

## **Hospitality Student Satisfaction Regarding Internship in Jakarta, Indonesia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objectives of this study are to find out the importance of internship for students and the factors for their motivation and satisfaction as interns in the hospitality industry. This research uses the quantitative method through a questionnaire to gather data. Seventy-two questionnaires were collected from Diploma-4 students in hospitality and tourism major universities in Jakarta, Indonesia. Different analyses were employed. The result shows that the students are aware about the importance of the internship. The results also depicted that the location of the hotel had the highest effect on the overall satisfaction. Overall, the students were satisfied with the internship program. To improve the internship programs, the findings of this study recommend the hotel industry and the school offering hospitality and tourism programs to consider the views of students.

*Keywords:* Hotel Industry, Internship, Motivation, Satisfaction, Jakarta

### **INTRODUCTION**

Hospitality and tourism industry is one of the important industries in the world. This industry contributed to employment, foreign exchange, income, and tax revenue (Geoldner & Ritchie, 2012). Hospitality and tourism industry in some countries such as France, Spain and Malaysia is a largest commodity in international trade (Geoldner & Ritchie, 2012). This industry is also recognized as one of the fastest growing sectors in the world. Forbes (2014) says the hospitality industry will create an additional 75 million jobs. In addition, according to international Labor Organization's statistics (ILO) in 2013, hospitality industry (including tourism) provided more than 225 million jobs all over the world in 2010 and projected to provide 296 million jobs by 2019.

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In Indonesia, hospitality and tourism industry ranked fourth largest GDP generator among goods and services sectors, and is one of the important component of the country's economy. In addition, the industry is a source of the foreign exchange revenues, with \$9billion contribution of foreign exchange in 2012, and overall, the industry contributed 8.9% of Indonesia's GDP and supported 8% of the country's total employment (Geoldner & Ritchie, 2012). In Indonesia, it is estimated 700 to 800 hotels will be built in the next decade, concentrated in Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java and Bali. Jakarta, as the country's capital, listed as number one emerging city in 2014, will overtake Singapore and Hong Kong for global businesses in 10 to 20 years' time (Kearney, 2014).

Since the hospitality industry is service-related, and relies on people's communication skills and technical skills, that need to be learnt specifically in the form of education. Those sets of skills are required to create proficient and good-quality employees who will be working in the hospitality and tourism industry, if taught in the proper way. According to (Hobson, 1995), to fulfill the increasing employment opportunities and demand for proficient and well-trained employees, many education institutions offer hospitality and tourism management (HTM) majors. Universities with HTM majors offer the chance to learn theoretically those skills in the classroom. These theories in isolation have no bearing without any practical

experience, because generally what the students learn in classroom will be different from how they are practiced.

The above facts encourage an internship or practical training program by universities with a HTM major in their curriculum. Internship has multiple benefits, for example, practical skills that cannot be taught in class, such as using specialized equipment and dealing with difficult customers (Zopiatis and Constanti, 2007). According to (Tse, 2010), internships or practical training programs are a first class opportunity for students to acquire and exercise managerial competencies by observation and practice. Internship requires triangular partnerships from the students, the universities, and the employers or organizations in the industry. Each should get the benefits from the internship program. Internship can strengthen the links between the universities and the industry, which can raise the universities' profile, enhancing the research opportunities and establishing long term working relationships to optimize future graduate employment opportunities (Walo, 1999).

The students are gaining most benefit from the internship. Firstly, they gain the working experience that is not available in the classroom, and applying those skills from the classroom to the real situations. Second, they had better edge in the job market, since the employers are more concerned with the working experience, so internship could help the students securing a job in the future. By doing an internship,

the students can also decide on what career paths they want to choose. Lastly, the students had the opportunities of social and business networking and it helps to increasing their confidence after the internship. Most importantly, the students develop a better understanding of how organizations function. Since internship is consider as working experience, there will be factors that create the students' motivation to do the job assigned to them, which in the end will leads to their satisfaction level. It is also suggested that the success and failure of the internship program will influence the student decision to enter the hospitality and tourism industry after they graduate.

However, internship programs are often considered unstructured, and poorly organized, therefore causing the students to complain about the quality of the program itself (Jenkins, 2001). The benefits for the students are rare when the employment condition were in poor condition such as low rate, no pay for overtime duties, and heavy workloads. In addition, the students are complaining that the full-time staff and managers are not properly train and prepare to help and enhance the students' experience during internship. Some employers even do not pay attention to the objectives of the internship, and just treat the interns (students) as a supplement for a labor shortage instead of developing employees through internship. Previous study also comments that the hospitality schools or departments are not very well prepared to design, monitor and manage

the internship program. This study further added that universities or educational institutes are failing to prepare the students to cope with the challenges and demands of work in this sector. Reference (Fox, 2001) argued that unpleasant internship experiences could quickly turn a person away from the industry, and (Waryszak, 1999) comments that internship programs that fail in meeting students' expectations could discourage them to enter the hospitality and tourism industry after graduation. Since internships are the first working experience students encounter when enters the industry for the first time, it is important to make the internship appropriate and structured because that first time will set the idea of how the industry really is. If one unpleasant internship experience could make a person stepping away from this industry, how many skilled human resources the hospitality industry had to be lost? While the industry needs to have the skilled human resources as much as the growth of the industry, the bigger it gets, the more resources it needs.

Research about students' experience towards internship is limited and based on the knowledge of the researcher. There is no related research about internship that has been done in Indonesia. The students viewed the internships as important, but if the employers did not view it as important, how can the internships work effectively? It could result in low satisfaction from students after the internship, which results in the students not entering the hospitality and tourism industry right after they

graduate. Despite of the discrepancies reported from the students, universities and employers, there is a unanimous view that internship is a critical factor in the completion of hospitality curriculum and the transition of student to the real world of work.

Low satisfaction in internship can cause the students to step away from the hospitality and tourism industry, which could decrease the employment rate in the industry. Any shortage in employment will prevent the industry from growing as predicted. To know better about the experience of students during their internship, the main objectives of this study are to understand the efficacy of internship from the students' perspective and also to explore the factors that affect to the students' motivation and satisfaction.

Based on those premises, the research questions for this research are:

- 1) What are the students' perspectives about the efficacy of internship?
- 2) What are the factors that affect the students' motivation and satisfaction during the internship?

The findings of this research will be useful in different ways. For universities, according to (Bao and Fang, 2010), "internship can be considered as a great opportunity for educators to increase the contact and cooperation with the hospitality industry which could enrich the industry's input in course development". This research benefit universities offering hospitality and tourism program (especially to Jakarta

areas where the research is done) It will help improve their quality of the internship program by taking students' point of view. and develop a structured and organized internship program.

Furthermore, internship can strengthen the links between the universities and the industry, which can raise the universities' profile, enhancing research opportunities and establishing long-term working relationships to optimize future graduate employment opportunities (Bell and Schmidt, 1996; Walo, 1999). For employers, internship can benefit in the hiring stages, as it reduces uncertainty when hiring new employees. Also for the employers, this research can also benefit them to help the universities to create the valuable experience for the students, which their positive inputs will improve the reputation of the employers itself to the future students who will take the internship program, and also providing the employers prospective list of employees when the students graduate from their respective universities. Previous studies also note that some firms see internship as a source of inexpensive labor to cope with seasonal demand (Miner and Crane, 1995; Taylor, 2004). Finally, internship could provide students the working experience, which could make them, had more edge on the job market and had the opportunities of networking.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper used exploratory research method. A deductive approach was used, with a quantitative method. Quantitative

research is a form of conclusive research involving representative samples and structured data collection procedures. This method is needed to complete this research, because it could measure each factor precisely to establish which are the motivators and de-motivators. Descriptive analysis was also used to present and summarize the data that was collected. Mean values and standard deviations of all variables used in this research used descriptive analysis.

The survey technique was used for this research because of its advantages in accommodating a large number of samples and the data could be collected in a short amount of time. This research concentrated on the factors (motivators and de-motivators) of the student's satisfaction regarding the internship, which they had experienced during their studies. The research will focus on three HTM universities in Jakarta, Indonesia, and is limited to the students who already completed an internship during their studies. The research is focused on the hospitality and tourism industry's internship program, which is included in the university's curriculum. Since the research is cross-sectional, considering the amount of time available, the research is concentrating in Jakarta area only. Since this research is cross-sectional, considering the amount of time available, the research is concentrating in Jakarta area only. The questionnaires spread out in three well-known diploma program universities with HTM major.

The data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire consisting of five sections, based on prior research (Lam and Ching, 2007; Bao and Fang, 2010; Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou, 2013). The questions are using single-response scale (multiple choice) and 5 point Likert scale. The first segment is about the importance of internship from the students' perspective. The second part breaks down the factors that motivate and de-motivate of students when they do internship. The factors in this section were work environment, location, job, supervision, relationship and pay. The third part measured the level of satisfaction among students. The fourth segment includes an open-ended question, allowing the students with the freedom to write their inputs to improve the internship program and the last section measured the socio-demographic of respondents. The questionnaire designed based on the literature review from the related studies. Multiple linear regression analyses were also used to analyze the data. Multiple linear regression analyses are a statistic analysis used to determine the influence of independent variables on a dependent variable. T-tests were also used to compare the satisfaction in terms of the gender. The data was collected in June 2015.

Since the quantitative research design used for this research, it provides a guide for the purposive sampling where the selected population are not randomly chosen to produce a sample, which are intended to making generalization using

statistical inferences. For this research, the best purposive sampling technique that will be used is homogenous technique, where the sample chosen based on the similarity. The chosen participants were selected based on two criteria. At first he/she should already completed internship and secondly they should reside in Jakarta, Indonesia, and done the internship in Jakarta.

To assess the reliability and validity of questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted among 15 students and after the result of reliability test it contributed for actual study. Pilot test is necessary in order to get the indication of how well the participants understand the questions and which questions that are unclear. For pilot test the questionnaire should spread to small groups of people that are representative of the group that are being targeted (Conardie, 2012). For this research, Cronbach's alpha approach used to measure the reliability. The result of reliability test for actual study was satisfactory. The findings revealed the Cronbach's alpha values of .936 for the overall satisfaction and .705 for the internship attributes part. Validity served as the result of measurement. The questionnaire's validity was supported by being reviewed by the experts on the hospitality field.

## FINDINGS

The questionnaires were distributed for four days, and in total 72 questionnaires were filled by participants from the selected universities. The participants consisted of 39 females and 33 males

students from HTM universities in Jakarta. The participants' age at the time of data collection ranged from age 20 to 24, with an average age of 21.

### The Importance Level of the Internship

In the first part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked about the importance of the internship program in the form of a Likert scale. Based on the findings, the students' mentioned that internships are important ( $M = 4.15$ ) for them to learn more about hotel industry. By completing an internship, the students could experience the hospitality industry and apply what they had learnt in the classroom to real-life situations.

### The Motivators and De-Motivators

The students were asked about motivating and de-motivating factors in the second part of the questionnaire. There were six factors: job, supervision, relationship, pay, location and work environment. Since this study employed 5 point Likert scales, the mean score above 3 is considered as satisfactory factor for students. Based on the findings, relationship factors were considered the highest motivator ( $M = 4.01$ ) to the students, followed by work environment ( $M = 3.82$ ), supervision ( $M = 3.76$ ), location ( $M = 3.64$ ), and job ( $M = 3.40$ ), while the pay factor is considered as a de-motivator ( $M = 2.68$ ) during internship. Each factor will be explained further below.

Based on the findings, the job factor had an overall mean of 3.40 which suggesting that the students' feel that the job is one of the motivating factors during internship. The supervision factor has an overall mean of 3.76, indicating that the students' feel that supervision during the internship is one of the motivating factors. The relationship factor is the one that highly motivate the students during an internship, with a mean of 4.01.

Pay is a de-motivating factor for the students during the internship. In line with previous studies (Lam and Ching, 2007; Zopiatis and Constanti, 2007; Bao and Fang, 2010), this study also suggested that the pay factor is a de-motivator that could lead the students to feel dissatisfied after the internship. Location has an overall mean of 3.64, which indicates that the students' feel

that the location from the hotel to where the students reside at the time is one of the motivating factors during the internship. Work environment, which has an overall mean of 3.82 and is the second highest after relationship factors. The working environment that provides all the students' needs during the internship could motivate the students to do the internship.

**Satisfaction Level of the Internship**

Part three of the questionnaire consists of the satisfaction related questions based on the six factors listed above. In here, all the six factors were tested to find which factors affected the most to the students' satisfaction during the internship. The results of the questionnaires are explained further in this section.

Table 1  
Multiple Regression Analysis

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.618 <sup>a</sup>	0.382	0.325	0.63276	
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Job	0.257	0.104	0.278	2.48	<b>0.016</b>
Supervision	-0.009	0.117	-0.009	-0.076	0.94
Relationship	0.079	0.111	0.077	0.712	0.479
Pay	0.118	0.07	0.186	1.683	0.097
Location	0.305	0.092	0.339	3.297	<b>0.002</b>
Work Environment	0.155	0.118	0.151	1.31	0.195

The R square (coefficient of determination) in regression analysis was 38.2% of the total variance in the dependent variable. The F-ratio of 6.696, significant at  $p < 0.05$ , shows that the model was reliable.

The final regression equation model was measured as follows:

$$Y = .490 + .257 \text{ job} - .009 \text{ supervision} + .079 \text{ relationship} + .118 \text{ pay} + .305 \text{ locations} + .155 \text{ work environment}$$

The value of  $\beta$  in the column of unstandardized coefficients determined the relationship between overall satisfaction during internship and independent variables in this research. If the value is positive, it indicates that there is a positive relationship between dependent variable and independent variables. In this research, two variables had a positive relationship (job and location) on overall satisfaction.

These values tell to what degree each independent variable affects the dependent variable if the effects of all other predictors are held constant. The regression equation with 6 attributes was significantly related to overall satisfaction of the students,  $F(6.65) = 6,696, p = .000$ .

### Independent Sample t-test

Independent sample T-test was conducted to gain a better understanding of the overall satisfaction differences between males and female students in Jakarta. A previous study by (Patrick, 2012), states that it is important to know the differences between males and females in terms of education. Based on that study, it is important to know how students at a similar age and from similar social origins differ in science achievements in terms of their gender.

Table 2  
*Independent Samples t-test*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Equal variances assumed	0.328	0.569	0.454	70	0.651	0.08314
Equal variances not assumed			0.447	62.015	0.657	0.08314
GROUP STATISTICS						
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	Male	33	3.7071	0.85293	0.14848	

The results of TABLE 2, reveal that there is no significant difference in satisfaction during the internship between male and female students,  $t(70) = .454$ ;  $p > 0.05$ . Both males ( $m = 3.70$ ) and females ( $m = 3.62$ ) were satisfied with their internship experience. Linver, Davis-Kean, & Eccles (2002) also mentions that many researchers still raise the questions on whether the gender differences still exist or not. Many researchers in the science education also finding differences in science achievements when gender is used as a parameter. The current findings informed the subsidiary rationale to carry out this research, because the knowledge on the role of gender in science learning is not complete. However, the area which this study emphasized is directed at the role of gender on internship satisfaction which has very limited literature in Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings of this study indicate students believed that internship was important for their personal knowledge about the hospitality industry. The results also revealed that relationships with co-workers and staff during the internship had the highest effect on the motivation of the students. It meant that internship helped the students to have a better understanding of professional team-working. These findings were supported by a previous study which stated that students should be encouraged to work as team to share their knowledge and skills related to practice (Wakefield,

Boggis, & Holland, 2006). The findings also showed the level of satisfaction of the students during the internship. Two of the factors listed (job and location) are found to affect the students' overall satisfaction. The students' also felt satisfied with their internship, which meant that this work experience will likely affect their future career choices.

Although the students were satisfied with the internship, the satisfaction level would increase if there was some allowance available for them during the internship. It was also found that there was no significant difference between genders on overall satisfaction during the internship. This contradicts the findings of a previous study (Patrick, 2012) which stated there are differences in behavior in terms of gender. This study found that both genders had the same experience regarding internships.

This research can be used by stakeholders in the hospitality industry as well as universities to develop and design high-quality internship programs.

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