

“A Comparative Study of Domestic & International Internship for Aspiring Hospitality Management Students”

Authors

Dr. Anuradha V. Karmarkar ¹

Assistant Professor, AISSMS College of HMCT, Pune

anukmk@yahoo.co.in

Dr. Kiran M. Shende ²

Associate Professor, AISSMS College of HMCT, Pune

chefkiran1977@gmail.com

Mr. Avishkar Bhadauria ³

Student TY BSc. HS, AISSMS College of HMCT, Pune

4sahilbhadauria5@gmail.com

Abstract

Hospitality professional course is incomplete without the internship in hotels or allied sector of hospitality. This is the most crucial phase of the curriculum, where the interns hone their skills, acquire physical, interpersonal and cognitive learning and actually transform from raw interns to professionals.

In recent years an increasing trend has been witnessed of interning in hotels abroad due to exposure, learning and new environment, whereas some still prefer domestic internship due to convenience, comfort zone and future job opportunities with in the country .

The research paper aims at comparing internship with in the country and internship abroad, from an intern's perspective.

The study has been conducted in one of premiere Hotel Management School in Pune. The data has been collected from 100 students from second and final year to compare and study the impact of training before and after the internship. The finding of the paper suggests preference of International internship over domestic internship

Keywords: Domestic internship, International internship, Hospitality management students

Introduction

Internship is a major factor in a career for the budding professionals in the hospitality sector. Traditionally, internships are viewed as experiential learning and supervised work practices. In recent years, it is defined as a structured and career relevant supervised professional work / learning experience, paid or unpaid, within an approved hospitality agency / organization / corporation, under the direct supervision of at least one practicing hospitality professional and one faculty member for which a hospitality student can earn academic credit. Nowadays, internships are treated as an element to clear the examination in order to gain academic credit rather than an experiential learning that leads to a career growth and development. This basic aim of this thesis paper is to explore the factors associated with different stakeholders, and see the differences in internships output.

“Internship” is an excellent platform to hone the skills, interests and plan career choices in real working environment while gaining an edge on “inexperienced” job market competition. As a result of that, internships are viewed as one of the prerequisite to gain academic certificates, rather than a valuable experience before entering the working world of hospitality. This also provides an opportunity for students to integrate and consolidate thinking and action. The internship is equivalent to fieldwork, filed experience, practicum, cooperative or experimental learning with little variations. It is also a supervised work experience, where students are accommodated under special guidelines and attention during their internship instead of working alone by themselves in the industry.

Internships in any hospitality organizations provide a real sense of working and commitment towards fulfilling particular job requirements, as a result of which interns are able to learn through experience and able to identify the problems and challenges related to their work without only confining towards theory of a certain body of knowledge. However, it is now more treated as a channel to complete the academic certification. However, because of some bad experiences faced during internship leads to decision, to not enter the industry as professionals upon graduation. Some of the factors that are researched for years are longer working hours, poor remuneration and promotional track, poor benefits and lack of rapport with colleagues etc. The value of an

internship should be revisited and examined in order to see its function in recent years. A chronological literature is presented in order to evaluate the efficiency of an internship, and whether its function has increased or deteriorated over the years.

Internship is one of the most effective models of experiential learning in hospitality education. A hotel management trainee has to work in close association with different departments in a hotel and assist them in their daily routine operations. A trainee is required to understand the overall operations of the hotel while specializing in one or more areas. Hotel management trainees may have to work closely with front desk managers, culinary department, general managers, convention and event planner, housekeeping department, and learn from them. A hotel management trainee is supposed to acquire a good working knowledge of the hospitality sector with special attention to dealing with customers.

Importance of Internship

As a college student it will also help in making the resume strong and gives the students a Real world experience, by joining a company as an intern gives the opportunity to work hands on in a professional environment. It acts as a stepping stone for exploring different career options. It also helps in forming a good network by interacting with professionals you gain new connections and learn how to communicate in a professional environment. It makes you understand the value of time and how each minute counts in a professional environment.

Internships are great tools to improve your chances as a job applicant and help make you a better potential employee. So make the investment in the career and look into becoming an intern.

To sum it up, internship could be defined as a three-way partnership between students, institution and the business which accepts the interns (Inkster & Ross, 1998). The benefits of a normal internship for these three parties are clear and evident according to Patterson (1999). Students gain the experience of the real world. Academic institutions increase its reputation and fame. Employers establish a student application pool with employment purposes. Tourism internships provide a beneficial experience for all the students, employers, and educational institutions involved.

Challenges of Internship

Hospitality pattern demands for long working hours, high commitment and endurance may cause a highly motivated employee exhausted. Additionally an internship position has commonly structured tasks that lead to monotony, and also it does not come with similar benefits as a regular employee.

Generally, students are unable to perform to the employer's expectations due to heavy workloads and inability to cope with the duties and responsibilities. There may be instances where employers are not well versed about the objectives of internships and may place them wrongly. Many companies does not even make an attempt to nurture potential employees through internships, instead they prefer to take people who are best fit according to the needs and objective of the organisation.

A number of studies have shown the impact of negative internship experiences and reduce the students' desire to continue in the hospitality industry. Additionally internship that fails to meet students' expectations would discourage them from entering the tourism and hospitality industry. Many students would leave the industry because of unfulfilled expectations. However, there are also studies that say a good internship will retain more students, strengthen their passion and reduce their anxiety about the future.

Need of the study

A good internship influences student's confidence in their future career development, and also gives students a glance of the industry. It will also act as a foundation to their future career and decide to stay with the industry or not.

A well planned structured internship may have a significant role in the subsequent performance of the interns and may lower turnover rates.

A good internship program may retain more students in the hospitality industry after graduation and will preserve more candidates in the hospitality industry upon graduation.

Limitations of the Study

- The study was purely based on the information received through the limited scope and purview of survey
- The study was relevant to the existing market scenario and the information, judgment and predictions of the respondents may differ accordingly with time, status, mindset and geographical zone.
- The study also relates to the boom and demands of the hospitality industry in the current hour and would differ in case of demand supply trend.

Definitions

- **Hospitality management** is the study of the hospitality industry. A degree in the subject may be awarded either by a University college dedicated to the studies of hospitality management or a business school with a relevant department. Degrees in hospitality management may also be referred to as hotel management, hotel and tourism management, or hotel administration. (Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org>)
- **Domestic internship:** It is an on the job training performed by the hotel management students in domestic hotels.
- **International internship:** It is an on the job training performed by the hotel management students in international hotels abroad.

Literature Review

This is designed to determine what has been published concerning the research question. It has been commonly agreed that no work can be significantly accomplished without decisively studying what previously exists in relation to it. There are very few direct studies available on this subject. In fact, in India, a study has not been conducted related to topic so far. Thus the review of internship related benefits, issues, and perception aspects will certainly guide us to accomplish broad objectives of the present study.

Mahesh Kumar (2017): The study had aimed towards analyzing the perceptions of hospitality students about their industrial training. The paper had also examined the expectations and perceptions of students toward their industrial training experience. The findings of the study suggest that the training experience to be made more meaningful by improving the overall quality of the training program for the benefit of both the industry and students. The research study further, suggest that communication between the hotel and the institute should be clear and constant so that any kind of problem with regards to the internship could be solved.

Dilipkumar Mahadik, Kiran Chavan 2016: The study discussed about a large number of students undergoes their industrial training/on job training as part of curriculum. The research concluded that the trainees are subjected to unfair treatment, long strenuous work hour's very low stipend amounting to exploitation. The trouble of trainees cannot be solved easily unless collective efforts have been made by Government officials, education institutes, Hospitality and Tourism establishments to eradicate it. The study suggests that Policies and legislature should be formulated and implemented sincerely towards the internship programs. Also Government agencies, education institutes & Hotel operator must join hands to stop all forms of exploitation of students.

Koc, E., S. Yumusak, M. Ulukoy, R. Kilic and A. Toptas, 2014: The study aimed to explore the views of tourism and hospitality students' with regard to their summer internship programs they participate. The findings of the study revealed that after their internship experiences almost 18.3% of the students do now wish to work in tourism and hospitality sector while a significant proportion of them wish to work in different areas of tourism and hospitality they had originally intended. The study also had practical implications for tourism and hospitality education sector.

Aggett, M. and G. Busby, 2011: The aim of their research was to determine the reasons that Tourism, Hospitality and Events students of one British university opt out of the placement year. The study had identified support mechanisms required in order to increase students' participation with regards to on the job training. The responses had indicated a number of issues and suggestions are made for initiatives that emphasise the value of the opportunity and encourage students to consider their career development options.

Dickerson, J.P., 2009: The study had suggested a realistic preview of the hotel industry gained in an experiential learning component may not be the only key to early career satisfaction. The respondents do believe that they have understood the expectations of the industry; they are expressing dissatisfaction in their first career positions. The study had indicated that special attention should be directed to the first-position college graduate, as 23% of respondents in this study had reported leaving the industry altogether after the first management position.

Collins, A.B., 2001. The study had discussed the competitive society which the students face with a selective job market which places premium on experience, as the hands on practice cannot be imparted through classroom teaching. It can only be gained through direct activity while performing their on the job training. The laboratory training is clinical, whereas internship is real-world confrontation where the students get a firsthand glimpse of reality. This paper had examined student's reactions to the industrial training program and its

success in providing a realistic workplace experience. The study also had examined the structure of the industrial training system, its strengths and weaknesses, and what can be done for the improvement.

Cates-McIver, L., 1999: The study explores the concept of allowing students to enter the working world for gaining experience is not new concept. However, there is a significant increase observed due to accreditation and the desires of employers the number of internship and co-op opportunities. The purpose of this paper was to gain a better understanding of the outcomes and takeaways of co-operative internship experience by examining the perspectives. The perspectives represented in this paper had come directly from students after their internship.

Cannon, J.A. and M.J. Arnold, 1998: The research indicated that students have adopted a significantly more pragmatic orientation to college internship programs. The students would be looking forward the internship program as a vehicle for augmenting their education, and more as a means of gaining a competitive edge in the marketplace for new jobs. The institutes should accordingly ensure that the strategic focus of their internship programs reflects the reality of today's employment market and what students expect from such programs. The students should strongly consider the allocation of additional resources to internship programs for improving the program flexibility and encouraging student participation.

L. Davies, 1990. The study aimed in understanding the actual mindset of the leading organizations towards internship opportunity for students in higher education institutes. The study had focused on the importance of internships and training programs, major challenges the organizations are facing and ways to overcome them. The study had found that more than one third of the organizations offer training positions as part of their CSR. The research had revealed the benefits of training programs towards skills and knowledge gained by the trainees, also the fact that trainees are injecting new ideas into the organization. As a result majority of the organizations consider the trainees as an asset for them. However, there are some areas require improvement, such as orientation interpersonal skills etc.

Hite, R. and R. Bellizi, 1986. The article had reported the results of an investigation about relationship between early career success and past participation in an undergraduate field internship. The study had extended earlier research on the effects of formal marketing education on career success. A survey indicated a significant early career advantages for undergraduates with internship experience. The study finds that career benefits which are provided to the students had positive implications for marketing educators, university administrators and interns.

Objectives of study

1. To study the factors influencing the selection of internship.
2. To compare the preference of domestic and international internship.
3. To analyze the impact of internship on their personality.

Research Methodology

This research is based on the study of between Domestic and International internship. Which was done with the help of questionnaire and the feedback was taken and the responses were recorded and the survey was carried out successfully.

Method of data collection:

Primary data: Primary data was collected from questionnaire which was sent to students who have undergone industrial training from different colleges of Pune.

Questionnaire: It was designed in Google docs so that students can fill the questionnaire in their smart phones and it contained all the multiple choice questions do that it would be easy for them to fill and to collect data from them.

Secondary Data: Secondary data was collected from Magazines, online articles and books etc.

Sampling design:

The target for this research are the students so this questionnaire was made keeping in mind that each and every student must be able to understand what are they answering to and could answer all the questions correctly.

Sampling Frame:

Once all the responses were collected by Google docs and the data was collected and all the data was used as sample for this research paper.

Sampling Unit:

A sampling unit is one of the units into which an aggregate is divided for the purpose of sampling of each unit regarded as individual and indivisible when the selection is made during the research a total of 100 respondents were considered.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

The data collected was analyzed using basic analytical tools. This also includes the detailed analysis of the data which was conducted with the purpose of attaining the set objectives of the research. Mentioned below is the analysis which be presented graphically and in tabulated form for better interpretation. The Interpretation of the collected data was done by drawing inferences from the collected facts after the analysis of the study.

Table I – Frequency Analysis – Training preferred by the students

Frequency		Total
Domestic	International	
39 %	61 %	100 %

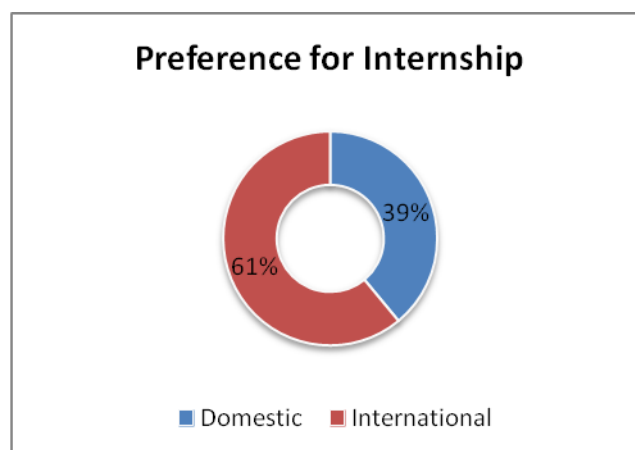


Figure – I. Preference of Internship

Inference: As the chart projects, the students inclination towards International training high 61% as compared to the Domestic Internship 39%. . This indicates students look for international exposure for learning, experience the job culture and also view this as a career opportunity.

Table II – Frequency Analysis – To what extent training changed your perception about hotel industry:

Frequency			Total
Positive	Negative	Same as Perceived	
55 %	37 %	8 %	100 %

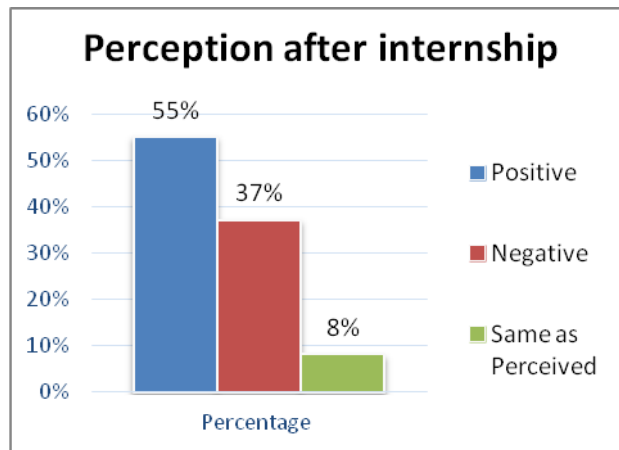


Figure – II. Perception after Internship

Inference: The question was directed to the students who recently returned after completing their 20 weeks internship. As this bar graph shows, **55.3%** students have a positive perception about the hotel industry after completing their industrial training and **38.3%** students had a neutral response which means the training experience was as expected. Whereas only **8.5%** students had a negative perception about the hotel industry, after completion of their industrial training.

Table III – Frequency Analysis – How the industrial training / internship has impacted you:

Frequency			Total
Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
61 %	10 %	24 %	100 %

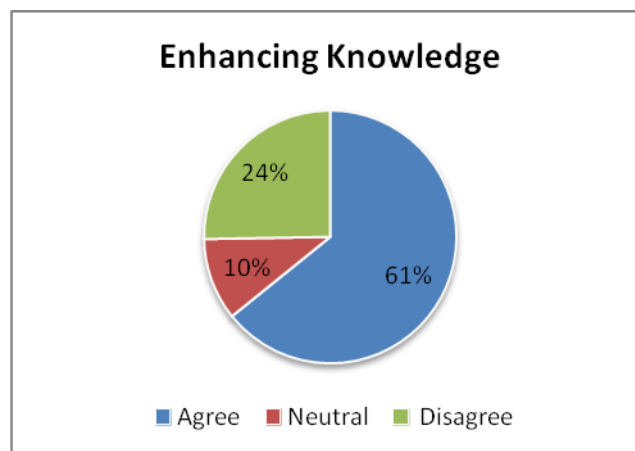


Figure – III. Impact on Knowledge

Inference: As per the data 61% students feel that training has helped them in enhancing their knowledge 10% are neutral about it. The reason for disagreement is 24%; could be due to lack of interest, poor trainers, and language barriers in international training etc.

Table IV – Frequency Analysis – How the industrial training / internship has impacted you:

Frequency			Total
Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
85 %	05 %	10 %	100 %

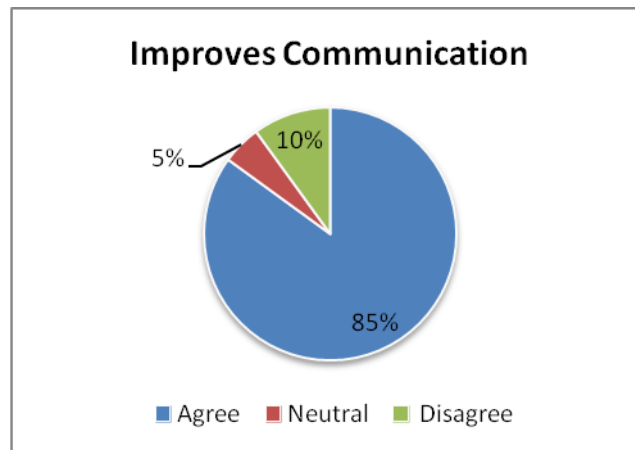


Figure – IV. Impact on Communication

Inference: Communication and language is a problem with some students especially those from vernacular medium, but training helps them in overcoming that barrier over 20 weeks either domestic or International. 85% have shown agreement to this and hence it is considered as one of the important parameters impacting the students.

Table V – Frequency Analysis – How the industrial training / internship has impacted you:

Frequency			Total
Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
80 %	07 %	13 %	100 %

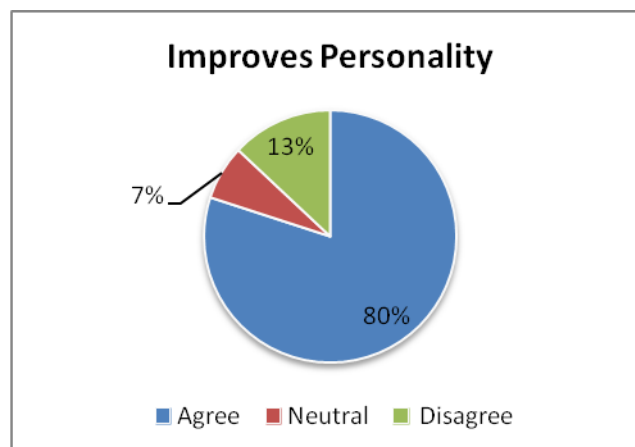


Figure – V. Impact on Personality

Inference: Personality is evaluating your inner soul and thought process. After training it is prominently visible amongst students in their changed personality, physical appearance, more receptive approach etc which comes from the activities they were involved in, decision making ability, observation and learning. 80% of them agree to this fact and impact whereas the attitude and perception of the students also change drastically post training. This is the impact of the jobs they carry out, mentoring during training, and most important is learning. 78% of the students have accepted the fact that training changes their attitude for better.

Table VI – Frequency Analysis – How the industrial training / internship has impacted you:

Frequency			Total
Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
78 %	04 %	18 %	100 %

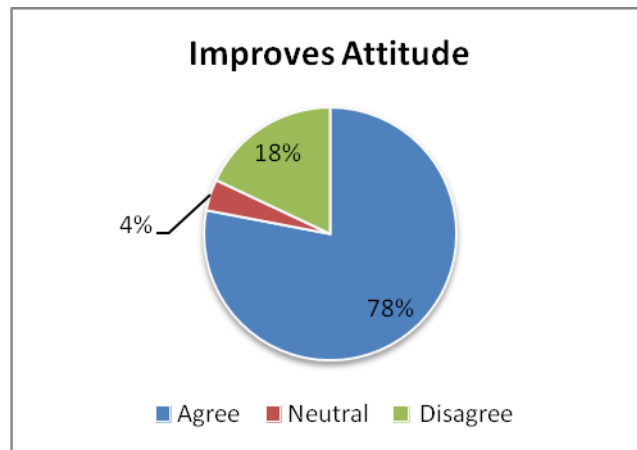


Figure – VI. Impact on Attitude

Inference: This graphs shows that Industrial training has majorly improved their attitude (78%) towards the chosen career, whereas the level of disagreement is comparatively very low. This can be due to exposure, learning and the skills they acquire during their training.

Table VII – Frequency Analysis – How the industrial training / internship has impacted you:

Frequency			Total
Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
83 %	05 %	12 %	100 %

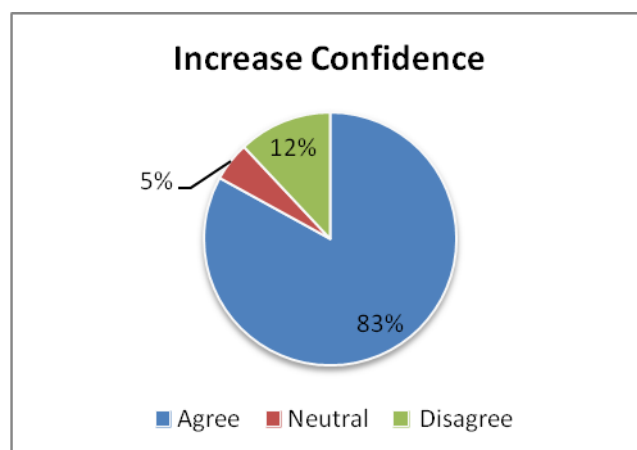


Figure – VII. Impact on Confidence Level

Inference: This graphs shows that Industrial training has majorly improved their confidence level of the students (83%), the ratio of disagreement is comparatively low. This can also be due to exposure real time working conditions and acquiring the skills during their training.

Chart VIII – Factors influencing Domestic Internship:

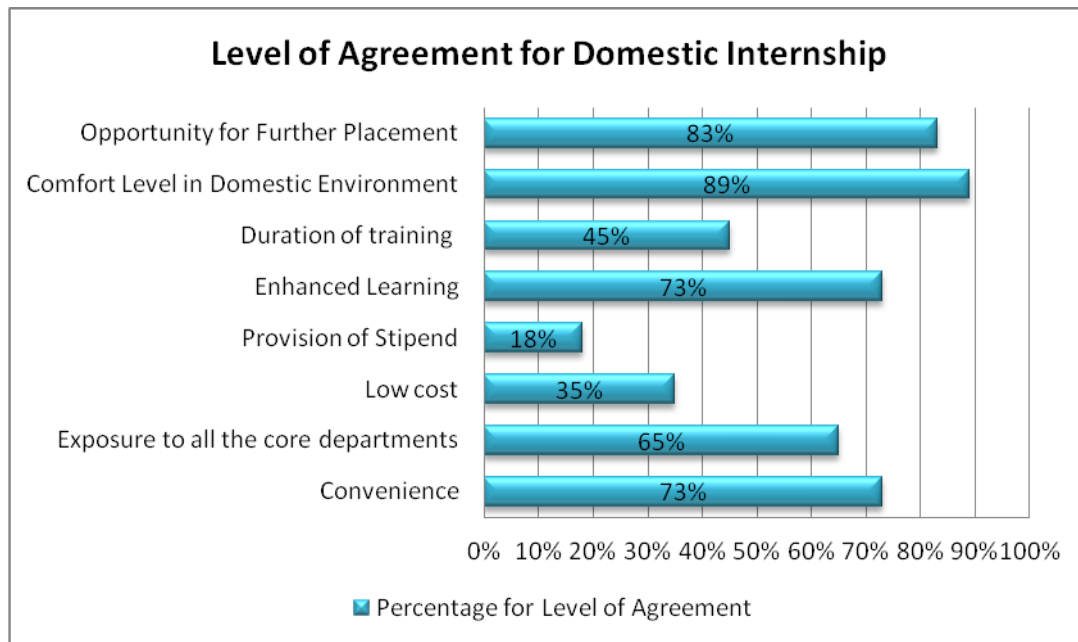


Figure – VIII. Factors influencing Domestic Internship

Inference: The students were asked to choose the factors which influence their choice of opting for internship. This Bar graph shows the preference of different parameters of the students while opting for the internship. Out of the eight parameters the two most agreed upon factors were the opportunities for further placement and the comfort level in domestic environment. This clearly indicates that students’ primary intention to do internship is creating a platform for further placement and students prefer domestic training due to the convenience of home culture and environment.

Chart IX – Factors influencing International Internship:

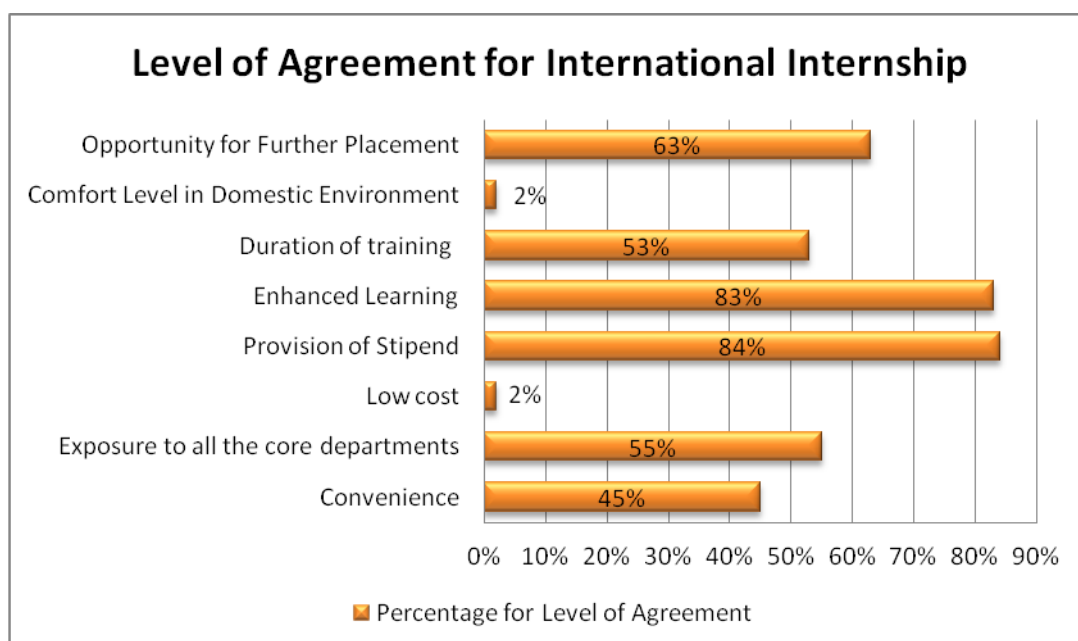


Figure – IX. Factors influencing International Internship

Inference: The graph clearly indicates that students prefer international exposure through training due to two most agreed upon factors which are enhanced learning and the stipend money paid to them also is one of the attraction for international training. Exposure to the departments is not agreed by the many of the students as most of them are placed in the same department during the training period.

Findings

- Students in the hotel Industry are more inclined towards International training as compared to the Domestic Internship. They seek international exposure to enhance their knowledge. Students want to experience the International job culture and consider International Internship as a career opportunity.
- The students' choice for Internship is driven by two parameters; one of them is **opportunity for further placement** and secondly choosing **the comfort level internship in the domestic environment considering** convenience of home culture and environment.
- The students who prefer international exposure due to enhanced learning and financial gain in the form of the stipend money.
- Students have limited exposure to the departments as most of them are placed in the same department during the complete training period.
- The students have a positive perception about the hotel industry after completing their industrial training.
- The training received during internship helps students in enhancing their knowledge.
- Training helps students in overcoming the barriers of communication and language impacting the students personality, attitude and perception.
- Industrial training boosts the confidence level of the students due to exposure, learning and the skills they acquire during their training period

Conclusion

- International internship gives room for better working hours, good stipend, and personality development, improve in communication skills and learning of different hotel culture.
- Domestic Internship provides better exposure to all the departments of the hotel, the environment is more comfortable for the trainees to work and hence it's convenient. And also is much affordable as compared with international training.
- The Research findings clearly indicate that both international and domestic internship have their own positives and negatives, and it completely depends on the student choice of internship as per his / her need and requirements.
- It is observed from the research that majority of the students prefer International training over Domestic training mainly because of international exposure, experiencing the hotel working culture, improvement in communication and more learning.
- Students who prefer domestic internship over international Internship seek to be close to their family and give importance to their personal life too.

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