

## **The Impact of Internship Programs' Effectiveness on Students' Satisfaction and Career Choice**

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### **Abstract**

The experience of a hotel internship plays a significant role in determining whether hotel management students decide to choose or leave their careers. This paper aims to identify the main factors that affect students' satisfaction with their internship programs, exploring the role of hotel students' satisfaction from internships and its impact on career choice. A convenience sample of 344 students from faculties and private educational institutes was investigated to examine their satisfaction with internships at four-star and five-star hotels as a crucial determinant of career choice. The data were analyzed using SPSS (V. 25) to test the proposed hypotheses. The results revealed that the interns were dissatisfied with long working hours and workload, low financial benefits, night shifts, supervisors not providing enough care, the internship system being disorganized, the negative attitude of society toward hotel employees, and the career choice of students in the hotel industry were low after their internship. The study recommended that hotels should pay well to students, reduce the times of night shifts, and treat students with more supportive and respect to improve their career choices in the hotel industry. It also suggests that the practical components of hotel management programs should be maintained by higher educational institutions to produce graduates who are qualified and knowledgeable.

*Keywords –Educational institutions; Internship programs; Student satisfaction; Career choice*

### **1. Introduction**

A hotel internship has an important effect as a component of the curriculum design in higher education of hospitality because of the practice-oriented nature of careers in the industry (Chen et al., 2018). Through internships, students can receive in-depth instruction, gain expertise in practical application, create a strategy for applying knowledge in the workplace, and master applied knowledge (Jiang & Tribe, 2009). Furthermore, internships improve students' career prospects by developing their professional cognition and work attitude (Dickerson, 2009; Zopiatis, 2007).

Hotel management programs have trained a large number of hotel experts throughout the years, greatly aiding the industry's development by supplying the necessary skills. There has been a noticeable "imbalance between supply and demand" between the hospitality education sector and the industry, despite the rapid expansion of hospitality management programs and the number of students enrolled in these programs all over the world (Qu et al., 2021). Although the number of students graduated from hospitality and tourism is rising, relatively few of these graduates go on to work in the hotel industry (Song & Wang, 2008). An integrated component of a higher degree program in hospitality management, a hotel internship offers practical

experience working in the hotel business. Consequently, to better meet the needs of the business for talent, it is critical to look for ways to manage these internship programs (Qu et al., 2021).

Intern students in hotel properties occupy a unique position as both learners and temporary hotel staff. On the first side, they are acquiring actual practical knowledge and abilities as hotel staff (Ineson, 2010). On the other side, they are still enrolled in college-level studies, so their satisfaction with the internship experience will likely have an impact on the quality of learning they receive. The value of hotel internships is well understood by educational institutions of hospitality (Beggs et al., 2008); yet, there are times when the interests of the employer and the students completing the internship do not align. Such a mismatch in interests could be the reason why an internship program doesn't produce the expected outcomes (Chen et al., 2018).

Students' impressions of the hotel sector and their choice to work in a hotel career after graduation are influenced by how satisfied they are with their internship experience (Fang et al., 2013; Seyi'toğlu & Yi'ri'k, 2015; Qu et al., 2021). A full comprehension of the factors influencing hotel interns' satisfaction with their internship experience is generally lacking in the literature, despite prior research suggesting that a variety of factors, including both internship programs and industry participation, had an impact on their satisfaction (Chen & Shen, 2012). Thus, the main goal of this study is to determine the key factors affecting hotel interns' satisfaction with their internship and their career choices.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Many hospitality students have a low intention to stay in the hotel industry when they graduate (Gad & Abd El-Latief, 2019; Daskin, 2016; Koc et al., 2014). Although the factors influencing their career decision tend to be complex, most hospitality students cited the gap between their real working experience and expectation of their internship as the major reason why they intended to leave a hotel career (Richardson, 2008; Lu, 2022). The most important practical connection for students to determine whether a career in hotels meets their interests and personality is internships in the field (Zopiatis, 2007). Students get the chance to apply their theoretical knowledge to real-world practical issues in the industry. However, after their internship, the majority of students decided to quit the hotel industry (Lee & Chao, 2013). Despite the size of higher education in the hospitality field, not much research has been done to look at the variables influencing the satisfaction of students during their internships, and the influence of students' satisfaction in their career choice. Thus, this research gap is addressed by the current work.

## **1.3 Aim of the study**

The main aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of internship programs in the hotel industry, with a focus on their impact on students' satisfaction and career choices. The specific objectives are:

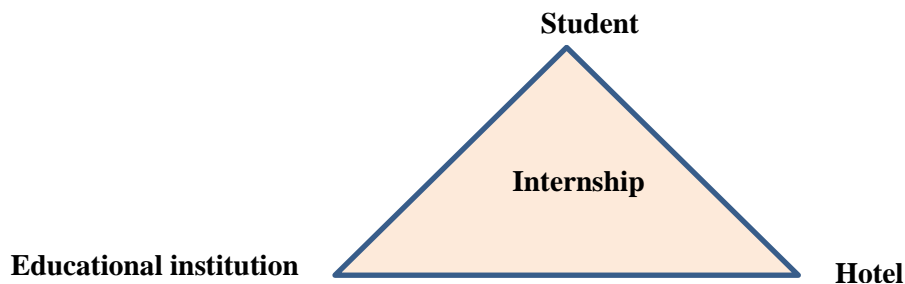
1. To identify the key factors influencing students' satisfaction with their internship programs in the hotel industry.

2. To analyze the extent to which students' satisfaction with internship programs affects their decision to pursue a career in the hotel industry.
3. To evaluate the overall impact of internship program experiences on students' future career choices in the hotel industry.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Internship Program in the Hotel Industry**

In addition to being one of the best ways to gain practical experience, the internship in the hotel industry is also viewed as a vital tool that helps close the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application in the workplace (Hoyle & Deschaine, 2016; Pacheco, 2019; Zopiatis, 2007). Internship programs improve student learning and produce more meaningful learning results because people learn best in real business situations through a combination of listening, seeing, and reading. Greater management competence, time management, communication skills, and self-discipline (Huang et al., 2016) are a few examples of such effects. A three-way collaboration between the student, educational institutions, and the host establishment is what is known as a well-structured internship (Yiu & Law, 2012). These three stakeholders offer their thoughts on the advantages of internships in the hotel industry (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** Stakeholders of internship in the hotel industry.

In general, educational institutions, hotels, and students themselves are the three stakeholders that influence internship satisfaction (Chen et al., 2018; Chen & Shen, 2012). Researchers have found a variety of important factors associated with each stakeholder in earlier literature. Academic readiness, planning of the internship, academic supervision, administrative support, the relevance of internship to the curriculum, and performance evaluation were all considered from the perspective of the academic institution when determining factors influencing the overall satisfaction of students with their internship experience (Chen et al., 2018; Chen & Shen, 2012; Hussien & La Lopa, 2018). From the perspective of hotel employers, Researchers indicated some factors including working environment, social interaction and relationships working, help provided by supervisors and colleagues, experience of learning and skill training (Chen et al., 2018; Hussien & La Lopa, 2018; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2013; Singh & Dutta, 2010). Finally, from the perspective of the student, Student internship satisfaction was found to be influenced by several factors, including autonomy, self-initiative, acknowledgment and opinions, individual

development, and dedication and self-commitment. (Chen & Shen, 2012; Hussien & La Lopa, 2018; Singh & Dutta, 2010).

The advantages of internships in the hotel industry were concluded from the perspective of stakeholders as follows:

### **1. Student's perspective**

To help students bridge the gap between theory and practice, they pursue internships in hotels, in addition they gain from the following:

- Understand the real working environment in a better way (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2007).
- Expand the acquisition of knowledge, such as communication skills with different people, specific technical skills, and enhancing students' level of management competence (Busby & Gibson, 2010; Chen & Gursoy, 2008).
- Develop students' shared sense of working by dealing with different customers and observing experienced colleagues in a workplace setting (Lu, 2022).
- Gain a greater awareness through observing the actual workplace (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2007).
- Foster a common understanding of working by letting students interact with a variety of customers or by making them see experienced employees in action (Lu, 2022).
- Provide a clear option for a future career as well as a chance to develop leadership, teamwork, and interpersonal skills (Aksu & Koksall, 2005).
- Introducing students to international perspectives, ethical issues, and improved chances for career path (Busby & Gibson, 2010).
- Develop patience and tolerance for handling difficult tasks, and boost self-esteem by managing accountable responsibilities (Chen et al., 2011).

Thus, internship programs offer numerous advantages in terms of learning, both personally and professionally. It is easy to understand why internships are a required component of almost all undergraduate hospitality programs.

### **2. Educational institutions' prospective**

Numerous research indicated that the internship program is beneficial for hospitality educators as well as students. According to research, educators can benefit from the following:

- Encourage students to pursue their career goals and help them succeed in their careers once they graduate (Robinson et al., 2016).
- Establish a reputation in the hotel sector by qualified graduating students (Lu, 2022).
- Increase chances of participating in career fairs, industry visits, training seminars, mentoring programs, field trips, and college advisory boards (Zopiatis, 2007).
- To maximize future graduate job chances, the university should fortify its linkages to the hotel sector through improved opportunities for collaborative research, increased university visibility, and the development of long-term working relationships (Lu, 2022).

As a result, enhancing relationships and collaboration with the hospitality sector through the internship programs will help instructors stay updated on industry developments and enhance the way that students' courses are developed.

### **3. Hotels' perspective**

Although studies have shown that internships of students are beneficial for instructors and students, particularly in the hospitality business, employers in the hotel industry can gain from the following as well:

- Offer a pool of potential employees available, who are typically strongly committed to the hotel sector (Lu, 2022).
- Lower labor costs—which are considered essential in the human-intensive sector (Schwarz & Kalberg, 2003).
- Assessing the performance of students and adaption to unexpected conditions (Lu, 2022).
- Establish connections with nearby institutions of hospitality education to explore prospective joint projects and research opportunities (Yiu & Law, 2012).
- Filling in labor shortages in high-demand seasons (Lu, 2022).
- To guarantee that industry requirements are included in the curriculum, maintain long-term relationships with collegiate hotel departments (Doniņa, 2015).

Therefore, the employer views internships as an excellent way to get a grasp of a highly valuable labor force that is particularly quickly transformed, readily available, and well-trained interns.

## **2.2. Student Satisfaction with Internship**

Satisfaction of students during an internship has become an essential measurement for assessing the efficacy of an internship (Farmaki, 2018). This, in turn, influences students' career choices after graduation (Chen et al., 2018; Robinson et al., 2016) and the development of their career identities in the hotel industry (Mooney & Jameson, 2018). Maintaining students' satisfaction with their internship is important for enabling high-quality education in hospitality educational institutions (Singh & Dutta, 2010). Many studies revealed some factors influencing students' satisfaction with their internship experiences, which differed between countries in contrast to the job satisfaction of hospitality employees (Kong et al., 2015; Yiu & Law, 2012).

Several studies investigated the perceptions of students throughout internship programs (Lee, 2008; Lu, 2022). According to Luo & Lam (2019), students' perceptions of their internship experiences differed from their expectations, which generally led to lower levels of satisfaction. Less interest in a profession in hotels has been associated with low student satisfaction. Improving intern satisfaction is essential as it can result in higher output, lower training expenses, and lower intern turnover rates (Dixon et al., 2005).

## **2.2 The future career choice of students**

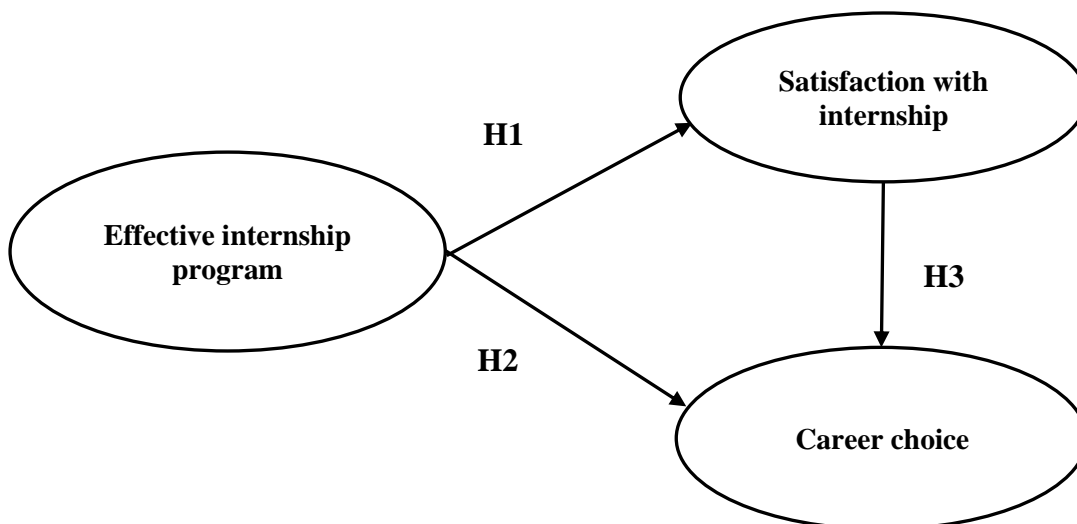
Numerous factors that influence hospitality students' decision to stay in the field after graduation have been investigated by the study of Lee et al. (2019), the researchers

identified five sources of influence: social media, parents, advisers, industry mentors, and professors. These sources also have an impact on the career of hospitality students. According to Amissah et al., 2020; Goh & Lee, 2018; Maxwell & Broadbridge, 2014), attractive people industries, chances to travel, career stability, cross-training, transferable skills, diversity in culture, and gender are important factors influencing a student's career choice. Previous studies (Robinson et al., 2016; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013) have also emphasized the crucial role that internships play in preparing students for career choice.

According to Fong et al. (2014), students who have a bad internship experience are more likely to obtain negative beliefs about the business and lose motivation to work in the hotel sector after graduation. After the internship experience, students shift their career from a career pathway focused on hospitality to one focused on tourism or another (Robinson et al., 2016).

The growth of the hotel industry increases the need for talent which can be produced by fresh graduates beginning their careers. Thus, Chen and Shen (2012) suggested that completing an effective internship can increase career choice, lower the rate of staff turnover in the hospitality industry, as well as enhance diversity by providing trained staff that has the necessary abilities and competencies.

It is concluded from the previous literature that there is a gap in how the effectiveness of internship programs impacts student satisfaction with internships and future career choices. Additionally, the satisfaction of students with internships will be examined as an independent variable that impacts their future career choice. Thus, this study proposed the following framework.



**Fig. 2. Research conceptual framework.**

Based on the previous conceptual framework this study supposed the following hypothesizes:

**H1:** Internship programs has a significant effect on the satisfaction of students with their internship.

**H2:** Internship programs has a significant effect on the future career choice of students.

**H3:** Satisfaction of students with their internship programs has a significant effect on the future career choice of students.

### **3. Sample and Data Collection**

This study employed a quantitative approach by using self-administered questionnaires distributed among students who accomplished their internships in 4 and 5-star hotels. A combined distribution technique including both face-to-face and postal distribution was used to administer the survey for students. A common internship program for students conducted during months of summer, starting in June or July and extended to the end of August or September. In Egypt, summer is the high season of operation in hotels, as indicated by (Zopiatis, 2007), many establishments use internship programs as a means of sufficient and free labor force. The study sample consists of students at hospitality governmental faculties (n=218) and higher private institutes (n=126). In total, 344 valid responses were achieved from the first of October to the end of December 2023. A convenience sampling technique was employed (Bell et al., 2018) as the survey was delivered to students at the beginning of the academic year (2023/2024).

#### **3.1 Instrumentation**

The survey was developed based on the review of the literature about the satisfaction of students and their expectations from internship programs. The survey was accompanied by a cover letter that explained the purpose, and objectives of the survey. Questions were converted to statements, and respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which each statement reflected their opinion using a five-point ordinal Likert scale. The survey was piloted by twenty-fourth-year students to ensure its clarity and appropriateness because they were expected to have a lot of knowledge and experience. The questionnaire was then revised and finalized based on the received feedback. In addition, one open-ended question was added to explore other views and comments on the topic.

#### **3.2 Construct of the questionnaire**

Three parts were implemented in the questionnaire. The first part includes three questions on demographic information (gender, type of educational institution, and academic level), and five questions on characteristics of the sample (internship length, hotel level, job rotation, internship department). Six sections about internship constructs were implemented in the second part concerning academic institution support, hotel supervisor, working conditions, financial benefits, recognition, and interpersonal relations. questions of this part were adapted from (Abdel-Aty & Deraz, 2018; Gad. & Abd El-latif, 2019; Lu, 2022; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2021; Qu, 2021; and Zopiatis, 2007). Satisfaction of students and their choice to remain in the hotel industry were implemented in the third part. This part was developed by (Cui & Abukhalifeh, 2022; Qu, 2021; and Lu, 2022).

#### **3.3 Data analysis**

The data were analyzed by using the SPSS (V. 25) to test the hypotheses of the study. Descriptive statistics were presented to identify the demographic profile of respondents and their characteristics, the main factors affecting student satisfaction with the internship, Spearman correlation was computed to investigate the relationship between internship-specific constructs, students' satisfaction, and students' career choice. Additionally, regression analysis was performed to measure the impact of internship-specific constructs on students' satisfaction and their choice to pursue their career in the hotel industry.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Reliability analysis

The reliability of constructs was explained by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure internal reliability; the value of Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1, and higher values indicate greater reliability. Cronbach's alpha of this survey was higher than 0.94 for the individual constructs and 0.958 for the entire survey as illustrated in Table 1. The values exceeding 0.70 indicate strong credibility (Hafez & Amer, 2016). The study tests revealed high internal consistency (coefficient > 0.7), which is acceptable to consider the reliability of the instrument.

**Table (1): Coefficient of reliability and validity of the survey**

|                              | <b>Constructs</b>            | <b>No. of items</b> | <b>Cronbach's Alpha</b> |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Independent variables</b> | Academic institution Support | 4                   | 0.962                   |
|                              | Hotel supervisor             | 5                   | 0.947                   |
|                              | Working conditions           | 5                   | 0.955                   |
|                              | Financial benefits           | 3                   | 0.949                   |
|                              | Recognition                  | 3                   | 0.947                   |
|                              | Interpersonal relations      | 5                   | 0.948                   |
|                              | Satisfaction                 | 8                   | 0.953                   |
| <b>Dependent variable</b>    | Future career choice         | 1                   | 0.959                   |
| <b>Overall survey scale</b>  |                              | <b>34</b>           | <b>0.958</b>            |

Reliability alone is not enough to determine its appropriateness. Validity is therefore necessary to validate the constructs. Before the questionnaire's distribution and completion, three professors in hospitality management and three HR managers with over five years of experience in the hotel industry evaluated its content validity. Their feedback was taken into consideration when modifying the questionnaire.

### 4.2 Respondents' profile

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of respondents. It was found that the percentage of female students (22.4%, n = 77) enrolled in higher education programs studying hotel management is less than that of male students (77.6%, n = 267), which is in line with the requirements of the hotel industry in terms of the gender of the employee. The majority of respondents were affiliated to governmental faculties (63.4%, n = 218). In terms of academic level, the fourth-level students were the most group that participated in this study (44.4%, n = 163), followed by third-level students (37.2%, n = 128), and



second-level students (15.4%, n = 53). On the other hand, since it is difficult for first-level students to give a true perception of the hospitality industry and have no understanding of hotel internship programs, it is decided to be excluded from this study. In addition, the population of the study was all undergraduate students and their ages ranged from 19 -23 years old, it is intended not to include the age of respondents in the demographic section.

**Table (2): Demographic of the Sample**

| Variable       |                        | Freq.      | %          |
|----------------|------------------------|------------|------------|
| Gender         | Male                   | 267        | 77.6       |
|                | Female                 | 77         | 22.4       |
|                | <b>Total</b>           | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Affiliation    | Governmental Faculties | 218        | 63.4       |
|                | Private Institutes     | 126        | 36.6       |
|                | <b>Total</b>           | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Academic level | Second level           | 53         | 15.4       |
|                | Third level            | 128        | 37.2       |
|                | Fourth level           | 163        | 44.4       |
|                | <b>Total</b>           | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |

### 4.3 Characteristic of the sample

The characteristics of respondents were tabulated in Table 3.

**Table (3): Characteristics of the sample**

| Variable                               | Category            | Freq.      | %          |
|--|---------------------|------------|------------|
| Internship length                      | Less than one month | 7          | 2          |
|  | 1-2 months          | 69         | 20         |
|  | 2-3 months          | 86         | 25         |
|  | 3-4 months          | 159        | 46         |
|  | 4 months and more   | 23         | 7          |
|  | <b>Total</b>        | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Hotel Level                            | 5- star             | 288        | 83.7       |
|  | 4- star             | 56         | 16.3       |
|  | <b>Total</b>        | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Job rotation                           | Yes                 | 59         | 17         |
|  | No                  | 285        | 83         |
|  | <b>Total</b>        | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Rotation mode                          | Inter-department    | 261        | 75.9%      |
|  | Intra-department    | 83         | 24.1%      |
|  | <b>Total</b>        | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |
| Internship department<br>(no rotation) | Front Office        | 52         | 15         |
|  | Food & beverage     | 159        | 56.4       |
|  | Housekeeping        | 65         | 23         |
|  | Other               | 19         | 5.6        |
|  | <b>Total</b>        | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |

The majority of respondents (93%, n = 337) had spent less than four months in internships, and about half of the students (45%, n = 210) had internships between one and three months. Students with four months and more of internships only represent

(7%, n = 23). The internship of all respondents was conducted at hotels with four-star categories and more. On the other hand, more than three-quarters of respondents (75.9%, n = 261) did not rotate through different departments during their period of internships. Students who worked without job rotation were mainly involved in the food and beverage department (56.4%, n = 159), the housekeeping department (23%, n = 65), and the front office department (15%, n = 52). Housekeeping and the food and beverage departments have the highest turnover rates and the greatest need for hotel employees (Cui & Abukhalifeh, 2022). It is concluded that students hope to obtain internship opportunities in the front office department, but the number of staff needs is low and it is difficult to get the position. Other departments (15.6%, n= 19), such as purchasing, and marketing departments, have a smaller number of staffing opportunities, making it more difficult to obtain internship opportunities.

#### **4.4 Factors affecting the satisfaction of students with their internship**

The findings indicate that the satisfaction of students with their internship is influenced by 8 main factors, the percentage of which is included in the following section.

**Table (4): Factors affecting the satisfaction of students with their internship**

| <b>Factors affecting the satisfaction of students with their internship</b> | <b>factors</b>  | <b>F</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|---|----------|----------|
|   | Long working hours and workload are overworked          | 298      | 86.6     |
|   | Low-paid financial benefits                             | 168      | 48.8     |
|   | The night shift has an impact on my health.             | 136      | 39.5     |
|   | Supervisors don't provide me with enough care           | 118      | 34.3     |
|   | The management system of the internship is disorganized | 74       | 21.5     |
|   | Lack of equity and discrimination                       | 47       | 13.7     |
|   | The social status of waiters is downwards               | 39       | 11.3     |
|   | Difficult to be involved with my colleagues and leaders | 35       | 10.2     |

The influencing elements that account for above 10% of satisfaction are tabulated in Table 4. The two factors that most affect internship satisfaction are Long working hours and overwork, and Low-paid financial benefits accounting for 86.6% and 48.8%, respectively. Excessive internship hours, overwork and low pay have all had a significant impact on students' satisfaction with their internships. Students believe that their daily exhaustion is more than the amount of work they can accomplish. Students involved in food and beverage service and housekeeping, in particular, must rapidly clean the area, pass dishes, wash tableware, set the table, and service beverages. These tasks are hard and often require students to have overtime.

The current students are highly reluctant to work at night, as evidenced by the 39.5% of respondents who claim that working the night shift negatively impacts their health. Due to their regular work schedules, they are unwilling to wait until guests leave at 11 or 12 p.m. before cleaning the table and setting it, and then return with tired bodies to their room, where they will sleep after midnight.

Supervisors don't provide me enough care, Management system of internship is disorganized, Lack of equity and discrimination accounted for 34.3%, 21.5%, and 13.7% respectively of student internship dissatisfaction.

Waiters have a lower social status, and this factor's percentage is relatively high, accounting for 11.3% of student internship dissatisfaction. The explanation of this result may be due to that numerous students discussed how the social status of servers had harmed their perception of themselves. A hotel waiter is viewed as a low-level work in society, one that involves servicing customers, which is a social cognition that is challenging to change. Particularly at the local level, many parents are also reluctant to permit their students to work in hotels in the future.

In terms of interpersonal relationships, Students' satisfaction with their internship is also influenced by their relationships with colleagues and leaders with 10.2% of student internship satisfaction.

In addition, this study revealed other influencing factors below 10% which include, staff dormitory environment, quality of staff meals, and the city where the hotel is located.

#### **4.5 Overall satisfaction of students and their future career choice**

The following Table 5 shows the overall satisfaction of students with internship and their choice to pursue a career in the hotel industry.

**Table (5) Overall satisfaction of students and their career choice in the hotel industry.**

|  | <b>Category</b>         | <b>F</b>   | <b>%</b>   |
|--|-------------------------|------------|------------|
| Overall satisfaction of students with internship               | Completely dissatisfied | 33         | 9.6        |
|  | Dissatisfied            | 115        | 33.4       |
|  | Neutral                 | 88         | 25.6       |
|  | Satisfied               | 81         | 23.6       |
|  | Completely satisfied    | 27         | 7.8        |
|  | <b>Total</b>            | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |
| After graduation, do you intend to work in the hotel industry? | Yes                     | 246        | 71.5       |
|  | No                      | 98         | 28.5       |
|  | <b>Total</b>            | <b>344</b> | <b>100</b> |

Data analysis found that only 108 students, accounting for 31.4 %, were satisfied with the internship. There are 148 students, accounting for 43%, who are dissatisfied and completely dissatisfied with their internship. In addition, there are 88 students, accounting for 25.6%, who are neutral.

In terms of the future choice of students to pursue a career in the hotel industry, 246 students (71.5%) of the respondents, say they would like to work in the hotel industry after graduation, while 28.5% say they would not. This proportion is lower than the findings of studies conducted by Cui & Abukhalifeh (2022) and Richardson (2008), which were 78% and 43.6%, respectively. This result refers to that many students have negative perceptions of the hotel industry. There is very little opportunity that these students will ever work in the hotel industry again.

The growth of the hotel industry and the improvement of hotel management specialization in universities are both seriously threatened by this. Also, hotels are finding it difficult to attract fresh college graduates, and the number of students pursuing hotel management specialization is declining.

**4.6 Correlation matrix of internship constructs, satisfaction, and future career choice**

It is observed from the Table 6 that the future career choice of students shares a high statistically significant and positive relationship with students' satisfaction with their internship ( $r= 0.865$ ,  $p< 0.01$ ) and internship constructs including: Academic institution support ( $r=0.623$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), Hotel supervisor ( $r= 0.840$ ,  $p< 0.01$ ), Working conditions ( $r= 0.679$ ,  $p< 0.01$ ), financial benefits ( $r=0.809$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), Recognition ( $r= -0.883$ -,  $p< 0.01$ ), Interpersonal relations ( $r=0.939$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

**Table (6) Correlation matrix of the study variables**

| Study variables                        | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     | 6                     | 7                     | 8 |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <b>1. Future career choice</b>         | 1                     |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |   |
| <b>2. Satisfaction with internship</b> | .865**<br>.000<br>344 | 1                     |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |   |
| <b>3. Academic institution support</b> | .522**<br>.000<br>344 | .623**<br>.000<br>344 | 1                     |                       |                       |                       |                       |   |
| <b>4. Hotel supervisor</b>             | .661**<br>.000<br>344 | .840**<br>.000<br>344 | .795**<br>.000<br>344 | 1                     |                       |                       |                       |   |
| <b>5. Working conditions</b>           | .591**<br>.000<br>344 | .679**<br>.000<br>344 | .780**<br>.000<br>344 | .905**<br>.000<br>344 | 1                     |                       |                       |   |
| <b>6. Financial benefits</b>           | .590**<br>.000<br>344 | .809**<br>.000<br>344 | .738**<br>.000<br>344 | .919**<br>.000<br>344 | .810**<br>.000<br>344 | 1                     |                       |   |
| <b>7. Recognition</b>                  | .803**<br>.000<br>344 | .883**<br>.000<br>344 | .726**<br>.000<br>344 | .947**<br>.000<br>344 | .849**<br>.000<br>344 | .913**<br>.000<br>344 | 1                     |   |
| <b>8. Interpersonal relations</b>      | .787**<br>.000<br>344 | .939**<br>.000<br>344 | .725**<br>.000<br>344 | .956**<br>.000<br>344 | .811**<br>.000<br>344 | .931**<br>.000<br>344 | .981**<br>.000<br>344 | 1 |

#### 4.7 Testing Hypotheses

To investigate the impact of internship satisfaction on students on their choice to pursue their career in the hotel industry or not, simple linear regression was conducted. In addition, to estimate student's choice to pursue their career in the hotel industry after their internship, multiple regression analysis was also computed.

##### 4.7.1 The impact of internship program on student satisfaction with internship

Table 7 shows the impact of internship constructs on student satisfaction with internships. The results indicated that the value of adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is .671 and F= 699.985 (p<0.01), referring that 67.1% of the total variance in student satisfaction with an internship is explained by effective internship constructs including the support of the academic institution, supporting of hotel supervisor, working conditions, financial benefits, Interpersonal recognition, and interpersonal relations with co-workers.

**Table (7): The impact of effective internship constructs on student satisfaction with internship**

| R   | R-Square                    | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |         |                      |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------|----------------------|
| .820  | .672                        | .671              | .35227                     |         |                      |
| ANOVA <sup>(a)</sup>  |                             |                   |                            |         |                      |
|   | Sum of Squares              | df                | Mean Square                | F       | Sig.                 |
| <b>Regression</b>   | 86.865                      | 1                 | 86.865                     | 699.985 | 0.000 <sup>(b)</sup> |
| <b>Residual</b>   | 42.441                      | 342               | 0.124                      |         |                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | 129.306                     | 343               |                            |         |                      |
| Coefficients <sup>(a)</sup>                                       |                             |                   |                            |         |                      |
|   | Unstandardized Coefficients |                   | Standardized Coefficients  | t       | Sig.                 |
|   | B                           | Std. Error        | Beta                       |         |                      |
| <b>(Constant)</b>   | .739                        | .072              | .820                       | 10.314  | .000                 |
| <b>Internship constructs</b>                                      | .702                        | .027              |                            | 26.457  | .000                 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Student's satisfaction with the internship |                             |                   |                            |         |                      |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Internship constructs                  |                             |                   |                            |         |                      |

This result is consistent with what had been concluded by Lu (2022) as the previous constructs are essential and important for achieving positive internship experience for students in the hotel industry. This result supported the first hypothesis *"Internship programs has a significant effect on the satisfaction of students with their internship"*.

##### 4.7.2 The impact of an effective internship program on future career choice

It is observed from the following Table 8 that the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is .477 and F= 313.907 (p<0.01). These figures reveal that 47.7% of the total variance in future career choice of graduates to pursue their career in the hotel industry is explained by the effective implementation of internship programs in hotels.

**Table (8): The impact of effective internship programs on future career choice**

| <b>R</b>   | <b>R-Square</b>                    | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | <b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b> |          |                      |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| .692   | .479                               | .477                     | .46292                            |          |                      |
| <b>ANOVA<sup>(a)</sup></b>                       |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
|  | <b>Sum of Squares</b>              | <b>df</b>                | <b>Mean Square</b>                | <b>F</b> | <b>Sig.</b>          |
| <b>Regression</b>                                | 67.269                             | 1                        | 67.269                            | 313.907  | 0.000 <sup>(b)</sup> |
| <b>Residual</b>                                  | 37.289                             | 342                      | 0.214                             |          |                      |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | 140.558                            | 343                      |                                   |          |                      |
| <b>Coefficients<sup>(a)</sup></b>                |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
|  | <b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b> |                          | <b>Standardized Coefficients</b>  | <b>t</b> | <b>Sig.</b>          |
|  | <b>B</b>                           | <b>Std. Error</b>        | <b>Beta</b>                       |          |                      |
| <b>(Constant)</b>                                | 1.089                              | .094                     | .692                              | 11.557   | .000                 |
| <b>Student satisfaction with internship</b>      | .617                               | .035                     |                                   | 17.717   | .000                 |
| a. Dependent Variable: future career choice      |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Internship constructs |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |

This result is consistent with the findings of (Cui & Abukhalifeh, 2022; Lu, 2022) who indicated that students who have an effective internship experience are more likely to stay in the hotel industry career. So, an effective internship program is necessary to improve the future career choices of students after their graduation. Therefore, the second hypothesis that said "*Internship programs has a significant effect on the future career choice of students*" was supported.

#### 4.7.3 The impact of student satisfaction with an internship on future career choice

It can be concluded from simple linear regression analysis that the value of adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is 0.428 and F= 916.895 (p< 0.01) that student satisfaction with their internship accounts for 42.8% of the variance of student career choice of students to stay in the hotel industry as presented in Table 9.

**Table (9): The impact of student satisfaction with an internship on career choice**

| <b>R</b>                          | <b>R-Square</b>                    | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | <b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b> |          |                      |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| .553                              | .428                               | .428                     | .46795                            |          |                      |
| <b>ANOVA<sup>(a)</sup></b>        |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
|                                   | <b>Sum of Squares</b>              | <b>df</b>                | <b>Mean Square</b>                | <b>F</b> | <b>Sig.</b>          |
| <b>Regression</b>                 | 102.373                            | 1                        | 102.373                           | 916.895  | 0.000 <sup>(b)</sup> |
| <b>Residual</b>                   | 38.185                             | 342                      | 0.112                             |          |                      |
| <b>Total</b>                      | 140.558                            | 343                      |                                   |          |                      |
| <b>Coefficients<sup>(a)</sup></b> |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
|                                   | <b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b> |                          | <b>Standardized Coefficients</b>  | <b>t</b> | <b>Sig.</b>          |
|                                   | <b>B</b>                           | <b>Std. Error</b>        | <b>Beta</b>                       |          |                      |

|   |      |      |      |        |      |
|---|------|------|------|--------|------|
| (Constant)  | .413 | .078 | .853 | 5.322  | .000 |
| <b>Student satisfaction with internship</b>   | .590 | .029 |      | 30.280 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: future career choice<br>b. Predictors: (Constant), Internship constructs |      |      |      |        |      |

The previous results indicated that students' satisfaction with their internship had a significant positive effect on their career choices. In other words, the higher level of student satisfaction with internships improves the choice of students to pursue their career in the hotel industry. The previous results explain that students expect internships to enhance their professional horizons, and future career advancement and enable them to acquire technical skills through work teams and supervisor support. Students' expectations about their jobs before beginning the internship and their feelings regarding the outcomes of the internship will encourage them to pursue a career after completing the program. According to this, future choices to pursue the same career path are greatly influenced by how satisfied one is with the hotel environment. They could wish to remain on the same job path if they are happy with their organizations. They will be very reluctant to pursue that career further if they are not satisfied. This result supported the third hypothesis that said "*Satisfaction of students with their internship programs has a significant effect on the future career choice of students*" was supported.

#### 4.8 Estimation level of hotel career choice

Multiple regression was employed to estimate the choice of students to pursue their career in the hotel industry; the formula was computed based on the following table:

**Table (10): parameter of student career choice estimation level**

|  |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| <b>R</b>   | <b>R-Square</b>                    | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | <b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b> |          |                      |
| .760 <sup>(a)</sup>  | .640                               | .636                     | 2.415                             |          |                      |
| <b>ANOVA(b)</b>  |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
|  | <b>Sum of Squares</b>              | <b>df</b>                | <b>Mean Square</b>                | <b>F</b> | <b>Sig.</b>          |
| <b>Regression</b>  | 104.055                            | 6                        | 17.342                            | 160.105  | 0.000 <sup>(b)</sup> |
| <b>Residual</b>  | 36.503                             | 337                      | .108                              |          |                      |
| <b>Total</b>   | 140.558                            | 343                      |                                   |          |                      |
| <b>Coefficients(a)</b>   |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |
|  | <b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b> |                          | <b>Standardized Coefficients</b>  | <b>t</b> | <b>Sig.</b>          |
|  | <b>B</b>                           | <b>Std. Error</b>        | <b>Beta</b>                       |          |                      |
| <b>(Constant)</b>  | -.374-                             | .153                     |                                   | -2.446-  | .015                 |
| Educational institution support  | .056                               | .068                     | .044                              | .820     | .413                 |
| <b>Hotel supervisor support</b>  | -.462-                             | .071                     | -.681-                            | -6.501   | <b>.008</b>          |
| Working conditions   | .004                               | .046                     | .006                              | .086     | .932                 |
| <b>Financial benefits]</b>   | -.295-                             | .063                     | -.398-                            | -4.688-  | <b>.000</b>          |
| <b>Recognition</b>   | .802                               | .135                     | .0815                             | 5.922    | <b>.043</b>          |
| <b>Interpersonal relationships</b>   | .411                               | .136                     | .965                              | 7.666    | <b>.000</b>          |
| a. Dependent Variable: Hotel career choice.<br>b. Predictors: (Constant), educational institution support, hotel supervisor support, working conditions, financial benefits, recognition, and interpersonal relationships. |                                    |                          |                                   |          |                      |

It's concluded from the previous Table 10, that the estimation rate of hotel career choice =  $\beta_0 + \beta_1$  hotel supervisor support +  $\beta_2$  financial benefits +  $\beta_3$  recognition +  $\beta_4$  interpersonal relationships.

The tabulated results indicated that the career choice of students is impacted positively and significantly by four effective internship constructs including; hotel supervisor support, financial benefits, interpersonal recognition, and interpersonal relationships. This result means that if the implementation level of one of these four effective constructs increases then the level of hotel career choice will also increase. The other two internship constructs including; educational institution support, and working conditions are excluded from the proposed estimation rate because they have low coefficients. It is concluded that the increase in the effective implementation level of hotel supervisor support would increase the level of hotel career choice by (0.462) which is the highest coefficient among other coefficients. On the other hand, working conditions have the lowest effect (0.004) on hotel career choice.

## **5. Conclusion and Implications**

This study used a quantitative approach to investigate the effectiveness of internship programs, the overall satisfaction of students with internships and their choice to pursue a career in the hotel industry. The researchers discovered that just 31.4% of students were satisfied. However, only 28.5% of students say they intend to leave the hotel industry after they graduate. Although numerous studies have demonstrated that internships benefit interns, higher educational institutions, and hotels alike. This study indicated that students who were looking forward to their internships became frustrated with the hotel industry and did not want to pursue their careers after graduation. Because the work they were performing was too hard, their financial benefits were low, they often worked overtime, they faced a low social status in society, and they were unwilling to stay in the hotel industry.

Students have faced several challenges as a result of these tasks, they should actively confront them. To meet the internship requirements, intern students must actively acquire professional skills and social experience. Interns are required to promptly fix any issues they have by actively communicating with hotel leaders and university professors. Students should have reasonable expectations for their internships and establish achievable practical goals. As they transition from college students to employees, they should shift their perspective and be aware of this. Before beginning their internships, they should start the internship with realistic expectations and a solid basis of professional knowledge. Individual differences among students should also be recognized. Each student will encounter a unique set of challenges and arrive at the internship with a different set of expectations. As a result, students themselves should take the initiative to communicate with academic supervisors and hotel supervisors, express their requirements, and proactively look for assistance during their internships.

Educational institutions should take responsibility of for the supervision and organization of student internships. Both the educational objectives and the affordability of the student should be considered in internship programs. Governmental



faculties and private educational institutions should examine hotels of internship in detail, sign internship protocols & contracts, and determine working hours, overtime hours, financial benefits, and other details. Throughout the internship process, the academic supervisor should keep in touch with students and keep them updated about the internship situation of students, quickly deal with any challenges and problems they face, and provide them with psychological support. Governmental faculties and private educational institutes should also take steps to establish internship arrangements and explain to students the importance of it. Furthermore, university-assigned internship supervisors are crucial to the internship experience. Students often have questions about their futures due to their lack of work experience. They require academic supervisors to boost their job confidence, help them deal with the confusion they have at work, and offer prompt advice and care. Before the internships are conducted, supervisors should take the initiative to learn about the needs of the students. They must assist the students in psychologically preparing for their first career and keep them from having unreasonable expectations for the internships, which could influence their future choice to work in the hotel industry. Finally, educational institutions should set up and develop an effective system for assessing internships that complies with industry standards. A good internship assessment system should not only offer a grade to the internship course but also help students understand their strengths and weaknesses.

Hotel properties should implement HRM changes and improve the standard of HRM to prevent the fall in the number of employees who have not graduated or specialized in hotel management. Firstly, hotels need to be more considerate of the rights and interests of students, recognize their emotions, and provide a positive internship environment. Supervisors of hotels should also provide students with comprehensive internship guidance, including work professional skills, interpersonal relationship management, and psychological support. Take various methods to improve the internship satisfaction of intern students. Hotels should establish an appropriate management structure for interns to coordinate their employment and studies while looking for internship agreements with hospitality educational institutions. For instance, hotels could arrange accommodation and internship rotations (inter-department or intra-department) for students to enhance their overall skills. Lastly, because internships are a component of education and will directly influence students' career choices, hotels should also create training programs for students in related occupational skills and offer employment opportunities where students may put these abilities to use. Additionally, hotels must make sure that students understand opportunities in the hotel industry, environmental culture, and adaptation to new work life.

## **6. Limitations and Future Research**

Although the sample of students was affiliated with different educational institutions, only four private institutes and five governmental faculties were used in this study; hence, a larger number of educational institutions offering programs of hospitality management could be included in future research to investigate the generalizability of these findings. Future research may also examine employers' viewpoints regarding internships and compare them to the results of this study, to ensure improving internship

organization and content in the hotel industry. As the sample of this study was from the hotel industry, similar studies among organizations and students in other industries may reveal different findings. Other studies may examine the organizational commitment of interns, the perceived supervisor support, and the perceived organizational support.

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الملخص العربي

يساهم التدريب الصيفي في الفندق في تحديد ما إذا كان طلاب قسم إدارة الفنادق سيقروون توظيف مستقبلهم المهني بالقطاع الفندقية أو تركه. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد العوامل الرئيسية التي تؤثر على رضا الطلاب عن برامج التدريب الصيفي بالفنادق، واستكشاف دور رضا طلاب عن تجربة التدريب الصيفي وتأثيره على الاختيار المهني. تم توزيع استبانة على عينة عشوائية من الطلاب (344 طالب) بالكليات والمعاهد الخاصة للتعرف على مدى رضاهم عن تجربة التدريب الصيفي بالفنادق، واختيارهم العمل بالقطاع الفندقية مستقبلاً. حيث تم استخدام مجموعة من المقاييس الإحصائية منها: ألفا كرونباخ، معامل ارتباط سيرمان، تحليل الانحدار الخطي البسيط. وأظهرت النتائج أن 43% من الطلاب المتدربين كانوا غير راضين عن تجربة التدريب الصيفي بالفنادق، وكان أبرز عناصر عدم الرضا تتعلق بأعباء وضغوط العمل، طول ساعات العمل، والأجور المنخفضة، والعمل بالورديات الليلية، وأن المشرفين لا يقدمون الرعاية الكافية للمتدربين، وعدم وجود جداول عمل تنظيمية للتدريب الصيفي، ونظرة المجتمع غير الجيدة تجاه موظفي الفنادق. وزعم 38.4% من الطلاب الملحقين ببرامج التدريب الصيفي الى عدم رغبتهم في الاختيار المهني لقطاع الفنادق للعمل مستقبلاً. وأوصت الدراسة بضرورة قيام الفنادق بتخفيف أعباء وضغوط العمل عن الطلاب، ودفع مقابل مادي جيد، وتقليل أوقات المناوبات الليلية، ومعاملة الطلاب بمزيد من الإنسانية لتحسين الاختيار المهني لصناعة الفنادق مستقبلاً. وقدمت الدراسة عدد من المقترحات للأطراف المستفيدة (المؤسسات الأكاديمية، الطلاب، المنشآت الفندقية) من أجل توفير خريجين مؤهلين وواسعي المعرفة.