Factors Influencing Students’ Career Intention in Hospitality Industry: A Review

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The conscious plans to join a field or not constitutes the individual’s career intention. Hospitality is an industry with swift pace in growth and its skilled manpower demand is never-ending which has to be fulfilled by the undergraduate students in hospitality. Previous researches have revealed that not all students were willing to join the industry for various reasons. A total of 35 research papers were reviewed in an attempt to explore the influence of self efficacy and internship experience on the intention of students to join the industry.

1. Introduction
Tourism is a very widespread and vast industry. Accommodation that covers hotels and restaurants, accessibility that covers transportation via land, air and water and attraction that covers all the places like monuments, archaeological sites, religious places, fairs, festivals etc., that becomes the main reason for a person to leave his usual place of residence and travel to other places within and even outside the boundaries of their native countries, are three elements of tourism. The pace of the growth of hospitality industry globally can be estimated by the fact that by 2028, 30.5 million international tourists are expected to arrive in India and moreover the medical tourism is expected to reach 9 million US dollars (“Tourism & hospitality,” 2019). The more number of tourists means more number of people required to cater to their needs. In fact, the statistics of forecasting also reveal the same. The statistics reveal that only in hospitality sector 7.2 million people will be required to answer the demands of tourists and from that 4 million only to cater to their accommodation and food and beverage demand by 2022 (Imacs, 2008). This demand is even forecasted to reach 0.92 million annually in the tourism sector only by 2021-22. It is also forecasted that 0.86 million people by 2021-22 as compared to 0.47 million in 2009-10 will be required to work for the hospitality sector and will not be there forming a huge gap (Tourism, 2012). This report by the ministry of tourism also reveals that 40% of students who join various hospitality courses seldom join the industry and usually migrate to other sectors for various reasons. Students are the future manpower of the industry and they are required to be trained in order to prepare them to join the industry as the hospitality industry requisitions skilled manpower (Griffin, 2011).

1.1 Internship or Training
The Oxford learner’s dictionary describes internship as a specific time period during which a student or fresh graduate is exposed to the real industry work and gets a hands-on work experience. In a swiftly growing industry like hospitality, the demand for skilled manpower is required and this can only be fulfilled by training (Nikandrou et.al., 2009).

Realising the importance of training for hospitality students all hospitality courses have incorporated industrial training or industrial exposure training or internship in their respective curriculum. Practical work experience can be taken only by means of this training (Zoipiatis & Theocarous, 2013). They also mentioned that this internship or training also proves to be vital regarding the choice of careers by hospitality aspirants. Various researchers have mentioned the merits and demerits of internship in terms of internship experiences of interns that drives them either to pursue their career in the hospitality industry or migrate to others. Kulsuvan (2000) researched and listed an array of factors that arose due to poor internship experiences of the undergraduate students that made them lose their interest in the industry and finally left the intention to join the industry. Richardson (2008) concluded in his study that almost half of the student respondents in his study revealed disinterest in pursuing a career in hospitality and were willing to leave as soon as they graduated.

1.2 Self- Efficacy
It is quite clear from that just by joining a course does not mean that an individual would pursue a career in the same field as well. In the hotel industry, the correct attitude in addition to the required skill is imperative. To choose a career is the most critical decision an individual has to make in his life and it depends upon the benefits that he or she is expecting to reap by putting in belief in his or her capabilities to achieve it (Lent, Brown and Hackett, 1994). Bandura (1977, 1986) defined this belief as self-efficacy and also emphasized on its key and vital role in motivating a person to make a career decision. The stronger the self-efficacy the greater is the
performance and hence stronger is the commitment of such an individual leading to better career prospects. Managing emotions is also critical to self-efficacy as the stressful internship was found as a key reason behind the anxiety of interns which in turn made them divert their ways from the career they wanted to pursue before their internship (Wang et.al., 2014).

2. Effect of Working Conditions

Working conditions in an organisation are very important for everyone and its quite a relative term when it comes to individual perception. For some, it might be remuneration, working hours, type of work allotted, benefits from work, safety and security, management or supervisor attitudes. Various researches in past have revealed that the working conditions that the undergraduate students experience during their internships have significant effects on their decision of pursuing a career in the hospitality industry post-internship.

2.1 Salary or Remuneration

Everyone likes to have a good remuneration and associated benefits according to the work they are allotted and if they are not paid accordingly then they show their own levels of dissatisfaction in response to the situation that arises. Various researches also hold this fact in accordance. In the case of hospitality interns salary had a direct relation with their intention to join post their internship (Farmaki, 2018). The students who could earn a good remuneration during their industrial internship showed a greater commitment towards working in the hotels after graduating however many students were ready to leave and migrate and take other options as they were not satisfied by the remuneration they got(Mohammed, 2018). Goh & Lee (2018) also found and agreed to the same as they concluded that the respondents who considered their rewards as low as compared to the work assigned to them during their internship showed negative intentions as far as their joining hotel industry was concerned. Despite the fact that many countries claim that tourism and hospitality industry boosts the economy not many students are willing to work for the industry as they found that they were provided with lower benefits as compared to the employees (Abdullah et.al.2015). Years of research have shown that low pay has been a negative attribute of hospitality industry due to which the manpower gap increases as the undergraduate students who showed interest in the industry before joining and experiencing the work showed very less or negligible intent to work post their internships and course due to low pay and benefits (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000).

2.2 Long Working Hours, Physical Working Conditions and Nature of Work

It is quite natural that if a person works more he or she expects to be paid accordingly. In past researches, it was observed that the researchers who were researching the career decisions of fresh graduates based on the industrial experience that they gained during the internship, combined pay and benefits more often with the duration of the shifts that their respondent interns were subjected to. It is quite obvious that if an individual is working for long hours at a stretch he or she expects good physical working conditions or it may be put across like that in the presence of good physical conditions the people may be able to work for long hours. Jane S, (2006) revealed that the interns’ perception changed after they joined for the internship. The researcher pointed out that the students lost their interest in the field due to the fact that they were subjected to long shifts. Mohammed, (2018)in his research agreed to this and revealed that there exists a significant relationship between physical working conditions and career decision. He mentioned that the interns who found poor physical working conditions and lower benefits associated with lower pays were refraining from working for the hotel industry post their respective courses. Sui et.al (2012) revealed that job satisfaction was indeed a driving force for the future manpower of the industry. An individual shows job satisfaction when he or she is performing the jobs that they fit in (Song & Chon, 2012) and are getting amply paid for the duration for they are working, if not then he or she may also show negative intentions towards working. Generation Z showed a promising attitude towards working in the industry however they had their reservations and concerns in terms of long working hours associated with less remuneration (Goh & Lee 2018). They showed a greater commitment of joining the industry however the researchers did not mention their concerns regarding the physical conditions or nature of work. At times the trainees were given structured work that made their mundane work schedule very monotonous and affected their internship experience negatively (Abdullah et.al, 2015).

On the contrary, there are researchers who have taken up the research in a totally different and beneficial direction. Researchers found out that the length of the internship affected the career intention of the students. The longer the internship was the better prospects of working in the industry (Mihail, 2002). He concluded in his research that a longer duration of internship ensured a higher percentage of students joining hotels. This fact was supported when it was found that a shorter period of industrial training was, in fact, draining the interns and they were getting overburdened (Oliver, 2006). Yusof, N. et.al. (2013) also supported this finding as they concluded that the employers were also concerned about the duration of industrial training.
2.3 Management Attitude, Staff Behaviour and Quality of Training

Breaking the ice is an important step whenever someone new joins and organisation. If gone wrong it may produce poor perceptive results. Behaviour, especially in the case of interns, is vital to impart positive training experience and it has an effect on career intention of the intern (Farmaki, 2018). She also mentioned that attitude of management towards the trainees influences internship experience; however, there is a mediating role of demographic factors. She mentioned that the internship quality was not up to the expectations of the trainees and that had detrimental effects on their willingness to join the hotel industry. There were other reasons that were pointed out by various researchers. Interns returned to their institutions with an impression of lack of promotions and opportunities provided in the hotels to their employees making them think otherwise about the industry (Mohammed, 2018). More negation was added to their perception when they pointed out the pressure that was put on them from the management side for getting their work done (Goh & Lee, 2018). They also pointed out discrimination that the students felt during their internship. This was a clear indication of poor quality of training, poor management attitude and poor work environment being provided to the trainees. Abdullah et.al. (2015) mentioned in this context that negative intentions were also shown by the students who were exposed to poor quality of training in the sense they showed commitment to work but also noticed discrepancy in the provision of benefits to them. Role of supervisors was found to be equally responsible for the preparedness of the interns and has a direct impact on the quality of the training provided (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). They believed that the supervisor behaviour was perceived to be an indicator of the benefit reaped from the job. In exact contrast in one of the studies, the author explains internship not very prominent in influencing the career decisions of the interns as compared to various socio-cultural aspects (Walmsley, Thomas, & Jameson, 2012). Sui et.al. (2012) advocated that the level of job satisfaction proved to be decisive in case of interns willingness to join the hotel industry. Few researchers even commented on the quality of training experience as poor because the interns were considering their industrial exposure training as a mandatory requirement for their degree and not for their career (Abdullah et al., 2015). This was even apparent that the educational institutions were not paying attention towards developing the skills of the students but were only providing higher education and hence the students were not able to make use of the internship experience (Sheth & Dubey, 2016). Similar indications were projected that there existed a mismatch in the expectation of the industry and the skill development from the education institute side regarding their students rendering a negative experience and hence no willingness to work as an employee after finishing their courses (Le, McDonald, & Klieve, 2018). The influence of the supervisor’s role, the perceived benefits and quality of training strengthens the commitment to join the industry (House, Lee, Chao, & Management, n.d.).

3. Effects of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy in an individual determines how he or she performs academically or what career he or she chooses (Bandura, 1997). It is directed by personal experiences, the experiences to which one is a witness, social persuasion and emotional mind set (Bendura, 1986). It is the source of self motivation of an individual due to which the individual is able to make crucial decisions about his or her career.

3.1 Social influence and Vicarious Experiences

People often get ideas from other people. If a person is not able to make a decision about something it is quite natural to seek advice. If the decision is a vital one like career decision then they take advice from the trusted ones and who can be more trusted than parents, relatives, friends and teachers. Generation Z students got influenced by their family members the most followed by their friends and finally their faculty members for the choice of career (Goh & Lee, 2018). While studying the career choice of hospitality students it was found that they were motivated and supported by their family members the most. The students who were supported by their family showed greater commitment as compared to those who could not reap that support (Wen, Leung, Li, & Kwon, 2018). Self-belief proved to be a strong motivator to keep up with the pace and dynamicity of the industry and the students who showed the eagerness to learn were characterised y stronger will to join the hotels as their workplace (Tsai, Hsu, & Yang, 2017). Botha & Bignotti, (2016) during their research found that the students who possessed entrepreneur skills had high self efficacy and showed greater intent to join the industry. It was also found that the intern’s interest played a mediating role between self efficacy and choice of career (Song & Chon, 2012). Dinther et.al. (2011) mentioned in their paper that self efficacy has a crucial role to play in case of students of higher education. According to them, higher self efficacy was seen in students who went for a considerably longer internship as compared to others and previous researches have already proven that higher self efficacy leads to better commitment to join the industry. They also revealed that indirect experiences and verbal persuasion in the form of feedback were not that significant. The more number of hours spent in the training boosts the confidence of a student and he or she shows greater self efficacy which was also influenced by previous work experience (Norman et al., 2011). People who are motivated and confident about themselves don’t hesitate to take decisions and it holds good for students (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010).
They also added that the students who were confident to take their decisions were self motivated and the source of their motivation was often their family, friends and teachers. They commented that interaction with people was the main reason for their motivation. They also revealed in their study that career outcome was moderately significant in improving self efficacy and also self efficacy was more significant in female respondents as compared to male respondents. They also concluded that stronger self belief was apparent in students who had worked earlier and had set realistic goals for themselves as they were aware of the culture of the hospitality industry.

3.2 Emotional Mindset and Behavioural Control
Although as already mentioned that self efficacy has emotional mind set as a vital component so it also explains a person's ability to control his or her behaviour under different circumstances. It has been proved in various previous researches that a person who controls his emotions are more stable and confident and as already mentioned such people show extreme confidence in taking their decision (Wen et al., 2018). They also revealed that the students who were having higher emotional intelligence had higher self efficacy thus falling in line with (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins, 2010). Wang et al., (2014) published that there existed anxiety amongst interns and related it to the training that they were supposed to undergo as a part of their curriculum. They conducted their study on two groups of students, one who were yet to go for internship and the other who came back from internship. They concluded that the level of anxiety was more in the case of post internship students as compared to pre internship student. They also found out and revealed that the anxiety level of students decreased after their internship. They also concluded that a negative influence exist between intern's anxiety and career intention. In a way they also revealed that interns were not coping up well emotionally during internship and that had an adverse effect on their commitment towards career. The finding of (Wang, Chiang, & Lee, 2014) are concurrent with that of (Walsh, Chang, & Tse, 2015). They also concluded that the students with higher emotional intelligence showed greater commitment to join the industry as compared to their counterparts. They also mentioned that emotionally stable students were able to cope up with the guest demands in a service based scenario and were able to handle the situations better. They also suggested that individual who could manage his or her emotions well showed greater job satisfaction within the industry. They also suggested that emotionally intelligent individuals would be able to find a better personal fit in the industry and they confirmed the finding of Lent et al. (2002).

4. Inference
To cover the manpower gap it is important that the students who pursue hospitality courses join the industry, however, there has been a gap and it’s widening. There have been researches to assess and find the reasons for students not committing to work in the industry. Various approaches to this are there but this paper have concentrated on effects of internship and self efficacy on career intention of the students. After reviewing previous researches it is apparent that students who choose this course deviate from it after coming from the internship. The authors of previous researches have revealed that long working hours is one of the reasons for this shift as it also associates itself with poor working conditions and low pay and benefits, thus, deteriorating the overall internship experience of student. Authors have also pointed out that institutions of higher education are not mentoring their students about the importance of this training and students are perceiving the internship as just a part of curriculum and not realising it as an enriching experience hence degrading the importance of training. Various authors have also pointed out that the quality of training is also not up to the expectations of the students, so they have also suggested that the hotel schools and industry to put in efforts to structure and improve the quality which otherwise is driving away the potential into other sectors.

Training is just one aspect of this paper. The other aspect is of self efficacy that a student develops during training. Most of the authors who have researched on this area have revealed that the students already have self efficacy that they had developed during their course of education. The social persuasion, which is the first element of self belief in an individual, is found to be influenced by the trustworthy allies of the students. It is found in the previous researches that a student motivation and confidence level improves with the support of his or her family, friends and faculty. It is found from the studies that this social interaction and support strengthens the self efficacy of the students and these studies has also revealed that the students who have higher self efficacy show less doubts in making their career decisions. The researches on the self efficacy of the students undergoing training has also shown that behaviour of staff and management during the internship increases their
anxiety resulting in lesser commitment to join the industry, however, it is also concluded in various researches that the students who are able to manage their emotions showed higher self efficacy and service orientation and were willing to join the industry. The studies have also revealed that these emotionally stable interns are able to set realistic goals for themselves and have positive career intentions.

5. References


11. Imacs, N. (2008). Disclaimer for the Skill Gap Report: NSDC engaged IMaCS (ICRA Management Consulting Services Limited) to prepare this report, which is based on independent research and analysis done by IMaCS. This report is not based or derived from any other report, 1–59.


