

STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTION TOWARDS TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The study explored students' expectations and perceptions towards the Tourism and Hospitality Internship program by evaluating the pre-internship expectations and post-internship experience. The significance of this study lies in the fact that numerous students pursuing courses in tourism and hospitality assume internships as a stepping stone to their career in this million-dollar industry.

Method: The design of the study is quantitative. Using a five-point Likert scale, the items assessed pre-internship expectations and post-internship perceptions of students enrolled in higher educational institutions in Goa (India) offering hospitality and tourism management degree programs. The study took ten months, from February 2022 to November 2022. A total of 324 respondents participated in the study. Gap analysis, Factor analysis and Regression analysis were employed to analyse the data using SPSS version 27. The research study is one of its kind in India's hospitality and tourism sector. Research on internships in India's tourism and hospitality sector needs to be addressed, as it is a sensitive topic for students.

Result: Gap analysis provided variables with positive as well as negative gaps. Six variables yielded positive results while seventeen variables yielded negative gaps. Factor analysis factored out five factors namely: Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment, Learning opportunity and its facilitation, The job itself, Resume and Self-development, and Future employment opportunity. Regression analysis predicted two significant factors contribution towards overall satisfaction of the students towards internship program.

Conclusion: Gap analysis between students' expectations and perception provided significant results about the six variables that yielded positive differences. These variables were: Competitive fringe benefits, High team spirit in the group, Able to apply theories to the workplace, High autonomy, Able to develop technical skill, Feedback from managers, indicating that the expectations have been met or surpassed. The study presents that though the students are satisfied with a few aspects of the Internship, overall satisfaction is negative. Two factors, namely 'Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment' and 'Future employment opportunities,' are significant in predicting students' overall satisfaction with the Internship program. Considering the results, suggestions for higher education institutions are provided to improve the quality of the Internship program.

Keywords: tourism, hospitality, internship, work-integrated learning, expectation, perception.

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EXPECTATIVAS E PERCEPÇÃO DOS ALUNOS EM RELAÇÃO AO PROGRAMA DE ESTÁGIO DE TURISMO E HOSPITALIDADE

RESUMO

Objetivo: O estudo explorou as expectativas e percepções dos alunos em relação ao programa de Estágio de Turismo e Hospitalidade, avaliando as expectativas de pré-estágio e a experiência pós-estágio. O significado deste estudo reside no fato de que numerosos estudantes que buscam cursos em turismo e hospitalidade assumem estágios como um trampolim para sua carreira nesta indústria milionária.

Método: A concepção do estudo é quantitativa. Usando uma escala Likert de cinco pontos, os itens avaliaram as expectativas de pré-estágio e as percepções pós-estágio de estudantes matriculados em instituições de ensino superior em Goa (Índia), oferecendo programas de graduação em hotelaria e gestão de turismo. O estudo levou dez meses, de fevereiro de 2022 a novembro de 2022. Um total de 324 entrevistados participaram do estudo. Análise de lacunas, análise de fatores e análise de regressão foram empregadas para analisar os dados usando SPSS versão 27. A pesquisa é uma das mais semelhantes no setor de hotelaria e turismo da Índia. A investigação sobre estágios no setor do turismo e da hotelaria na Índia tem de ser abordada, uma vez que é um tema sensível para os estudantes.

Resultado: A análise de lacunas forneceu variáveis com lacunas positivas e negativas. Seis variáveis produziram resultados positivos, enquanto dezessete variáveis produziram lacunas negativas. A análise fatorial faturou cinco fatores, a saber: Orientação de Supervisão e Ambiente Organizacional, Oportunidade de Aprendizagem e sua facilitação, O cargo em si, Retomar e Autodesenvolvimento e Oportunidade de emprego Futuro. A análise de regressão previu dois fatores significativos de contribuição para a satisfação geral dos alunos para o programa de estágio.

Conclusão: A análise de lacunas entre as expectativas e a percepção dos alunos forneceu resultados significativos sobre as seis variáveis que produziram diferenças positivas. Essas variáveis foram: Benefícios competitivos marginais, espírito de equipe elevado no grupo, capaz de aplicar teorias ao local de trabalho, Alta autonomia, capaz de desenvolver habilidades técnicas, Feedback de gerentes, indicando que as expectativas foram atendidas ou superadas. O estudo apresenta que, embora os alunos estejam satisfeitos com alguns aspectos do Estágio, a satisfação geral é negativa. Dois fatores, a saber, "Orientação de Supervisão e Ambiente Organizacional" e "Oportunidades futuras de emprego", são significativos para prever a satisfação geral dos alunos com o programa de Estágio. Considerando os resultados, sugestões para instituições de ensino superior são fornecidas para melhorar a qualidade do programa de Estágio.

Palavras-chave: turismo, hospitalidade, estágio, aprendizagem integrada ao trabalho, expectativa, percepção.

1 INTRODUCTION

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is placed carefully in the curricula to enable the proficient growth of students and can be seen as one of the powerful practices used by higher educational institutes to contest for a broader pool of applicants. Industries are



looking for efficient solutions to train student trainees within their organizations and lessen the uncertainty in recruiting processes, as students expect more well-organized WIL programs to gain professional skills (Tobias, 1996).

Several higher educational institutions in Goa offer tourism and hospitality degree programs. These higher educational institutions are affiliated with Goa University, the only state-public university established in 1984. Students from various parts of India are enrolled in degree courses in these institutions, including tourism and hospitality. Goa's immense potential to drive the tourism and hospitality business has been recognized the world over as Goa bids supreme openings for a robust hospitality profession. The fifth biennial Hotel Rate State Planning survey for tourism regarded Goa as a major tourist destination by ranking it among the top five states in the country. The World Travel and Tourism Council (2018) ranked Goa as the world's third most preferred tourist destination and raised an apprehension that without highly qualified professionals with wide-ranging experience, this industry is in danger. Rightly observed by Klimovskikh et al (2023), that the management of human resources grounded on the philosophy of sustainable development will turn as a significant constituent of organizational development.

However, considering the dearth of studies in Goan and Indian tourism and hospitality sectors highlighting student Internship experience as compared to the numerous literature available in Western counterparts, the importance of this study lies in its attempt to address this gap by examining the expectations and perception of students towards tourism and hospitality internship program in Goa. The study set out to evaluate students' expectations prior to and perceptions following an internship program, thereby understanding what the interns expect and to what extent the organizations provide it. It then sought to determine the relationship with the overall satisfaction of the interns.

The study rests on the theory of Constructive Alignment. The theory of Constructive Alignment proposes that real work is done by the student and the teacher to only work as a facilitator, student-centered basically (Biggs, 2003). Constructive alignment theory encourages the alignment of learning, instruction, and assessment of students' competence at work (Dochy et al., 1999). Accordingly, the fundamental phase in establishing a WIL program is to lay out the learning goals. The second step is to develop teaching and learning exercises that encourage learners to attain the goals, and the final phase is selecting evaluation tasks that will assess if and how effectively every learner meets the standards outlined in the learning goals. This exercise may be carried



out by all the hospitality industry stakeholders jointly to overcome one constant issue confronting the internship program, i.e., determining an optimal evaluation tool that meets the needs of all stakeholders involved. Internships as a form of WIL can serve as a yardstick to assess students' potential to learn and apply their learnings to the practical work environment.

Internship is crucial for students to enter the hospitality business while directly tied to hospitality education (Collins, 2002; Jenkins, 2001). It is a significant topic of study to examine what students anticipate, perceive, and review about their internship experience. Cultural variations may also significantly influence students' expectations and perceptions of an internship program. In order to minimize the potential impact of cross-cultural bias, the study's scope is limited to Indian students in Goa who have attended internship programs while completing a degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management. Nonetheless, the questions like: What might students anticipate before the Internship program even starts? After its completion, how do students feel? How satisfied are students with the Internship program? What connection exists amongst the discrepancy between expectations and perceptions with overall internship satisfaction be addressed to create a high-quality Internship program. A preliminary investigation was done in this study that measured the expectations of students before joining the Internship program and their perception after the completion of the Internship program. By deducting perceptions from expectations, it was possible to determine the gap.

2 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Literature provides a wide range of definitions of WIL (Abeysekera, 2006). WIL is an umbrella term to integrate theoretical knowledge with workplace application. According to Pauze et al. (1989), WIL is the same as fieldwork, field experience, field practicum, cooperative education, or experimental learning experience. Kramer and Usher (2012) argued that WIL comprises work placement and is also associated with classroom learning, Whereas McNamara (2013) recognizes WIL as an approach that emphasizes knowledge exchange and development. WIL is a teaching technique enabling the amalgamation of theoretical knowledge and practice (Billett & Choy, 2014; Billett, 2022).

This study emphasizes one form of WIL, the Internship. Davies (1990) defines Internship as experiential learning that allows students to apply theories they have learned



in the classroom to real-world situations. It also allows them to integrate and solidify their thinking and behavior. According to McMahon and Quinn (1995), an Internship is a "supervised work experience" where students are given instructions and care during this time rather than working independently in the field. Fox (2001) regards Internship to bridge the enormous conceptual gap between academic theory and real-world experience. It is a form of practical learning that blends in-class discussion with real-world application (Wasonga & Murphy, 2006). Internships are defined as work monitored carefully, resulting in student learning through practice (Abeysekera, 2006).

Past studies have discussed the relationship between Internship and Education (Shortt, 1994; Collins, 2002). An increasing number of undergraduates consider enrolling in tourism and hospitality programs a golden opportunity with an internship component lasting anywhere from a few weeks to a year (Neuman, 1999; Cates-McIver, 1999). According to Busby et al. (1997), Internship programs offered by tourism and hospitality colleges also emphasize teaching student various technical skills, including computer technology, financial management, and quantitative techniques. In a survey comparing graduates from the hospitality and tourist industries in Australia and Hong Kong, students consistently evaluated internships as being more crucial to their chances of landing their first job (King et al., 2003).

Higher education institutions compete with hospitality organizations by deputing their students to fill the hospitality industry's human resources requirements (Lee & Chao, 2013). Studies claim that students' career decision-making is substantially influenced by the quality vis-à-vis satisfaction with the Internship program (Chen & Shen, 2012). Any undesirable experience from the Internship program has led to decisions about withdrawal from the hospitality segment (Lu & Adler, 2009; Richardson, 2008; Koc et al., 2014). According to Mohanty and Mohanty (2019) and Bello et al. (2019), a skill gap exists between the present tourism educational syllabus and the requirements of the hospitality segment. Such discrepancies have raised questions about the "quality" of an effective Internship program that will entice students to choose future employment in the tourism and hospitality sector. One bad experience will deter a young prospective employee from the hospitality industry (Fox, 2001). Waryszak (1999) adds that if an internship program falls short of students' expectations, it will deter them from working in the travel and hospitality sector after completing the course. Literature also put forth that students perceive internship programs as unstructured and poorly organized, students complain



about the quality, and as a result, the tourism and hospitality industries are seeing an increase in the number of graduates leaving this field (Jenkins, 2001; Rautenbach & Mann, 2019; Al-Romeedy et al., 2020; Hyasat, 2022). Potential causes may be pay and lengthy hours of labor (Patterson & George (2001), more obstacles to overcome as compared to other sector (Jenkins, 2001), inadequate training at educational institutes, less stipend, no compensation for on-site official visits by guides, lack of support from industry, poor guidance at the hotel (Yiu & Law, 2012). According to the findings of Leslie (1991), this sector struggles to retain a sizable number of qualified candidates. Taylor and Geldenhuys (2018) state that interns have a positive overall opinion regarding the Internship programs. However, support from the hospitality organization and the educational institution was absent. Literature highlights the fact that the students are not happy with the overall Internship program. Hence, it is essential for tourism and hospitality stakeholders to understand the factors underlying student satisfaction towards the internship program. This study plays key role in identifying the gap between expectation and perception as well as factors leading to overall satisfaction towards the Internship program thereby increasing percentage of students who stay in the sector after completion of their course.

2.1 STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS, PERCEPTIONS, AND SATISFACTION TOWARDS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The three parties involved in the internship program have diverse needs, expectations, and beliefs, as pointed out by Davies (1990). The expectations of students about the hospitality and tourism industry could vary after completion of their course (Sarabakhsh et al., 1989; Pavesic & Brymer, 1990). This can severely affect their job satisfaction and positive professional growth (Waryszak, 2000). According to Berta (2003), hospitality students in Florida had a high expectation of "potential for advancement," as opposed to a high perception of "broad experience" after completion of the Internship program, and about 85% of them continued working as part-time employees in the industry while pursuing their degree. According to Chan et al. (2002), before an internship program, Hong Kong tourism and hospitality students anticipated great chances for professional advancement and personal development. However, only the first aspect was deemed crucial following an internship program, showing that this opportunity allows students to get real-world experience that may help with their future



professional development. In evaluating Australian students' impressions of their cooperative education assignments, Waryszak (2000) discovered that peer cohesion, supervisor support, work pressure, control, and innovation were more prevalent than the others. Students in the hospitality and tourist industries are concerned about issues including lack of challenge and managerial participation (Knutson, 1989; Charles, 1992). Research also brings out numerous aspects such as academic theory, source of information, previous experience of work, if any, caliber of coaching at the educational institutions, as well as the student's level of willingness, are generally responsible for shaping student's expectations (Zopiatis, 2007; Jiang & Tribe, 2009; Chen et al., 2009; Singh & Dutta, 2010).

Findings of satisfaction with the Internship program were inconsistent across the research. Students conveyed positive and negative feelings and attitudes towards their internship experience (Mqwebedu et al., 2022). According to Busby et al. (1997), students were happy with their internship experience, particularly with the technical skills and information they gained. In another study by Emenheiser et al. (1997), most respondents held that they were happy with their internship experience and that it improved their capacity for problem-solving. This stresses for implementation of soft skills courses in business schools (Maulana, 2023). Ju et al. (1999) reported contradictory findings that Korean students assessed their hotel internship experience with low satisfaction and that two-thirds of respondents did not anticipate receiving a job offer after their internship program. Findings reported by Lu & Adler (2009), Chen & Shen (2012), and Koc et al. (2014) concluded that undesirable experiences during internship programs have led to withdrawal from the hospitality and tourism sector.

2.2 PROBLEMS RELATED TO INTERNSHIP

During the Internship program, hospitality students generally occupy positions that are highly noticeable to guests and can be stressful for the students at times. Moreover, Internship programs are sometimes thought of as "fixed postings" or "very regimented activities" without any job rotations, which could reduce the enthusiasm of hospitality students (Busby et al., 1997). Pavesic and Brymer (1990) observed that even the most career-focused person may experience burnout due to the lengthy working hours. Benefits such as pay and pay for overtime are scarce even after working under unfavorable conditions (McMahon & Quinn, 1995).



Students typically need more preparation and talent to meet the organization's expectations. Students struggle to overcome difficulties because they are intimidated by their work surroundings and inexperience (Huyton, 1991). Another area for improvement is that the students need help forming positive working relationships with their coworkers due to a poor employee-organization fit (McMahon & Quinn, 1995). Some organizations might need to be more wholly informed about the objectives of the internship program and might view interns as a complement to a labor shortage. According to Fox (2001), many businesses hire people interested in specific areas where they need staff instead of developing potential employees through Internship programs. Some businesses are still determining what to expect from students, how to train them successfully, or what skill levels they should achieve during their internship program (Huyton, 1991), especially in situations like Covid19 pandemic, it was very difficult to participate and learn online due to lack of infrastructure facilities (Khairiah- Khairiah et al., 2023). The academic supervisor also faces a considerable challenge in assessing internship performance (O'Toole, 2007). Most Internship program coordinators are academic staff members who oversee teaching and research and the organization and planning of Internship programs for their students (McQuade & Graessle, 1990). As a result of their enormous workloads, these staff members' ability to coordinate the Internship programs effectively and efficiently may need to improve.

3 METHODOLOGY

A person's expectations and perceptions are closely related to how they rate the quality and degree of satisfaction (Kandampully et al., 2001). Expectation (E) is the way people see the world before they have an experience, and perception (P) is how they feel once they have the experience. The degree of satisfaction with one's experience would then be indicated by determining the gap between Perception and Expectation (P-E). Suggestions can be provided for improvement areas in how Internship programs are organized.

A quantitative research design has been used in this study. The scale items evaluated interns' Internship expectations and perceptions based on the studies of Waryszak (1999), Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000), Kelley-Patterson and George (2001), and Lam and Ching (2007). The students across India enrolled in seven educational institutions in Goa, six offering a three-year degree program and one offering a five-year



integrated degree program in hospitality and tourism management affiliated with Goa University, were surveyed. After completing their internship program, the interns were requested to recall their preceding expectations and perceptions. The study took ten months, from February 2022 to November 2022. The minimum required hours for an internship vary among the various educational institutions. However, according to the structure of the syllabi of Goa University, the Internship must last a minimum of 08 weeks and a maximum of 24 weeks.

There were three sections in the questionnaire. Part I contains the pre-internship expectations and post-internship experience, containing 27 variables; part II contains a single-item scale measuring overall satisfaction; and part III covers the demographic data. The study recorded pre-internship expectations on a five-point rating scale ranging from Expected to a great extent (5) to Not at all Expected (1) and post-internship experiences on a five-point rating scale ranging from Met to a great extent (5) to Not at all met (1). A five-point rating scale ranging from Extremely satisfied (5) to Extremely dissatisfied (1) was used to measure the overall satisfaction level in part II. A total of 124 respondents participated in the study. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. By calculating the gap scores between the two measures, scores reflecting the degree to which internship expectations were not met, met, or surpassed were determined. The work by Lam et al. (2003) followed a similar procedure.

Gap analysis has determined the gap between pre-internship expectations and post-internship perception. Factor analysis with principal components analysis and VARIMAX rotation method was used to condense the original scale of 27 variables, which included information about superiors, job autonomy, peer relationships, and the job itself. Eigenvalues of 1 or more were deemed significant and selected for interpretation, while factor loadings of at least 0.5 were selected (Hair et al., 1998). Linear multiple regression has been used to determine the relative weight of the internship-related variables in predicting overall satisfaction. T-tests and descriptive statistics were also used. The internal consistency and reliability were assessed using Cronbach's alpha scale reliability analysis, and the generally accepted lower bound was chosen at 0.70 (Hair et al., 1998).



4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table No. 1: Demographic profile of the respondents (N= 324)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender			Previous Internship experience		
Male	209	64.5%	Yes	230	71%
Female	115	35.5%	No	94	29%
Internship duration			Department		
Less than four months	84	25.9%	Front Office	105	32.5%
4 to 8 months	198	61.2%	Housekeeping	52	16.0%
More than eight months	42	12.9%	Sales and marketing	21	6.4%
			Food and Beverage	105	32.5%
Star rating			Human resource	41	12.6%
One-star	00	0%			
Two-star	00	0%			
Three-star	42	12.9%			
Four-star	73	22.5%			
Five-star	209	64.5%			

Source: Primary data by author, (2023)

Table 1 provides the details of the 324 student respondents. Almost two-thirds (64.5%) of the respondents are Male, and slightly more than one-third (35.5%) are female. The majority of the students were placed in the Front office (32.5%) and Food and Beverage (32.5%) for an internship, followed by Housekeeping (16 %), Human Resources (12.6%), and Sales and Marketing (6.4%) for internship. More than half of the interns were placed in five-star hotels (64.5%) for an internship, followed by four-star hotels (22.5%) and three-star hotels (12.9%). The majority (71%) of the students had previous Internship experience. Maximum (61.2%) of the students were on Internship from 4 to eight months, followed by less than four months (25.9%) and more than eight months (12.9%).

Table No. 2: Students' Expectations and Perceptions Gap scores (N= 324)

Variables	Expectation Mean	(SD) ^a	Perception Mean	(SD)	Gap Mean ^b	t-test



Competitive training	4.12	1.04	2.96	1.12	-1.16	6.32**
Good to resume	4.13	0.87	3.65	1.18	-0.48	4.62**
Comprehensive training program	3.45	0.91	3.06	1.08	-0.39	4.57**
Feedback from managers	4.19	0.96	4.25	1.13	0.06	0.53
Good peer relationships	4.04	0.91	3.94	0.97	-0.10	0.24
Broad work experience	3.59	1.43	3.38	1.07	-0.21	1.53
Interesting and challenging work	4.41	0.75	3.96	1.47	-0.45	3.34*
Good work environment	4.51	0.87	3.89	1.03	-0.62	5.50**
Sufficient supervisory support	3.96	1.00	3.35	1.15	-0.61	6.19**
Reasonable boss	3.74	1.05	3.74	1.08	0.00	0.00
Competitive fringe benefits	3.25	1.22	3.63	1.26	0.38	2.50*
Good coordination between the institution and Internship organization	3.58	1.31	3.36	1.00	-0.22	1.24
Good opportunity for self-development	4.25	1.01	2.83	1.65	-1.42	8.22**
Appreciation and praise from managers	3.80	1.00	3.80	1.33	0.00	.00
The feeling of being a team member	3.94	1.37	3.83	1.14	-0.11	0.57
Sympathetic help from superiors with problems in the workplace	4.16	0.81	3.93	1.13	-0.23	1.72*
High autonomy	3.64	0.60	3.77	0.97	0.13	1.18
Acceptable work pressure	3.83	0.99	3.25	1.05	-0.58	3.78**
Encouraging innovative ideas	3.77	1.18	3.41	1.24	-0.36	2.02*
Stable work shift	3.41	1.52	3.04	1.51	-0.37	2.30*
Able to apply theories to the workplace	3.22	1.01	3.48	1.32	0.26	2.25*
Able to develop interests through practice	4.06	0.98	3.37	1.00	-0.69	9.65**
Good opportunity for future employment in the same company	3.90	1.20	3.90	1.09	0.00	0.00
High team spirit in the group	3.91	1.15	4.19	0.78	0.28	2.27*
Able to identify self-strengths and Weaknesses	4.00	0.95	4.00	0.95	0.00	0.00
Able to develop technical skill	3.70	0.89	3.79	1.20	0.09	0.76
Involve in supervisory tasks	3.66	1.28	3.51	1.24	-0.15	0.85

**p<0.01; *p<0.05.

All mean scores were rounded up to two decimal places.

a. SD: standard deviation.

Gap mean = perception mean-expectation mean.

Source: Primary data by author, (2023)

Table 2 provides significant observations about the six variables that yielded positive differences. The difference between expectation and perception for 'Competitive fringe benefits' increased by 0.38. For variables 'High team spirit in the group' and 'Able to apply theories to the workplace,' the perception means were higher by 0.28 and 0.26, respectively. Additionally, another three variables that yielded positive perception scores were: 'High autonomy' (0.13), 'Able to develop technical skill' (0.09), and 'Feedback from managers' (0.06), indicating the expectations have been met or surpassed. This finding shows that the hospitality organizations may have arranged some benefits for the interns such as traveling facility, accommodation, food, stipend, etc. The mean score of these variables indicates that students agreed that they had learned something from the internship program, especially about working in a group, applying the classroom theories



to the workplace, having the freedom to work, developing technical skills, etc. As a result, students are satisfied with these variables.

All negative mean gap differences indicate that expectations about the Internship could not be met, as observed in Table No. 2. 17 variables yielded negative differences between expectations and perceptions. The largest gaps were 'Good opportunity for self-development (-1.42), 'Competitive training' (-1.16), 'Able to develop interest through practice' (-0.69), 'Good work environment' (-0.62), and 'Sufficient supervisory support' (-0.61). This concludes that these internship variables suffered a quality shortfall, and the students are not satisfied with these variables. The possible reasons could be that the organization needed to provide the students with the expected training and self-development opportunities. The schedule and pre-set training program needed to have been prepared and followed by the superiors as expected by the students. As pointed out by Huyton (1991), a possible reason is that many hospitality organizations need to learn what and how to train students. This may be reflected in the interest in the students' work during their internship program. Another significant adverse finding is that high expectations about competitive training have negatively affected the internship experience. This shows that the students still need to receive internship training as per the required industry standards. This finding accords with Berta (2003) that students also have high expectations for advancement and provision of technical skills but contradicts the findings of Busby et al. (1997).

The Hospitality industry workforce quit the job because benefits like reasonable pay and pay for overtime are not provided even after working for extended shifts under poor working conditions. A study by McMahon and Quinn (1995) presents similar findings. Another reason could be that the students were not happy with the supervisory support they received. Students may have perceived that their superiors have not treated them fairly or treated them as replacements for sick employees. Waryszak (2000) contemplated that students consider supervisory support most important. This suggests that the students have yet to gain the full benefit of the Internship program that will make them proficient employees in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. Students know their tasks clearly, and the internship program is a stepping stone to entry into the Tourism and Hospitality industry. The finding points out the vital direction of preparing a curriculum by all the stakeholders that will ensure that basic requisite skills are imparted to students during the Internship program, supporting Jogaratnam and Buchanan (2004), who



proposed organizing a pre-internship seminar that will provide a comprehensive idea to students about the distinctive characteristics of hospitality positions that the interns occupy. The paired sample t-test indicated that 15 variables out of 27 variables were found to be significantly different ($t = < 0.01$).

Table No. 03: Factor Analysis on Gap Means score of Internship variables. (N=324)

Variables	Factor Loading	Communality	Eigen-values	% of variance	Cumulative variance %	Reliability coefficient
Factor 1: Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment			10.560	39.11	39.11	0.921
Feedback from managers	0.685	0.753				
Good peer relationships	0.566	0.790				
Good work environment	0.572	0.892				
Sufficient supervisory support	0.538	0.802				
Competitive fringe benefits	0.900	0.817				
The feeling of being a team member	0.808	0.841				
Sympathetic help from superiors with problems in the workplace	0.862	0.822				
High team spirit in the group	0.750	0.704				
Involve in supervisory tasks	0.866	0.907				
Factor 2: Learning opportunity and its facilitation			3.634	13.46	52.57	0.896
Good coordination between the institution and Internship organization	0.897	0.921				
Appreciation and praise from managers	0.583	0.641				
Encouraging innovative ideas	0.844	0.839				
Stable work shift	0.722	0.790				
Able to apply theories to the workplace	0.812	0.826				
Factor 3: The job itself			2.684	9.94	62.51	0.810
Broad work experience	0.788	0.817				
Interesting and challenging work	0.638	0.707				
High autonomy	0.744	0.794				
Able to develop technical skill	0.618	0.663				
Factor 4: Resume and Self-development			2.307	8.54	71.05	0.833
Competitive training	0.621	0.752				
Good to the Resume	0.559	0.865				
Comprehensive training program	0.727	0.894				
Reasonable boss	0.549	0.938				
Able to develop interests through practice	0.698	0.556				
Able to identify self-strengths and weaknesses	0.675	0.626				
Factor 5: Future employment opportunity			2.085	7.72	78.77	0.809
Good opportunity for self-development	0.844	0.847				
Acceptable work pressure	0.891	0.811				
Good opportunity for future employment in the same company	0.690	0.654				

Source: Primary data by author, (2023)



Another aspect of this study was to understand the impact of internship variables on the overall satisfaction level of the students. Hence, factor analysis was conducted to extract factors using 27 Internship variables, as seen in Table No. 3. According to the results shown, five factors were extracted, explaining a total variance of 78.77%. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion of sampling adequacy was 0.638, more significant than the suggested index of 0.60 (Hair et al., 1998), as well as the Barlett Test of Sphericity was 1163.175 ($p = 000$). The reliability tests showed that the five factors' reliability coefficients varied from 0.809 to 0.921, greater than the recommended significant threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 1998). As a result, good internal consistency was observed among the variables within each factor.

Table No. 04: Factor Ranking based on Grand mean gap (N=324)

Factors	Expectations Grand Mean (SD)	Perception Grand Mean (SD)	Grand Mean Gap (SD)	Rank ^a
Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment	3.96 (0.71)	3.84 (0.67)	-0.12 (0.66)	4
Learning opportunity and its facilitation	3.56 (0.83)	3.41 (0.51)	-0.15 (0.52)	3
Job itself	3.84 (0.52)	3.73(0.58)	-0.11 (0.37)	5
Resume and Self-development	3.92 (0.62)	3.46 (0.93)	-0.46 (0.61)	2
Future employment opportunity	3.99 (0.85)	3.33 (0.82)	-0.66 (0.49)	1

*Grand Mean is the Mean of Means of variables under each factor
SD represents standard deviation.

Grand Mean Gap = Perception Grand Mean-Expectation Grand Mean

^A Ranking of the Grand Mean gap is based on the mean values and indicated from high to low.

Source: Primary data by author, (2023)

Table 4 reveals the ranking of the five factors based on the grand mean gap. The latter was found by substituting the factor's expectation grand mean from its perception grand mean for comparative purposes only. The most significant grand mean gap was 'Future employment opportunity' (Grand mean gap -0.66, Rank 1), followed by 'Resume and self-development (Grand mean gap = -0.46, rank 2). This finding holds that the quality vis-à-vis satisfaction with the Internship program largely influences the decision about a career. Similar results were obtained by Lu & Adler (2009), Richardson (2008), Chen & Shen (2012), and Koc et al. (2014).

Additionally, other factors, namely, 'Learning opportunity and its facilitation' (Grand mean gap= -0.15, Rank 3), 'Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment' (Grand mean gap= -0.12, Rank 4), and 'Job itself' (Gap mean= -0.11, rank 5), have negative Grand mean score. This indicates overall dissatisfaction amongst the student interns about their internship program. Interns believe that the Internship



organization could have provided more exciting and challenging work opportunities and chances to improve their skills as per industry standards. This has led to disappointment among student interns and the failure of higher educational institutions and internship organizations to provide a realistic picture of internships prior to its commencement, considering the Goan Tourism and Hospitality industry environment. A study by Lam and Ching (2007) found similar results.

Table No. 05: Regression analysis of Internship factors on overall satisfaction (N= 324)

Factors	β	Beta	T	VIF	Tolerance
Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment	0.544	0.704	7.045**	2.656	0.377
Learning opportunity and its facilitation	0.149	0.222	1.789	04.088	0.245
Job itself	0.107	0.141	1.051	4.755	0.210
Resume and Self-development	0.029	0.144	0.200	5.189	0.193
Future employment opportunity	0.373	0.055	6.755**	1.673	0.598
Constant	3.954	-----	55.940		

Multiple R = 0.746, R² = 0.556, Adjusted R² = 0.537
 Standard error = 0.585, F = 29.581, Significant F = 0.0001
 **p<0.01.

Dependent variable: overall satisfaction; independent variables: five Internship factors; β : unstandardized coefficient; Beta: standardized coefficient; VIF: variable inflation factor; T: tolerance.

Source: Primary data by author, (2023)

Linear regression was used, with overall satisfaction as the dependent variable and the five factors as independent variables. Only two factors were statistically significant with overall Internship satisfaction, as seen in Table 5. They were 'Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment' and 'Future Employment Opportunity.' The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.556 demonstrated that these factors explained 55.6% of the variance in overall satisfaction. The t-values were less than 0.001, indicating that the regression model was statistically significant. The positive regression coefficients (β) show that the two factors influenced overall student satisfaction positively. The variance inflation factor (VIF) and the tolerance value were used to assess multicollinearity between the independent variables (Belsley et al., 1980). The results revealed no multicollinearity, as the VIF indexes remained under 10, and the tolerance values were more significant than 0.10.

Observation of partial correlation coefficients of the two independent factors recognizes that 'Supervisory Guidance and Organizational Environment' (β = 0.544) is the most critical factor in predicting overall Internship satisfaction. Similar results were reported by Singh and Dutta (2010), and Taylor and Geldenhuys (2018). Students also consider Future employment opportunities (β = 0.373) as the second most significant



factor in determining overall Internship satisfaction. This finding is supported by Koc et al. (2014), Robinson et al. (2015), and Shetu and Sayeda (2020).

5 CONCLUSION

Findings prove that students have learned something from their Internship program, especially tasks related to teamwork, applying classroom theories to the workplace, having the freedom to work, developing technical skills, etc. Students also praised that they were provided with exciting and challenging job opportunities during the Internship program that improved their hospitality skills. Hence, students are satisfied with these Internship variables. On the other hand, the variables with the most significant negative gap were good opportunities for self-development, competitive training, ability to develop interest through practice, good work environment, and sufficient supervisory support. This confirms that these Internship variables suffered a quality shortfall, and the students are dissatisfied with these variables.

Though students are satisfied with a few aspects of the Internship, the overall satisfaction is negative (evident from Table No. 4 Grand mean gap). The finding shows that the hospitality sector is inhospitable to its potential human resources. This cut a sorry figure for the Goan tourism and hospitality industry. Two factors, namely supervisory guidance, organizational environment, and future employment opportunity, are highly influential factors in predicting students' overall satisfaction with the Internship program. This concludes that trainees would be satisfied when they are provided with adequate support and guidance in the workplace along with a positive working environment. It is known that the working environment in hospitality organizations for internships differs from that of any corporate business or service organization. The internship experience will be enhanced when the organization creates a well-structured internship program for interns, providing them with meaningful jobs and allowing them to use their creativity to accomplish those jobs. Hence, the study supports the theory of Constructive Alignment.

6 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings, practical implications can be derived for higher educational institutions. First, the educational institution should take the lead and invite students and hospitality organizations to participate in preparing a structured Internship program by creating a well-defined, cohesive triangular framework. A sound internship program is



the need of the hour that includes setting genuine learning goals agreed upon by the student, internship organizations, and the academic institution. The internship program must include learning objectives, techniques for achieving those objectives, and parameters for evaluating results in line with the theory of constructive alignment. Amendments to the curriculum may be made if required.

Secondly, higher educational institutions should issue hospitality organizations and students guidelines regarding what is expected during an Internship program. Students will have communication issues, poor interpersonal relationships, or a lack of professional know-how. These issues can cause emotional trauma, depressed mood, and anger among students. An individual who can offer advice and support regularly to students will be able to reduce these psychological symptoms and boost trainees' Internship satisfaction levels. Therefore, a full-time specialized staff member may be appointed by the higher educational institution to oversee the Internship program, preferably with extensive industry experience. His/her strong industry background can also benefit students from close connectivity with industry stakeholders.

Indeed, it may not be possible to exactly match the expectations and perceptions of students regarding Internships. However, an attempt can be made to provide a realistic picture of the industry to the interns by organizing pre-internship seminars or discussions by the higher educational institution by counting industry specialists on board so that the student have true picture of the internship program.

7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study's limitations included a small sample size covering students from India enrolled in higher educational institutions for tourism and hospitality degree program in Goa. Therefore, results might not be able to be generalized to other samples. Future research should incorporate a more significant number of participants covering comprehensive range of tourism and hospitality services. A self-reported questionnaire was another methodological limitation; in addition, when completing the questionnaire, students were prompted to recollect their expectations when they were in the Internship program. Students' poor memory could harm the survey's validity. In future research, a longitudinal study of students participating in an Internship program can be used to minimize possible bias.



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