

A STUDY ON STUDENT PERCEPTIONS AND AWARENESS OF THE PM INTERNSHIP SCHEME

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ABSTRACT

This project explores the awareness and perception of students regarding the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme 2024, a government initiative aimed at enhancing youth employability through practical industry exposure. The scheme, designed for unemployed individuals aged 21 to 24 from non-government-employed families, offers internships in India's top 500 companies along with a government stipend. Despite its potential, awareness about the scheme remains limited among students. The study focuses on students from the top 10 NIRF-ranked colleges in India and aims to assess their knowledge and attitudes toward the scheme. Data was collected using structured questionnaires and analysed using statistical tools such as chi-square, ANOVA, and correlation. Findings indicate a significant gap between the scheme's objectives and students' awareness, highlighting the need for improved communication and outreach strategies. The research not only underlines the importance of bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world experience through internships but also emphasizes the critical role of government initiatives in shaping future employment opportunities. By identifying challenges in awareness and perception, the study offers insights for enhancing the effectiveness of such programs and ensuring broader student engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Internships play a vital role in bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world application. They provide students with hands-on experience, improve their skill sets, and enhance their employability. Recognizing the importance of practical exposure for the youth, the Government of India launched the **Prime Minister's Internship Scheme 2024**, aimed at equipping young individuals with industry-relevant skills by offering internship opportunities in top companies across the country. This initiative targets unemployed youth aged 21 to 24, particularly those from non-government-employed families, to provide them with work exposure, a monthly stipend, and a chance to improve their career prospects.

However, despite the scheme's potential benefits, there appears to be a lack of awareness among students, especially regarding its objectives, eligibility, and application process. This study seeks to evaluate the level of awareness and perception among students about the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme. By focusing on students from top-ranking institutions in India, the research aims to identify gaps in communication and outreach, and to suggest ways to improve the visibility and effectiveness of the scheme among the student community.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

1. Many students are unaware of the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme despite its nationwide implementation and potential benefits.
2. Even among those who are aware, there is a lack of clear understanding regarding the scheme's objectives, eligibility criteria, and application process.
3. This lack of awareness and understanding limits student participation, reducing the overall effectiveness and impact of the scheme in addressing youth unemployment and skill development.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of awareness among students regarding the PM Internship Scheme.
2. To identify students' perceptions toward the PM Internship Scheme.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Dr. H M Naveen (2024) conducted a study on the topic "Guidelines for PM Internship Scheme: A Pilot Project (2024-2025)". The study aims to provide internship opportunities to one crore youth in top 500

companies in five years. The study focuses on the opportunity provided to the intern to get training gain experience and skills within the real-life environment of the business or organization that helps in bridging the gap between academic learning and industry requirements in turn, assisting enhancement of her/his employability. It specifically targets youth who have completed their education, offering them a chance to gain valuable experience in a professional environment. The study found that the direct involvement with companies and aims to foster a stronger link between education and employment opportunities in India.

Maseko Masego et al (2024) conducted a study on the topic “The assessment of a connection between internship programme and employee career progression: an analysis of South African internship programmes”. The study investigates the role of internship programs in enhancing career progression and reducing youth unemployment. The study found that well-managed internship programs can effectively curb unemployment rates by providing participants with relevant experience, personal development opportunities, and absorption into the workforce.

Willson Gustiavan et al (2025) conducted a study on the topic “Internship programme and work readiness among vocational students” The study investigates how internship experiences influence job readiness perceptions among Business Administration students at Politeknik Negeri Padang, aiming to enhance vocational education and human resource quality in a global context. The study found that employment readiness and internship impacts on skill development and industry exposure, emphasizing the role of internships in improving students’ preparedness for work.

Marcin Majka (2024) conducted a study on the topic “Importance of Internships”. The paper examines the multifaceted value of internships, exploring how they facilitate the application of theoretical concepts in real-world contexts, foster the development of both hard and soft skills, and provide networking opportunities essential for career advancement. The paper also explores alternative pathways, such as freelancing, volunteering, research projects, certifications, entrepreneurship, and mentorship, which offer similar benefits in skill acquisition and experience. The study found that continuous learning and skill-building, whether through internships or alternative experiences, are fundamental to personal growth and long-term career success.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

INTERNSHIP MODE PREFERENCE BASED ON AREA OF RESIDENCE

This table describes Internship mode preference such as online/Remote internship opportunities, in-person internships with hands-on experience, hybrid (both online and offline), short-term internships with flexibility, of the respondents and are given in the following table:

INTERNSHIP MODE	AREA OF RESIDENCE				Total
	Rural	Urban	Semi-urban	Semi-rural	
Online/Remote internship opportunities	7	22	4	3	36
In-person internships with hands-on experience	7	24	9	1	41
Hybrid (both online and offline)	4	23	4	0	31
Short-term internships with flexibility	3	5	1	0	9
TOTAL	21	74	18	4	117

The chi-square test is used to examine the relationship between two categorical variables. In this case, the variables are the area of residence and internship mode preference. The Pearson chi-square value is 8.363 with 9 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is .498. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (there is no significant association between area of residence and internship mode preference) cannot be rejected.

This suggests there is no statistically significant relationship between where someone lives and their preferred type of internship

EXPECTED SKILLS FROM PM INTERNSHIP SCHEMES

OCCUPATION/ STATUS		EXPECTED SKILLS				Total
		Leadership and decision-making skills	Technical and industry-specific knowledge	Communication and networking abilities	Government administration and policy understanding	
Student	Count	32	38	21	13	104

	% within Occupation/Status	30.8%	36.5%	20.2%	12.5%	100.0%
	% within Expected Skills	80.0%	97.4%	84.0%	100.0%	88.9%
	Adjusted Residual	-2.2	2.1	-.9	1.4	
Employed	Count	6	1	2	0	9
	% within Occupation/Status	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	.0%	100.0%
	% within Expected Skills	15.0%	2.6%	8.0%	.0%	7.7%
	Adjusted Residual	2.1	-1.5	.1	-1.1	
Business	Count	2	0	1	0	3
	% within Occupation/Status	66.7%	.0%	33.3%	.0%	100.0%
	% within Expected Skills	5.0%	.0%	4.0%	.0%	2.6%
	Adjusted Residual	1.2	-1.2	.5	-.6	
Professional	Count	0	0	1	0	1
	% within Occupation/Status	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within Expected Skills	.0%	.0%	4.0%	.0%	.9%

	Adjusted Residual	-0.7	-0.7	1.9	-0.4	
Others	Count	40	39	25	13	117
	% within Occupation/Status	34.2%	33.3%	21.4%	11.1%	100.0%
	% within Expected Skills	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

H₀: There is no significant association between occupation/status and the expected skills.

(i.e., expected skills are independent of a person's occupation/status.)

H₁: There is a significant association between occupation/status and the expected skills.

(i.e., people from different occupations/statuses expect different skills.)

- Students (88.9%) form the majority of respondents and mostly expect Technical and Industry-Specific Knowledge (97.4%), Communication and Networking Abilities (84%), and Leadership Skills (80%).
- Employed individuals (7.7%) place relatively more emphasis on Leadership and Decision-Making Skills (66.7%).
- Business respondents (2.6%) show some interest in Leadership (66.7%), but otherwise have low representation across other skills.
- Professionals have no expectations for most skills except a small 4% in Communication, indicating a highly skewed perspective or very low sample.
- Others (117 responses), though not clearly categorized, make up the second-largest group and show equal preference across all skill types (100% across the board), indicating their views are included in all skill types evenly.

SUGGESTIONS:

Following are the suggestions for improving the PM Internship Scheme:

- ❖ Increase awareness about the scheme among students.
- ❖ Simplify the application process.
- ❖ Provide clear information about eligibility criteria and benefits
- ❖ Offer mentorship and support to interns.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of understanding student perceptions and awareness of the PM Internship Scheme. The findings suggest that students have varying levels of awareness and perceptions about the scheme, with some being well-informed while others lack knowledge about its benefits and application process. The study emphasizes the need for increased awareness and promotion of the scheme among students, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas. By understanding student perceptions and addressing their concerns, policymakers and educators can refine the scheme to better meet the needs of students and enhance their employability. The study's insights can inform strategies to improve the effectiveness of the PM Internship Scheme and contribute to the development of a more skilled and employable workforce in India.

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