

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN JAPAN

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to examine the students' perception on internship program in Japan. Internship program in Japan is one of the program conducted by STKIP PGRI Pasuruan with IC Tech.Co.Ltd Japan. This study investigates the students' perception toward the implementation of Internship program by using qualitative research method. The subject of the study are 17 students joining the Japanese course. The researcher got the data by collecting the students questionnaire and used semi structured open-ended interview to find the students preparation relate it to mastering Japanese language, job skill, understanding culture, homesick and the students motivation also their parents support. Otherwise, students showed the positive effect toward international internship program is valuable experience overseas.

Keywords: Students' perception, internship program

INTRODUCTION

Internship as something that “engage (s) students in a process of active-learning that links work experience with opportunities for critical analysis and reflection” or real world experience related to your career goals and interests. It may, but does not have to be related/connected to your academic major or minor (O'Neil, 2010). Internship is an important of higher education institution, especially for an academic curriculum development. Even mostly students undergraduate entered the education institution, but industry areas also interesting for them.

Prianto, Asmuni, Firman, Maisaroh (2017) found that academic performance and involvement in the internship program have a significant effect on the quality of life skills of the graduates. When it is compared to academic performance, involvement in the internship program has a stronger effect on the quality of life skills of graduates. Academic performance has an indirect effect on the readiness to work. Academic performance does not have a strong effect on the quality of life skills and the readiness to work. The study shows that involvement in the internship program becomes the dominant factor influencing the quality of life skills and the readiness to work. For that, every university must have an internship program that must be followed intensively by the students so that after graduation they are more ready to work.

For more a decades of students here, implemented the internship program at school institution continuous until today but newest internship program at Japan it will different perspective, expectation even for the students, the parent and the institution. An internship will help them for their interest, values, knowledge and skill in new settings. O'neil (2010) gave some recommendation for creating internship, (1) Strengthen how internship are defined. (2) distinguish between learning goals and career development goals-and include both. (3) address departmental reluctance to do “vocational education” and (4) improve collaboration and communication between career services professionals and faculty.

Nurbatra (2016) examined service learning in Muhammadiyah University of Malang. The study investigates the implementation of Internship program Phase 1 administered by Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, focusing on its strengths and weaknesses. The research revealed that although some weaknesses were found in the implementation of Internship program Phase 1, students showed positive attitude towards this service learning experience.

Jamil, Norina Ahmad, Shariff, Sarwati M, Abu, Zurah (2013) studied the students' practicum performance of industrial internship program, they analyzed on the students cognitives outcomes and skills development outcomes. They found that the feedback from the industries indicated that their students had acquired meaningful work knowledge, demonstrated good working skills what the right attitudes at the work place.

But nowadays a college education will serve to proper a graduate into a profession by demonstrates an academic proficiency in various theoretical and practical examples of way that a job might be performed. So the college education developed their students capacities with two kind of internship. The students free to choose their interest to joint the internship at school institution or industry. Why students should do internship? According to Grossman (2018) that today, employers favor prospective employees who have done not only one internship but multiple internships. What is involved in applying for, getting, and fulfilling the requirements for doing an internship may be easy for some and difficult for others. The reality is that it is a multifaceted endeavor to do all of the various aspects of pursuing an internship. Ideally, a student begins looking for an internship the semester before she/he wants to do the internship. The student will register for the credit bearing internship course at her/his college in case the internship requires that it be done for college credits.

Here at STKIP PGRI Pasuruan the maximum number of credits a student can do toward their internship is four (4) credits. An internship turning into a job is one of the best and rewarding outcomes of an internship. Not every, but many internships have the possibility of developing into full-time employment. The closer you are to the terminal point in your education, graduating, the likelier it is that an internship can develop into a full-time job. The process of to successfully applying, interviewing, obtaining, and fulfilling the responsibilities of an internship demonstrates an understanding and ability to sequence and carry out a complicated plan. The plan to do an internship in turn is perfect practice to finding a job. The process is virtually the same. Searching, planning, applying and doing; whether it's an internship or a job the process is the same. The saying, "Practice makes perfect," is directly relevant to the internship/job experience.

However, the whole point of an internship from colleges' point of view is to provide students with experiences that are not like what students get in the classroom. Rather, internships should provide opportunities to confirm or confound what is found in textbooks and set forth in lectures, and in so doing help meet the institution's learning goals. Of course, if an internship does not meet the learning goals as set forth in the institution's mission statement, it is something other than an internship—it's a job—and should be compensated as such. So if an internship serves the learning goals of the college, the college should pay up in the form of academic credit, but if an internship provides no clear academic connection, paying out in the form of wages is necessary.

Loretto (2018) questions about how important is it really to do an internship before applying for a job? Internships are a proven way to gain relevant knowledge, skills, and experience while establishing important connections in the field. Georgina Barton¹, Kay Hartwig², and Anh Hai Le² (2018) at their article' International students' perceptions of workplace experiences in Australian study programs: A large-scale survey the results showed that students rated overall workplace experience highly; however, their confidence in completing assessment items where reflection and self-evaluation were required was a concern. Students also rated self-perception of employability as uncertain despite having positive experiences in the workplace context. Findings

showed that there is a need for universities to better support international students in completing reflective and self-evaluative assessment. In addition, more work needs to be done to improve confidence levels of international students around employability. Study Kyoto (2018) also has partnered with companies to host an internship program. Students choose from a range of industries and also receive a salary during their internship, making this an especially exciting opportunity for international students.

Bridge.job (2015) share 5 benefit of having an Intern, such as free up the staff, hire from within, increase staff retention rate, give back of the community and recruit future interns. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the students’ perception on internship program at IC Tech.Co.Ltd Japan.

METHOD

This study uses descriptive qualitative as a research method. It is qualitative because deals with the natural phenomena. This research used mixed method design which enables us to gather qualitative input to explain and extend quantitative results in order to gain a comprehensive insight of the research (Creswell et al., 2014). A set of questionnaire was administered to obtain quantitative input and constructed to determine the students’ perceptions on internship program in Japan. The data were collected from 17 Japanese course students, which consisted of 3 male and 14 female. The data was collected at the first week of September 2018. The reasons for limiting the sample only for the Japanese course students since they are interest to the internship program. Besides questionnaire, the researcher used semi structured open-ended interview to understand the respondents’ point of view rather than make generalizations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From a set of questionnaire can be divided into four sections. The first section, four statements concentrates on the students mastering Japanese language. The next two statements about understanding job skill. The three statements in the third section deal with student’s understanding Japanese culture, homesick and the last section, two statements, relate it with the students motivation. The finding is revealed that 15 students (88,20%) of students think that mastering Japanese is very important and 2 students (11,80%) think that mastering Japanese is not so important.

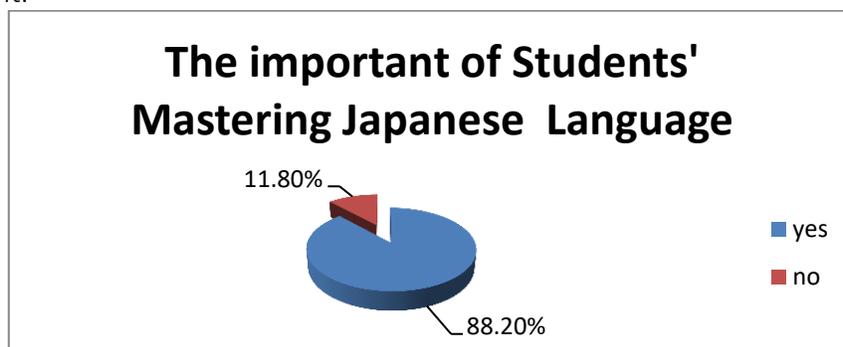


Chart 1: The Important of Students’ mastering Japanese Language

Based on the interviewed that students face some problems during the process of mastering Japanese language.

I think, mastering Japanese language is very important but I have a problems to memorizing Japanese words (Interviewee A)

I learn very hard to mastering Japanese because I want to joint the internship (interviewee B)

I don't have problem to study Japanese, because when I was senior high school I got Japanese subject (interviewee C)

I like Japanese but sometimes I face some mispronouncing words (Interviewee D)

Wong (2013) said that despite all the reasons you've very likely heard about the benefit of learning another language-good for our degree, travels, career and some people seem to think that being multilingual isn't all that important anymore. Not only is it important, it may very well be necessary.

When we travel to Japan and found people speak in their mother language and only a few people speak in English, even we've heard that English is International language. So we should master Japanese language before joint the internship.

John (2012) stated from the 10 ridiculous Japanese stereotypes, one of that is about all Japanese people can speak English really good. He said that many Japanese students just do enough to get by in English class and by the time they graduate they've forgotten quite a bit of it. So, next time when we visit Japan, don't be surprised if not absolutely everyone speaks English as well you'd like them to.

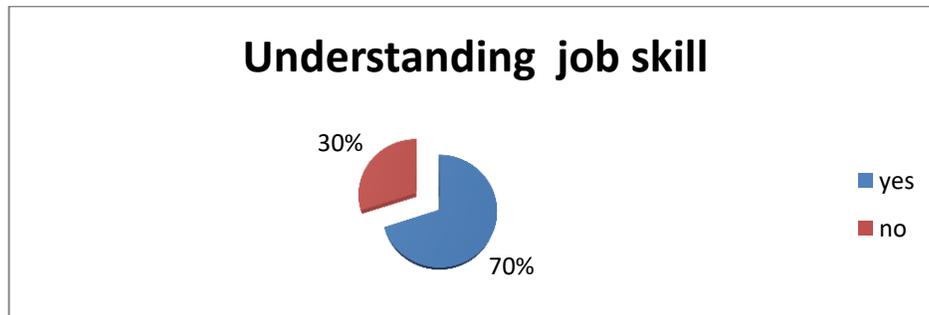


Chart 2: Understanding job skill

From the second statement shows that 12 students (70%) understand that internship industry at Japan will be different with Indonesian factory and 5 students (30%) still confuse related to job skill. IC tech.Co.Ltd is one of the company at Japan that run food and beverage packaging so students should practice before entered the company. Here are the students worries related to job skill:

I feel rather nervous mom, as we know that Japanese people look too serius. Japanese people have a high standard of disciplined (interviewee A)

Well, we will adaptation easily when we think that we can (Interviewee B)

Why not? I have enough energy to complete my internship, so that I will have high standard of International intern (interviewee C)

For an internship, students would prepare themselves for the interview just as they would prepare for a job interview. They should expect to be answered traditional types of questions, behavior-based questions in Japanese language online.

Many companies are hiring interns as an efficient and economical recourse. Babbit (2012) identifying the 10 soft skill that should consider, such as: passionate, work ethic, entrepreneurial, ability to solve problem, self-disciplined, independent, a leader, resilient, versatile and coachable. The most successful interns are those disciplined enough meet project deadlines and sometimes toward their own tasks and work schedule.

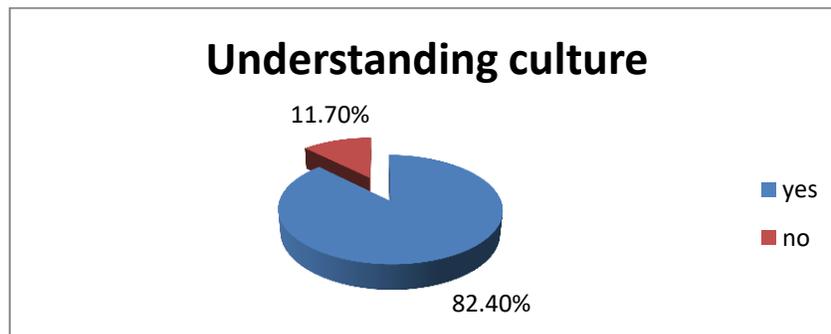


Chart 3: understanding culture

From the chart 3 that 14 students (82,40%) understand the Japanese culture, only 3 students (11,70%) that they got the information about Japanese culture while the tutor shared his experience when he was joint internship in Japan a few years ago. But some students said that they learned by internet, watching Japanese movie, and reading a book.

I learned Japanese culture from Japanese movie (interviewee A)

I think their culture and habitual are different from us, but I will learn a lot (interviewee B)

I'm worry where should I pray 'Jum'atan' mom? (interviewee C)

I feel excited to visit Japan, because I have friend from Korea, so their culture are almost the same (interviewee D)

Go abroad writing team. (2015) said that getting professional experience through an internship in Japan is very important move and one that will easily change your life. It will give us an edge over our peers in the global job market of today, in which companies are strategically looking for bright, young people with an international mindset that are capable of adapting to different cultures effectively.

Stinger and Cassidy (2009) gave some tips related to the activities for improving the cross cultural communication. Besides, Alphen (2015) found that Japanese people are struggle from two disasters, earthquake and tsunami. So the researchers report the Western media

reporting assumptions about the Japanese mentality. Blatant stereotypes about Japanese people more apparent in stories about the disasters but in their real life.

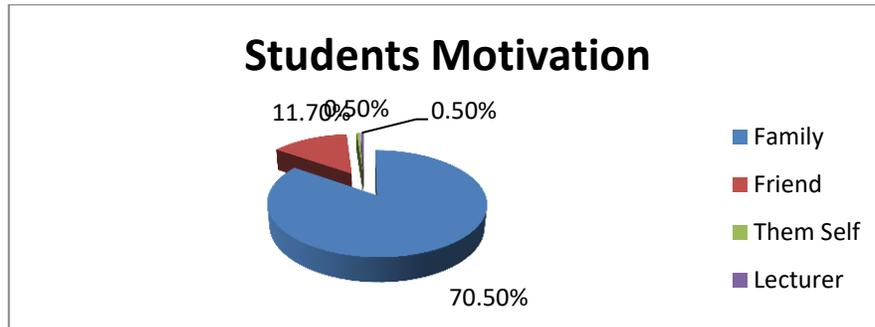


Chart 4: Students’ motivation

From chart 4 above shows that 70,50% the students motivation to join the internship come from their family. 11.70% from their friends, 0.50% from their self, 0.50% from their lecturers.

My family support me to join the internship at Japan? (interviewee A)

My boyfriend is Korean, so he will visit me at Japan (interviewee B)

Mom Ninik, motivate me well, thank you mom (interviewee C)

So interesting that I will join the internship at Japan, that can improve my Japanese language (interviewee D)

Beyene (2012) said that if they’ve got enough self-motivation, it is possible to brush up their language skills in their spare time. They believe the statement “help break the ice, deepen cultural understanding and open business access to new markets”.

Mosley (2013) gave 10 tips for better engagement related to internship, (1) soldfy a job description, (2) immerse them with training opportunities, (3) nail-down deadlines, (4) assign meaningful work, (5) give ownership, (6) play off their strengths, (7) establish one-on-one-meetings, (8) encourage company-wide interaction. (9) don’t forget to fun, and (10) reward them. Batey and Lupi (2012) found that the students’ responses toward their student reflection resulted in some interesting and compelling observations and discoveries. Using the cross cultural adaptability inventory allowed them to develop a perspective on their students’ progress towards greater cultural awareness and appreciation, self-growth and maturation, and openness to values and system (social and educational).

People join an internship abroad not only shows that they have gained experience in their desired field of work, but also countless other things too. Moving abroad to gain experience shows independence, confidence, adaptability, cultural awareness and bravery, things that a normal internship in their home city would not demonstrate. They’re shown that they are a risk takes and not afraid to adapt and innovate. (Matt, 2017).

Grossman (2014) share about 6 (six) reasons to do an internship while studying, (1) you might find your future employer, (2) test-drive your knowledge and skills, (3) find role-models, (4) Strengthen your CV, (5) If you do well, you have a network, (6) it can be the experience of a lifetime.

Ratra (2016) share her internship experience in Japan, she got the opportunity to interns abroad internationally which not many students have the chance to, and grow as a person by becoming more independent/learning about different culture. It would be a great experiences she's had in her life and she encourage other students to do the same. She gave advice to anyone who aspires to intern abroad is find connections through family member/friends who work abroad, and do not feel intimidated by working in international office, being abroad, or by co-workers who have plenty of experience.

Internship can be boring at time and an internship is meant to teach the students skills, expand their horizons also let them explore professional life in the real world. There are 4 fundamental ways to staying motivated as an Intern, Alison (2018) those are: (1) make clear goals, (2) network, (3) keep a diary, (4) bring a buddy. Group internships are common and a great way for internees to avoid boredom or burn-out during internship work.

CONCLUSIONS

Internship industry have importance role to follow, students should prepare not only mastering Japanese language, but also understanding the job skill and culture. Beside that, the internships identify potential career paths, as test career options, boost job offer after graduation and improve the students social skills, including team work, also how to handle conflict resolution.

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