

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM
MANAGEMENT INTERNSHIP AT UCC

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidates Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has ever been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Name.....

Signature: Date:

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Name.....

Signature: Date:

Co-Supervisor's Name.....

Signature: Date:

ABSTRACT

Internship is one of the most effective models of practical learning in Hospitality and Tourism Management (HTM) education. It has become necessary to ensure that graduates are equipped with appropriate practical skills. Furthermore, the combination of theory and practice is viewed as an essential component of a student's HTM education. However, there is still much debate on the nature of training collaboration that exists among the stakeholders. This thesis investigates stakeholders' perceptions of HTM internship.

Data for the study were obtained through a survey for 121 final year HTM students from the University of Cape Coast and interview guide for 10 faculty members and employers in the industry. A census was conducted for the students; purposive sampling for faculty members and a multi-stage sampling technique was used for selecting employers.

Generally, the study found that some form of training collaboration exists among stakeholders regarding placement, duration and assessment; however, this collaboration is somewhat weak and must be improved. The study also revealed that stakeholders generally have a positive perception about the HTM internship. Based on the findings, it was concluded that collaboration among stakeholders is somewhat weak and therefore a positive perception about the effectiveness of internship will be achieved when stakeholders strengthen the existing collaboration among them in order to train students during internship.

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DEDICATION

To my dear parents; Mr. Jonathan Blankson and Mrs. Winifred Blankson who had hope in me and invested in my education.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACCI	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ASET	Association of Sandwich Education and Training
BCA	Business Council of Australia
CAUTHE	Council Australian Universities for Tourism and Hospitality Education
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CHRIE	Council of Hotels, Restaurants and Institutional Education
DHTM	Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
GTA	Ghana Tourism Authority
HEI	Higher Educational Institution
HTM	Hospitality and Tourism Management
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
NACE	National Association of Colleges and Employers
PANAFEST	Pan African Historical Theatre Festival
SPSS	Statistical Product and Service Solutions
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
IIP	Integrated Internship Programme

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) observed that since the latter half of the 20th Century, the Hospitality and Tourism industry has been expanding both in dimension and complexity (Scotland, 2006). Consequently, tourism and hospitality programmes have also increased in most tertiary institutions worldwide (Akyeampong, 2007; Amoah & Baum, 1997). In addition, changes in the work environment, increases in travel and tourism, competition and globalisation, customisation, advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and changes in expectations of employers and employees have had an impact on education and training in the hospitality and tourism sector (Wilkinson, 2008). These have led to the integration of career-related experiences into undergraduate education which consists of supervised work, generally known as internship.

Internship is fast becoming an important component of schools' curricula for many career choices in higher education (Armoo & Neequaye, 2014; Wilkinson, 2008). According to Cook, Parker and Pettijohn (2004), the number of students who undergo internship in higher education for example have increased from one out of 36 students in 1980 to three out of four students in 2000.

The word ‘internship’ has been defined differently in other countries (Busby & Gibson, 2010). The duration, nature and objectives of internships are also different in various parts of the world. For example, in the UK, Germany and in most parts of Europe, the most frequently used term for internship is ‘sandwich placement’ (Busby, 2003). The German educational system also places great emphasis on the importance of sandwich placement in educational curriculum (Klein & Weiss, 2011).

According to Keynote Project (2002, p. 5), sandwich placement can be defined as “a temporary period of student employment as part of a student’s course which is effectively planned and managed and takes in the negotiated requisites of the student, employer and Higher Education Institution (HEI)”. Therefore, it has become widely recognised that internship activities can help students’ successful transition from school to the work environment.

In Ghana, the term internship is usually referred to as ‘industrial attachment’ (Effah, 2005). This is an educational strategy where learning in the classroom alternates with learning at the workplace and allows for the competencies of students to be developed by industry professionals before they graduate (Effah, 2005). Industrial attachment programmes in Ghana offer interns in almost all fields an opportunity to gain professional experience in their area of study. Working in a professional environment, interns develop a sense of responsibility as they interact with a wide range of age groups, meet potential role models and get feedback through work evaluation (Akomaning, Voogt & Pieters, 2011). In addition, Knouse, Tanner and Harris (2000) note that internship helps to develop in students,

job related skills and working habits such as communication, innovativeness, assertiveness, time management and self-discipline needed to function effectively in the world of work. Internship also contributes to developing students' management competencies (Knight, 1984; Walo, 2001).

Divine, Millar, Wilson and Linrud (2007) and Effah (2005) identified two main types of placement; structured and unstructured. Higher institutions which organise internship may either use one or both types in an internship curriculum. HEI's are also required to comply with the start date and duration of the programme (Akomaning et al., 2011). Tse (2010) notes that internship offers students an avenue to gain hands-on experience, put educational theories into practice and reflect on their future careers. Internship for students has become important in giving a practical phase to the class work. Schools offering internship programmes also benefit through increased collaboration between academia and organisations participating in the programme (English & Koeppen, 1993). Not only is it an opportunity for academia to establish social ties with industry but it also enables students to learn about the necessary generic and transferable skills needed for specific jobs and adapt to the working environment. In other words, employers have the opportunity to 'screen' future graduates on the basis of work abilities that are required of them.

There are other terms given to the word 'internship'. These include students work experience, placements, cooperative education, experiential education and work-integration education. It is important that HEIs educate students in order for them to think critically and be creative, innovative and develop their problem

solving abilities and adapt to change (Felisitas, Molline & Clotildah, 2011). It is therefore necessary for stakeholders to focus on working closely to achieve the aims, objectives and purposes essential for ensuring a positive perception of internship as this may reflect the outcome of an internship programme.

Most often than not, students are unaware of the importance that employers place on practical experience. When students move out of school and are transitioning into the work environment, they face tough competition from those who have practical work experience. In the hospitality and tourism sector, where customer service is a priority, work experience is a great requirement. Internship can, therefore, assist students to bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practical reality by exposing them to real-life experiences (Lam & Ching, 2006). Although internship programmes are very important components of the institutional programme, internship, if not well organised, becomes a cost rather than benefit to the stakeholders involved when their perceptions and attitude towards the programme is deficient. Also, lack of stronger collaboration among stakeholders in training students goes a long way to pose a threat to the organisation and implementation of the internship programme. In addition, getting feedback from industry and faculty members through performance assessment will be undermined.

Most often than not, finding placements become difficult especially when employers are not receptive to interns being brought to their firms through managed placements by the institution for reasons such as lack of work experience, lazy attitude of interns and low preparedness on the part of staff to supervise and

communicate with interns (Akomaning et al., 2011). Transitioning from class work to the job market becomes a challenge to students in terms of bridging the gap between theory and practical learning. However, the necessity and importance of an internship programme has to be realised with the help of available information and consistency in the organisation and implementation of the programme. Students on internship are, basically, the central beneficiaries of the internship programme and therefore there is the need for an effective implementation of internship in order to meet their requirements in the job market.

Statement of the Problem

The aforementioned has highlighted the importance of internship in any well designed higher educational curriculum. In Ghana, more recently, internship has been recognised as an integral part of the curriculum of tertiary institutions. This is largely due to its role in equipping students for the job market. However, its organisation and implementation can be fraught with several challenges, which if not properly addressed, could undermine the very essence of internship. The hospitality and tourism programme offered at the tertiary levels, in particular, has been tagged for having weak linkage with the industry (Buckley & Amoud, 2010). This situation is believed to have resulted in several difficulties for the interns, the tourism industry and the educational institutions offering these programmes. Some of these challenges include inadequacy of duration, students' difficulty in adapting to the work environment, transferable skills such as business skills, human resource management skills, information technology skills, poorly developed inter personal

problem solving abilities and low preparedness on the part of staff to supervise and communicate with interns (Bamford, 2012; Felisitas et al., 2011). In addition, while employers and supervisors are concerned about the kind of graduates that the universities and polytechnics are producing, educators on the other hand, are concerned with inadequate facilities for providing practical training to students (Akyeampong, 2007). Yet, little is presently known about the nature of training collaboration between the industry and academia, the specific challenges faced by key stakeholders and the perceived effectiveness of the current internship programme in developing employable skills among students.

From existing literature, it is evident that there are three key stakeholders involved in the organisation of internship programmes; namely students, educators and employers. Yet, previous studies in this area, particularly in the hospitality and tourism field, often take a less holistic view by examining one or two of the three stakeholders in isolation. For example, a study by Waryszak (1997) investigated students' perceptions of the cooperative education work environment in service industries and neglected the views of the educational institutions. Another study by Millar, Mao and Moreo (2008) conducted competing assessment using the views of Hospitality Management educators and industry but neglected the views of students. In light of this, the current study seeks to investigate all three stakeholders' perceptions about hospitality and tourism internship.

Research Questions

1. What is the nature of training collaboration existing between the DHTM at UCC and industry?
2. What are the perceptions of different stakeholders' regarding the effectiveness of the current HTM internship?
3. What are the challenges confronting key stakeholders in the organisation of internship?
4. What are the views of stakeholders' on how the existing internship can be improved?

Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is to investigate stakeholders' perceptions of hospitality and tourism internship programme at the University of Cape Coast.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Assess the nature of training collaboration between the DHTM at UCC and industry
2. Compare stakeholders' perceptions of the effectiveness of the current HTM internship
3. Identify the challenges confronting key stakeholders in the organisation of HTM internship
4. Assess stakeholders' views on how the existing HTM internship programme can be improved.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study can help improve existing HTM curricula in tertiary institutions, consequently resulting in a more valuable internship experience for students. In practice, the findings can inform internship coordinators about new and improved methods of placing students and evaluating students in order to minimise the challenges of organising and implementing internship.

Generally, literature presents very little information on the nature of training collaboration between academia and industry; hence, this study will offer information about the role of stakeholders in the organisation and implementation of internship and how stakeholders can collaborate effectively to train students. This insight could therefore strengthen the existing training collaboration between academia and industry.

This study is geared towards investigating stakeholders' perceptions of HTM internship. Some work has been done by other authors on ways of improving the perceived effectiveness of the internship programme. For example, Akomaning et al. (2011) worked on Stakeholders' perceptions of organisation of internship in Vocational education and training. Therefore, findings can add to existing knowledge on stakeholders' role in the effective organisation and implementation of internship programmes.

Limitation and Delimitation of the Study

The research process was impeded by some limitations. The study was limited in terms of spatial coverage, time, scope and financial constraints. However, the primary limitation of this study was related to the sample size for the qualitative analysis. The qualitative aspect of the study was limited to 10 stakeholders (five

faculty members and five employers) who were perceived to have direct involvement in internship. As a result, care must be taken when interpreting the findings of the study due to the small sample size. Future research may benefit by increasing the sample size and employing a more positivist approach.

It is also important to note that this study is based on perceptions and does not measure the actual effectiveness of the programme. Perceptions are subject to change from individual to individual and time to time. This, therefore, becomes a limitation for the generalisation of the results. These limitations, therefore, provide basis for further research in examining internship on a wider scale.

Delimitation of the study deals with decisions that in one way or another may influence the scope of the study. Even though a study of this nature may have been limited by time, financial constraints and small sample size, it cannot encompass every necessary aspect. Therefore, an important delimitation made to facilitate the investigation of stakeholder's perceptions was the selection of establishments where students embarked on the internship. The use of stratified sampling to select establishments from sub-sector in the hospitality and tourism industry in Cape Coast facilitated the research process.

A secondly, appointments booked or reserved for interviews of faculty members and employers facilitated the research. This is because, faculty members and employers selected days and times convenient for them for an interview to facilitate qualitative data collection and so respondents were readily available and they made time for data collection.

Thirdly, the students targeted for the research were strategically contacted after their lecture period. Information about the students' lecture time table was solicited from the Department's administration in order to know the place and time to meet the students after their lectures.

Definition of Terms

Internship Stakeholders: Internship stakeholders are persons and groups regarded as having an interest in the internship programme. Therefore, internship stakeholders include students, faculty members and employers.

Perception: Perception is the primary process by which human beings obtain knowledge about the world. It involves the activity of our sense organs (i.e. sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell) in responding to external stimulation (Gibson & Helme, 2001). According to them, perception guides our behaviour because what we perceive determines what we do next. Therefore, the way stakeholders perceive Hospitality and Tourism internship determines the kind of measure they will take towards its organisation and implementation.

Internship programmes: These are programmes offering supervised practical experience for advanced students or recent graduates in a professional field

Organisation of Thesis

This study is presented in five chapters. The first chapter gives a general background to the study and covers such areas as problem statement, objectives, research questions, significance of the study and definition of important terms. The second chapter deals with the review of literature on the historical development of

internship, hospitality and tourism education, tourism education versus tourism training, practice of internship programmes, issues to consider in designing an internship programme, value of internship in HTM education, stakeholders' perceptions of an effective internship as well as other related literature. Chapter Three describes the study area, research design and paradigms, sampling procedure and conceptual framework for the study. The analysis of data, including findings and discussions are detailed in Chapter Four. Chapter Five covers summary, conclusions and recommendations that have emerged from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literature which informs and provides the background to the subject of this study. This chapter begins by presenting information about the historical development of internship, issues about hospitality and tourism education, the debate on tourism education versus tourism training, relevant factors to consider when organising an internship, the reason for studying stakeholders and their perceptions and finally concludes with a summary of the literature review.

Historical Development of Internship

It has been observed by Spradlin (2009) that if anyone was in a tertiary institution before the 1980s, there is the possibility that that person never embarked on anything called internship. Spradlin (2009) notes that internship originates from professional apprenticeship that originated with the trade guilds of Europe between the 11th and 12th Centuries. A trade guild is a group of traders with similar interest who come together to form an association (Spradlin, 2009). He further observed that during apprenticeship, master craftsmen and tradesmen took in young learners and gave them menial tasks that made filing and photocopying seem luxurious.

During their teen years, apprentices mainly served one master. They could then graduate to a permanent career and start earning wages. Often they chose to continue with the same masters.

The apprenticeship system then was all about supervision, training and recruiting workers which sounds a lot more like today's internship (Spradlin, 2009). The author of the 1911 book on *Labour and Apprenticeship* by Reginald Bray asserts that even though apprenticeship and internship have basic similarities, there are some key differences. First of all, the bureaucratic system found in the current internship is much less reduced. Secondly, the apprentice system outlined clear and straight forward benefits. Lastly, the apprentice system would get an apprentice into a guild which eventually gave way to industrialisations and incorporation of formal professional education in the early 20th Century.

Internship formally began in the late 1960s. Spradlin (2009) recounts that, internship became important because employer's demand of knowledgeable and experienced workers increased. In the 1960s, internship offered a stronger collaboration with workers and industry as well as allowing workers to gain practical work experience; a lot like the current internship (Armoo & Neequaye, 2014). In fact, the first academic internship programme in the USA was implemented in the Accounting Department at the University of Cincinnati in 1906 (Henry, Razzaouk & Hoverland, 1988). Universities took the lead in making internships more appealing and productive for students in the late 1970s and early 80s by evaluating and awarding grades for the programme, and advisers pushed internships as a way to gain competitive advantage in the work place (Walo, 2000).

Students eventually used internship as a way to ‘test-drive’ their career choice, to discover their interest in their course of study. There are important components of an internship programme that need to be considered in this study.

Hospitality and Tourism Education

According to Millar, Mao and Moreo (2008), the first four-year Hospitality and Tourism education programme were started in Cornell University in the United States in the 1920’s. Hospitality and Tourism education programmes have been on the increase steadily since then. In fact, in the past 30 years, the number of post-secondary institutions has quadrupled (Riegel & Dallas, 2006). Even though colleges, vocational schools and polytechnics focus on teaching practical skills necessary to work in the hospitality and tourism industry, hospitality and tourism educational curricula in the universities in general now focus on ensuring that graduates coming into the labour market have the required technical skills. According to Hall et al. (1995), not only do students have to develop practical skills but they also need to have higher level ‘soft’ skills to apply the appropriate work practices in the work place.

Though Universities are expected to focus their attention on preparing students for management positions in the hospitality industry (Barrows, 1999), in recent times, they have also had to focus on generating a manageable group of students that begin working at the line-level (Goodman & Sprague, 1991). Akyeampong (2008) defines ‘pure education’ as the aspect of education concerned with the outcome of teaching and learning subjects such as Literature, Science,

History, Mathematics, Art and Music. However, as society changes, individual needs also change. Therefore education must incorporate vocational and technical aspects as well. In his study, Akyeampong (2008) goes on to say that as schools are increasingly being tasked to produce manpower in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry, education and training must both be incorporated in the university curriculum in order to achieve a balance between 'thinking' and 'acting'.

Hospitality and Tourism education is traditionally divided into five sectors: food service, lodging management, recreation, travel related management, convention and meetings management (Riegel & Dallas, 2006). While each segment has its own characteristics, they serve the same purpose, or mission serving the guest (Riegel, 1991).

Tourism Education versus Tourism Training

Baum (2006) observed that the definitions of tourism education and tourism training have been challenged for a long time. The concepts of tourism education and tourism training have been explained by a number of scholars. For example Christou (1999) defines the role of the Higher Educational Institution as the body concerned with developing students' generic skills while the industry is responsible for facilitating the development of transferable skills among the interns in the form of training.

Go (2005) defines education as the process of imparting knowledge. According to Akyeampong (2008), tourism education is where students are taught in an official setting where students are trained to understand and develop their

analytical thinking in order to contribute to the professional and intellectual development of a person. Like any qualification, education aims to ensure that students gain a qualification that will allow them to enter the industry upon graduation as a result of a high-standard of professional education (Bamford, 2012).

On the other hand, tourism training according to Akyeampong (2008), involves the delivery of practical knowledge, skills and techniques needed to work in the tourist industry. Go (2005, p. 6) also defines training as “the process of bringing a person to an agreed standard of proficiency for responsibilities through practice or instructions”. Therefore the famous adage which says ‘training is for skills and education is for life’ may take a different turn to be misrepresented in this modern society (Baum, 2006). This is because, the similarity with the definitions of education and training both involve knowledge attainment while the difference is skills attainment and proficiency. This therefore suggests rightly that the idea of training being specifically about skills alone and education being about knowledge alone is a misnomer. Without training, there is no education and without education, there is no training.

Tourism training and education are communicative, interactive and involves methods, concepts and model that students can apply in their working career (Go, 2005). Therefore practical training and theoretical knowledge must be balanced to ensure that the standards of the educational degree are met (Briggs, Stark & Poplawski, 2003).

This review therefore shows that Tourism training and education are important components of HEIs in ensuring that the hospitality and tourism industry

continues to grow (Baum, 2006). It is argued that students are not being educated in a way that allows them easy entry to the industry, adding further challenges to the shortage of skilled labour that the industry is already characterised with (Akyeampong, 2007). Not only vocational courses, but student internship programmes would allow students to develop skills which will prepare them for the industry. In effect, this will create a balance between education and training curriculum (Busby, 2003).

Practice of Internship

There is significant literature that highlights the importance of internship during a student's undergraduate degree (Baum, 2006). Busby (2001) argues that discussion on tourism degree must certainly include issues on internship.

Internship; sometimes referred to as placement, sandwich placement, experiential learning or cooperative education aids in building relationships between industry and educators (Busby, 2005). Cooperative education is the process of education which formally integrates the student's academic study with work experience in cooperating employer organisations (Go, 2005). Also, according to Davies (1990, p. 2):

‘Experiential learning is an integration and alteration of thinking and doing. It is the method by which effective, progressive and eventually self directed learning can occur with all that this means for individual and collective confidence, ability and progress’.

Internship involves undertaking a short period of practical work in concurrence with training (Baum, 2006). In the UK, internship can last from twelve weeks to twelve months and are often voluntary (Busby, 2003). Caribbean tourism programmes have a work based practical component to them which equates to at least eight weeks of practical work experience in the industry (Charles, 1997).

Just as it appears internship is popular in tertiary education worldwide, in Ghana and most especially at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), internship is also evident. In the Faculty of Education of UCC internship counts towards a student's degree where instead of taking a course, students work for a period of time in a field relevant to their degree.

The purpose of an internship is to ensure that graduates are ready to be productive members of the industry and create a career (Tribe, 2002) by understanding skill development and increasing self-confidence and maturity (Busby, 2005). Another purpose of internship is to gain experience, develop attributes that are required of graduates, acquire further practice (Busby, 2003), decrease learning time when entering the industry (Lam & Xiao, 2000) and increase the employee retention rate (Waryszak, 1997). Such practical experiences are aimed at building knowledge and bridging the gap between theory and practice (Akyeampong, 2008).

Providing an opportunity for graduates to participate in internship is valuable for many hospitality and tourism education programmes. However, depending on the scheme, one criticism is that, making work based placement mandatory can provide the industry with cheap labour while students gain little

benefit. Another negative outcome of mandatory internship is that students find themselves working in establishments not related to the hospitality and tourism course programme. This is usually evident when an internship programme is not properly organised and implemented.

While several studies have shown that internship helps to cement a student's aspirations to pursue a long term career in the industry, others found a worrying trend that, following an internship experience, some students decide against a career in the industry (Barron, 1999). Exposing students to the industry through practical experience does not necessarily work in favour of the industry attracting skilled labour.

Interns are overworked in some industries because employers know that it is part of an academic exercise which is mandatory and so the negative perceptions of the industry is further exacerbated (Baum, 2006; Getz, 1994). Undertaking internship may result in students not wanting to enter the industry which is a problem faced by educators and the industry. Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) suggest that the negative perceptions of the industry from students' point of view stem from their practical experience.

The characteristic of long working hours, low social status, low pay, seasonality, high employee turnover, and stressful work have influenced these student's perceptions which they would not have experienced if they did not participate in internship (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000).

On the other hand, it can be argued that exposing students to the hospitality and tourism industry will help them to overcome the negative image that is

portrayed by people about the industry (Baum, 2006). This is because students who partake in an internship as part of their degree are considered to have a competitive advantage over others looking to enter the workforce. This is because they have the practical skills needed to work in the industry (Busby, 2005). It therefore becomes the responsibility of educators and employers to ensure that student internship experiences have a positive influence on their perception of the industry.

Issues to Consider in Designing an Internship Programme

In designing an internship programme, there are certain basic factors that need to be considered in order to determine the type of internship suitable for the educational institution. According to Divine, Miller, Wilson and Linrud (2007), it is necessary for a Department of 600 students and more to critically consider factors such as placement method, duration of internship and a method of evaluation. However, the researcher believes that these factors are still critical and can be applied even for a lesser groups of students thus its consideration in this literature.

One major decision that academia must make when considering an internship programme is whether it will be actively involved in placing the students or it will allow the students to find their own placements. The structured method of placement is the process where the coordinator of the internship is likely to keep information on organisations available for internship (Divine et al., 2007). The structured placement according to Divine et al. (2007) offers the academia a greater level of involvement in the internship programme. They also have a greater opportunity to find appropriate placements for students. Students therefore have a

fair ground of being placed in an organisation with fewer challenges. However, the structured placement process may not allow students to be placed in organisations of similar standards. The large numbers of students will also pose a challenge for the coordinators in placing all the students (Divine et al., 2007).

On the other hand the unstructured placement process allows students to find whichever organisation they deem suitable to work in. The unstructured placement allows students to find their own placement and give the Department less administrative work (Divine et al., 2007). These processes however come with its advantages and disadvantages. Akomaning et al. (2011) argue that the unstructured method of placement is perhaps a more fair approach for students since it gives them the opportunity to compete for all available internship opportunities. At the same time, it gives students the opportunity to experience how to job hunt upon graduation. Divine et al. (2007) also confirm this assertion in that, allowing students to find their own placements helps develop the life-long search skills they will need once they leave school.

Another issue to consider for a successful internship programme is an effective evaluation process (Akomaning et al., 2011). The training received by students on the field need to be accounted for and evaluated in order to achieve the objectives of the programme. During an internship, students are supervised and assessed by faculty members as well as the organisation (Walo, 2001). Evaluation allows students to express their concerns about the internship either on paper in the form of report writing or in person during supervision. This creates fair grounds for interns to be graded for the work done (Spradlin, 2009).

The duration of an internship programme is also very beneficial. The time spent in an organisation coupled with a positive attitude of students towards training, helps to determine the effectiveness of the programme. A six-month period for internship is quite usual with academic institutions around the globe (Lam & Xiao 2000; Mihail, 2006; Walo, 2001). Generally, internship programmes in the USA provide internship periods lasting from two (2) to 18 months in relevant study programmes (Internship USA, 2008) whilst in most European countries internship last from three (3) to 12 months (Aston University Careers and Employability Centre, 2009).

Value of Internship to HTM Stakeholders

Ensuring students are exposed to the industry makes them more employable as they gain management qualities and experience (Armoo & Neequaye, 2014; Busby, 2005). Just as trainee doctors do not exit their qualification without having undertaken practical training so must hospitality and tourism educators not exit without some form of work based learning (Ward, 1990). Many Hospitality and Tourism courses require students to undertake some internship as part of their curriculum (Busby, 2005). Experience is seen to be key in gaining employment, particularly in getting more than an entry level job. The teaching profession has given particular emphasis to the importance of learning through direct application (Walo, 2000).

Several studies in the hospitality and tourism fields examined the value of practical work experience of students in terms of career and personal development.

There is little doubt amongst stakeholders on the value of undertaking practical work experience in preparation for a career within hospitality and tourism industries.

As has been discussed earlier, there is an increase in the need for developing practical skills among undergraduate students in order to make them employable and highly competent. There have also been discussions on tourism training and education as well as the practical aspects of the Hospitality and Tourism educational curriculum. Students are the main beneficiaries of internship programme. However, the organisation of internship does not only benefit students, but employers and the institutions as well.

Benefits for Students

Students, who are arguably the most important stakeholders in the internship process, enjoy most benefits from internship (Buckley & Amoud, 2010). Toncar and Cudmore (2000) note that there is a large body of research which highlights the benefits of internship stating that internship allows students the opportunity to become active participants in their own education. Coleman (1976) also noted that implementing career related experience at the tertiary level improves the long term retention of programme studied as well as increase the motivation of the learner. Toncar and Cudmore (2000, p. 54) argue that this form of learning

offers students a new way of understanding what they have previously learned, thereby enriching previously learned lessons and grounding them in reality.

Internship raises students' productivity level on future jobs, and is directly rewarded by employers with higher wages. Similarly, one could propose that internship before graduation equips students with specific forms of work ethics. Work placement does not only help interns to perform better and more efficiently on a job, but enables them to acquire cultural skills and get used to specific manners or soft skills that are in existence in the social environment of a certain industry sector or organisation. Most of these skills are not practiced in the educational system (Jackson, Goldthorpe, & Mills, 2005) and must be experienced elsewhere in order for the skills to be properly developed in a job setting.

Internship gives students the opportunity to integrate theory and practice in their chosen field by making practical their classroom learning into the real world. This experience then allows them to gain a deeper understanding of their academic work which in turn can improve their academic performance upon their return to the classroom. As research in this field keeps increasing, there are facts which suggest that students who participate in internship in the undergraduate level perform better academically than students who do not (Lucas & Tan, 2007). For example, in a study of almost 200 students from the University of the West of England, SurrIDGE (2009) reported that students who participated in internship achieved significantly better final year marks than students who did not participate in internship. Furthermore, students who had been on internship programmes gained 3.6 per cent more on their final year marks than non internship students.

Similarly, Gomez, Lush and Clements (2004) concluded that students taking an internship programme exhibit improved academic performance in their final year on the average. Internship students will gain an advantage of nearly 4 per cent prior to their graduation.

In an experimental research, Taylor (1998) found that students with internship experience are evaluated as being significantly more qualified and hence have a higher probability of being hired than students without internship experience. Thus the probability of obtaining a higher class is affected by the decision of the student to go on professional internship.

Indeed, in terms of career success, research from the US suggests that students who completed internships during their undergraduate degree programme fared better in the world of work upon graduation than non-intern graduates (Baum, 2006). Research has shown that students who are optimistic and determined to develop practical skills all through their undergraduate education by being open to the elements of work to corporate culture and work habits developed valuable personal and professional networking contacts (Toncar & Cudmore, 2000). Gault, Redington and Schlager (2000) recounted how interns reported receiving larger entry-level payment than non-interns, with starting salaries averaging 9.23 per cent higher than non-interns, while the length of time it took interns to obtain their first job was also significantly shorter than for non-interns.

Work placement, also, impacts on students' personal development and growth. They often develop more self-confidence and self-awareness as a result of their experiences which can then bring about a renewed sense of maturity and

responsibility. They learn to see the world in new ways and can become more open-minded and compassionate as are some of the qualities required by employers in the industries. Their experience in the workplace may cement their career aspirations and bring about a new sense of ambition, commitment and purpose (Gibson & Busby, 2009; Gomez, Lush & Clements, 2004; Toncar & Cudmore, 2000). Thus it can be concluded that work placement offers students significant benefits in terms of their academic performance, employability and overall personal development which all contribute to increasing their labour-market value.

Benefits for Employers

There are also a number of important benefits to be reaped by employers who engage in internship programmes and offer their establishments for internship. According to Beard (2007), employers have reported “lower turnover rates for college hires who have participated in an internship in contrast to college hires that have not completed these experiential learning activities” (p. 208). It is therefore not surprising that in a recent survey of 169 employers, 67 per cent of respondents stated that “in general, they preferred to recruit graduates whose degree programmes had included internship” (Getz, 1994).

As one of the dimensions of internship noted by Hurst and Good (2010), over the past two decades, companies are more often using internship as a recruitment tool for employing staff (Coco, 2000). Internship allows both the intern and the company an opportunity to find out if the intern possesses the skills

necessary to adapt to the firm's work ethics, thereby enhancing internship to serve as a recruiting tool.

For many companies, the most flourishing source of new hires comes from students who have interned in their organisation or elsewhere (Sessions, 2006). As Gault, Redington and Schlager (2000) outline, such programmes can help employers to save significant cost on recruitment but still gather a pool of high quality employees. Walo (1999) surveyed 120 interns at the completion of their internship and found that 75 per cent gained employment with their host company while 20 per cent were offered assistance by the host company to find employment at the completion of their internship (Walo, 1999). A similar study in UK revealed that almost 70 per cent of interns were offered graduate jobs, 80 per cent of employers recruited students who had been on internship with the primary aim of granting them permanent employment, and 40 per cent of annual graduate intake from these employers consisted of former interns (Association of Sandwich Education and Training [ASET], 2009).

A similar study carried out by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2010), which surveyed 235 employers from 20 industries across the United States (US), reported that 83 per cent of respondents said that their primary focus of the internship was to feed their full-time hiring programme while nearly 80 per cent identified this as the primary focus of their program. Of the students hired by these employers from the graduating class of 2009, almost 45 per cent came from employers' internship programmes and 35 per cent came from their programmes (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2010).

Internship provides access to a team of workers who are usually enthusiastic and dedicated to the industry and bring fresh ideas to the workplace (Yiu & Law, 2012). Employers benefit from the input of fresh ideas and innovations from motivated students. According to ASET (2009), employers can gain new ideas from enthusiastic staff members who had previously participated in internship. Again, according to ASET (2009), these interns are branded a 'short to medium term project' by the company. Furthermore, students come equipped with specific innovative skills as well as an up-to-date overview of the industry's developments and should become fully productive at an early stage (ASET, 2009).

A study carried out by a New Zealand HEI in 2002 with its industry partners concluded that 90 per cent of students joining their organisations appear to possess greater energy and enthusiasm, making it a major benefit for the organisation (Ferkins, 2002). Employers can then utilise these enthusiastic students to address short-term company needs such as covering staff leave, helping out at busy periods or carrying out work which may be too time-consuming for their own staff to complete, all of which can improve their companies' productivity. This theme was highlighted in Ferkins' (2002) study of New Zealand employers which found that students who had been on internship were able to accomplish tasks at their work places which may not otherwise have been completed.

Research by Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) revealed that industries are enthusiastic about contributing to student internship. For industries, engaging in internship gives them the opportunity to also extend their support in terms of corporate social responsibility. Companies offer their organisations for college

students to be employed as a way of helping out with the internship programme, also to offer college students the opportunity to work with professionals in their field and experience the industry at first hand.

The majority of organisations studied by Ferkins (2002) emphasised the ‘feel-good’ factor in being able to ‘give something back’. This in turn can generate goodwill within the academic community which can lead to further social relationship between industry and HEIs. This can help industry develop an “increased awareness of current academic developments in the particular discipline” (ASET, 2009), while also having the opportunity produce a high quality work force (ASET, 2009).

Studies conducted by Kliknaite (2009) confirms that in spite of the enthusiasm demonstrated by Ghanaian industries toward academic internships, the collaboration between both entities is somewhat weak, thus limiting the ambition and vision to drive forward effective industrial training of students.

Other studies have found that, some organisations allow interns to work to their firms without any interest in training them or fulfilling the objectives of the internship programme. This therefore contributes to a negative perception of internship.

Due to the highly labour intensive nature of the hospitality and tourism industry (Akyeampong, 2008; Mensah, 2009), internship programmes have been instrumental in filling labour shortages during peak seasons, allowing employers to consistently provide optimal customer service (Yiu & Law, 2012). Waryszak

(1999) points out that experience gained through internship helps with induction, which ultimately increases staff performance and retention.

Benefits to the Institution

Another stakeholder in the work placement process is the HEI involved, as placement programmes also offer significant benefits to the academic community. The institution usually prepares the internship curriculum as part of the course programme which will be assessed and graded after the internship. According to Effah (2005), students' competencies and skills are developed and nurtured by their educators in the HEIs before they graduate.

Firstly, internship helps to train students and increase their competencies, which is one of the ultimate goals of higher education. It is at the institution that students develop generic skills and theoretical bases of what is to be applied in the working environment. Research has shown that internship help improve academic performance which in turn helps to close the gap in post-graduation and career search success. Another advantage of institution getting involved with an internship programme is that, an institution that partakes in internship reflects a good reputation for the institution where the student was educated thereby making that institution attractive for potential applicants. Through internship, HEIs have the benefit of putting to test their course materials and making sure that what they are educating students is of importance to industry.

As McGinn (1999) highlights, internship also provide HEIs with an important feedback system of directing educational needs into the design and

adaptation of course curricula. According to Effah (2005) the educational institution and industry get feedback through performance assessment during internship.

Such associations with industry should help ensure that curricula reflect the dynamics of the marketplace and the combination of knowledge and skills that will be expected of graduates in the 'real' business world (St. Armant, 2003 cited in Getz, 1994). This then helps academic institutions provide graduates with the qualities required by employers (ASET, 2009). For instance, internship affords HEIs the opportunity to maintain contact with work environment in developing new ideas so they can strengthen collaboration between them and industry. This can enhance collaborative research opportunities, raise an institution's profile, and help to establish long-term working relationships to optimise future graduate employment opportunities (Walo, 2001)

According to Gault et al. (2000), internship programmes also offer tremendous potential for strengthening collaboration between the university and the business community. Training and other business partnerships forged between academia and industry may serve as a catalyst for raising new sources of external funding. Certainly, there are a number of possible collaborations that can grow from internship partnerships between industry and academia. This is therefore one area which the researcher intends to focus on.

This section therefore suggests that internship programmes are very beneficial and hold great value to all stakeholders involved. Barron (1999) summarised the benefits of internship to stakeholders as

- The opportunity to put theory into practice
- The provision of a practical context in which students may be placed
- The possibility of receiving some formal industry training
- The development of transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, self discipline and practical skills
- Assistance with identifying career paths and/or confirming pre-working environment

Furthermore, Cooper et al. (1993) as cited in Akyeampong (2008) summarise the benefits of a well-trained workforce in the hospitality industry as good education and training, adds value to the industry, raises the quality of personnel and infuses a sense of professionalism and ownership, ensures that workers in the industry tend to understand the interrelationship of the sectors and begin to perceive business opportunities, provides skills and practical knowledge to boost the performance and productivity of personnel, allows the actors to gear the needs of the sector with the output of tourism institutions; and helps to retain staff, provide a career path for employees and overall, achieve a better use of human resources in the tourism industry.

Stakeholders' Perceptions about Internship

The need for positive perceptions of hospitality and tourism internship will eventually lead to its success in terms of the effectiveness in the organisation and implementation of the programme (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000). This is because an individual's perception determines the line of action to take (Roney & Oztin,

2007). Perception can be explained as a state where people are able to experience what is around them using their five senses; sight, sound, smell, taste and touch (Cherry, 2012).

Attitudes are closely related to perception and this goes on to help and predict behaviours and also help understand those behaviours (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000). If behaviour can be understood, such as why people choose to study, work or teach in the hospitality and/or tourism and why they take part in internship programmes, then combining this with the perceptions of these stakeholders can provide better understanding of the Hospitality and Tourism internship programme and to maximise a positive perception for internship in future.

Internships are designed to provide students with the opportunity to learn new skills under the guidance of experienced professionals (Hurst & Good, 2009). Since internship programmes play a fundamental role in preparing undergraduates for entry-level jobs, it is beneficial for stakeholders to be concerned about the perceptions to discover what is required of academia, to discover what employers in the industry view about the programme and what students' attitudes and perceptions are about the internship programme in developing their employable skills. Studies by Hurst and Good, (2009) explained that knowledge of the perceptions of internship will help industry and academia to learn about the problems, successes or gaps that occur during internship to ensure that graduates are entering the industry with the most appropriate skills.

New Trends in Hospitality and Tourism Internship

Hospitality and tourism internship is very important in grooming undergraduate students in order to prepare them for the work environment, therefore it is important for the HEI involved in the internship programme to be concerned with the type of interns they are producing (Verney, Holoviak, & Winter, 2009). Internship gives students the opportunity to experience the nature of the work environment upon graduation. As a way of establishing their social responsibility, industry offer work opportunities to students.

Overall, gaining work experience through internship programmes has been proven to be a credible way to ease the transition from an academic life to the world of work (Collin & Tynjalla, 2003; Garavan & Murphy, 2001). Internship gives companies a chance to evaluate students' work capabilities before they are given an opportunity to work in the company's establishment. The perceived value of internship and the attitude towards them have remained fairly constant for some time now. However, a study by Hurst and Good (2010) shows recently, the face of internship has changed. There have been various trends and dimensions found in the internship programmes. Hurst and Good (2010) identified five major dimensions in the hospitality and tourism internship programme which include: 1) internships: the new recruiting tool; 2) increased endorsement of internships by retailers and educators; 3) paid vs. non-paid internships: a legal issue? 4) structure of internship programmes revamped; and 5) socialisation of interns: creating a bond. Apart from retail interns whom research shows that they are usually paid, other internship programmes are not. For these programmes, interns are rewarded

when they use the internship to increase their academic credits and to better their grades.

Need for Improved Employability Skills in the Industry

In this current economic downturn and increased competition for jobs, securing a good position in the work environment after graduation is paramount. Students must develop some marketable skills, such as communication, time management, self-confidence, and self-motivation; all of which are now considered requirements by the industry (Hurst & Good, 2010).

Studies have shown that globalisation, which has been used to refer to the increased mobility of goods, services, labour, technology and capital seen during this period (Government of Canada, 2002), has accounted for the increasing need for developing employability skills. This is mainly because, globalisation has taken a turn from agriculture and manufacturing to global white collar jobs and for this reason, and employees are also in competition with themselves in this knowledge based service industry (Young & Chapman, 2010).

Goods and services are not the only products which are in competition globally, but also employment competencies are battling to be rendered the required recognition. In the global economy, employees need certain practical skills that put them in the high demand market. Employability skills are those generic and transferable skills needed by potential employees to make them competent and hireable (Cook et al., 2004). These generic competencies are skills that are not assigned specifically. For evidently it can be applied to different jobs and life

contexts. In most frequently cited examples, Young and Chapman (2010) identify communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution as examples of generic competencies.

Another project known as the MISLEM project which involved partner institutions from five European countries, identified eight generic ‘soft’ competences which are considered to be vital to employers and is what they look out for when assessing the employability of graduates, namely communication skills; team-working and relationship building skills; self and time management skills; ability to see the bigger picture; influencing and persuading abilities; problem-solving abilities; leadership abilities; and presentation skills (Andrews & Higson, 2007). According to the project, the most important generic skills to be developed are the higher level soft skills which entail mostly communication (Hall, Higson & Bullivant, 2008). In the context of this study, generic competencies skills just as soft skills, transferable skills, employability skills or workplace competencies are merely the same thing.

Research carried out in 2001 by the Business Council of Australia (BCA) and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) also identified eight key employability skills: communication, teamwork, problem solving, self-management, planning and organising; technology, life-long learning, initiative and enterprise skills (Precision Consultancy, 2007).

The types of generic skills falling under the broad umbrella of the term employability skills according to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2009) include “team working, communication, active listening, an interest in

learning, problem solving, numeracy, literacy and taking criticism as the employability competences which make the difference between being good at a subject and being good at a job”.

Internship helps students strengthen these requisite skill sets. For example, in a recent longitudinal study regarding the perceptions of interns, Cook, Parker, and Pettijohn (2004) found that 87 per cent of the interns felt that their internship experience improved their general ability to get along with people in work environment. Their study also confirm that, 78 per cent of interns agreed that the internship experience gave them greater confidence in finding a job after graduation, and 57 per cent of the interns felt that their internship experience informed their future career choices (that is, either affirming or changing).

Moreover, internship helps students improve upon their job skills and work ethics, gain through access to job sources, and even impress potential employers, all of which help improve future job opportunities (Mihail, 2006;. Knouse, Tanner, & Harris, 1999) as cited in Hurst and Good (2010). In relation to these findings, a group of European countries who hold series of ministerial meeting with the aim of ensuring quality higher educational qualification also look at the importance of acquired skills through training during an undergraduate study. The Bologna Process, as the movement is called, worked toward the creation of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (Buckley & Amoud, 2010). One of the main issues that have been addressed by this movement is increasing graduate employability skills.

As part of the various seminars held by the Bologna Working Group on Employability held in Luxembourg late 2008, it was stated that “HEIs and employers need to work together to identify ways in which courses and programmes of study can offer students the opportunity to develop and define for themselves employability skills”, and the group therefore suggested that there should be an increased focus on providing internship as part of undergraduate programmes (Buckley & Amoud, 2010).

Universities have a responsibility to equip students with skills and attributes (knowledge, attitudes and behaviours) they need in the workplace and which employers require (Hurst & Good, 2010). This is to ensure that by the time the course programme ends, students will have an in-depth knowledge of their subject as well as developed generic employability skills’ (Hurst & Good, 2010).

A study on education and skills conducted by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) in 2009, it was found out that improved employability skills constitute one of the ultimate goals of student interns. The study reported that 78 per cent of respondents mentioned employability skills to be one of the most important factors when recruiting graduates (CBI, 2009). When the same survey asked employers what areas universities should prioritise over the coming years, 82 per cent of the respondents identified ‘improving students’ employability skills to be a key focus for universities (CBI, 2009). The CBI Higher Education Task Force agrees with this assessment, stating:

‘The importance of employability skills is now greater than ever in the current economic climate. Work placements are one way of providing a

means by which these skills can be attained. In order to be well prepared for the upturn, we need to ensure that we are producing graduates with higher level skills and the employability skills which employers value in order to support the economy and meet the needs of business' (CBI, 2009, p.3).

An Australian survey found that most graduates recognised the opportunities offered during internships for skills development (Crebert et al., 2004). The study also reported a correlation between the graduates' experience of internships and the relative ease with which they made the transition from university to employment. However, there was a strong perception that the skills developed during internship had greatly contributed to the graduates' subsequent career advancement (Crebert et al., 2004).

In an interview involving 258 managers, a study by Harvey et al. (1997) found that respondents tremendously approved internship as a means of helping students develop attributes that would help them to be successful at work.

Since the need for employability skills has become one of the main focuses for employers and HEIs in the past decade, a number of groups have looked at ways of integrating the development of employability skills into undergraduate curricula. Based on the findings of various studies, it has become clear that the key to achieving this aim is by expanding internship programmes.

Collaboration between University and Industry

The primary focus of most University-industry collaboration is joint research (Kliknaite, 2009). However, studies have shown that many University-industry collaborations have an impact on the teaching and learning that develops naturally out of the partnership (Edmondson, Valigra, Konward, Hudson & Belfield, 2012). Universities and industries have been collaborating for over a century and due to changes in technology, changes in work environment and increase in global knowledge, there is the need not only for a link between university and industry but also a stronger collaboration to help train students (Buckley & Amoud, 2010). According to Edmondson et al. (2012), this collaboration demands a bigger leap off the normal relationship. They say this because a stronger collaboration requires each side to engage beyond the conventional exchange of research for funding and work well to develop strategic partnerships involving the culture of the universities with an innovation-driven environment of the company (Ineson & Stone, 2007). Again, in order to develop a stronger collaboration, university and industry must overcome the cultural and communications divide that hinders this relationship and undermines the potentials and benefits of a stronger collaboration (Chapman & O'Neil, 2010). Edmondson et al. (2012), admit that getting into partnership is not as simple as it seems and it also does not come easy. Their research found out that most European universities do not collaborate with industry and those who do, only do that based on University revenue purposes.

There are a number of possible school–industry collaborations which have various effects and benefits for stakeholders (Ineson & Stone, 2007). The impact of

collaboration can generate new knowledge which can contribute to an industry's improved performance (Pertuzé, Calder, Greitzer & Lucas, 2010). Close collaboration gives rise to the promotion of mutual, ambition and purpose towards a shared vision (Kliknaite, 2009) in any well-organised internship. Also, the benefits are obvious for institutions. These include external funding, opportunities for professors and graduates to work on groundbreaking research, and most importantly teaching and learning. Training collaboration can therefore promote a stronger relationship between industry and academia which can facilitate both flexibility and speeded-up innovation (Akomaning et al., 2011).

According to Ineson and Stone (2007), a new trend developing between university and industry is the competition for global recognition. This has prompted some companies to develop partnership with universities specifically aimed at modernising teaching and learning. Internship has been seen as important model of training students due to university and industry collaboration. The most productive collaborations are strategic and long term according to Edmondson et al. (2012). Stronger collaborations among stakeholders in order to train students are built on shared vision, stronger human ties, understanding and trust on all sides (Johnson, 2008). However, there are some challenges which thwart the very potential of achieve the aim of training students during internship (Akomaning et al., 2011). A study by Surridge (2009) found out that university-industry collaborations are mainly compromised by failures of communication among stakeholders. Edmondson et al. (2012) however observed that this weakness in

collaboration can be overcome by university leadership such as faculty members and heads of departments. They stated that

“there is the need to communicate the importance of stronger collaboration the entire economic community, make the goals and benefits clear to the faculty and the most fertile starting point for a stronger collaboration is for industry to do something it cannot do by itself in the form of internship programmes” (Edmondson et al., 2012. p. 6).

According to Christou (1999), popular tourism destination countries such as Greece and Australia and have a well developed hospitality and tourism educational systems in order to meet the expectations of tourism and hospitality industry. Therefore, for the institution, internship can strengthen links with industry and enable a better understanding of the hospitality and tourism industry, whereas for industry, internships can be an avenue for producing qualified staff for that industry (Johnston, 2008). In all, academia has the students and research resources and industry has the establishments and funding and so they must work together to train students and begin to build a solid relationship from there.

Stakeholders’ Perceptions of an Effective Internship

Internship is often viewed as being mutually beneficial to stakeholders (Borkowski, 2008; Divine et al., 2007). The mutual benefits, nevertheless, cannot be certain because its success or failure depends greatly on the way in which the stakeholders collaborate in its implementation process (Akomaning et al., 2011).

An effective internship involves a strong collaboration of all stakeholders about the conditions of the internship, the responsibilities of each stakeholder and the system of feedback (Akomaning et al., 2011). A study conducted by Breiter (1991), suggests that all three stakeholders agree that practical work experience is very important for the future success of HTM graduates.

On the other hand, when there is a weak linkage among these three stakeholders, the student faces various challenges which may cause them to perform menial tasks on the job (Johnston, 2008), resulting in interns becoming quickly demoralised and learning nothing about putting their generic skills into practice at the work place. Therefore stakeholders need to specify their distinctive roles during student internship (Rothman, 2007).

Christou (1999) indicates that interns in the hospitality and tourism industry acquired skills which enabled them to be quite confident in their first employment after graduation although they face some challenges. Collaboration therefore plays a vital role in student learning in industry. Therefore, a well-organised internship will help students to transit smoothly from school to industry (Carlin & Manson, 2007).

Challenges Faced in the Organisation of Internship

LeMasitre and Pare (2004) state that most students face some form of challenge in one way or another when going through the transition from classroom to workplace to begin their skilled careers. They go on to state that it becomes

difficult for students to bridge the gap between college-learned theory and practical work.

As such, internship programmes offer an opportunity to close the gap between college-learned theory and practical reality (Fox, 2001; Randall & Good, 1991), and they provide students with valuable work-centered knowledge and work-related experience (Gross, 1981). Since this thesis is focused on perception, it can be mentioned that challenges in the organisation of hospitality and tourism internships could lead to negative perceptions of the programme.

These challenges therefore may affect stakeholders to perceive the benefits of internship differently (Davis, 1990). Not all stakeholders deem internships beneficial as there are studies to prove this assertion as discussed above.

Although research on this subject proves the need and importance of internships, not all the stakeholders believe in this assertion. Some believe that after an internship experience, some students reject the idea of pursuing a career in the hospitality and tourism industry (Barron, 1999). Waryszak (1999) agrees that an internship program that fails to meet students' expectations is likely to discourage them from pursuing a career in the hospitality and tourism industry after graduation. This is because after a bad internship experience, most students lose interest in that area even though that is still their course programme. Unfortunately according to Jenkins (2001), these challenges emanate from improper organisation of the internship programme.

Challenges to Students

In the hotel industry, Hospitality interns often work in highly visible positions which is the front of office (such as waiters and front-desk personnel), since back of office is mainly employee and managerial staff. This requires them to interact with guests, which may cause stress especially if interns have not mastered the transition from school work to work environment. The nature of the jobs performed in internship positions and the long working hours typically associated with the hospitality industry may burn out even the most career oriented intern (Pavesic & Brymer, 1990). In situations where students have not come to terms with the transition from class work to the work environment, they find it difficult adjusting to these long hours working conditions.

Students' Challenges with Employers

Poor employee – employer fit seems to be another concern, whereby students find it difficult in communicating and building good relationships with colleagues (McMahon & Quinn, 1995) and their employers or work supervisors.

The important elements of a work environment from the viewpoint of interns are also recognised in Collins's (2002) study of 113 HTM students in Turkey, where almost one third of the respondents complained about the lack of task orientation. Austin (2002) examines a set of hospitality and tourism programmes in Malaysian universities, which incorporated an element of practical industry training. The findings indicated that Malaysian employers who provided training opportunities for hospitality students showed that, generally, these interns did not have major commitments for the tasks they were given and they were unwilling to come to terms with the job requirements. The interns, in contrast,

regarded themselves as “highly educated” and thus deserving of better-quality positions than what they were offered (Austin, 2002)

Employers’ Challenges with Students

Normally, the reason for students not performing according to employers’ expectations lies in poor preparation and/or lack of ability. Huyton (1991) describes some students as having weak problem-solving abilities as a result of being overawed by the work environment and their own inexperience. Employers or department supervisors on their part are also unwilling to work with such attitudes from interns. Studies by Akomaning et al. (2011) showed that some staff members exhibit unfriendly relations with interns and are unwilling to train interns.

Challenges of the Institution

For Hospitality and Tourism Departments, the main problem could be the heavy workload of the academic staff tasked with the supervisory role of evaluating and supervising interns during the programme. McQuade and Graessie (1990) show that most internship representatives are members of academic staff who are not only responsible for the supervision and coordination of internship programmes but also their regular teaching and research activities. Their workload can be so heavy that it leads to a reduction in the effectiveness and efficiency of their internship coordination role (McQuade & Graessie, 1990). Hospitality and Tourism Management educators are faced with an interesting dilemma when advising undergraduate students, given the seemingly overwhelming need to obtain work

experience while trying to balance this with the time spent on other activities related to the pursuit of a college degree.

Administration of the coordinating activities necessary to make internship programmes successful is another challenge for most educators, because their primary role is educational rather than administrative. Two studies, one focusing on hospitality educators (Downey & DeVeau, 1987) and another on practitioners (Downey & DeVeau, 1988), reveal different views about this administrative role. While hospitality educators prefer to hire part time coordinators due to the costs involved, practitioners prefer full-time coordinators because they can take comprehensive overall responsibility for internship programmes.

Faculty Members Challenges with Employers

There is still considerable debate on the perceived effectiveness of the training collaboration between the Department and the industry (Barron, 1999; Petrillose & Montgomery, 1998). In fact, some employers may not be fully aware of the objectives of an internship, or they may treat students simply as a solution to a labour-shortage problem (Yiu & Law, 2012). As stated by Fox (2001), instead of developing potential employees through the internship, many employers only take people who are interested in particular subjects, or who can work in areas where they need staff. Employers may therefore take the opportunity of the internship programme just for personal or organisational reasons and not with the need of the students in consideration.

Even worse, they may be uncertain of what to expect from students, how to train them effectively, and what skills they should acquire during their internship.

Studies show that, “in recruiting workers in a hospitality and tourism firm, employers do not consider academic performance as a factor, but work experience only” (Stalcup, 2002).

Conceptual Framework

In general, internship programmes are valuable ways to acquire broad competencies where practical knowledge obtained supports and complements the theoretical knowledge learned in the educational institutions (Mihail, 2006). This study has identified key factors of internship as perceived by the relevant stakeholders from HEIs to students and industry. The research identified relevant conditions that contribute to the benefits derived from internships and, when well managed, bring about a positive or negative perception of internship. These conditions are: collaboration between school and industry (Divine et al., 2007), placement procedures (University of Pittsburgh, 2009), duration (Divine et al., 2007; Mihail, 2006) and assessment (Walo, 2001).

Conditions for successful implementation of internship are characterised by strong collaboration between Universities and industry, a reasonable duration of the internship, and placement related to the hospitality and tourism industry and effective assessment. These conditions coupled with the type of organisations (accommodation, restaurant, airline, travel and tour agency, financial institutions and the public sector) students work will contribute to the benefits and perceptions derived from internship.

A successful implementation of internship may be threatened by challenges stakeholders face during internship. Such challenges include students' difficulty in finding an organisation, unfriendly relationship between employees and interns, an uncomfortable and hectic work environment, negative attitude on the part of supervisors, lack of responsibility and limited opportunities (Collins, 2001). Such challenges are most probable in haphazardly planned internships (McManus & Feinstein, 2008).

This will eventually affect the perceived outcome of the internship either positively or negatively which may lead to further challenges to stakeholders.

Figure One below is a conceptual framework this study.

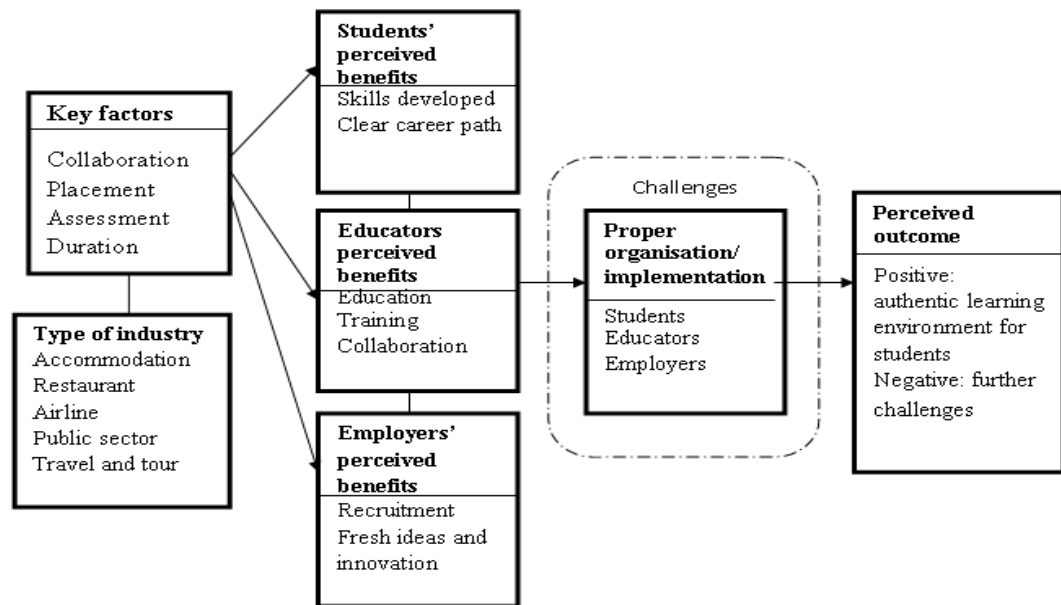


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Adapted from Akomaning et al. (2011)

Chapter Summary

According to Ashwork and Saxton (1989), internship provides a close approximation to the real life exercise of a student's academic discipline. They add value to a degree course as they enliven the theory by allowing students to interpret the lived experience through effective and rational reflection.

This chapter has therefore examined the concept of hospitality and tourism education, the debate between tourism education and tourism training, the practical aspect of hospitality and tourism education, the values of internship in HTM education to all stakeholders and finally, this chapter has critiqued the perception of students choosing a career in the industry based on their internship experience and discussed some challenges facing stakeholders in internship.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter highlights the activities undertaken during the research period. It gives an overview of the following relevant issues: research design, research approach, instruments used to collect the data, target population, method of data collection, sampling procedure and sample size.

Study Area

Cape Coast is located in the southern part of Ghana, along the coast. It is situated 165 km west of the national capital Accra. The Cape Coast Metropolis (Fig. 2) is a medium size metropolis with a population of 119,340 (Statistical Service, 2000). It was the first national capital of the then Gold Coast (now Ghana). The removal of the seat of government to Accra in 1877 marked the beginning of the economic decline of Cape Coast, a trend which has continued to this time. Throughout the year, sunshine is guaranteed. It has high humidity but the cool breeze from the sea cools the atmosphere.

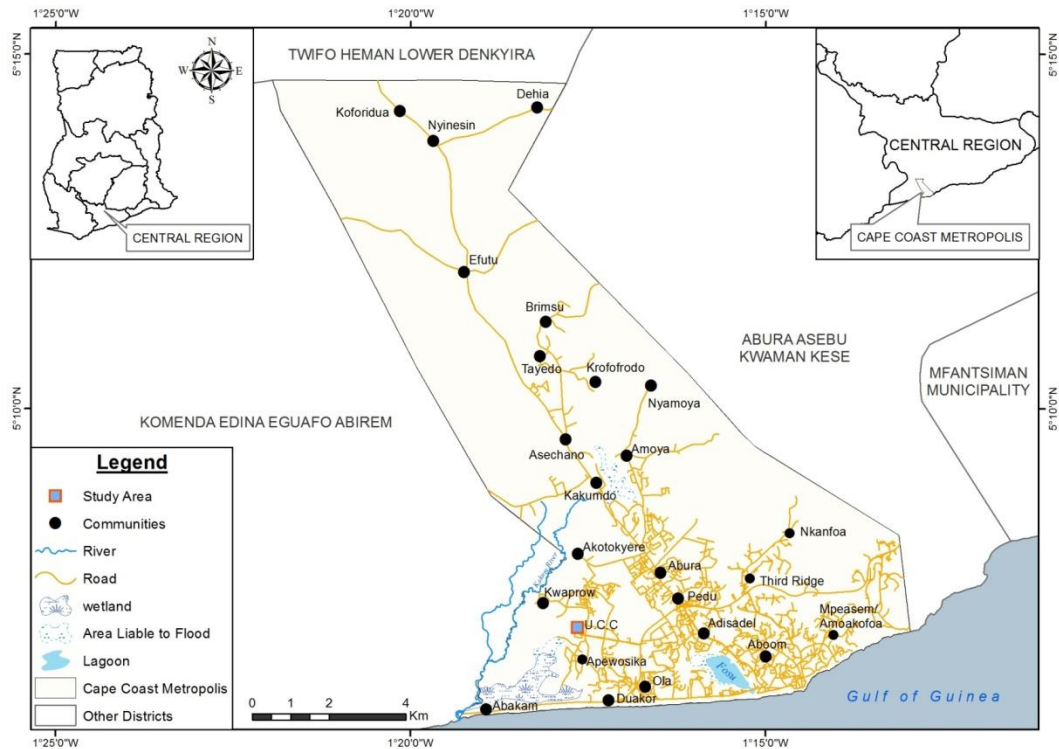


Figure 2: Map of Cape Coast Metropolis showing UCC

Source: GIS Remote Sensing and Cartography Unit, UCC (2013)

Educational Setting of Cape Coast

Mfantsipim School became the first secondary school to be established in the Gold Coast. This gave Cape Coast a signal of another hope of development because education was considered one of the most important aspects of development. Currently, Cape Coast can boast of some of the best, oldest and finest schools in Ghana; namely, Wesley Girls' High School, St. Augustine's College, Mfantsipim School, Adisadel College, Aggrey Memorial AME Secondary School, Ghana National College, Holy Child Secondary School, Cape Coast Technical Institute and Cape Coast Polytechnic. Also, one of Ghana's leading universities in

teaching and research, University of Cape Coast (UCC) is found in this region. UCC is located on a hill which overlooks the Atlantic Ocean and has two campus; namely the old and new sites (University of Cape Coast). UCC is found between two of the most important historical sites in Ghana; Elmina and Cape Coast Castles. UCC is organised into nine (9) faculties. Namely the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Institute of Education, School of Agriculture, School of Biological Science, School of Physical Science, Business School, School of Medical Sciences and Faculty of Social Science from which the Department of Hospitality and Tourism is found.

Until October, 2008, the DHTM was known as the Department of Geography and Tourism. The new name was carved in order to offer programmes that reflect current trends in the hospitality and tourism market at both the national and international levels. The DHTM therefore revised its courses offered to include aspects of tourism and hospitality service delivery.

It is the mission of the DHTM to provide a broad-based training in Hospitality and Tourism Management in order to produce self-confident, innovative and self-reliant graduates for management careers in the hospitality and tourism industries. The Department specifically aims at developing students' intellectual capabilities, introduce students to basic principles, theories and concepts of hospitality management, to offer students a practical learning experience, to enhance students' marketable skills and finally to provide opportunity for people, especially practitioners to upgrade their professional

knowledge through research. One of the main approaches used by the Department to achieve its vision was to improve the Department's internship programme.

Tourism in Cape Coast

Tourism in the study area has gained much recognition internationally due to its remarkable attractions and destinations. Cape Coast offers rich cultures supported by the availability of hotel facilities that cater for people of all walks of life. The availability of transport and communication has helped promote activities undertaken by tourists and students. Some of the popular attractions include Kakum National Park which is located 30km north of Cape Coast. Established in 1994, Kakum National Park is one of the most diverse and best preserved national parks in West Africa. It is easily accessible from Cape Coast but "suffers from a serious paucity of mammals though it has a large variety of butterflies" (Akyeampong, 2007). Cape Coast's mascot is a crab which has its statue in the center of the town. Other attractions include a series of Asafo shrines, Cape Coast Center for National Culture, the Oguaa Fetu Afahye and the biennial Pan African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST). This festival was born in 1992 and it showcases Ghana's rich culture exemplified in durbars that are held by the chiefs displaying their stool, regalia, totems, maces and resplendent kente clothes (Akyeampong, 2007)

Research Paradigm/ Approach

Using mixed methods is valuable in research (Axinn, 2006). The research questions helped to determine the method used for this research. The strategy that was utilised in this thesis was triangulation (Creswell, 2003). Using a mixed method approach allowed for raw data to be collected and in depth opinions to be sought (Finn, Elliot & Walton, 2000). Therefore, the perception of the internship is being driven by two philosophical perspectives: the positivist and the interpretive perspective. According to Sarantakos (2005), “positivism defines reality as everything that can be perceived through the senses”. Since internship is a reality, the positivist believes that the internship programme is out there, governed by a set of laws and can be realised through its experience. On the other hand, the interpretive perceive internship as something that is in the minds of people and therefore internally experienced. Thus, the way people perceive internship is based on how they see it in their minds and therefore their perception of internship is subjective. There are scholars who believe that qualitative and quantitative research should be used together where as others believe otherwise (Bamford, 2012). This study, however, uses the paradigm that suggests that combining qualitative and quantitative research is possible using one paradigm. Pragmatism is, therefore, the one paradigm that allows for both qualitative and quantitative research methods to be used in a study (Rossman & Wilson, 1985).

According to Sarantakos (2005), quantitative research is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. It is used for the various

sciences, including Physics, Biology, Psychology and Sociology. Some advantages of quantitative research include the provision of results which can be summarised statistically, and statistical comparisons between various groups made. Quantitative research in itself provides a basis for a value-free and unbiased research and also makes it suitable for the testing of hypothesis (Sarantakos, 2005) and research questions. Qualitative research is a subjective study which is intended to explore the research findings in order to build on theory. Qualitative methodology is inductive in nature and employs low levels of measurement (Sarantakos, 2005).

A number of articles have been written about the organisation of internship and stakeholders' views on the nature of the internship programmes. However, there is little publications address the training collaboration between the DHTM and the Tourism Industry. Most other studies, also, take a less holistic view about the perceptions of all three stakeholders in internship organisation (Yiu & Law, 2012). This chapter discusses the methodologies used for addressing the objectives and research questions as posed in Chapter One.

Research Design

The design for the study was descriptive because the aim of this research was to describe what the stakeholders perceive hospitality and tourism internship to be from the data collected in order to help provide background information about Hospitality and Tourism internship in general. The descriptive research also helped to explain the outcome of the analysis. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data

analysis is also known as the mixed method (Sarantakos, 2005). The use of the mixed method is to allow for a descriptive and an in-depth exploration to provide an accurate picture of stakeholders' perceptions of Hospitality and Tourism internship so that the overall strength of the study will be greater than using either qualitative or quantitative research (Creswell & Plano, 2007). The mixed method helped to understand the three main stakeholders' perceptions about Hospitality and Tourism internship.

Sources of Data

Data for this study was sourced primarily from in depth interview guides and questionnaires conducted in the study area. Relevant and existing additional information such as a list of establishments where students were placed, the evaluation form for assessment and a copy of the introductory letter requesting for internship assistance was sourced from the Administration of the DHTM and the HTM internship coordinator.

Target Population

The research involved final year HTM students of UCC, faculty members from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management of UCC and managers from hospitality and tourism firms in cape coast where students did their internship. Final year students of the Department were targeted because they had had internship experience in the hospitality and tourism industry. The Cape Coast Metropolis was selected as the study area because the study targeted HTM students

in UCC as well HTM faculty members who are also in UCC. For the purposes of proximity, convenience, time constraints and financial issues, managers from hospitality and tourism firms in Cape Coast were targeted even though majority of students were placed in firms outside Cape Coast. Further research can consider targeting managers of firms in Accra, Sekondi-Takoradi and Kumasi.

Sample Size Determination

A census was conducted for Hospitality and Tourism Management final year students in UCC to obtain quantitative data. The total number of final year students in the DHTM was 141. However, the actual number of students who were available to complete the survey was 121 students. The researcher purposively selected five faculty members from the Hospitality and Tourism Management Departments of UCC and five managers from the Hospitality and Tourism Industry for in-depth interviews. In all, 131 respondents participated in the study.

Sampling Procedures/Techniques

Sampling, according to Sarantakos (2005), is a process of selecting a unit to represent a whole population which is included in the study. Stratified sampling is a process of dividing members of a population into homogeneous subgroups before sampling is applied to each stratum.

In selecting managers of organisation where interns worked, a stratified sampling technique was employed from the various tourism industries within the tourism sector. From the homogenous groups which consist of accommodation,

restaurants, public sector, eco-tourism establishments and travel and tour agencies, a simple random sampling was conducted to select managers from each of these establishments.

The two types of non-probability sampling are accidental and purposive (Trochim, 2006). This research is utilising purposive methods where there are predetermined groups for the researcher to use (Trochim, 2006). This method allows a small subset of a larger population to be researched (Babbie, 1973).

Purposive sampling was used to select faculty members from the Hospitality and Tourism Management Department of UCC whom the researcher deems relevant for the study. A census technique was applied to the final year students of UCC due to their numbers which is convenient for the data collection.

Data Collection Instruments

This study made use of an interview guide for qualitative data and questionnaires for quantitative data. The interview guide was employed for managers and supervisors in the hospitality and tourism sector as well as the internship coordinator and supervisors in the Hospitality and Tourism Management Department, UCC. The interview guide was used so that there will be ample freedom to ask other follow up questions that will help address and give further insight into the responses given by the employers and lecturers.

Employers' and Faculty Members' Interview Guide

The development of this instrument was informed by the objectives of the study to guide the research during the in-depth interview with managers. This

instrument was developed to obtain information from hospitality and tourism managers on their views about the effectiveness of the current internship programme, the challenges they faced in the organisation of the programme, their views on the nature of training collaboration between them and the institution and finally, suggestions on how to improve the current internship programme. A section of the interview which aimed at finding out the attitude of the employers towards the internship programme asked about their feelings towards the internship programme.

A similar interview guide was developed for the internship coordinator and faculty members in the DHTM, UCC to obtain their views on (1) their perceptions of the effectiveness of the current internship programme (2) the challenges faced in the organisation of the internship programme (3) the nature of training collaboration between the hospitality and tourism educational institutions and the Industry and (4) how the existing internship can be improved.

Questionnaire

Questionnaires are a set of designed questions that permit the gathering of information from individuals (Veal, 2006). The purpose is to find reliable and valid information for analysis on the given topic for generalisations to be drawn from the population (Finn et al., 2000). Questionnaires are an invaluable tool if they are designed well and data collection and analysis is comprehensive (Brunt, 1997). They are used to gain facts and opinions of people which are deemed neglected by

other methods (Brunt, 1997). By using a standardised set of questions, it is easier to compare responses of the respondents (Axinn, 2006).

The students' questionnaire was developed to obtain information from the hospitality and tourism students regarding (1) the nature of training collaboration between the hospitality and tourism educational institutions and industry (2) their perceptions of the effectiveness of the existing internship (3) the challenges faced in the organisation of the internship programme and (4) suggestions on how the existing internship can be improved. The information from the questionnaire was obtained from the final year Hospitality and Tourism Management students of UCC.

The questionnaire was developed on the basis of previous literature. It consisted of five modules. The first module asked general questions about students' perceptions of their internship experience. The second module addressed issues on stakeholders' perceptions about internship duration, assessment, collaboration and placement. The third module asked questions about the challenges encountered as well as suggestions for improving the existing internship programme. Module Four employed a Likert scale instrument to investigate students' perceptions about their learning experiences, the host organisation and the staff of the host organisation. The last module solicited information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Pre-Testing of Research Instruments

A pretest of instruments is the process of administering the research instruments to a similar target population for a trial test to ensure that the validity and

reliability of the instruments is held (Finn et al., 2000). This is also done so that feedback can be sought to make improvements. Veal (2006) identified the purpose of a pilot study as a way to “test questionnaire wording, sequencing, and layout, familiarity with respondents, test fieldwork arrangements, train and test fieldworkers, estimate response rate, estimate interview, time, and test analysis procedures”.

The pretesting of the instrument was carried out on the 20th of January, 2014 in the Department of Geography and Rural Development, Faculty of Social Science, KNUST. The respondents were the final year students of the BA Culture and Tourism programme. This group of students was targeted because their course programme base is similar to that of UCC Hospitality and Tourism Management programmes. These students, also, undergo internship and were the right respondents for the pretest. At the end of the pretesting, it became necessary that the research instruments needed to be re-worded to be easily understood.

About 25 questionnaires were distributed to the Culture and Tourism students at KNUST after one of their lectures. However, 20 questionnaires were retrieved and were useful for data analysis. The quantitative data from students was coded into SPSS version 16 for further analysis. Due to the busy schedule of the faculty members in the Department of tourism as well as establishments where students did their internship, a telephone interview was conducted for faculty members and managers in order to pretest the interview guide. The interview was transcribed and grouped under themes. The global themes that emerged were inductively analysed.

Response Rate and Challenges Faced on the Field

Response rates determine the representativeness of the sample where a high response rate reduces response bias (Finn et al., 2000). A response rate of 50 per cent is considered to be good (Brunt, 1997), other authors also consider 50 per cent to be adequate, 60 per cent to be good and anything over 70 per cent to be very good (Finn et al., 2000).

Employers and faculty members: The response rate for the qualitative data collected was measured by the willingness of the respondents, that is, employers from the industry and lecturers to be involved in an in-depth interview with the researcher. Out of the 11 respondents purposively selected by the researcher for the interview, one was unwilling to be interviewed. The reasons given for the unwillingness to participate in the interview was due to time constraints as well as lack of flexibility in the nature of his work. In all, the response rate was very good.

Students: A census was conducted in an attempt to survey the entire population of the HTM final year class with the population totaling 141 students. From the population it was deduced that about 14 per cent did not participate in the census. One major reason for the inability of the researcher to attain the numbers was that, some of the students decided to leave the class without completing the questionnaire whiles another class was preparing to hold a lecture in the same room. This made it difficult for the researcher to identify the students of the Hospitality and Tourism class since some of them had dispersed. Others, for personal reasons declined to participate in the census. This resulted in the sample size of 121 students making up 86 per cent of the population.

Table 1: Response Rate

A	Attempted census population	141
B	Number of refusals	20
C	Percentage of refusals	0.14
D	Actual number of student respondents	121
E	Percentage of sample size	85.8
F	Census questionnaires properly completed	121
G	Attempted sample of interviews	11
H	Number of refusal of interview	1
I	Total number of respondents for the study	131

Source: Field work, 2014

Ethical Issues

The respondents were assured of anonymity, privacy and the confidentiality of the data collected. Additionally, the stakeholders were made to know that their participation was strictly voluntary. For the supervisors in the industry and the supervisors from the Department, a cover letter was administered seeking their approval to be interviewed and their anonymity was assured in a written note on the interview guide. Assurances were given that the researcher would maintain the highest level of priority for anonymity, confidentiality and privacy, and that the research instrument would not be made available to anyone other than the researcher. The same assurances were given to all three stakeholders. The students

were informed that their completed questionnaire would not be examined by anyone other than the researcher.

Data Processing and Analysis

Quantitative data collected from the students were coded into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 programme for further analysis. This employed statistical analysis using frequencies, percentages, cross tabulations and mean to analyse their perception of skills developed, challenges of the internship programme as well as a comparison of the stakeholders' perceptions of the effectiveness of the existing internship programme.

There was also an inductive generalisation of the research findings based on the qualitative data collected. The interviews tried to find out from faculty members and employers the nature of training collaboration between the DHTM and industry, their perceptions of the effectiveness of the current internship as well as the challenges faced.

The data was electronically captured, transcribed and analysed. This is to say that a three-tier coding system was employed to group responses under thematic networks and findings transcribed. The global themes that emerged were inductively analysed.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has highlighted the activities that were undertaken during the research period. It has given brief information of the study area giving an overview

of the educational setting of Cape Coast, the size and population of Cape Coast and the nature of tourism in Cape Coast. This chapter also gave a detailed description of the research design and its approach. The sources of data, target population and how the sample size was determined have also been explained in this chapter.

The chapter also describes the techniques used in sampling and finally, details information about the data collection instruments and the response rate of the respondents. The findings of the quantitative and qualitative research are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It presents the analysis, results and discussions of data collected. This chapter covers the profile of respondents, nature of training collaboration, perceptions about the effectiveness of the current internship programme, challenges confronting stakeholders in the organisation of internship and finally stakeholders' views on how to improve the current internship programme.

Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents

A total of 121 students responded to the questionnaires. This was made up of 71 females (58%) and 50 males (42%). This outcome supports observations by Richardson (2009). In his study, a little over half of the respondents (66%) were noted to be females. This suggests that females do continue to enter into the field of hospitality and tourism as confirmed by Pavesic (1993). According to Pavesic (1993), the majority of students who choose to study Hospitality and Tourism Management are females, since males mainly choose the traditional programmes such as Engineering, Mathematics, Architecture and other courses.

The majority of the students (72.6 %) were between the ages of 20 and 24 as may be characteristic of students in the final year group. The second highest group was between the ages of 25 and 29, representing 16 per cent of the respondents, whereas about 11 per cent were between ages 30 and 34. The overwhelming majority of the students surveyed were unmarried (94%) while five per cent were married with one person divorced. Majority of the students professed Christianity as their religion (97%) with the remaining percent being Muslims.

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	50	42
	Female	71	58
Age	20-24	77	72.6
	25-29	17	16.0
	30-34	12	11.3
Marital status	Single	113	95
	Married	6	5.0
Religion	Christianity	116	97.5
	Islam	3	2.5

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

A total of 10 faculty members and employers were considered for the in-depth interview (IDI). The overwhelming majority were males (90%) with only

one female. All respondents interviewed were Christians; none were below 24 years but majority were in their early 30's. A few were between the ages 25 and 29. Two-thirds of the respondents were married with 30 per cent unmarried.

Nature of Training Collaboration

Pertuzé et al. (2010) observed that the most common concern about any internship programme is that the link between the University education provided and the demands of industry may be poor. It became a necessary therefore to assess the nature of training collaboration between the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management (DHTM) of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and the industry. The placement method, duration of internship, assessment of interns and collaboration between institutions (Akomaning et al., 2011) was assessed in examining the existing training collaboration between the DHTM and industry. Undoubtedly, it is expected that various aspects of internship (comprising the four factors identified by Akomaning et al., 2011) must be effectively implemented in order to minimise the challenges that may be faced by stakeholders. All three stakeholders, namely faculty members, students and managers must collaborate in order to effectively train students and achieve a successful internship programme. Each stakeholder has a specific role to play in the implementation of the internship programme.

Role of Stakeholders in Placement Selection of Students

The DHTM uses the unmanaged or unstructured method of placing students whereby students are allowed to find their own organisations for internship which are later approved by the academic institution (Divine et al., 2007; Effah, 2005).

Basically, the nature of the Departments' internship placement is such that, at the beginning of the third year, students are asked by the internship coordinator to look for hospitality and tourism related organisations for their internship. The internship coordinator is responsible not only for the internship curriculum, but to facilitate communication with all parties, to provide both students and employers with information and to mediate when problems arise (Chang & Chu, 2009; Cook et al., 2004). The internship coordinator periodically reviews the curriculum by collecting and analyzing feedback and comments and recommending a course of corrective action as and when necessary. The coordinator mainly ensures that the organisations selected by students are preferably, in the accommodation sub sector, food service sector, travel and tour agencies, financial institutions, airline and the public sector such as the Ministry of Tourism and Ghana Tourism Authority.

Results from the IDI narrowed down three reasons which account for the unstructured method of placement by the Department. Firstly, faculty members from the Department attested to the fact that the internship programme is in its youthful stage. The large numbers of the final year students do not allow for easy placements of students. Secondly, faculty members were of the view that the Department is currently cultivating a relationship with industry and building a database of organisations which are willing to take students in subsequent internships. For an organisation to be included in the data base, it must be willing

to train students to develop practical skills, it must be related to hospitality and tourism programme and, most importantly, it must be willing to accept interns. Thirdly, it has been noted that there are students who may not find interest in developing a career in industries related to the Hospitality and Tourism Management. This therefore suggests that some of the students may consider pursuing a career in an industry unrelated to Hospitality and Tourism. One of the faculty members had this to say about the nature of placement:

When we started the first year of the internship programme, we actually went to look for placements for our students but last year we decided that looking at the size of the class, it was practically impossible to get placements for all internship students. So in order to make the playing field level for everybody, we decided to make students look for their own placements.

According to the faculty members, students are not left out in the development of a database of establishments for placement. Students who can make contact with organisations that are willing to accept interns are made to bring their contacts on board in order to build the database. Students are informed during the first semester of their third year to begin the search for organisations where they would prefer to do the internship. Students then submit names of their organisations to the Department. The Department then provides letters of introduction to students to be given to the companies. After the letters have been submitted to the companies which are willing to take on interns, students can begin the internship.

Information from the IDI with faculty members showed that the DHTM is very much concerned about the type of organisations in which students do their internship. It is the responsibility of faculty members, therefore, to advise students to find organisations preferably related to Hospitality and Tourism. The internship coordinator addresses a letter to an organisation specifying that the student is from the DHTM looking forward to intern with the named organisation. They then request further that training should be provided in specific areas such as front office, housekeeping and other departments depending on the establishment concerned. A positive response from the managers would imply that the student can begin work in that establishment as an intern.

Managers of establishments also have a responsibility to play in the placement process of interns. In line with the assertion by Singh and Dutta (2010), managers who are willing to accept interns provide the first step to a successful internship programme. Some managers, on the other hand, may not accept interns into their establishments based on various reasons which will be presented in the course of the study. However, managers who accept interns make it possible for the internship programme to progress successfully.

Role of Stakeholders in Determining the Duration of Internship

It is very crucial for time to be dedicated to developing employable skills by students as well as for supervisors to provide effective training to the students

(Renganathan, Karim & Li, 2011). The duration of the internship programme is six weeks. This is because the long vacation in which students work is averagely eight weeks. However, the Department decides that the first and last weeks of the vacation should be left for students to rest and prepare their reports respectively. From the data analysed, it was revealed that a little over half of the students in the Hospitality and Tourism Management programme (52.2%) spent six weeks at work while 25 per cent spent eight weeks. Thus, a quarter of the students are noted to have spent time working extra weeks than was required. Students working beyond the six weeks of the internship suggest that some of the students are self-motivated and are willing to do more work if permitted. These results mirror findings by Akomaning et al. (2011). Their study showed that about 28 per cent of polytechnic interns also worked eight weeks instead of six. It is the role of individual stakeholders to comply with the duration set by the internship coordinator for the internship programme. This is adhered to in order to achieve an effective organisation of the programme. Figure 3 represents the durations which students on the internship programme worked:

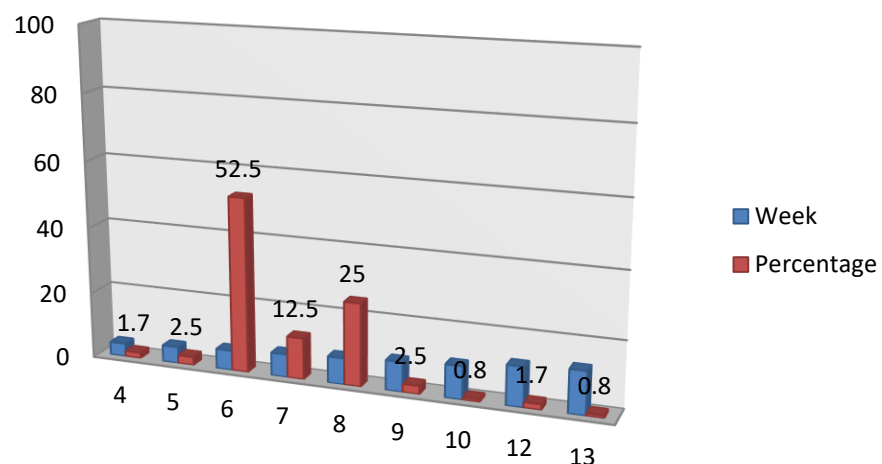


Figure 3: Duration of Internship

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Role of Stakeholders in the Assessment of Interns

Internship plays a fundamental role in preparing students for their future careers (Hurst & Good, 2010). Therefore, it is imperative that both academia and industry evaluate students after the internship programme.

Some students indicated that they were assessed orally by their employers and faculty members while others were observed by their employers as well as faculty members. In addition to these, students also write their own reports about the internship programme, which are also used to assess them.

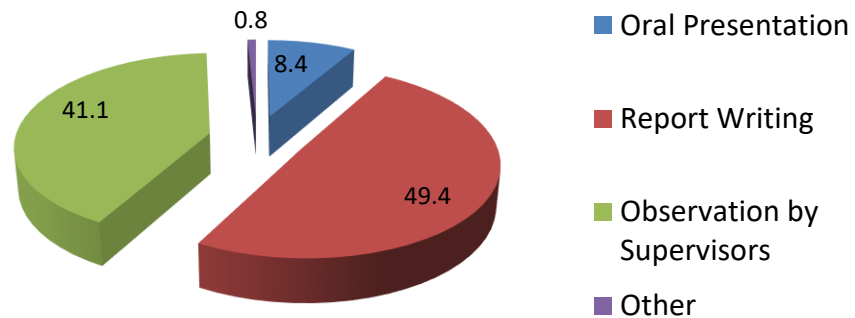


Figure 4: Forms of Assessment

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

During the period of internship, students are assessed by their supervisors in the industry, supervisors from the University and through each student's own written report. Student's internship report is a formal report written in the narrative form which demonstrates that the student understands the whole concept of internship, presents the student's experiences and demonstrate the extent to which student met the objectives of the internship programme. The Department's evaluation is similar to practices by educational institutions elsewhere, as could be seen in Clark (2003) and Walo's (2001) study. According to faculty members, assessment of internship begins with a day's field trip where students write reports in groups. This takes 20 per cent of the continuous assessment. The students' internship reports also comprise 20 per cent of the continuous assessment. The remaining 60 per cent goes into the evaluation forms which are completed by supervisors or managers of the interns.

During the main internship programme, there is an unannounced visit to organisations where interns are placed. According to faculty members, the purpose of the unannounced visit is to interact with managers/ supervisors and find out if students are at post, whether the relationship between students, co-workers and management is cordial and whether there are any problems that need to be resolved. It is at this level that the supervisors from the University undertake their assessment of the students.

Their evaluation forms have to be completed with information on the performance of each intern provided by the intern's supervisor(s) at the place of work. According to faculty members, the evaluation forms filled by managers

request them to provide information on students' interpersonal relations, punctuality and perception of the internship programme. In order to ensure that reports from the managers are a true reflection of the students, the students are, also, supposed to sign against these reports. In total, these reports are treated as the examination score.

The student's role in facilitating the assessment of his performance by faculty members and supervisors at the work place involves record in a log book on daily basis the tasks assigned to him/her, how the task was implemented and what was learnt from that task. The log book is then endorsed by the supervisors in the organisation to confirm that the student accomplished the tasks assigned. As part of the evaluation, students are also tasked to write a field report of their experience and perceptions about the internship they embarked on.

Existing Training Collaboration among Stakeholders Regarding Internship

The IDI with faculty members suggests that there is some form of collaboration among stakeholders regarding the placement method, duration and assessment of students during internship. With regard to placement, most of the faculty members confirmed that most managers are willing to take on students from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management for practical training. A few of them however stated that:

Some managers are appreciative of what is being done and some are not. Each individual business or organisation and their dynamics and most has to do with the individuals who are there, some of them appreciate what is

being done, some are welcoming and give you information, tips and ideas and others also toss the lecturers around and have the view that the internship programme is a waste of time. But most of them do not accept interns in their establishment because of the small nature of their establishments.

The Department and industry work hand in hand in order to place students. Even though students are allowed to find their own placement, an acceptance from organisations to let the students work in their establishment is necessary. Students collaborate with both lecturers and industry in the job search for an organisation to work with. Even though some students may have difficulty in searching for an organisation, they develop the skill of job search prior to their graduation. Once students find an organisation to work with, they go to the Administration section of the DHTM, UCC for introductory letters to the industry. Once the letter is approved through a positive feedback from managers, the student can begin work.

For member of the industry, accepting interns gives them the opportunity to extend their support in terms of corporate social responsibility. Most managers offer places in their organisations to tertiary students to be employed as a way of helping out with the internship programme and internship offers tertiary students the opportunity to work with professionals in their field in order to experience the industry at first hand. Majority of organisations studied by Ferkins (2002) ‘emphasised the “feel-good” factor in being able to “give something back”’.

In terms of duration, academia decides the minimum length of time that the students must work. This is part of the internship programme. Even though the

faculty members confirmed that there are considerations of an extension of duration, the duration currently remains 6 weeks. Industry and students therefore collaborate with academia by complying with the terms of the programme regarding duration. One faculty member who had an indifferent opinion about the duration had this to say:

The duration is fine, its six weeks but we want to take it further, I mean you can never have enough training but for now, I think the six weeks is ok.

In terms of assessment, collaboration exists among all three stakeholders in each level of evaluation. Interviews with faculty members and managers showed that Academia-Industry feedback is existent in the evaluation process. The Department and industry once again collaborate to train the students by making sure that reports given by all stakeholders reflect work done by students. Students also collaborate with industry by complying with the tasks assigned to them in fulfillment of the objectives of the internship curriculum. However, some of the comments made by faculty members regarding assessment suggested that issues of students forging reports and support of friends and relatives compromises the evaluation. One of the faculty members had this to say about the assessment:

I can't tell how true or otherwise the assessment by the supervisors on the job is. We are hoping that the supervisors who do one third of the job do it well. Because some of the students look for their own placements, there is no guarantee that the places they look for do not belong to friends and relative because we've been to places where we find that the students have not reported. So until we go on the unannounced visits we don't know what

is happening but when they hear we are doing the rounds those who don't go will even report and if someone is being shielded by friends and relatives, he or she makes an appearance and is covered. So for that aspect is based on faith and trust, nothing much can be done about it.

Even though the collaboration that exists between academia and industry may be weak, managers provide information on job performance of students whereas faculty members base their evaluation of students on the feedback given by managers.

In effect, all three stakeholders collaborate to train the students in developing valuable skills and bridging the gap between theory and practice. Figure 5 is a Venn diagram which specifies the different roles of stakeholders and the training collaborations that exist among them. Each circle represents stakeholders' roles during internship. The interceptions where the circles meet represent the nature of the collaboration which exists among them.

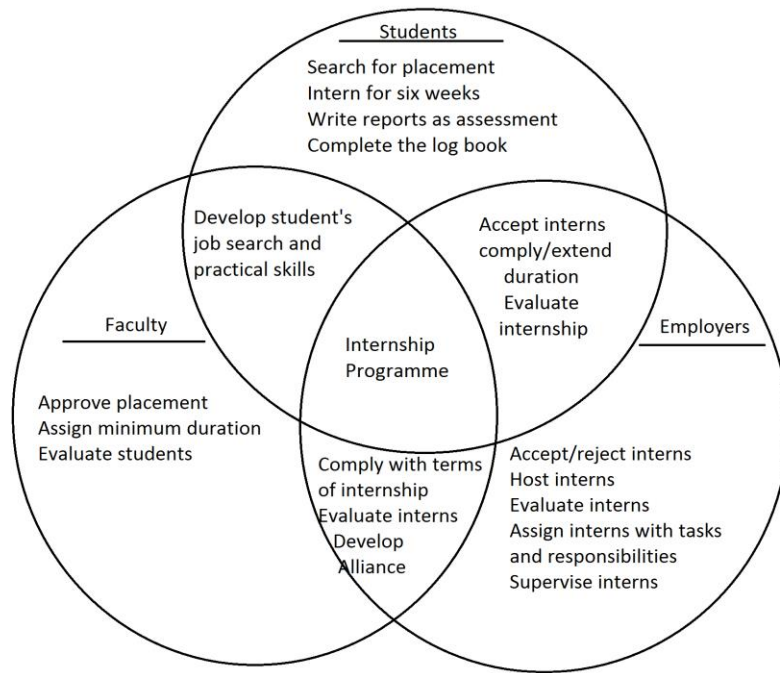


Figure 5: Stakeholders' Roles in the Internship Programme Outlining the Existing Nature of Training Collaboration at each Interception

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Perceived Effectiveness of the Current Internship Programme

Students' Perceptions about the Effectiveness of Internship

On the whole, the overwhelming majority of the students surveyed (92%) were of the view that the current internship is effective. This is diagrammatically represented in Figure 6 below:

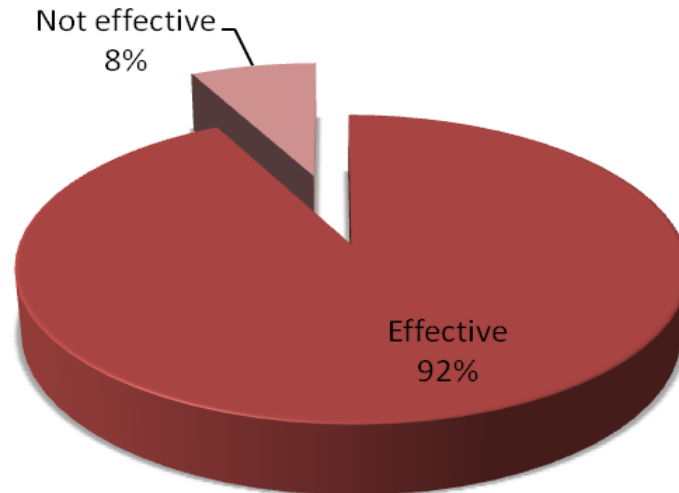


Figure 6: Perceived Effectiveness of Internship

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Mean scores based on a five point Likert scale on students' perceptions of learning experience, staff at the organisations and host organisation were used to determine whether the students have a positive or negative perception regarding the internship programme. Mean score above the neutral level of three indicates a favourable response from the students.

Students' Perceptions of Their Learning Experience, Host Company and Staff

Most students acknowledged that the internship was a valuable learning experience which helped them to aspire for further education and career in the industry (70%), to execute problem solving activities (69.8%) and to practice team work with their colleagues (68.1%). These skills are definitely important because

executing problem solving activities will enhance students' employability (Mason et al., 2006). At a mean of 3.43, 55.9 per cent of the students said that they gained writing skills.

Again, these findings are in line with studies by Cook et al. (2004) who found that over 70 per cent of students felt that their internship experience generally helped improve their confidence in finding a job after graduation and, also, aspire for future career in the industry. This addresses the need of current employers, who not only demand students who are intelligent academically, but also, students who have developed the required core competencies at work place (Johnson, 2000). It is, therefore, worth noting that about 64 per cent of students acknowledged that they developed oral and presentation skills.

However, it can be observed that students' perception of the opportunity to apply the things learnt in class at the work place had one of the least scores in spite of the crucial importance of the need for a link between theory and practice. Although some studies have brought out assumptions that industrial internship encourages the integration of theory and practice, this relationship is extremely complex and students may perceive it differently (Lam & Ching, 2007; Renganathan, Karim & Li, 2011). Moreover, students adapt various generic skills in learning and therefore may have differing views regarding the application of theories in the work environment.

Table 3: Students' Learning Experiences from Internship

<i>Students' learning experience</i>	<i>% of students</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Deviation</i>
Aspire for future education and career in the industry	70.1	3.86	1.04
Execute problem solving activities	69.8	3.79	0.98
Practice team work with my colleagues	68.1	3.71	1.24
Develop oral and presentation skills	64.4	3.66	1.10
Apply theoretical work with practices in the industry	60.2	3.58	1.16
Gain writing skills	55.9	3.43	1.17

Source: Field work, 2014

Students' Perceptions of Host Organisation's Staff

Most students found staff to be very helpful (58.2%) and readily available (53%). This implies that staff lived up to what was expected of them; they mentored and supervised the interns not only to help them learn, but also to avoid the costs that would have been incurred by the mistakes of interns. On the contrary, the majority of students (60%) were of the view that the staff did not maintain a good rapport with interns. Again, it implies that students did not receive much support from staff. From an open ended question posed in the students' questionnaire, one student commented:

Staff members from the host company were afraid that if they taught us, we will become better at our jobs than them and they will lose their jobs to us because we have a higher education.

Table 4: Students' Perceptions of Host Organisation's Staff

<i>Students perception of staff</i>	<i>% of students</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Deviation</i>
Staff were helpful	58.2	3.49	1.37
Staff were always available	53.0	3.34	1.27
Staff were able to maintain a good rapport with interns	39.5	2.67	1.45
Staff attended to arising issues promptly	39.4	3.21	1.21

Source: Field work, 2014

Students' Perceptions of Host Organisation

This study also examined students perceptions regarding the support received from their host organisation. Many host organisations provide support to students as a form of social responsibility, knowing the potential benefits that students will receive from the experience. Students confirmed that their host companies were supportive of the internship (mean score of 3.6). They further recognised that they gained training from host organisations whose activities were related to their course (71.5%), that host companies provided a real job experience (67.2%) and, finally, host companies provided maximum opportunity for training (62.2%).

In contrast to these finding, studies by Renganathan et al. (2011) shows that, some organisations do not have a well structured training programme. In their study, they noted that a well-structured internship programme will lead to students being employed within 6 months upon graduation, helping them secure 'graduate level' jobs (Mason et al., 2006). The implication is that many of the host

organisations that make available their facilities for the internship programme may not have a well structured training programme for the students. In addition, most of the host companies rely on their own staff members to supervise the students during the internship programme.

Table 5: Students’ Perceptions of Host Company

<i>Students’ perceptions of host company</i>	<i>% of students</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Sd</i>
HC training provided was related to my course	71.5	3.75	1.30
HC was supportive of the internship programme	70.6	3.89	1.15
HC provided real job experience	67.2	3.75	1.14
HC provided maximum opportunities for training	62.2	3.63	1.19
HC has a well structured training programme	45.3	3.30	1.18

Source: Field work, 2014

On average the students rated their learning experience positively, with a mean score of 3.67. Students’ perceptions about staff received a mean score of 3.18, implying that staff interaction with the students was fairly positive. These findings imply that the students perceive the internship programme favorably.

Students’ Impressions about Internship

One of the major objectives of an internship programme is to help students acquire practical skills and develop a better understanding of class work in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Coco, 2000). From Table 8, most students considered internship as a valuable learning experience (39.2%) which

served as a means to develop competent skills (34.1%) and to enhance job security (21.1%). Studies by Jauharl (2006) showed similar finding where majority of the students considered the internship as a valuable learning experience.

Table 6: Students' Impressions about Internship

<i>I consider the internship experience as....</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
A valuable learning experience	91	39.2
A means to develop competent skills	79	34.1
A means to secure employment	49	21.1
An avenue to increase my grades	10	4.3
Other	3	1.3
Total	232	100

Source: Field work, 2014

A similar study by Lam, Zhang and Baum (2001) could not emphasise this enough. In their study, they stressed that the key to successful internship is a well developed personal skill and qualities that make an individual more employable. However, students least considered internship as an avenue to increase their grades (4.3%).

In today's electronic age, with strong emphasis on ICT skills development in hospitality firms (Ayeh, 2007), it is interesting to see that students rated technological skills to be the least developed skills during internship. It can be observed from Table 7 that students perceived to have developed their practical

skills (32.4%), communication skills (22%) and managerial skills (21.7%). In line with Felisitas et al. (2011) position that students are to develop critical thinking, be analytical and be able to use innovative ways of thinking to solve problems and adapt easily to changes, 15 per cent of students recognised that they had developed innovative skills from the internship programme.

Table 7: Perceived Skills Developed by Students during Internship

<i>Perceived skills</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Practical	100	32.4
Communication	68	22.0
Managerial	67	21.7
Innovative	47	15.2
Technological	27	8.7
Other	1	0.3
Total	310	100

Source: Field work, 2014

This confirms several studies which have been conducted on the importance of skills acquisition by interns. An Australian survey found that a high proportion of graduates (82.5%) recognised the opportunities offered for skills development during internship (Crebert et al., 2004).

Perceptions of Effectiveness of the Current Placement Method

Over half of the students (51%) were of the view that finding their own placements is not effective. Reasons cited include difficulties in getting into an organisation (64.7%) and cost of transportation (14.7%). Students also faced challenges in finding an organisation because of the weak collaboration between the Department and the Industry (14.7%).

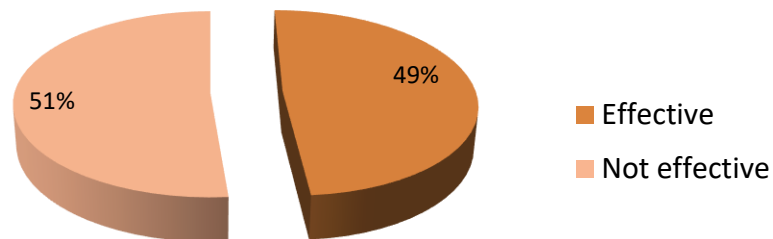


Figure 7: Perception of Placement

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

One of the respondents, even though perceived the placement to be ineffective, said that there was no trouble in finding an organisation. Some of the students (5.9%) were worried that assessment of the internship will not be on fair grounds since some students found places where they had relatives and friends as employers/supervisors who would assess them favourably.

Table 8: Reasons for Ineffectiveness of Placement

<i>Reasons for ineffectiveness of placement</i>	<i>Not effective</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Difficulty in getting into an organisation	44	64.7
Department did not handle the placement as expected	10	14.7
High cost of transportation	10	14.7
Support of friends and relatives	4	5.9
Total	68	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Divine et al. (2011) assert that an unstructured internship programme has been considered perhaps to be a more fair approach for students since it gives them the opportunity to compete for all available internship opportunities. This study showed that fewer students agree with Divine et al. (2011) on this.

The remaining 49 per cent who considered the current placement method as effective cited a number of reasons. These include no difficulty in finding an organisation (46.8 %) and the fact that it allowed students to find organisations in convenient locations (23.4 %).

Some stated that the internship placement helped them to gain the experience for searching for a job after school (17%).

Table 9: Reasons for Effectiveness of Placement

<i>Reasons for effectiveness of placement</i>	<i>Effective</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
No difficulty in finding an organisation	22	46.8

Allowed students to find organisations in convenient locations	11	23.4
Gained the experience of searching for a job after school	8	17.0
Support from friends and relatives	6	12.7
Total	47	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

This assertion is in line with studies done by Buckley and Amoud (2010). They confirm that internship impacts on students' personal development and growth. They explain that students often develop more self confidence and self-awareness as a result of their experience in searching for a job which can then bring about a renewed sense of confidence, maturity and responsibility. Notwithstanding the difficulties in getting into an organisation, a little more than half of the students still found the placement to be effective.

Faculty members, on the other hand, were generally of the view that the current placement method was effective. They claimed that students' job search is a learning process for them prior to graduation. Also, faculty members confirmed that based on the positive feedback from employers through evaluation, the placement process is considered effective. The few faculty members who considered the internship placement to be ineffective were of the view that the hospitality and tourism industry is dominated by small scale, individually owned operations which are usually non-institutionalized. They further argued that

students who work in these individually owned businesses are not exposed to quality industry work and this may not be appropriate for their learning experience.

The majority of employers, on the other hand, considered the placement method ineffective because they perceive that even though they have the “feel good” experience of accepting interns into their organisations, they prefer to collaborate more with academia by discussing vacancies before students seek placement in their organisations. Employers expressed their desire to participate more fully by helping to design the internship curriculum. Employers’ views on the placement method concur with studies by Divine et al. (2011). In their study, they observed that students finding their own placement may alienate employers, many of whom request that schools handpick a small group of quality students for them to interview. Other employers indicated the fact that even though they view the current placement method as ineffective, they are not perturbed. This is because it still allows them to hire free labour that will work for them as the same allows the students to make their grades.

A little less than half of the students perceive the internship to be ineffective and most of the managers also thought that the placement method was ineffective because they wanted to be more involved in the placement process. However, all faculty members unanimously perceived the placement process to be effective. Therefore stakeholders’ perceptions about effectiveness of placement differ. All three stakeholders agreed that students’ job search is a valuable learning experience. Students also agreed with lecturers on the fact that the unstructured method of placement minimizes the problem of location and transportation.

Whereas some students were in agreement with managers of establishments, the majority sided with faculty members on the effectiveness of the current placement method.

Clearly, the above views and concerns of the three stakeholders about the placement method of internship are not consistent. In addressing these differences, Rothman (2007) suggests that the educational institution should intensify orientations and seminars concerning internship. Again, it has become mandatory for the Department to strengthen the collaboration with the industry to foster understanding and cooperation for the programme.

Perceived Effectiveness of the Internship Duration

It can be noticed from Figure 8 that 89 of the students (74.8%) thought that there was the need for an extension of the duration whereas 25 per cent perceived otherwise. In a similar study by Mihail (2006), most interns preferred to have the internship period extended. This indicates that interns are willing to have a longer period of internship in order to increase their working experience. As a solution to this challenge, Republic Polytechnic (2008) suggests that the duration of an academic internship can be restructured by creating longer vacations for internship time or by adopting practices in other countries where internship is available a whole semester or even all year round.

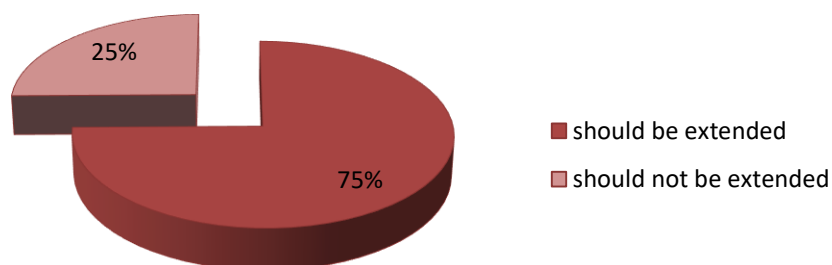


Figure 8: Extension of duration

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Of the students who thought that the duration should not be extended, about 43 per cent said that an extension will lead to further challenges. According to the students, an extension implies that more money has to go into transportation, food and other expenses which will make the programme financially costly for the students. Others also requested for rest after the six weeks internship programme to recover their strength before the next academic year begins (25%).

Table 10: Reasons for Maintaining the Current Duration

Reasons for maintaining the duration	Frequency	Percentage
Duration extension could lead to further challenges	12	42.9

The duration is just enough	9	32.1
Students should be allowed to rest after the internship	7	25
Total	28	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Most students recognise that an extension of the duration is critical for interns' learning experience as affirmed by Hurst and Good (2009). Reasons cited were that an extension will help students go through most of the organisation's departments (44.4%) which will provide enough time to develop practical skills (53%). This will further help to execute an effective implementation of the programme, thereby reducing stakeholders' challenges if the duration is extended.

Table 11: Reasons for Extension of Duration

<i>Extension of duration</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
It will help interns go through most of the departments	36	44.4
Internship should be extended to a whole semester to help develop skills	43	53
Internship should start from level 100 so that duration need not be extended	2	2.4
Total	81	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Views from faculty members were mainly one sided. Most of the faculty members confirmed the inadequacy of time for students to acquire and develop practical skills on the job. They, however, argued that this depends on the individual; some students are fast in adapting to their work environment whereas others are slow learners. An individual's level of interest and involvement can determine the effectiveness of the time spent on the job. One lecturer notes:

Experience that we gathered from elsewhere, with other programmes, we think a whole semester will be adequate for any student to get the practical skills that he or she requires.

Managers were also of the view that, the duration spent in the industry is very important. Therefore, an extension of the duration will allow room for a uniform means of acquiring and developing skills. On the other hand, managers perceive that the duration is effective and does not require extension. Further investigations showed that these organisations are small, individually owned and they only partake in less challenging tasks. For those organisations, the managers confirmed that it was very easy for the student to pick up the practice and acquire customer service skills. It was stated that the student spends the first half of the internship period of learning the culture of the work and eventually becomes conversant with it.

According to some employers, however, the internship programme might not be effective if the duration was shorter. They believe that, six weeks on the job

is not enough to acquire the required practical experience. Therefore, generally, managers involved in the study perceive the duration was not effective. Both faculty members and managers were however concerned about students' attitude to learn and the rate at which they develop their practical skills.

Perception of Effectiveness of the Current Approach for Assessment

Figure 9 shows that 90 of the students comprising about 76 per cent consider the existing method of assessment to be effective whereas 24 per cent of the students regarded the assessment as ineffective.

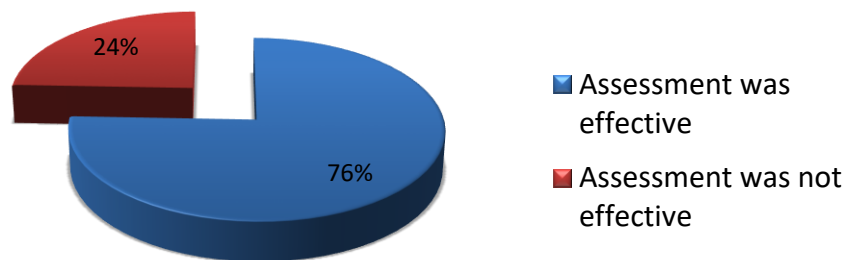


Figure 9: Perception of Effectiveness of Assessment

Source: Field work, 2014

Table 12 lists the reasons given by the students who considered the assessment as effective. Notable reasons included the fact that evaluation from both lecturers and students are considered (31%), the report writing component of

the assessment is a good way to determine if students understand the internship (24%), assessment instills seriousness in students (31%) and motivates them to work diligently and finally the assessment gave students the opportunity to write down things learnt for future reference (13.5%).

Table 12: Reasons for Effectiveness of Assessment

<i>Reasons for effectiveness of assessment</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
The assessment considers evaluations from both lecturers and managers	23	31
Evaluation instill seriousness in students	23	31
Report writing component is a good way to determine if students understand the internship	18	24
Gave students the opportunity to write down what they learnt for future reference	10	13.5
Total	74	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Although the majority of students believe that the assessment was effective, others were not in favour of this assertion. Those who believed the assessment is not effective reasoned that students can forge reports (40.8%), assessment led to

further challenges (22.2%) and supervisors seldom came round for supervision (37%). Genuinely, the comprehensive system of the Department's assessment is not intended to leave loopholes for students to find ways of dodging the system. However, as may be one of the disadvantages of the unstructured method of placement, family and friends' support in addition to the small individually owned nature of hospitality and tourism companies, students can find placement with friends and relatives who may provide some form of support for the students who do not participate in the internship programme and yet provide a written report to be graded, thus their perception of ineffectiveness of assessment.

Table 13: Reasons for Ineffectiveness of Assessment

<i>Reasons for ineffectiveness of assessment</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Students can forge reports	11	40.8
Supervisors seldom came round	10	37
Led to further challenges	6	22.2
Total	27	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Some faculty members were indifferent about their perception of the effectiveness of the assessment process. They believed that, students finding their own placement may not be effective for the report writing. Faculty members believe that some students will find ways of securing placement with establishments owned by friends and relatives. This goes a long way to mar the assessment and hinder a

true reflection of the work performance of the student. Some, also, argued that until the unannounced visit begins, there are no checks or evidence of students being at post. They can make an appearance once the news spread of an unannounced visit and this can be done with the help of technology.

On the contrary, some faculty members said that there are questions raised when the reports from the industry are too perfect and this is checked to make sure that the reports are valid. Therefore, the method of assessment is effective.

Some of the managers were in agreement with this assertion as well. By completing the evaluation forms which the students bring to the supervisors at the host company, in addition to the constant monitoring and observation while the interns work, industry believes that this method of assessment is very effective. Most of the supervisors at the work place assess the students by monitoring and observing how the interns go about their work, how they deal with customers and how they interact with management and other colleagues. However, industry views the method of assessment as not complete without a post evaluation of the reports that the students bring to make sure that what the students write is what they actually showed while at work and also if there is any evidence of skills acquired.

These perceptions are closely related to other responses. Stakeholders' views did not differ in terms of assessment. However, some students were concerned that the assessment is not effective because evaluation may not be on fair grounds since some students get support from friends and relatives.

In conclusion, stakeholders are of the view that the method of assessment is generally effective but with stronger collaboration, the internship programme will become better than it is.

Challenges Confronting Stakeholders in the Organisation of Internship

Often, stakeholders do not realise the full benefits of internship due to certain challenges. The internship programme of the DHTM has its own challenges.

Challenges Confronting Students

It is noticeable from Table 14 that most students encountered unfriendly relationship with the staff of the host company (18.9%). According to Singh and Dutta (2010), it is clearly important that supervisors and staff support the students in their training. The second most common challenge students faced was the limited duration of the internship (17.8%). Other challenges include weak collaboration between school and industry (16.6%) and lack of proper orientation (16.6%) of the students. Also, not providing students with allowance (16.2%) and transportation (11.6%) According to Akomaning et al. (2011), these challenges are descriptive of an unstructured internship.

Table 14: Challenges Facing Students (N= 121)

<i>Causes of the challenges</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Unfriendly relationship between staff and interns	49	18.9
Limited time for internship	46	17.8

Weak collaboration between school and industry	43	16.6
No proper orientation	43	16.6
No allowance given to interns	42	16.2
Failure to provide transportation	30	11.6
Other	6	2.3
Total	259	100

Total is more than N due to multiple responses

Source: Field work, 2014.

Challenges Confronting Faculty Members

As may be recalled from the previous discussions on students' placement, faculty members were concerned about the method of placement because the unstructured method comes with its own disadvantages (Divine et al., 2007). With students finding their own organisations, faculty members were faced with the challenge of locating the students across the country. Other challenges that confronted lecturers include the issue of monitoring and assessing the interns. The practice of "unannounced visit" to the organisations where the interns work is being compromised with the advent of technology. This is because the use of mobile phones and easy access to internet, allows for easy communication and transfer of information, allowing interns to inform their colleagues in other establishments about the unannounced supervision. The reliability and credibility of the assessment and evaluation then becomes questionable. Lastly, faculty members mentioned that with more support from industry, the problem of training, placement and evaluation of the students can be reduced.

Challenges Confronting Employers

Employers also faced certain challenges which could be a cause of concern for the internship programme. Employers lament that mistakes caused by new interns especially in the service industry increases the cost of recovering these service failures and poses a great challenge to the establishment. Employers argued that interns cannot be allowed to work without supervision because students place a burden on managers and supervisors to spend extra time in training the students. They further explained that interns find it difficult to transition from class work to the work environment because they believe that there is little practical aspect of hospitality and tourism taught in the classroom. It therefore becomes a cause for concern when students cannot easily put into practice what they are being taught in class.

Supervisors stated that students go into the job market and what they learn in class is not what happens in practice. It is on this note that managers call on academia to strengthen the collaboration between them so that these challenges could be minimized.

Stakeholders Views on How to Improve the Current Internship Programme

Stakeholders gave suggestions on how the internship programme can be improved. The purpose of these suggestions was to determine how prepared stakeholders were regarding subsequent internship. This objective outlines various suggestions from stakeholders.

Views by Academia on How to Improve the Internship Programme

Active Involvement in Placement Selection

The educational institution plays a major role in the internship programme. Faculty members were in agreement that the placement process needs to be improved. Faculty members noted that industry should create vacancies for academic internship. Also, there must be a system among industry, academia and government policies (Akyeampong, 2007) which can be used to identify places of vacancies in businesses for the students' benefits. In relation to this, a study by Amoah and Baum (1997), observed that the gap between education and industry can be closed through formulation of strategies to bridge the gap between education and industry.

Extension of Duration

It is important to note that the extension of duration in itself is not the solution to students being equipped with knowledge and skills but the importance of what goes on during the internship (Pertuzé et al., 2010). It is very important for time to be dedicated to training students and faculty members saw the need for an extension of duration for the internship. This will be possible if the HEI restructures the academic semester and adopts flexible internship times as practiced elsewhere such as the Faculty of Education (University of Pittsburgh, 2009). The extension of duration will give the students adequate time to develop employable skills.

Overcoming the Weakness in the System

Faculty members observed that most students do not understand the nature of work in the hospitality and tourism industries. They therefore suggested that right from first year, students should be made aware of what is expected of them in their decision to take up a career in these industries. Beginning from the lower levels, students should be informed that the internship programme is not for them to be supervisors but for them to learn from the supervisors. A seminar or an orientation can be organised for the students before the internship programme begins so that the students will know what is expected of them before they undertake the programme.

Closer Collaboration

Industry needs to be engaged more in the internship programme and students need to be prepared before embarking on an internship. Faculty members suggested that since research is important in building a knowledge-based practice all over the world, knowledge is only generated through research. Respondents believe that it should be possible for industry to regularly ask academia to undertake research for them so that feedback will be generated for industries. Some lecturers believe that undertaking a research for industry is a mutually beneficial relationship. The knowledge gained from this research can be shared for an obvious win-win situation.

Views by Industry on How to Improve the Internship

Improvement in Placement Selection

Managers also argued that they seek to be actively involved in the placement process. They suggested that their establishment should be given prior notice and be informed that students from the institution will be presenting letters seeking to work with them during the long vacation. This should be done prior to the commencement of the internship programme. This means that industry should be made aware that their organisations will be involved in this academic exercise so that they can be prepared.

Closer Collaboration

The importance of collaboration has far-reaching effects. The impact of collaboration can generate new knowledge which can contribute to an industry's improved performance (Pertuzé et al., 2010) during internship. Managers were of the view that increased collaboration with academia will lead to an effective internship programme. Internship can promote learning alliances between industry and academia which can facilitate flexibility innovation. The greater ability to identify and bring in external ideas and technologies enhances an industry's flexibility to respond to changing customer needs.

Post Evaluation

Managers were of the view that post evaluation should be conducted for the final year students who have recently been on the internship programme. This evaluation must entail an oral presentation for the students to give them the

opportunity to discuss their internship experiences. Managers suggested that lecturers should not only rely on the written report and on-site supervision. An oral presentation is intended to help bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Views by Students on How to Improve the Internship

About 28 per cent of the students suggested that lecturers should be involved in the placement process to make sure that students find places related to hospitality and tourism. More than half of the students (52.3%) suggested that the internship duration should be extended to a semester long programme. About 12 per cent of the students agreed with lecturers and managers that in order for the internship to be more effective, the collaboration between the Department and the industry should be stronger.

Table 15: Students’ Suggestions to Improve the Internship

<i>Suggestions to improve the internship</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Extension of duration to a semester long programme	57	52.3
Active support by Department	31	28.4
Department should build a stronger relationship with industry	13	11.9
Better planning and organisation by the DHTM	8	7.3
Total	109	100

Source: Field work, 2014

Chapter Summary

This study aimed at investigating stakeholders' perception of HTM internship, identifying the challenges encountered during internship programme and bringing out some suggestions to improve the current internship programme to find out how prepared stakeholders are towards subsequent internships.

Training collaboration exists among the DHTM, industry and students in terms of placement, assessment and duration. All stakeholders, also, participate in the placement and evaluation process. Students were assessed based on a report written by them and evaluation from the supervisors about their experience in industry. Some students were also assessed based on an oral presentation at their host company.

Students generally had a positive perception about their learning experience. Staff interaction with the students received a negative rating. However, students' perception about their host company was rated positively. Generally, stakeholders' perceptions about duration and assessment did not differ. However there were differing views from the stakeholders concerning the issue of placement. Some stakeholders perceived that duration needs to be extended because there is not enough time for the students to go through all the departments in the establishment in order for effective training to take place. In effect, the collaboration needs to be strengthened to make the internship programme effective.

Some of the major challenges faced by stakeholders include location and transportation for lecturers going on supervision, managers' operational difficulties and students' difficulties in getting placement due to inadequate support from lecturers. Students' major problem with the internship was the unfriendly relationship between the interns and the staff, as well as staff unwillingness to train interns.

Stakeholders did not differ in their suggestions for improvement of subsequent internship except in the area of post evaluation. This was considered by managers to be another valuable method of evaluation for the students. It is, however, refreshing to discover that stakeholders' suggestions for improvement inspire confidence in future organisation and implementation of internship. It becomes important for stakeholders, therefore, to collaborate effectively in ensuring that internship programmes are perceived positively.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The final chapter of this study summarises the perceptions of stakeholders about the HTM internship programme. It outlines the main findings of the study, draws out conclusions from the findings and makes recommendations for the improvement of HTM internship.

Summary

The main objective of this study was to investigate stakeholders' perceptions about the current HTM internship programme. This study also sought to determine the nature of the training collaboration between the University and the Industry, assessed stakeholders' perceptions about the effectiveness of the internship programme, examined the challenges that are encountered during the organisation and implementation of the programme and made recommendations for improving the existing internship programme.

The respondents of this study were final year students and faculty members of the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, UCC, and managers of hospitality and tourism establishments. The data collection instruments used for this study included a questionnaire and an interview guide.

All three stakeholders collaborate in training students to develop valuable skills and in bridging the gap between theory and practice (Amoah & Baum, 1997).

The study did not find much difference in stakeholders' perceptions on duration and assessment. Faculty members, students and some managers were in favour of an extension of the existing internship duration. Stakeholders unanimously agreed that the method of assessment is effective but with stronger collaboration, the internship programme will become a better one.

The analysis of the data collected revealed that some form of collaboration exists among stakeholders regarding the placement, duration and assessment of interns. However, this collaboration does not seem to be strong and hence needs to be improved. The managers believed that the placement process will be more effective if faculty members were actively involved in finding and selecting organisations for students and giving the managers prior notice.

Stakeholders also agreed that students develop skills based on their attitude towards learning at the work place, and that the practical experience gained will help increase their employability after graduation. This, perhaps, led to students' positive perceptions about their learning experiences, the host company and the staff of the host company. Some students observed that the staff maintained a good rapport with them while others indicated the contrary. Most of the students also confirmed that the internship is a valuable learning experience.

Faculty members, students, and some managers were of the view that the duration of the internship was inadequate whereas managers of small scale hospitality and tourism organisations were of the opinion that the six weeks

duration should be maintained. All the stakeholders agreed that the existing method of assessment is effective but the unannounced visit is compromised by the students' proclivity to inform their colleagues when the visit begins. Nonetheless, they were generally of the view that the assessment is effective. All the three key stakeholders further considered the current placement method as effective, though a few had contrary perceptions. Stakeholders were also of the view that the existing method of placement can be improved with time.

Challenges encountered by stakeholders in the organisation of effective internships include problems related to monitoring and location of interns, rising costs of recovering service failure caused by interns and the burden on managers with regards to bridging the gap between theory and practice. Stakeholders believed that a stronger collaboration could have minimised these challenges.

Even though the stakeholders recognised some challenges in the organisation of the internship, they were hopeful that the existing internship will improve with time. Views expressed by stakeholders on how to improve the HTM internship programme include the need for management and faculty members' active involvement in the placement of students, extension of duration and closer collaboration among stakeholders. The students also suggested the need for an induction training in the establishments before the internship programme begins so that they will know what is expected of them. The aforementioned are critical for the organisation of an effective internship programme.

Conclusions

Internship in itself is a form of training collaboration between academia and industry (Akomaning et al., 2011). However, from the study results, one can conclude that the existing collaboration among stakeholders is somewhat weak. Previous research has suggested that an effective training collaboration is critical for the successful organisation of internship (Pertuzé et al., 2010).

Secondly, stakeholders' perception about the effectiveness of duration and assessment does not differ. Stakeholders are willing to collaborate with the placement and assessment processes in order to reduce the challenges faced with the internship programme. This is necessary for strengthening the collaboration among stakeholders to effectively train students.

The main challenges faced by stakeholders included location of students by faculty members, cost of recovering service failure by managers and unfriendly relationship between staff and interns. However stakeholders recognise the need for a stronger collaboration especially in the areas of placement selection in order to minimise the inherent challenges.

Finally, the main suggestion for improvement of internship is stronger collaboration. This collaboration may also be seen in the form of research conducted by academia which will inform industry about ways to improve the industry. Faculty members and managers' input in developing the practical aspect of HTM programmes must be looked at with all seriousness.

Recommendations

Considering the results of this study, the following recommendations would go a long way to improve the internship programme and generate positive perceptions and outcomes for the programme. In order to ensure that stakeholders derive mutual benefits from the HTM internship programme, it is critical for the respective parties to collaborate effectively.

It is also important for students to understand the aims and objectives of the internship programme. This implies the need for hospitality and tourism establishments to organise seminars and orientations for students at the work place before the internship programme begins. Faculty members and managers should also be involved in these seminars. Programmes must be put in place to provide opportunities for faculty members to attend industry seminars and vice versa. This type of forum will enable educators and professionals to communicate openly about training needs, new research projects, problem solving and career networking. With this open dialogue, industry professionals can come together with educators to draw up a programme for internship and also to help incorporate the required body of knowledge into curriculum. Again, a stronger collaboration between educational institutions and the Industry in the placement of students will also be helpful in avoiding the challenges encountered by students when looking for placement.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that stakeholders understand the aims and objectives of the internship programme, a manual specifying the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder could help in better organising and managing the process. If stakeholders collaboratively prepare the internship programme

document, it is believed that they may consider the curriculum as their own product and not 'imposed' (Edmondson et al, 2012). This will help minimise the challenges which eventually result in some stakeholders perceiving internship in a negative light (Collins, 2002).

Considering the challenges that the unstructured method of placement poses to internship programmes, it is recommended for educational institutions to consider adopting the structured method of internship placement and, with the help of students and trade associations such as Ghana Hotels Association and Tour Guides Association, gradually build a database of organisations that are willing to accept interns. This will help reduce the burden of students struggling to find their own placements and enable educational institutions to secure placements for the increasing number of HTM students.

Though this study has its practical limitations, it still provides substantial baseline information for subsequent studies whose findings will help strengthen collaboration among stakeholders to ensure a more effective internship programme (Divine et al., 2007). Further research can consider extending the scope of the study to include more educational institutions as well as industry members.

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Module B: Perceptions of the different stakeholders' regarding the effectiveness of existing internships

Placement

6) Indicate how you found an organisation to do the internship

- a) the school placed me [] b) I found my own placement []
c) other, please specify.....

7) In your view, was the method of selecting an organisation for the internship effective?

- a) Yes [] b) No []

Duration

8) What was the nature of your time commitment to the internship programme?

- a) full time [] b) part time []
c) casual [] d) other, please
specify.....

9) How long did you work as an intern?

Please specify.....

10) How long does the department expect you to do your internship?

- a) one month [] b) two months []
c) three months [] d) other, please
specify

11) In your view, was the length of time allocated for the internship effective?

- a)Yes [] b) No []

12) Do you think the duration of the internship programme should be extended?

a) Yes [] b) No []

13) If yes, why?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Assessment

14) Please indicate how the assessment was done

a) oral presentation [] b) report writing []

c) observation by supervisors [] d) other, please

specify.....

15) Do you think the method of assessment was effective?

a) Yes [] b) No []

Module C: Challenges confronting key stakeholders in the organisation of internships

16) Did you face any challenges during the internship programme?

a) Yes [] b) No []

17) What do you think could have been the cause of the challenges?

a) weak linkage between school and industry []

b) disorganisation of the internship []

c) unwillingness of staff to teach []

d) other, please specify

.....

.....

.....

Module D: Nature of training collaboration between the Hospitality and Tourism department and the industry

Please respond to the following statements, with “1 representing “very poor” 2= “poor” 3= “neutral” 4= “good” and 5 for “excellent”

18) Student’s perceptions of their internship experience and skills gained

I am able to

STATEMENT	VP 1	P 2	N 3	G 4	E 5
Practice team work with my colleagues					
Apply theoretical work with practices in the industry					
Develop oral and presentation skills					
Gain writing skills					
Execute problem solving activities					
Aspire for future education and career in the industry					

19) Student's perception of staff during the internship

STATEMENT	VP 1	P 2	N 3	G 4	E 5
Staff were helpful					
Staff were always available when required					
Staff attended to arising issues promptly					
Staff was able to maintain a good rapport with students and their colleagues					

20) Student's perceptions of their host company (HC)

STATEMENT	VP 1	P 2	N 3	G 4	E 5
HC Training provided was related to my course					
HC Provided maximum opportunities for training					
HC Has a well structured training programme					
HC Provided real job experience					
HC Was supportive of the internship programme					

Module E: Stakeholders' views on how the existing internship can be improved?

21) Kindly suggest ways in which the internship process can be improved

.....
.....
.....

22) Generally, how do you feel about the internship programme?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Module F: Socio demographics

23) Sex of respondent

- a) Male b)Female

24) Age of respondent

25) What is your marital status?

- a) Married b) Single
c) Divorced d) Separated

26) Which religion do you belong to?

- a) Christianity b) Islam
c) Traditional
d) Others (please specify)

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide for Managers

General perception of the internship experience

1) Do you accept interns in your company?

Research question 1

What is the nature of training collaboration between the hospitality/tourism educational institutions and the industry?

2) What is the process used in selecting interns?

3) Do you give any form of feedback to the lecturers on the progress of the interns? If yes, how?

4) In your view, how effective is the internship programme in developing employable skills?

5) What kind of skills does the internship help develop?

Research question 2

What are the perceptions of the different stakeholders' regarding the effectiveness of existing internships?

6) In your opinion, is the current hospitality and tourism internship programme effective or not? Why do you say so?

Placement

7) In your view, do you think that the placement process is effective?

8) Do you think it is appropriate that interns work in industries related to their study programme?

Duration

9) What is the average duration that interns work in this company?

10) Do you think that the duration for the internship is effective?

11) What do you perceive will be the minimum length of time for interns to be able to develop skills that will make them employable?

Assessment

12) How did you as a manager of this company assess the interns on their job performance?

13) Do you think that the way you assess the interns are effective?

Collaboration

14) How do you collaborate with the school to make the organisation of the internship programme effective?

15) Do you think the collaboration you have with the school is effective for the internship programme?

16) Are there other areas in terms of collaboration that you would like to be involved in with the school?

Research question 3

What are the challenges confronting key stakeholders in the organisation of internships?

17) What are the challenges you are facing with the organisation of the hospitality and tourism internship programme?

18) What do you think is the cause of these challenges?

19) How can the challenges be resolved?

Research question 4

What are stakeholders' views on how the existing internship can be improved?

20) What are some of the qualities that as a manager, you would expect of your interns?

21) What suggestion do you have for improving the internship programme?

22) Generally, how do you feel about the internship programme?

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide for Faculty Members

General perception of the internship experience

1) In your view, what skills should the Department prioritise in developing during education to make the students more employable?

Research question 1

What is the nature of training collaboration between the hospitality/tourism educational institutions and the industry?

2) How do you perceive the training collaboration between you and the industry?

3) What is the process used in placing students?

4) In your view, how effective is the internship programme in developing employable skills?

5) What kind of skills does the internship help develop?

Research question 2

What are the perceptions of the different stakeholders' regarding the effectiveness of existing internships?

6) In your opinion, is the current hospitality and tourism internship programme effective or not? Why?

Duration

7) What is the average duration that interns are expected to work in the companies they are placed?

8) Do you think that the duration for the internship is effective?

9) What do you perceive will be the minimum length of time for interns to be able to develop skills that will make them employable?

Placement

10) In your view, do you think that the method used in placing the students is effective for the internship programme?

11) Do you think it is appropriate that interns work in industries related to their study programme? If yes, why?

Assessment

12) Are the students assessed?

13) How did you as a coordinator assess the interns on their internship programme?

14) Do you think that the way you assess the interns are effective?

15) Do the employers give you any form of feedback on the job performance of the interns? If yes, how?

Collaboration

16) How do you collaborate with the industry to make the organisation of the internship programme effective?

17) Do you think the collaboration you have with the hospitality and tourism industry is effective for the internship programme?

18) Are there other areas in terms of collaboration that you would like to be involved in with the industry?

Research question 3

What are the challenges confronting key stakeholders in the organisation of internships?

- 19) What are the challenges you are facing with the organisation of the hospitality and tourism internship programme?
- 20) What do you think is the cause of these challenges?
- 21) How can the challenges be resolved?

Research question 4

What are stakeholders' views on how the existing internship can be improved?

- 22) Do you think that the process in organising the internship should be improved?
- 23) What suggestion do you have for improving the internship process?
- 24) Generally, how do you feel about the internship programme?