INTERNSHIP SATISFACTION

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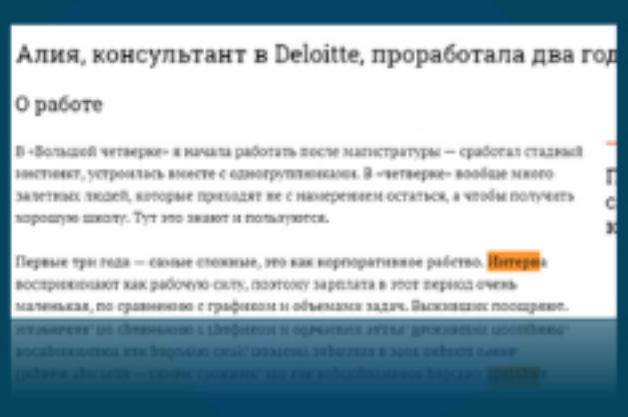
Sociology Capstone Project



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Importance of feedback from interns

- How to advance internship programs?
- What kind of interns a company needs to attract?

Problems with available data

- Biased: Absence of negative views.
- Generalized: Lack of specific examples.
- Short: Lack of detailed explanations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Internship satisfaction directly affecting willingness to work in a company

Significance of ex-interns' feedback

Presence of disengagers, i.e. students refusing to intern due to internship stereotypes (e.g. constantly bringing coffee)

Research methodology

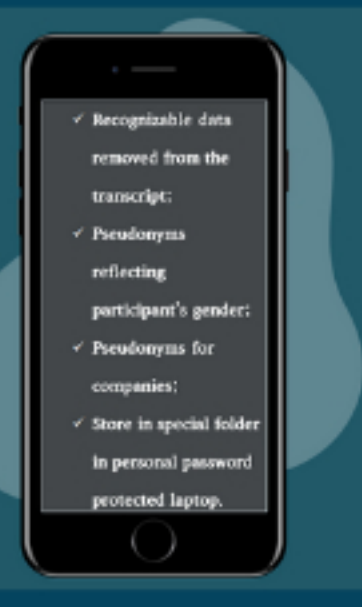
- ✓ In-depth interviews
- ✓ Snowball sampling

Data collection

- ✓ January – February 2020
- ✓ In Kaz, Ru, Eng.
- ✓ Internship experience in Kazakhstan
- ✓ Tape recording

Sample

- ✓ 7 respondents
- ✓ Senior and junior undergraduate NU students
- ✓ 5 SSH, 2 SENG students
- ✓ 2 Economics, 2 math, 2 engineering, 1 sociology students
- ✓ 1 boy, 6 girls



Dealing with data confidentiality

TO WHAT EXTENT INTERNSHIP SATISFACTION LEVEL REFLECTS STUDENT'S FUTURE EMPLOYMENT CHOICE?

	Aida	Balnur	Danel	Gulnaz	Islam	Laura	Mereke
Internship satisfaction	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Willingness to work there	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

Therefore, internship satisfaction directly reflected future employment choice of students. Nevertheless, students' unsatisfaction of internship in one department of the company did not affect willingness to intern or work in another department of the same company.

WHAT ARE THE STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS?

INTERN'S EXPECTATIONS OF RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Influence of GPA

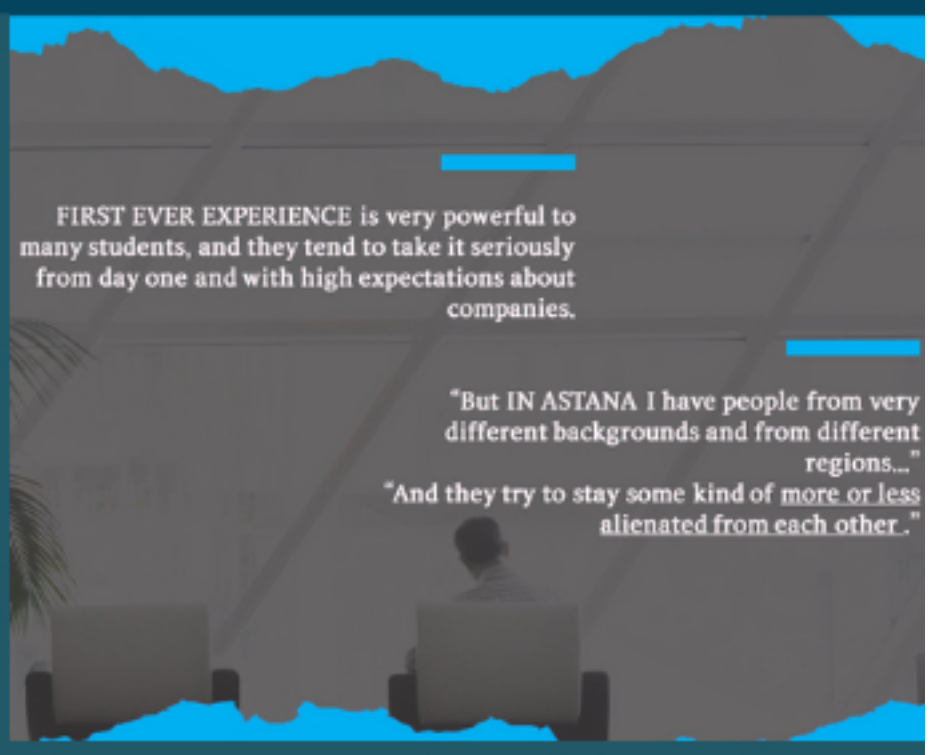
- It is not clear whether companies always or often rely on GPA of future interns. However, it is clear that many students expect that their GPA will influence their enrollment probability, namely in top companies or well-known ones.

Significance of online data

- Searching interview techniques and company information on the Interned prepared Balnur at least psychologically.

NU student identity

- Balnur expected her NU student identity affecting recruitment positively.



Intern's expectations of companies

1. Absence of expectations

Majority of participants revealed that the fact that they knew nothing about a company was not an obstacle, as for them it was important to gai almost any internship experience.

2. Company name sounding

Even sounding of significance in the name of a company influences students' decision to intern here.

3. Presence of strict corporate culture

Balnur and Mereke expected companies to have strict corporate culture and employers themselves being very strict and serious.

4. Rich experience in local market

Aida used her own measurement of experienced and successful company, which should be tolerant in almost any sense and have already developed efficient internship program.

5. International feature of a company

Company's international feature and having many foreign employers is considered to be positive and signifies that the company is good.

6. Misinformation within university

Students may have contradictory expectations of a company due to their reliance on one source of information in university, which can be vague

7. Company data on social media

Balnur noted that she followed Finco's Instagram page, and that's where she learned about the company.

8. Social connection with company employers

Laura's sister had been working in Nest, and Laura mentioned that her older sister was the main source of information about the company

Internship stereotypes

"that there will be some kind of requests and might seem ridiculous like bring you a coffee or buy a present for someone. I was ready for that at the very beginning, because my parents informed me that "This is Kazakhstan and you should be ready for it". (Aida)

"Well, many internships are like that. They are just given paperwork: How to make a presentation, prepare documents, sort out something." (Islam)

"Well, I was warned because of that, yes, governmental institution. That there will be this bureaucracy, and all things." (Danel)

Rich experience of a company in the local market

"I was expecting that everyone would be tolerant, that they're able to work with interns, that since they have so much experience in this market." (Aida)

Intern's personal characteristics

"I always think that: «Well, everyone like this. I will do differently, I will get different results.» " "It just seemed to me that: «So, I will come now, and everything will be cool .»" (Danel)

What affects students' expectations of internship experience?

First day impression

"It seemed as if they did not know what to give me first days ."
"I did not even have own work place, when I came there."
"I.e. in the beginning they thought: «Ok, just an intern, let her sit for a while and something else.» "
"I.e. all of this work, it lined up only if I say that I don't like." (Danel)

In Gulnaz's and Balnur's case mentors honestly told what they will be doing during the internship.

Socialization with previous interns or employers

Mereke revealed her unwillingness to work or intern in MELD, due to her major mates' words: *"they do not that much torture and pay attention, they do not consider us seriously."* She also relied on the experience of one engineer student when she was explaining why she wants to work in another company: *"And I heard that a person, i.e. student, who worked there, had learnt another kind of engineering method or like that. He kind of learnt that, and now he is even writing a research related to that."*

Expectations of office work

"I always thought that it will be hard to sit like that from nine to six pm. So. But, no, indeed I can work in office. I understood that I can work with people." (Danel)

HOW DO THE STUDENTS TEND TO DEFINE INTERNSHIP SATISFACTION?

COLLECTIVE'S COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES MATCH INTERN'S PREFERENCES.

In Aida's case it was problematic, thus, she felt herself quite isolated from the department, and could not share her real views on things at work. She preferred her department to interact in a more friendly way with her.

MENTORSHIP IS CONSIDERED AS A SEPARATE IMPORTANT DUTY BY THE COMPANY.

Mereke had a problem with her advisor, as she often could not meet him when she needed. Gulnaz also mentioned significance of having separate person who will coordinate interns.

MENTOR PAYS CONSTANT ATTENTION TO TASK ASSIGNMENT TO INTERN.

Gulnaz started leaving the work much earlier, because as she said there was nothing to do for her. Also, mentor should provide tasks related to the field that intern is interested in, and tasks that result in acquiring certain skill or knowledge.

INTERN'S WORKING STYLE MATCHES COMPANY'S WORKING STYLE.

Working with not credible sources and need to falsify research outcomes may discourage NU intern to create good piece of work.

INTERN IS ASSIGNED TO A CERTAIN DEPARTMENT FROM THE DAY ONE.

Even though students would be happy to intern in good companies, they may dislike working in these companies generally, if during the internship they could not gain anything from their fields. That's why it is important to recruit interns whose fields or interests match fields of departments of the company.

LACK OF STEREOTYPICAL "BRINGING COFFEE" TASKS.

Gulnaz said that one of the reasons why she may had begun to dislike the internship is older employers asking her to buy something from nearby store.

INTERNS CAN EASILY COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER.

Balnur mentioned that communication with her intern mates, who worked separately from her, was very useful during adaptation and solving work-related individual issues

INTERN CONTRIBUTES TO THE GENERAL WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT.

Balnur felt that she was contributing to Finco's work, as she knew that her researches and analysis were used by her colleagues. Islam also felt that he was contributing a lot, as starting from the second week he was doing half of the job.

COMPANY IS OPEN TO CHANGE REGULATIONS TO CORRESPOND TO INTERN'S NEEDS.

INTERN CAN ENGAGE IN PRACTICAL TASKS.

Islam and Balnur enjoyed exploring practical aspect of their theoretical knowledge from university courses.

COMPANY PROVIDES POSSIBILITIES FOR GROWTH.

PRESENCE OF FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS.

INTERN'S IDEAS ARE WELCOMED.

According to Aida and Danel, inability to share honest views with the company to be major drawback.

INTERNSHIP PERIOD DOES NOT INTERSECT UNIVERSITY SEMESTER.

Several participants had internship period intersecting beginning or end of the semester. Danel and Gulnaz pointed out that their studies may somehow affected their experience. As Danel stated her thoughts were a little in her studies.

WHAT CAN BE RECOMMENDED?

HIRING COMPANIES

In internship description try to specify fields of departments where students are going to intern, and put description of a company itself or link to its website/social media accounts.

Draw attention on does intern's communication preferences and working style more or less matches departments'/ company's using interviews.

Carefully skim cover letters so that to provide better match for students' interests and department's sphere.

Even though your company is not that well-known in Kazakhstan, try to ask to intern many students from various universities/colleges.

Provide advisor who has good soft skills or had good experience with mentoring.

HR coordinators should prepare along with future intern advisor already set of tasks that will be done by intern. These tasks should be discussed with department managers in details.

FUTURE INTERNS

Evaluate things you liked and disliked on the first day. It will help you to decide whether to continue the internship, and discuss with your mentor things that can be changed from the second day.

On the first day in a company ask your advisor what will be your tasks for entire month. Ask him/her to give information in a more specific way.

Try to find data on specific office or department of a company where you are going to intern.

Try to contact with several students who worked/interned in the department/company.

Do not rely solely on 'significant'/ 'prestigious' sounding of a company's name when deciding where to apply.

Even though internship sphere is not directly related to your major, try to apply to internships that offer any useful experience.

Before applying to internship make sure you know how interns are going to be recruited: on first come, first serve basis?

Career Advising Center

Try to get rich feedback from students about their first day of internship. Make sure they are aware that it is ok to leave the program, and that they will be supported to find new one.

Make sure HR coordinators provide enough data about the program, recruitment and the company itself in job description. The data should also be clear, vague statements especially regarding duties of interns should be altered.

Ask companies about tasks that are they going to give interns. Discuss suitability of these tasks to student's interests or major perhaps with their school advisors.

It would be better to allow students to have internship programs in reserve, i.e. in case they will dislike to continue interning one program, they will know that they still can apply to another internship. This can be helpful, as many students tend to continue internship even if they disliked many things from the beginning.

Ask students to write in CVs or cover letters which fields they have interests in even though they may not match field of internship company or department.

Try to stay in touch with HR department or mentors of interns to make sure interns' works are well coordinated and distributed.