only half more around 58.9%. This result arises because as many as 31.8% of students occupy the hotel operational position and FB service which is not in accordance with the learning outcome which is managerial expertise. In addition to this, the intrinsic motivation of students to work in the tourism industry is in a very high category which is seen from the desire of students to work in the tourism industry before the internship and the level of effort taken by the students to get positive work experience during their internship. The strongest motivation comes from within oneself, the stronger the internal motivation, the more likely it is to show a strong level of behavior to achieve the goal. Students who are internally motivated will tend to like their work and be free in expressing their creativity or innovation in their work so that this attitude also gets appreciation from the industry which ends mutually with positive experiences for internships students.

However, the thing that still needs to be considered to maintain this intrinsic motivation is that the lecturer have to try to apply several learning methods that can effectively increase student motivation such as giving awards, giving recognition and attention, and inviting participation.

V. CONCLUSION

Although the results of the study show that there is no influence of the internship program on the students' motivation to work in the tourism industry, it does not mean that the good or bad of the internship program is the same as the result. But actually it is the intrinsic motivation of the students to work in the tourism industry when choosing the tourism department should be maintained so that it remains strong or even improved. This can create a positive learning spirit when they become internship students and will then get positive feedback from the industry. This study still has many limitations, especially from the homogeneous aspect of the participant, that is, only on students in one department and one university. Hopefully future research can further increase the number of participants and their variations

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