

---

**INTEGRATION IN THE ORGANIZATION OF INTERNSHIPS FOR STUDENTS IN  
THE FIELD OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

**Jalilov Erkin Ergashevich**  
Teacher, Termez State University

---

**ANNOTATION**

This article aims to determine students' satisfaction, experience and attitude toward internship in hospitality higher education. Motivation: Work integrated learning in the system of vocational higher education should enable young people, who have acquired theoretical and practical knowledge, to increase their employability, develop expertise through the process of socialization in the workplace, as well as to develop work habits and have a better understanding of the work culture.

**Key words:** *system, vocational, habit, better, understanding*

Given the rapid development of the service sector, one of the key factors of success is the recruitment of highly qualified staff, which increases the demand for education in this field. This is supported by the fact that many higher education institutions worldwide strive to increase the number of hospitality and tourism study programmes (Kim, Lee, & Cohen, 2008). According to the Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Serbia for 2018, the total number of students enrolled in state higher education institutions in the field of services for the academic year 2016/2017 was 5847, while the number of those enrolled in private institutions was 452 (Statistical Office of RS, 2018). These numbers show that state higher education institutions still dominate in the field of services in Serbia despite the fact that competition in the market is getting fiercer. In order to become active partners in fostering local and regional development, higher education institutions (HEI) must become much more flexible as regards new opportunities and challenges. The fastest way for HEIs to respond to the labour market needs for skilled workforce is through redesigning internships. Developing an effective and well-organized internship program can help retain talent, reduce dropouts, and facilitate future career retention (Lin & Anantharajah, 2019). In order to increase students' satisfaction and the success of internship, strong faculty support and intensive participation of faculty supervisor are necessary. Hussien and La Lopa (2018) state that cooperation between industry, HEIs and students provides more opportunities to identify different needs, expectations and interests of students, leading to excellence in vocational education. According to the mentioned authors, the key factors of internship satisfaction are the following: self-initiative, university support, job characteristics (feedback is of the highest importance to students), an organizational environment that provides them with learning opportunities, and working hours. The purpose of this paper is to empirically explore the experience and satisfaction of internships in vocational higher education, but also to explore students' attitudes towards various aspects of the internship. For this purpose, a survey was conducted among current students of the College of Hotel Management in Belgrade. The paper is organized as follows. The introductory section is followed by a theoretical section explaining the concept of work integrated learning with special reference to its application in the hospitality industry, as well as a literature review of students' motivations for studying tourism and hospitality programmes. Section 3 sets out the research hypotheses and describes the research methodology. The results of the study are presented in Section 4, while Section 5 provides recommendations and concluding remarks. An analysis of students' previous experience with internships showed that more than two-thirds of respondents used college ads as a source of information (74.1%), followed by a professor's recommendation (24.9%) and a recommendation from other students (1%), while no student stated another source of information. Students generally agree with the statement that during internship they were doing the jobs they were studying

for (mean=3.52); namely, almost one third of all students (31.2%) stated that they had always done the job they were studying. As for the reasons why they continued to carry out internships outside their profession, the two most common reasons were the desire to learn something new (24.8% of responses) and the obligation to intern (19.7% of responses). Other, less common reasons were: desire to travel and learn about other cultures (9.8%) and avoid the demanding procedures necessary to change internships (8.5% of responses). Empirical results indicate a high rate of employability through internships (63.5%), which is a very encouraging information. Among those who were offered employment, the majority were students of hotel management (44.2%) and gastronomy (41.7%) programmes, and the least number of students were offered an employment in restaurant management (14.2%). Only 12.7% of students have never worked overtime during internship and there is no statistically significant difference between study programmes concerning overtime ( $p > 0.05$ ). One third of students (30.69%) stated that they were not paid overtime, 29.63% stated that they received pay, 26.98% said that overtime was recognized as working hours, while the rest did not work overtime. When it comes to compatibility between curriculum and internship programme, students are generally not sure to what degree they are aligned (mean = 3.08). Examining whether students worked during the internship in the jobs they were educated for, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference between the students of different study programmes (29.169,  $p < 0.001$ ). A post hoc analysis has shown that there is a difference between the students of hotel management and students of restaurant management (31.642,  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as between the students of restaurant management and students of gastronomy (44.789,  $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, we can conclude that gastronomy and restaurant management students do the job they were educated more often than hotel management students, thus confirming hypothesis H1. These results showed that hotel management students had a wider scope of work which qualified them more for employment in comparison with restaurant students. Regarding the frequency of work in the profession during the internship, a statistically significant difference was observed between males and females, as estimated by the Mann-Whitney U Test (3403.5,  $p < 0.05$ ). The results show that males more often than females do the jobs for which they are educated, thus confirming Hypothesis H2. Concerning students' perception of curriculum compliance with the internship programme, no statistically significant differences between the three study programmes have been found, as estimated by Kruskal-Wallis Test (4.486,  $p > 0.05$ ), so Hypothesis H3 is rejected. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test show statistically significant differences between students of different years of study in terms of perceived compatibility of the curriculum with internship programme (8.495,  $p < 0.05$ ). Statistically significant differences in perception are found between third-year and first-year students (29.113,  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as between second-year and first-year students (28.103,  $p < 0.01$ ), thus confirming Hypothesis 4. It has been confirmed that students of all years agree that the internship should be paid (1.649,  $p > 0.05$ ), therefore hypothesis H5 is rejected.

## REFERENCES

1. Airey, D. (2005). Growth and development. In W. Zhang, X. Fan, D. Airey, & J. Tribe, *An international handbook of tourism education* (p. 17). Oxford, UK: Elsevier Ltd.
2. Airey, D. (2016). Tourism education: Past, present and future. *The Business of Tourism*, 17, 9-12.
3. Caldicott, J., Wilson, E., Donnelly, J. F., & Edenheim, J. R. (2019). Fostering Self-Authorship Through Work Integrated Learning in University Tourism Programs: A Missed Opportunity? *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 1-14. DOI: 10.1080/10963758.2019.1685891
4. Cam, K. (2016). Work-integrated learning process in tourism training programs in Vietnam: Voices of education and industry. *Asia Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 17(2), 149-161.

5. Cameron, C., Freudenberg, B., Giddings, J., & Klopper, C. (2017). The program risks of work-integrated learning: a study of Australian university lawyers. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 40(1), 67-80. DOI: 10.1080/1360080X.2017.1377969