

Internship for Knowledge Enhancement – An Exploratory Study

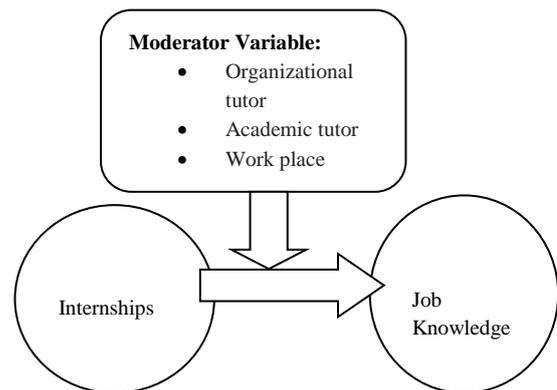
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Abstract: Getting a job has become a difficult task for graduates, as they are expected to possess an enormous amount of knowledge. Both, the theoretical and practical knowledge are considered to be very important. Though there are various resources available to enhance knowledge, ‘Internship’ is considered to be a primary source. The present study is focused in this area and the data was obtained from one hundred students studying engineering programme in computer science and electronics stream. Adapted questionnaire is employed for the study. Statistical analysis is used for the interpretation of data. The study undeniably proves the importance of internship programme in various aspects and recommends collaborative projects for the well-being of students.

Index terms: Knowledge, Practical exposure, Internship, Consultative sessions, Collaborative projects

concluded that the internships facilitate students to gain better knowledge. Yi (2018) proceeded research in this area and examined the relationship between ‘internship quality’ (IQ) and ‘entrepreneurial intention’ (EI)[10]. Seven hundred and two engineering students were the respondents for the study. It was found that the variable, ‘entrepreneurial desirability and feasibility’ mediate the relationship between IQ and EI. Although, a number of research studies are carried out in this part, no study has considered the stake-holders as moderators. The present study reveals the relationship between independent (Internships), moderator (Organizational tutor, Academic tutor, Work place) and dependent variable (Job knowledge). The framework of the study is given below in figure 1.

Figure 1: Framework of the Study



I. INTRODUCTION

Individual’s capability can be determined through their knowledge. Considering the current trend, the knowledge gained through books is no way going to be helpful for the students for doing a practical job. It is a known fact that the organizations spend so much of money to make their employees job fit[1]. Permitting students to work in the organization for a specified period of time is called as an internship and it is entirely different from apprenticeship. Many researchers carried out research in this area and proved the existence of association between ‘internship programs’ and ‘job knowledge’.

Carried out research to identify the perception of students regarding the internship programme offered by a private university in Malaysia[6]. The study employed case study method. The study revealed that the students achieve positive attitude towards learning through the programme. Further, a study conducted by investigated the role of internship course and found that the students gain more professional competencies through industrial learning[8].

Similar study explored the students’ satisfaction level towards internship programs[9]. The students studying masters in chemical engineering at the University of Granada were the respondents for the study. It was found that the students were satisfied with the programs. But still the students recommended certain factors such as maintaining good inter-personal relationship between academician and students, and providing proper assistance to the students for selecting the opt internship etc. The study

II. METHODOLOGY & DATA ANALYSIS

Among one hundred respondents, fifty belong to the computer science background and the other fifty belong to the electronics background. An adapted questionnaire consisting of ten questions for the variable ‘internship’, seven questions for ‘organizational tutor’, five questions for ‘academic tutor’, five questions for ‘work place’ and ten questions for ‘job knowledge’ is applied for this study. Totally, the questionnaire consisted of thirty seven questions with five point rating scale. The reliability is tested using the Cronbach’s alpha value and the result is given below in table 1.

Table 1: Reliability

S. No	Variable	Cronbach’s alpha
1	Internships	0.88
2	Organizational Tutor	0.91
3	Academic Tutor	0.85
4	Work place	0.80
5	Job Knowledge	0.87

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The above table illustrates that the values are reliable for all the five variables. The validity is tested using the content and face validities. Content validity is found by incorporating the views of teachers, and middle level managers. Face validity is assessed by asking the respondents to express their views about the measures that are used for each variable. It is found that the questionnaire perfectly measures the targeted variable[2][3][5].

To study the difference between computer science students and electronics background students with regard to these variables, t-Test is calculated. For the independent and dependent variable, not much difference is observed between the

Whereas for the moderator variables, 'organizational tutor' electronic students attained higher mean value and for 'academic tutor' and 'work place' computer science students got higher mean value.

The result is reported as follows in table 2.

S. No	Variable	Computer Science Branch		Electronics Branch	
		Beta	p value	Beta	p value
1	Internships	0.563	0.000	0.550	0.000
2	Organizational Tutor	0.484	0.000	0.564	0.000
3	Academic tutor	0.491	0.000	0.545	0.000
4	Work place	0.577	0.000	0.416	0.000
5	Internships x Organizational Tutor	0.512	0.000	0.511	0.000
6	Internships x Academic Tutor	0.547	0.000	0.530	0.000
7	Internships x Work place	0.420	0.000	0.518	0.000

Table 2: Comparison of Computer Science & Electronics Background Students

**p<0.01, *p<0.05.

To test the interaction effect of the moderator variable, moderator multiple regression analysis is calculated. The moderating effect is supported under different conditions. With regard to computer science students, work place is highly found to predict the dependent variable followed by the variables internships, Internships x Academic Tutor (interaction term), Internships x Organizational Tutor (interaction term), Academic tutor, Organizational Tutor, and Internships x Work place (interaction term) respectively.

For the students belonging to electronics background, Organizational Tutor highly influences 'Job knowledge' followed by the variables Internships, Academic tutor, Internships x Academic Tutor, Internships x Work place, Internships x Organizational Tutor, and Work place respectively. Therefore, it is inferred that the moderator variable and its interaction term significantly predict the dependent variable, job knowledge. The values are tabularized in table 3.

S. No	Variable	Branch	Total number of respondents	Mean	p value	T -test
1	Internships	Computer Science	50	15.34	0.000	7.310
		Electronics	50	15.66	0.000	
2	Organizational Tutor	Computer Science	50	14.22	0.016	11.161
		Electronics	50	18.16	0.000	
3	Academic Tutor	Computer Science	50	15.63	0.000	9.341
		Electronics	50	14.11	0.000	
4	Work place	Computer Science	50	15.85	0.000	4.806
		Electronics	50	13.09	0.000	
5	Job Knowledge	Computer Science	50	21.71	0.000	13.469
		Electronics	50	21.53	0.000	

Table 3: Beta & Significance level

Dependent variable: Job knowledge, **p<0.01.

III.DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The present study proves that the internships play a predominant role for enhancing the job knowledge of an individual student. Though the students belong to two different branches, their concern for internship is found to remain the same. Moreover, the study proves that the relationship between independent and dependent variable is strengthened by the use of moderator variables. Educational institutions should offer internship programs as per the choice of the student. Organizations should provide a challenging environment for the young aspirants. Organizational tutor should offer guidance whenever/wherever is required by the student. Both the industries and institutions should conduct periodic reviews to the students. This would definitely give more exposure to the students for enhancing the job/practical knowledge. Academic tutor should regularly contact the industrial tutor to understand the students' work progress. Knowledge could only be gained if the student has self interest. Hence, the students should make use of the opportunity provided by the industry and institution. The study concludes that the students, industries, and institutions should be jointly involved in 'knowledge enhancement'.

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