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Enhancing Academic and Career Development through Internships in Non-Professional Courses

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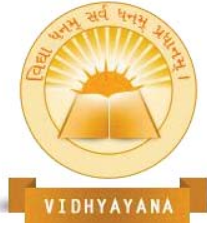
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Abstract:

It is said by the researcher that whatever we do we learn more than what we study and see so internship is a most appropriate way to apply the theory into practical and learn more what you study and find the gap to fill for future career growth. Internships are typically applied to professional fields, not much thought is given to how they might influence nonprofessional areas like the arts, humanities, and social sciences. This paper explores the transformative nature of internships in various sectors with particular reference to the contribution they make to an educational experience and employability. The study is based on a review of research published from 2000 through 2024, combining the results of previous studies to explore the advantages, obstacles and the implications that non-professional domains benefit from internships. The most effective findings reveal that internships are effective for students' education due to the fact that they allow students to use numerous theories they study in



practice. However, internships ensure that students can be in a position to acquire vital skills of communication and problem solving among them, internships also help in a large extent to enable students to follow clear career path. Nevertheless, there is always a concern how to provide quality internship placements for students which stresses on the importance of proper institutional support as well as collaborations with industry partners. The role of this work is to discuss the expansion and improvement of the Internship experiences and programs throughout all fields to promote the students' growth and readiness for different occupations generally.

Keywords: Internship, Skill Development, Non- Professional Courses, career development, employability readiness.

Introduction:

In recent years, there has been a growing movement toward acknowledging the significance of internships as educational experiences. The good effects that these can have on businesses, organizations, and talents have been demonstrated, but there is a lack of knowledge on the potential effects that they may have on classes in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. It has been pointed out by a great number of academics that internships are an essential component of education, and they also bring about desired professional outcomes for students. Experiential learning plays a crucial role in managing the gap between the career preparedness that is taught in school and the job market upon graduation, as described by Gault, et al. (2010) and Kolb, D. A. (2014). Furthermore, it provides students with the opportunity to practice and apply the skills that they have learned in school. Therefore, it should be made mandatory as part of professional disciplines. Additionally, NEP 2020 emphasizes that not only should it be mandatory for all disciplines, but it should also be mandatory for all disciplines in order to a better understanding of lifelong learning. The purpose of this paper is to address the ways in which students could benefit from internships in a variety of disciplines, including how they could learn more, how they could be transformed professionally, and how they improve their education.



The Indian government is funding skill development courses to improve student employability, collaborating with industry partners and implementing measures like the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS). The National Skills Development Corporation also supports startup ecosystems and student entrepreneurship. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan expanded InvenTiv 2024, the nation's largest R&D Innovation Fair, to tier-2 and tier-3, highlighting research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. The government's "Make in India", "Invest in India", "PLI Scheme", and "FDI liberalisation" initiatives aim to stimulate manufacturing. The National Credit Framework (NCrF) and Academic Bank of Credit (ABC) are implemented to improve student employability through internships, learner-centric education, and multiple entry/exit systems. The UGC also launched IGNOU's four-year undergrad curriculum with multiple entry/exits per NEP 2020, focusing on learner-centric education, digital learning, industry-institute partnerships, academic research, and internationalization.

Objective:

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effects of internships on students enrolled in non-professional courses. Specifically, it aims to:

1. Assess the academic benefits of internships in non-professional disciplines.
2. Explore the role of internships in career exploration and readiness for students in humanities, social sciences, and arts.

Methodology:

The systematic literature review (SLR) is applied to twenty research publications from internships and internship for non-professional courses spanning 2000–2024. Limitation of this paper is this paper is based on the secondary data.



Findings:

Research done on internships has mainly targeted industries like business, engineering and technology. Although many studies were carried in the professional fields of study, newer studies have sought to establish the level of internships in non- profession fields. For instance, Smith (2019) pointed that humanities students who went through internships gained enhanced critical thinking and communication skills. In the same way, Martins,2022,2022 noted that internships enhance specific career direction as well as development of contacts among learners enrolled in social sciences. Thus, it can be seen that this increase in emphasis on internships and employability in PhD social science programmes, has led to the establishment of this programme that is compatible with ESRC, ended up fulfilling the expectations of the students as well as their partners, & Stamati & Willmott, 2023. Internships enhance interpersonal and problem-solving and critical thinking competencies in social work degree programs and development studies, internships enhance skills and marketability across disciplines particularly social science Internships enhance interpersonal, problem-solving and critical thinking skills in Social work Degree programmes and Development Studies Internships enhance skills and marketability cross-disciplinary, particularly social science. This study also showed that internships enhance academic on all fields and disciplines highlighting the rationale for promoting effective encouragement approaches to link the internships to the career outcomes, Binder et al., (2015). Enhancing internships through enhanced communication, clear descriptions and..." Knouse et al (2008) thoughtful approach to what would be best for the student and businesses the interns will be working for. The authors concluded that, the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) internship requirement the undergraduate internships in Canadian family science integrate theory and practice and enhances professionalism. The research undertaken also showed that the placements set by the academic institutions were similar in objective but different in type, type of student placements, academic requirements, students' monitoring, and faculty supports. Previous occupational activities include internships, practica, field experience, cooperative programmes, experiences for learning, field-based experiences, community-based study, volunteer service, part-time work, volunteer work.



Undergraduate placements improves enlightenment, dyad of values, motivation, personality development, self efficiency, benevolence, communal affiliation, and volunteerism perpetuity. Some of the good placements are field support, volunteering services, advisory board and cash according to Weeks and Van Leeywen (2008). The studies found that internships improve job prospects, realistic intern expectations, contentment, success criteria, and intern monitoring. Others found faster hiring and better employability (Callanan & Benzing, 2004; Cault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000). In a mandatory environmental science internship assessed higher education's research, professional, and general natural science education. Student skills develop with an internship, communication, report writing, work organization, information collection, and independence enhanced during internships. Career education uses internships. This study found internships improve environmental science education, Scholz et al. (2004). These studies show that internships improve skill development, career preparedness, and employability for non-professional students.

Based on the review of literature and empirical data, this study reveals several key findings:
Based on the review of literature and empirical data, this study reveals several key findings:

- a. Smith (2019) has established that internships enhance the thought process as well as communication skills among humanities students.
- b. Social sciences students benefit from internships in that they help them to have the goal towards achieving their career paths and to make connections with other professionals (Martins, 2022).
- c. The programmes of PhD in social sciences provided by a prominent Russell's Group university exceeded the expectations of the students and helped them to become more employable by focusing on solving real life issues (Stamati and Willmott, 2023).
- d. Internships develops interpersonal, problem solving and critical thinking skills that are relevant in social work and development studies (Mwelwa & Mawela, 2021).
- e. Internships in various fields improve education outcomes as well as elucidate the importance of association of internships with career paths (Binder et al., 2015).
- f. The quality of internships for students and for businesses is enhanced by communication, defined criteria, and practical activities (Knouse et al., 2008).



- g. Internships for scientific undergraduate students in Canada combine theoretical knowledge with practical experience, offering opportunities to develop professional skills (National Council on Family Relations).
- h. Internships enhance employment chances, enable the individuals to have a feel of what they are likely to face in the work marketplace, most of the interns will be more satisfied with their jobs, provide a framework of measuring performance and adequate supervision and evaluation of interns (Callanan and Benzing, 2004; Cault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000).
- i. Environmental science internships at higher learning institutions enhance research, professionalism and natural science education where made compulsory (Scholz et al., 2004).

This study reveals that internships enhance the thought process and communication skills among humanities students, social sciences students, and PhD students. They help them achieve career goals, make connections with professionals, and develop interpersonal, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills. Internships improve education outcomes and align with career paths. Communication, defined criteria, and practical activities enhance the quality of internships for students and businesses. Internships also enhance employment chances, job satisfaction, and provide a framework for performance measurement. Environmental science internships at higher learning institutions enhance research, professionalism, and natural science education.

The studies performed collectively state that internships in nonprofessional fields positively affect the acquisition of skills, employment readiness, and employment prospects of the students. Internship in non-professional courses also play a very big role in improving on the practical aspects of theoretical knowledge obtained by students. A student achieves numerous working skills that may include communication skills, working in a team, problem-solving skills, and self-development skills. Internships are important in the sense that it assists students in determining the right courses of action with regard to their intended career. Some of the challenges include; securing the institutions' internship placements and ensuring that the interns get to learn what can be termed as relevant knowledge, these are real challenges but can be overcome through collaboration with the practicing institutions.



Discussion:

The data provided not only illustrates the themes but also illustrates the more profound and extensive impact that internships have had on the arts, social sciences, and humanities that are not professional in nature. Internships, despite their association with the flux of professions, are a substantial instrument that improves academic performance by enabling the application of acquired knowledge. By means of this integration, students are capable of developing a more profound comprehension of their respective disciplines, as well as other critical attributes, including communication, teamwork, and analytical skills, which are indispensable as they progress in their professional careers. Furthermore, apprenticeships are advantageous because they afford students the chance to identify their objectives within the industry. Internships also offer students the opportunity to establish professional networks, which ultimately enhances their preparedness for their future professions. Conversely, the women continue to encounter challenges in obtaining internships that are effective. This is because to improve the quality of apprenticeship experiences, it is necessary to have strong institutional support and collaborate with significant industry partners. It is imperative that educational institutions prioritize the integration and improvement of internship opportunities in courses that are not directly related to practical training as they increasingly acknowledge the importance of internships in all disciplines of study. This is to guarantee that the students are well-prepared to engage in a diverse array of career fields and that they develop in all aspects. Research on internships has primarily focused on professional fields like business, engineering, and technology. However, recent studies have also explored the impact of internships in non-professional fields, such as humanities, social sciences, and PhD students. Smith (2019) found that internships enhance critical thinking and communication skills among humanities students, while Martins (2022) noted that internships enhance specific career direction and develop contacts among learners enrolled in social sciences.

Internships also enhance skills and marketability across disciplines, particularly social science. The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) internship requirement for undergraduate internships in Canadian family science integrates theory and practice, enhancing professionalism. Previous occupational activities include internships, practice, field



experience, cooperative programs, experiences for learning, field-based experiences, community-based study, volunteer service, part-time work, and volunteer work.

Studies have shown that internships improve job prospects, realistic intern expectations, contentment, success criteria, and intern monitoring. They also lead to faster hiring and better employability. Environmental science internships at higher learning institutions enhance research, professionalism, and natural science education.

Internships in non-professional fields positively affect the acquisition of skills, employment readiness, and employment prospects of students. They also improve the practical aspects of theoretical knowledge obtained by students, enabling them to achieve numerous working skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and self-development. Challenges in securing internship placements and ensuring relevant knowledge can be overcome through collaboration with practicing institutions.

Conclusion:

Internships have a transformative effect on non-professional students by enabling them to connect academic learning to real-world applications. They contribute to the improvement of education, vocation preparation, and professional development. In order to optimize the advantages of internships, it is imperative to provide exhaustive assistance and complete integration into non-professional curricula. More research should be conducted and institutions should make more efforts to implement internships in order to improve student achievement in a diverse range of academic subjects. Internships are the most effective method for non-professionals to enhance their professional readiness and education, as indicated by the results of this study. The literature and the data both suggest that internships are advantageous to academic learning and equip students with work-ready skills. Academic institutions must prioritize and cultivate internships in the humanities, social sciences, and arts to ensure that all students have the opportunity to acquire experiential learning as a complement to their education. Internships provide students with the opportunity to enhance their skills, establish a bridge between academia and industry, and cultivate a workforce that is capable of confronting modern challenges in a variety of sectors through proactive engagement and deliberate



activities. The Indian National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to transform higher education by integrating technology, following global trends, and promoting holistic learning. It aims to balance potential, achievement, aspiration, and employment for India's youth under 35. To achieve these goals, the government has developed the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, mandatory internship programs, and the National Skill Development Corporation. Additionally, the government has expanded InvenTiv 2024, the largest R&D Innovation Fair, and introduced undergraduate credit schemes.

However, for non-professionals, internships can be beneficial in the following ways owing to which they should be pursued: gain practical knowledge, hone skills and acquaint themselves with actual working conditions. Employing internships work towards creating a portfolio, general experience suited in the real world, and an opportunity to make extended network. It can be achieved with the help of educational institutions and professional associations on the one hand and companies that offer internships on the other hand as well as web-sites with focused sections like Linked-In or search-only Web-sites with focus on internships. However, some difficulties may be observed while searching for such enablers, including a small number of options for persons who are not professionals in this sphere, unknown or low popularity of these programs, the competition with other, more experienced candidates, and possible geographical or financial restrictions. To avoid such pitfalls, one has to be an active networker and conduct some research about more targeted positions and talk to career services or other professionals in the chosen field.

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Conflict of Interest: I declare there are no competing interests related to “Enhancing Academic and Career Development through Internships in Non-Professional Courses”



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