

Effect of Internship Experience on Career Readiness of Students

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Abstract: Internship experience has become an essential component of higher education as it helps students bridge the gap between academic learning and professional practice. The present study examines the effect of internship experience on the career readiness of students in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, particularly in Chennai, Trichy, Puducherry, and Karaikal. The study focuses on understanding how internship exposure influences professional knowledge, communication skills, teamwork abilities, workplace adaptability, confidence, and employability among students. The research adopted a descriptive research methodology, and primary data were collected from 150 students through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, correlation analysis, chi-square test, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings reveal that internship experiences positively contribute to students' professional growth and improve their readiness to enter the job market. Most respondents agreed that internships enhanced their communication skills, self-confidence, practical knowledge, and understanding of workplace expectations. The study also identified a positive relationship between internship exposure and employability skills, while regression analysis showed that communication skills gained through internships significantly influence students' confidence in attending job interviews. The study concludes that structured internship programs play a vital role in improving career readiness and preparing students for professional employment.

Keywords: Career Readiness, Communication Skills, Employability, Internship Experience, Professional Development, Skill Enhancement, Students, Workplace Adaptability.

I. INTRODUCTION

Internships provide an important bridge in preparing students for their professional careers by connecting academic learning with relevant real-world experience. The demands of the job market have changed over the years, and now employers expect graduates to possess theoretical knowledge as well as hands-on experience in their particular fields, along with a command of soft skills such as communication skills, adaptability, teamwork abilities, and professional behavior. Internships give students exposure to corporate culture and work in a real workplace environment, thus gaining experience in enhancing poachability.

Internships allow students to gain experience in applying concepts learned on the job, thereby giving them more confidence, expanding their professional knowledge, and developing competencies needed for successful entry into a profession. This is an analytical work that explores how internship exposure changes the career preparedness of students in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry (Chennai, Trichy, Puducherry, and Karaikal). The research examines how exposure to internships affects the following parameters: communication skills, interpersonal relationships, self-confidence, teamwork, problem-solving ability, professional development, and employability. It further seeks to ascertain whether internship experience plays a major role in strengthening students' readiness for career prospects after graduation. The work is based on a primary data collection from students containing a structured questionnaire. The collected data were interpreted with the help of various statistical methods such as percentage analysis, chi-square analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. It is hoped that the findings of this research will inform educational institutions, employers, and students on how internships contribute to career development and employability skills.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study mainly examines the impact of internship experience on the career readiness of students. A descriptive research design was adopted to understand how internship exposure affects employability skills, communication abilities, confidence, teamwork, and adaptability in the workplace.

For the purpose of the study, both primary and secondary data were utilized. Primary data were gathered from 150 respondents through a structured questionnaire covering students from Chennai, Trichy, Puducherry, and Karaikal. Secondary data were collected from various sources such as books, journals, websites, and earlier studies related to internships and employability.

The respondents were selected using the convenience sampling method. To analyze the collected information, statistical techniques including percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, chi-square analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were used. The research primarily aimed to examine the relationship between internship experience and the career readiness of students.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Demographic Analysis

Table 1: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	100	66.7%
Female	48	32.0%
Others / Prefer not to say	2	1.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 2: Age of the Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20 Years	6	4.0%
20–22 Years	77	51.3%
23–25 Years	58	38.7%
Above 25 Years	6	4.0%
Mixed Response	3	2.0%
Total	150	100%

Table 3: Course of the Respondents

Course	Frequency	Percentage
MBA/MCA	61	40.7%
Engineering	58	38.7%
Arts & Science	26	17.3%
Engineering & MBA/MCA	2	1.3%
Dental Surgery (B.D.S.)	2	1.3%
Arts & Science & MBA/MCA	1	0.7%
Total	150	100%

Table 4: Internship Status of the Respondents

Internship Status	Frequency	Percentage
Completed	123	82.0%
Ongoing	25	16.7%
Not Yet Started	2	1.3%
Total	150	100%

Table 5: Type of Internship

Type of Internship	Frequency	Percentage
Unpaid Internship	96	64.0%
Paid Internship	54	36.0%
Total	150	100%

Table 6: Duration of Internship

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 Month	45	30.0%
1–3 Months	58	38.7%
3–6 Months	31	20.7%
More than 6 Months	15	10.0%
Mixed Response	1	0.7%
Total	150	100%

The demographic analysis shows that most respondents were male students belonging to the 20–22-year age group. A majority of the respondents were pursuing MBA/MCA and Engineering courses. Most students had completed internships, mainly for a duration of one to three months. The findings also indicate that unpaid internships were more common among students. Overall, internship participation was found to be high among higher education students, contributing to their professional exposure and career readiness.

B. Internship Experience and Workplace Understanding

Table 7: Students' Perceptions of Internship Benefits and Career Readiness

Statement	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total Positive Response (%)
An internship helped me understand real workplace expectations	48.7	30.7	79.4
Internship improved my professional knowledge	47.3	28.7	76.0
Gained clarity about career goals through an internship	45.3	20.0	65.3
Internship made me more job-ready	44.0	21.3	65.3
Feel more prepared to enter the job market after an internship	40.0	24.7	64.7

Source: Computed from Survey Data (N = 150)

The analysis highlights that many students felt internships helped them understand workplace expectations and organizational culture more effectively. Respondents reported that internships enhanced their professional knowledge and provided practical exposure to real business environments. The findings indicate that internship programs allow students to connect theoretical learning with practical industry experience, thereby improving their understanding of workplace practices.

C. Internship Experience and Communication Skills

Table 8: Impact of Internship Experience on Students' Skill Development

Statement	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total Positive Response (%)
My communication skills improved during the internship	41.3	26.0	67.3
The internship enhanced my ability to work in a team	56.0	18.7	74.7
I developed better problem-solving skills during my internship	40.0	26.7	66.7
My internship helped me improve my interpersonal skills	48.7	26.0	74.7
I learned how to handle work-related challenges effectively	45.3	29.3	74.6

Source: Computed from Survey Data (N = 150)

The results reveal that internship experience played an important role in improving students' communication and interpersonal skills. Most respondents agreed that internships helped them interact more confidently with colleagues, supervisors, and clients. Internship exposure also strengthened teamwork abilities and encouraged students to collaborate effectively within organizational environments.

D. Internship Experience and Confidence Levels

Table 9: Impact of Internship Experience on Students' Confidence and Career Preparedness

Statement	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total Positive Response (%)
My internship increased my confidence in attending job interviews	40.0	28.7	68.7
I feel more confident in presenting my skills to employers	43.3	24.0	67.3

My internship reduced my fear of entering the corporate world	43.3	32.7	76.0
I am confident in handling job responsibilities after my internship	47.3	26.0	73.3
My internship experience boosted my overall self-confidence	41.3	38.0	79.3

Source: Computed from Survey Data (N = 150)

The study found that internships had a positive impact on students' confidence and overall career readiness. Many respondents stated that internship experience increased their confidence in attending interviews, handling professional responsibilities, and showcasing their abilities to employers. In addition, internships helped students become more comfortable with corporate environments and reduced anxiety related to future employment opportunities.

E. Internship Experience and Employability

Table 10: Impact of Internship Experience on Employability and Career Opportunities

Statement	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total Positive Response (%)
My internship experience increased my chances of getting a job	51.3	16.0	67.3
Employers prefer candidates with internship experience	40.7	32.7	73.4
My internship helped me build a professional network	45.3	23.3	68.6
The internship experience improved my resume/profile	51.3	34.0	85.3
Internship exposure plays a key role in enhancing employability	36.0	30.0	66.0

Source: Computed from Survey Data (N = 150)

The findings indicate that internships play a major role in enhancing students' employability. Most respondents believed that employers give preference to candidates with internship experience and that internships strengthen resumes and professional profiles. The study also shows that internships improve students' awareness of career opportunities, industry expectations, and professional requirements.

F. Correlation and Regression Analysis

Correlation Analysis:

Table 11: Correlation and Regression Analysis

		3. My internship experience improved my professional knowledge.	20. Internship exposure plays a key role in enhancing employability.
3. My internship experience improved my professional knowledge.	Pearson Correlation	1	.369**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
20. Internship exposure plays a key role in enhancing employability.	Pearson Correlation	.369**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

Result

The correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between professional knowledge gained through internship experience and enhancement of employability ($r = 0.369$, $p < 0.01$); therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Regression Analysis:

Table 12: Dependent Variable: Confidence in Attending Job Interviews

Predictor Variable	β (Beta)	t-value	p-value	Result
Communication Skills Improved During Internship	0.612	9.412	0.000	Significant

Model Summary

Table 13: Model Summary of Regression Analysis on the Impact of Internship Experience on Employability

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Sig.
0.612	0.374	0.370	88.587	0.000

Source: Computed from Survey Data (N = 150)

Interpretation

The regression analysis reveals that communication skills gained during the internship have a significant positive influence on students' confidence in attending job interviews ($\beta = 0.612$, $p < 0.001$). The model explains 37.4% of the variation in interview confidence ($R^2 = 0.374$). The F-value of 88.587 with a significance level below 0.001 confirms that the regression model is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Overall Result

The correlation analysis identified a positive and statistically significant relationship between internship experience and employability enhancement among students. Regression analysis further showed that communication skills developed through internships have a strong influence on students' confidence in attending job interviews. Overall, the results confirm that internship experience contributes positively to career readiness, professional development, and employability among students.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study leads the authors to conclude that experience interning has a significant effect on the career readiness of students as well as their professional development. Internships introduce students to the practical aspects of work that give them an interface between their academic experiences and the actual workplace scenarios. This contributes to the development of key skills such as communication, teamwork, confidence, adaptability, and professional knowledge among students.

In other findings, students who had been involved with internships were more confident and prepared for the workplace they felt well-prepared to enter the job market. The internship exposure also assisted the students in enhancing their employability and gaining more clarity on professional expectations, besides understanding the organizational culture better!

Statistical evidence also corroborated that a higher number of internships leads to an enhancement in employability. The findings of the study suggest that internship programs in educational institutes and organizations need to be strengthened. When they are well-planned, meaningful internship opportunities can help students gain exposure to industry, nurture their skills, and contribute significantly towards the advancement of a student's career and future.

A. Major Findings of the Study

1. The study found that internship experience helped students improve their professional knowledge and gain a better understanding of workplace practices and organizational culture.
2. Most of the respondents stated that internships enhanced their communication and interpersonal skills, enabling them to interact more effectively in professional environments.
3. The findings revealed that internship exposure increased students' confidence levels and improved their employability skills.
4. Internship programs also contributed to the development of teamwork, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities among students.
5. A majority of the students believed that internships strengthened their resumes and created better career opportunities in the future.
6. Overall, the study confirmed that internship experience has a positive influence on students' career readiness and prepares them more effectively for entering the job market.

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