

Impact of Internship Characteristics on Skills Development: A Study of Undergraduates at Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of internship characteristics on skill development among undergraduates in the Faculty of Management Studies, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. Internships play a vital role in bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical experience, enhancing students' readiness for the professional world. The research specifically examines how internship duration, type, nature, quality, and opportunities for skill application influence the development of undergraduates' technical, cognitive, and interpersonal skills. A quantitative research design was employed, and primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 200 undergraduates who had completed or were currently undergoing internships. The collected data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, employing descriptive statistics, correlation, reliability, and multiple regression analyses. The findings revealed that internship quality and opportunities for skill application have a significant and positive impact on undergraduate skill development, while internship duration and nature showed moderate effects. However, internship type was found to have no statistically significant influence. The study highlights the importance of structured and high-quality internship programmes that provide students with opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in real-world tasks. These results have practical implications for universities, policymakers, and employers in designing effective internship programmes that enhance graduates' employability and career readiness.

Keywords: internship characteristics, internship quality, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, skill application, skill development