

FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY AMONG LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS WITH THE HELP OF INTERNSHIP EDUCATION

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Abstract *This study aims to evaluate the impact of internship education on the Library and Information Science (LIS) students and working professionals in the Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University region. The internship programmes were conducted by Knowledge Resource Center (KRC) and college libraries are taken into consideration. For the present research survey conducted and the questionnaire were distributed to the students, ex-students of the LIS teaching department and affiliated colleges and working LIS professionals in the Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University.*

The research study data was consisted of 45 LIS students who completed their internship programme after completion of Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLISc.) final semester examination, 136 ex-students which are the alumni of the LIS department and 78 working professionals from academic libraries within the university region. The research study was used structured questionnaire having different types of questions and responses were assessed using 5-point Likert scale. The research study employed descriptive analysis to evaluate demographic information. The central tendencies, scale measurement analysis and chi-square test is used to interpret data. The distribution normality of primary data and reliability of the questionnaire is tested.

The purpose of the research study is to study the scope of existing internship education and policy available for LIS science students in the university region. The various tasks and activities run under internship education are also studied. From the result it is found that, overall impact of internship education on the career development and employability of the LIS students is positive. The students get benefits from internship and them opinioned that the probability of success in the interview process for the various posts in the library is increased due to get practical knowledge and hands-on training in internship. On the basis of result it is concluded that, fostering sustainable career development and employability among LIS students, internship is important and it plays a big role in their career development.

Keywords: *Internship Education, Internship Programmes, Career Development, Sustainable Career Development, Employability, Library and Information Science (LIS) Education, etc.*

INTRODUCTION

An 'internship' is an opportunity to integrate career related experience into Library and Information Science (LIS) education by participating in planned, supervised work. Internship provides students an opportunity to put into practice skills they have learned in the class rooms. In addition, students should have an opportunity to enhance those skills, obtain the perspective of a work environment and benefit from a mentor or supervisor's experience and advice (Kannappanavar & Praveen, 2011). In the university region LIS student's internship facility is provided by Knowledge Resource Center of the university and college

libraries. The decided period of internship programme is for one month. The course content and activities of internship will be designed by facility providers/internship centers. Students have choice to select internship center as per their convenient. The objective of the study is to identify and study the place where internship activities were carried out and also study various tasks and activities run under internship education. Career development is an important process for every student. This process starts when they admitted to the undergraduate or graduate programmes in any institute. Internship plays big role in career development of students.

Sullivan and Baruch (2009) defined as, "career as an individual's work-related and other relevant experiences,

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both inside and outside of organizations that form a unique pattern over the individual's life span". Van der and De Vos, 2015 stated that, "sustainable career development refer to the sequence of an individual's different career experiences, reflected through a variety of patterns of continuity over time, crossing several social spaces, and characterized by individual agency, herewith providing meaning to the individual". Internship programmes is essential to increase employability ratio of the students. The 'internship' is directly linked to the employability of the students. Employability means the development of skills and adaptable workforces in which all those capable of work are encouraged to develop the skills, knowledge, technology and adaptability to enable them to enter and remain in employment throughout their working lives (HM Treasury, 1997, p. 1). This study is an attempt to measure impact of internship education on the career development and employability of LIS students in the Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University region.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the present research study is to determine how much internship education is fostering sustainable career development and employability among LIS students. Internship is essential in their future career development, professional and personal growth. This study also measure impact of internship education on the work environment of the LIS professionals in the Sant Gadge Baba Amravati university region. In order to reach and achieve the aim of the study following objectives were framed:

- To study the scope of existing internship education and policy available for Library and Information Science (LIS) students in university region.
- To identify and study various tasks and activities run under internship education.
- To measure impact of internship education on the career development and employability of LIS students in university region.
- To measure impact of internship education on the work environment of LIS professionals.
- To examine participant's level of satisfaction with the existing internship education.
- To explore problems in internship education faced by respondents.

REVIEWS OF THE PAST STUDIES

The various studies were conducted on the LIS internship. It is observed that, most of the studies were related to identify the strength and problems in internship. The objectives of these studies are to measure effectiveness of internship in

LIS education. Iradel et al. (2021) discovered several themes regarding lived experiences of pre-service teachers during their internship. Their study found that, interns set their expectations towards their internship. Bird, Chu and Oguz conducted study in the year 2015 on the internship in LIS education. In this study, participants were included from national libraries, associations, and academic library and information science programs from 69 different countries around the world. The result showed an amazing range of professional preparation requirements for employment in libraries across the respondent countries.

In 1990 Schon stated that, "an internship programmes provides a professionally guided experience when compared to the other experiential learning activities for the student". Professional experience, gained outside the classroom, enhances a student's sense of commitment to the community, as well as a personal sense of confidence, that can enable creativity (Sen & Ford, 2009). Hruska et al. (2022) were stated that, a clearly defined expectation towards the internship programme is very important for virtual interns. Hence, the internship satisfaction studies include expectations as integral to revealing interns' experiences. It is important for virtual interns to have a clearly defined expectation towards the internship program. That is why internship satisfaction studies include expectations as integral to revealing interns' experiences (Vo et al., 2022).

Bird and Michael (2014) conducted a study on the real learning connections: questioning the learner in the LIS internship. They examined that the role of internship, whether it has been benefited the students? For this a model is proposed which examines what happens for both the practitioner supervisor and the LIS educator during an internship experience. Iradel et al. (2021) discussed a theme where students were able to receive support from various sources ranging from financial, moral, and emotional support. In this part of their study, it revealed various arrangements made by students before the internship, especially its online mode. The previously done studies were concentrated on overall function of internship programmes while the present research study is related to micro and exhaustive investigation of internship scope, identification of various tasks and activities and to examine participant's level of satisfaction with the existing internship education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING

The research study is mainly based on the survey research. The data was collected from the appearing students of the teaching department of LIS and affiliated colleges of Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Maharashtra. These students completed their one month internship after final semester examination of BLISc. Now these students admitted

for Master of Library and Information Science (MLISc.) degree programme. The second category of respondents is ex-students of LIS teaching department and affiliated colleges. The third category of respondents is working LIS professionals. The data collected from these three categories of respondents with the help of Google form questionnaire. The questionnaire mailed to the various groups of students and working professionals. The received response rate is high i.e. 73.79%.

The sampling is done on the basis of systematic sampling. The mailing of the questionnaire is done randomly. The social networking sites and WhatsApp groups are used to send link of questionnaires. The survey response is good due to on-line mode. The collected primary data is used for the further statistical analysis. After screening the primary data is classified and tabulated in a scientific manner. For the descriptive analysis, demographics were calculated using frequency and percentage analysis. The non-parametric test i.e. chi-square test is used to draw results and to portray exact picture.

RESULTS

Demographic Information of Respondents

The total 259 responses received in this survey. The respondents were distributed in three categories i.e. appearing students, ex-students and working professionals in the university region. In the appearing students category 45 questionnaires received out of 51 mailed questionnaires; hence response rate of appearing LIS students is 88.23%. 200 questionnaires were mailed to the ex-students and response received is 136 i.e. 68%. These ex-students are the alumni of the teaching department of LIS and affiliated colleges of the Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Maharashtra. For working professionals, 100 questionnaires distributed out of them 78 responses i.e. 78% were received. The survey data and demographic information of the respondents is shown in the Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Types of Respondents	Respondents			Total Respondents % (N)
	Male	Female	Transgender	
Appearing students	18 (6.95%)	27 (10.42%)	0	17.37% (45)
Ex-students	79 (30.50%)	57 (22%)	0	52.51% (136)
Working professionals	49 (18.91%)	29 (11.20%)	0	30.12% (78)
Total	146 (56.37%)	113 (43.63%)	0	100% (259)

Source: Computed from the survey data.

The Table 1 shows that, 18 i.e. 6.95% respondents are male and 27 i.e. 10.42% were female in appearing students category. These students completed their bachelor degree BLISc. with one month internship programme. 79 i.e. 30.50% and 57 i.e. 22% respondents are male and female ex-students respectively. They completed their master degree MLISc. from the department of LIS.

The table also shows that, 78 i.e. 30.12% respondents were working professionals in the present survey. They work in libraries on various positions such as leading to supporting role. The working professionals were completed their internship at the time of graduation. Here, male respondents dominate female professionals by 18.91%. It is observed that, in total responses appearing female students are more, while in another category they behind male respondents. Transgender responses were not found in the present survey.

Internship Policy and Scope

Internship policy is designed for the LIS students by the university authority. Internship is essential for Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLISc.) students for award of their bachelor degree. It is mandatory in nature. After successful completion of one month internship programme, a certificate is issued by the concerned librarian of the organization. The library should have good infrastructure and excellent facility in their library to give internship. The student have choice to select internship place. Every LIS student of Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University shall be required to undergo a course of practical library work for a period of one month during or after completion of the BLISc. course in any of the libraries of the institutions recognized by the university.

It is assumed that, the learning experience of internship becomes meaningful when there is a strong learning objectives and working experience is aligned with this learning objectives, so following norms given by the university regarding completion of internship. For the internship provider center/institute library/college library should have:

- A qualified librarian approved by the university.
- The standing of the college library should be minimum 10 years.
- The library should have minimum collection of 25,000 books and good IT infrastructure.

Table 2: Task and Activities Run Under Internship Education for LIS Students

Activities	Responses Measured on the Scale					χ ² Value
	NA	VL	SW	MH	VM	
Acquisition of new books	63	48	32	49	67	6.36
Bar-coding and RFID tag installation	77	48	32	39	63	2.26
E-library training	134	33	18	27	47	9.19
Handling plagiarisms detection soft-ware	114	53	17	28	47	7.60
Issue- return counter work and circulation issues	133	44	17	28	37	3.88
Library software demonstration	113	29	26	30	61	8.13
OPAC & WEBOPAC working	114	53	17	28	47	7.60
Reference and periodical section work	77	48	32	39	63	2.26
Technical processing and data entry training	126	25	20	27	61	9.29
Uploading images and digital content on portal	95	25	36	35	68	9.11
Other important work	63	48	32	49	67	6.36
Average χ ² Value =6.55						

Source: Computed from the Survey Data. d. f. = (2-1) (5-1) = 4 χ_{0.6}² at 4 d. f. = 9.49

(*NA: Not at All, VL: Very Little, SW: Some What, MH: Much, VM: Very Much) (Note: Total Male & Female responses measured jointly in this table)

From the Table 2 it is seen that, the total calculated value of χ² (α=0.05, d. f. = 4) is 6.36, 2.26, 9.19, 7.60, 3.88, 8.13, 7.60, 2.26, 9.29, 9.11 and 6.36 respectively and average value of all the task and activities run under internship education χ² is 6.55 which is less than the critical value (α=0.05, d. f. = 4) 9.49, hence the null hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, it is found that, task and activities run under internship education for LIS student is useful. The most of the activities are related to various sections of the library. In the university region the different activities are carried out for the LIS students as an internee. Some students get working experiences in manual or partial automated library, while others get experiences in automated library at the time of internship. It is concluded that, task and activities run under internship education is varied and there is no similarity found in activities at the internship provider center.

Impact of Internship Education on the Career Development and Employability of LIS Students

Internship is an opportunity to learn something new which is not learns practically in classroom teaching. It is a chance to learn various skills, gain professional knowledge, and develop network/contact with other professionals in the LIS field. Internships education allows LIS students to apply classroom theoretical concept and knowledge to actual-world situations. It is useful for them to enhance their employability. Those students completed their internship education; such responses were considered to measure impact. The Table 3 shows the impact of internship education on the career development and employability.

Table 3: Impact of Internship Education on the Career Development and Employability of LIS Students

Statements	Type of Respondents (N=259)	NA	VL	SW	MH	VM	χ ² Value
Chance of career advancement increased	Male	50	10	26	17	43	6.11
	Female	45	15	10	18	25	
Enhance communication skills	Male	61	20	15	17	33	1.43
	Female	50	15	11	17	20	

Statements	Type of Respondents (N=259)	NA	VL	SW	MH	VM	χ^2 Value
Gain actual work experiences	Male	61	20	22	10	33	1.60
	Female	48	17	19	10	19	
Gain confidence level to do job	Male	71	20	12	10	33	6.77
	Female	50	14	10	19	20	
Increased network with the professionals	Male	69	20	12	12	33	5.48
	Female	48	14	12	19	20	
Increased soft skills, interpersonal, intrapersonal skills and competencies essential for library professional	Male	59	30	12	22	23	1.41
	Female	48	19	12	14	20	
Learn how to become professional	Male	59	28	12	22	25	2.61
	Female	40	21	10	14	28	
Opportunities of getting jobs were increased	Male	49	28	22	22	25	9.03
	Female	40	11	10	25	27	
Average χ^2 Value =4.30							

Source: Computed from the survey data.

$$d. f. = (2-1) (5-1) = 4 \chi^2_{0.05} \text{ at } 4 \text{ d. f.} = 9.49$$

(*NA: Not at All, VL: Very Little, SW: Some What, MH: Much, VM: Very Much) (Note: Male & Female responses measured separately in this table)

From the Table 3 it is cleared that, the total calculated value of χ^2 ($\alpha=0.05$, d. f. = 4) is 6.11, 1.43, 1.60, 6.77, 5.48, 1.41, 2.61 and 9.03 respectively and average value of χ^2 is 4.30 which is less than the critical value ($\alpha=0.05$, d. f. = 4) 9.49, hence the null hypothesis was not rejected. It is seen that, overall impact of internship education on the career development and employability is positive. The communication skills of internee are improved. Some respondents stated that, opportunities of getting jobs were increased after the completion of internship. The probability of success in the interview process for the various posts in the library is increased due to getting practical knowledge and hands-on training in internship. The confidence level of the LIS students increases for doing the job in any libraries. Hence, it is cleared that, the soft skills, interpersonal, intrapersonal skills and competencies were increased due to internship education in the university region.

Impact of Internship Education on Work Environment

Taylor, 1988 defined as, “internship is a structured and career relevant work experiences obtained by students prior to graduation from an academic program.” It is expected that in internship period students develop their personality, gain skills, and self-confidence. Students must learn how to take decision without assistance, how to increase inter-personal relations and how to interact with other professionals. These all things are useful while doing job. To measure impact of internship education on work environment, 78 responses from working library professionals are considered. It is an attempt to evaluate impact of internship education on job performance and work environment which is shown in the Table 4.

Table 4: Impact of Internship Education on Work Environment

Statements	Type of Respondents (N=78)	Yes	Some	No	Don't Know	Total
Apply the latest in techniques and technology	Male	40 (81.64%)	5 (10.20%)	2 (4.08%)	2 (4.08%)	49 (100%)
	Female	21 (72.41%)	6 (20.69%)	1 (3.45%)	1 (3.45%)	29 (100%)
Closed the skill gap	Male	33 (67.35%)	9 (18.37%)	5 (10.20%)	2 (4.08%)	49 (100%)
	Female	20 (68.97%)	7 (24.13%)	2 (6.90%)	0	29 (100%)
Foster leadership skill for present job	Male	21 (42.85%)	17 (34.70%)	5 (10.20%)	6 (12.25%)	49 (100%)
	Female	22 (75.86%)	4 (13.79%)	1 (3.45%)	2 (6.90%)	29 (100%)
Improve work climate/ environment	Male	30 (61.23%)	13 (26.53%)	3 (6.12%)	3 (6.12%)	49 (100%)
	Female	19 (65.52%)	8 (27.58%)	2 (6.90%)	0	29 (100%)

Statements	Type of Respondents (N=78)	Yes	Some	No	Don't Know	Total
Improvement in work culture and work condition	Male	26 (53.06%)	14 (28.57%)	9 (18.37%)	0	49 (100%)
	Female	16 (55.17%)	13 (44.83%)	0	0	29 (100%)
Increased significance of tasks	Male	30 (61.23%)	13 (26.53%)	3 (6.12%)	3 (6.12%)	49 (100%)
	Female	19 (65.52%)	8 (27.58%)	2 (6.90%)	0	29 (100%)
Interest created in handling of difficult task	Male	37 (75.51%)	6 (12.25%)	4 (8.16%)	2 (4.08%)	49 (100%)
	Female	18 (62.06%)	9 (31.03%)	1 (3.45%)	1 (3.45%)	29 (100%)
Job status increased	Male	30 (61.23%)	13 (26.53%)	2 (4.08%)	4 (8.16%)	49 (100%)
	Female	15 (51.72%)	12 (41.38%)	2 (6.90%)	0	29 (100%)
Level of job satisfaction increased	Male	21 (42.85%)	17 (34.70%)	5 (10.20%)	6 (12.25%)	49 (100%)
	Female	22 (75.86%)	4 (13.79%)	1 (3.45%)	2 (6.90%)	29 (100%)
Longer hours of work and more time spend in work place	Male	33 (67.35%)	9 (18.37%)	5 (10.20%)	2 (4.08%)	49 (100%)
	Female	20 (68.96%)	7 (24.14%)	2 (6.90%)	0	29 (100%)
Remuneration improved	Male	21 (42.85%)	20 (40.81%)	5 (10.21%)	3 (6.13%)	49 (100%)
	Female	24 (82.75%)	2 (6.90%)	1 (3.45%)	2 (6.90%)	29 (100%)
Re-structured the work, divisions and operations	Male	21 (42.85%)	17 (34.70%)	5 (10.20%)	6 (12.25%)	49 (100%)
	Female	22 (75.86%)	4 (13.79%)	1 (3.45%)	2 (6.90%)	29 (100%)

Note: Male & Female responses of working professionals measured separately in this table.

Source: Computed from the Survey Data.

The Table 4 shows that, out of 78 respondents 49 are male and 29 are female working professionals in this survey. Most of the male and female working professionals were agreed to the statement that, 'work climate and work environment is improved due to completion of internship'. While very few i.e. 6.12% and 6.90% of male and female respondents were given negative response. It is cleared that, both male and female respondents were agreed that, 'the level of job satisfaction and job status is increased due to internship and it is also helpful to increased current knowledge'. They take initiatives to handle conflict situation which shows that their leadership skill enhanced.

Internship is helpful in closing the skill gaps of respondents. Due to more practical knowledge given in the internship, the

respondents were felt that they can spend more time in their work places. Their interest created in handling of difficult task. Hence, it is found that, there is strong positive impact of internship education on the work environment of library professionals in Amravati university region.

Internship Education and Level of Satisfaction of Participants

The level of satisfaction is measured against 5-point scale of satisfaction. The responses of participants are categorized under three different categories and measured. The overall satisfaction is calculated and given in the Table 5.

Table 5: Internship Education and Level of Satisfaction of Participants

Level of Satisfaction	Respondents (N=259)						Overall Satisfaction (%)
	Appearing LIS Students (N=45)		Ex-Students (N=136)		Working Professionals (N=78)		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Not at all satisfied	2	3	6	5	1	2	19 (07.34%)
Slightly satisfied	3	2	21	8	2	4	40 (15.44%)
Moderately satisfied	2	7	30	12	6	3	60 (23.17%)
Very satisfied	5	8	10	20	10	13	66 (25.48%)
Completely satisfied	6	7	12	12	30	7	74 (28.57%)
Sub-total	18 (6.95%)	27 (10.42%)	79 (30.50%)	57 (22%)	49 (18.91%)	29 (11.20%)	259(100%)
Total	17.37% (45)		52.51% (136)		30.12% (78)		

Note: Total Male & Female responses measured separately in this table

Source: Computed from the Survey Data

The Table 5 shows the various level of satisfaction of appearing students from the LIS teaching department, ex-students (those passed out from the session 2022-23) and working professionals in the university region. It is seen that, only 7.34% i.e. 19 respondents were not all satisfied from the internship while 15.44% were slightly satisfied. The most of the i.e. 25.48% and 28.57% respondents were very and completely satisfied from the existing internship education. It is found that, most of the appearing students, ex-students and working professionals are satisfied with the internship while very few are slightly satisfied. They recommended

that the period of internship is less it should be extended so that they get more live experiences of working in the library.

Problems in Internship Education

The various questions were asked to the participants to identify problems in the internship programmes. The responses were collected, tabulated and presented in the Table 6. With the help of chi-square test responses of male and female participants were tested and various problems in internship were identified. The Table 6 shows the various problems faced by respondents in internship education.

Table 6: Problems in Internship Education

Various Problems	SA	AG	NT	DA	SD	χ^2 Value
Inadequate IT and ICT infrastructure at internship place	37	32	30	61	99	3.79
Insufficient training	34	35	31	64	97	6.51
Less time to participation in internship activities	34	27	47	56	95	7.51
No proper guidance or mentorship	27	20	51	95	66	5.65
No networking opportunities	15	30	51	95	68	6.53
No opportunities for growth or the acquisition of new skills	21	28	30	78	112	3.96
Supportive staff and administrative staff is not cooperative	21	20	38	78	102	5.88
Average χ^2 Value 5.69						

Source: Computed from the Survey Data

d. f. = (2-1) (5-1) = 4 $\chi^2_{0.6}$ at 4 d. f. = 9.49

(*SA: Strongly Agree, AG: Agree, NT: Neutral, DA: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree.)

Note: Total Male & Female responses measured jointly in this table.

From the Table 2 it is seen that, the total calculated value of χ^2 ($\alpha=0.05$, d. f. = 4) is 3.79, 6.51, 7.51, 5.65, 6.53, 3.96 and 5.88 respectively and average value of the various problems in internship i.e. χ^2 is 5.69 which is less than the critical value ($\alpha=0.05$, d. f. = 4) 9.49, hence the null hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, it is found that, adequate IT and ICT infrastructure is available at internship place. Sufficient training is given by the library employee and experts to the internee at their internship places. The library staff and administrative staff is cooperative, they assist to the internee. Some of the participants were opinioned that, the internship must cover the more hands-on training sessions.

This internship is mandatory for the award of Bachelor of Library and Information Science degree (BLISc.) So, the some of the students are not take serious interest in it, they just completed internship for one month certificate. It is found that, some of the students faced problems of economy; they don't have good financial position to complete their internship. Hence, it is recommended that government, or university authority must be compensating such students for the internship. Out of town students faced the problem of location of internship offering institutions, it is seen that, most of the academic libraries offering such facilities, hence

it is suggested that, public libraries and government district libraries in university region must offer internship facility and provides valuable experience to the students.

CONCLUSION

Performance measurement is the process of quantifying the efficiency and effectiveness of action (Tangen, 2004), where measurement is the process of quantification and action correlates with performance (Neely et al., 1995). It is concluded that for fostering sustainable career development and employability among LIS students internship education is important and it plays a big role in the career development of the students. The basic purpose of an internship is to provide practical, hands-on training for students to gain knowledge on real-world situations, profession insights, develop essential skills, and build professional contacts.

The internship facility is given by most of the academic libraries in the Sant Gadge Baba Amravati university region. It is observed that, overall impact of internship education on the career development and employability of the LIS students is positive. It is expected from interns that they gain knowledge and skills on the various operation, library

services, organization of reading materials, new IT and ICTs from the library and from LIS professionals, regardless of the mode of their internship (Daniel & Russell 2023).

The internship benefited the LIS students by providing practical exposure of acquisition of books, processing of books, data entry and other technical processing. Internships also assist to the students to facilitate working of the library, networking of the professionals and to establish professional contacts with the others. It is an opportunity to use learning experiences with actual working. It is found that the internship education for the LIS students is mandatory in nature. It is compulsory for the award of bachelor degree i.e. BLISc. The structured learning library experiences, working styles and environment, communication roles, job responsibilities, job expectations and job opportunities were the primary elements of internship education. Therefore, the well return internship policy is designed by the university and included in the curriculum of the LIS students.

It is found that, adequate IT and ICT infrastructure is available at internship places in the university region and most of the students are satisfied with internship programme. A proper training is given by the library employee and experts to the internee at their internship places. To increase the places of internship the 'internship policy' must be reviewed and make changes as per need. The public libraries and government district libraries must offer internship facility and provides valuable experience to the students for their better career.

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