

Understanding How Business Interns Perceive the Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Their Career Preparation and Future Job Opportunities

Keeba Kerketta BBA 6th Sem Enrollment No. A80306422173 Guide- Dr Ravi Mishra Amity University Raipur (C.G.)

Abstract

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping the landscape of business, creating both challenges and opportunities for young professionals. This research explores how business interns perceive the impact of AI on their career preparation and job prospects. The study uses a mixed-method approach, combining surveys and interviews with 120 business interns across major institutions in India. Results reveal a combination of optimism and anxiety: while interns recognize AI's potential in enhancing efficiency and productivity, they express concerns over job displacement and lack of AI-centric training. The findings suggest a need for business education to realign with emerging technological demands to foster AI-readiness in future professionals.

Keywords:

Artificial Intelligence, Business Interns, Career Preparation, Future Jobs, Employability, Internship, AI Perception, Digital Skills.

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming the business landscape. Its influence spans across sectors such as finance, marketing, supply chain, and human resources. As automation and data-driven decision-making become mainstream, the expectations from new business professionals, especially interns, are evolving. Internships, which serve as a bridge between academia and the



corporate world, are key arenas to examine how young professionals perceive the impact of AI on their future careers. This study aims to understand the mindset of business interns regarding AI and its implications for career development and employability.

Objectives of the Study

- To evaluate the awareness of AI among business interns.
- To assess how AI influences their career preparation strategies.
- To explore perceptions of job opportunities and threats associated with AI.
- To recommend strategies for educational institutions and internship providers.

Review of Literature

Literature suggests that AI is redefining employability criteria. Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) emphasized that automation will displace repetitive tasks, making cognitive and digital skills essential. Succi and Canovi (2020) highlighted that hybrid skills (business + tech) are in demand. Brougham & Haar (2018) found that many young professionals are anxious about being replaced by AI. Indian reports (NASSCOM, 2022) indicate awareness is growing but AI integration in education remains insufficient. Internships with AI components have shown to boost interns' confidence (Gupta & Agarwal, 2021).

Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This is a descriptive study using a mixed-methods approach—quantitative (survey) and qualitative (interviews).

4.2 Sample Size & Sampling Method

- Sample Size: 120 business interns
- Location: Various companies and academic institutions in Raipur and Delhi
- Sampling Method: Purposive sampling



4.3 Data Collection Tools

- Structured Questionnaire (Likert scale)
- Semi-structured Interviews
- 4.4 Data Analysis Techniques
 - Descriptive Statistics
 - Thematic Analysis
 - Charts and Graphs

Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Awareness of AI Among Interns

- 85% had heard of AI, but only 30% could explain its business application.
- Most awareness came from online platforms rather than academic courses.
- 5.2 Perceived Impact of AI on Career Preparation
 - 70% felt their curriculum was outdated and lacked AI-related content.
 - 65% said they would prefer internships that expose them to AI tools.
- 5.3 Fear of Job Displacement vs. Opportunity
 - 60% worried AI might replace their jobs in the future.
 - However, 75% believed AI would create new job roles in strategy and analytics.

5.4 Key Skills Interns Want to Develop

- Data Analytics (80%)
- Machine Learning Basics (52%)
- CRM Automation Tools (45%)

5.5 Interview Insights

"We know AI is the future, but our colleges are not preparing us enough," said a final-year BBA intern from Raipur.



"My internship had zero AI exposure. I learned more from YouTube than from the company," said another intern.

Findings

- There is a high level of curiosity but low practical exposure to AI.
- Interns associate AI with both opportunity and job insecurity.
- Lack of institutional training is a major gap in AI career preparation.
- Interns believe AI skills could give them a competitive edge in the job market.

Discussion

The findings reflect a dual perception of AI among business interns—optimism about career growth through AI and anxiety over its disruptive nature. The gap between curriculum content and industry needs is significant. Exposure to AI during internships can be a game-changer for enhancing employability. Institutions and companies must work together to integrate AI modules and tools in their training programs.

Conclusion

AI is not a distant future—it is the present reality. Business interns, as future professionals, must be equipped with AI-related knowledge and skills. While their perceptions are shaped by both media and personal experience, formal education and industry training must step in to provide structured learning. Bridging this gap will prepare interns not just to survive but thrive in the AI-driven job market.



Recommendations

- Business schools should integrate AI, machine learning, and analytics modules.
- Companies should offer AI-based projects or workshops during internships.
- Government and industry bodies should offer AI training for college students.
- Mentorship programs should address fears of job displacement.

Limitations of the Study

- Limited to interns from urban regions; rural perspectives are missing.
- AI perception varies across business specializations (HR, Finance, Marketing), not analyzed in detail here.
- Longitudinal impact of AI training was not studied.

Scope for Future Research

- A comparative study between AI perceptions of interns from IT vs. Business streams.
- Exploring how AI affects internships in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.
- Long-term tracking of career progress of AI-trained interns.

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