

A Study on the Relationship between Internship and Career Development of College Students

Xiangyun Dong^a, Feng Xie^b and Xiaohan Jiang^{c,*}

Yunnan Normal University, Kunming 650500, China

^adongxin197911@126.com, ^b394152446@qq.com, ^c491375338@qq.com

*Corresponding author

Keywords: College Students, Career Development, Questionnaire Survey

Abstract: As an important practice of college students before entering the workplace, internship is one of the most important factors affecting their career development. With provincial colleges and universities in Yunnan Province as the main survey object, this paper has studied the relationship between internship duration and career development, the relationship between internship place and career development, as well as the relationship between the type of employer for internship and career development through questionnaire survey method. The study found that the internship duration of three to six months, choosing employers outside Yunnan province and overseas companies, as well as private and foreign enterprises are conducive to the future career development of college students. It is hoped that the results of this research can improve the internship effect of college students, and help to further exert the positive influence of internship on the professional development of college students.

1. Introduction

Internship is all about applying the theoretical knowledge acquired to the actual work, which is of great significance to college students. In recent years, the number of university graduates in China has increased significantly. Relevant data show that the number of college graduates in Yunnan Province has reached 205,000 in 2018, most of which have entered the work force. Since the influence of internship before graduation on the career development of college students is far-reaching and enduring, the relationship between college students' internship and their career development has draw attention from the society and universities. This is also the main content of this paper.

This paper uses questionnaire method with colleges and universities in Yunnan Province as its main survey object. 500 questionnaires were randomly handed out to college graduates in Yunnan colleges and universities and 474 were collected, of which 427 were valid. Statistical analysis was then performed based on all valid questionnaire data. By interviewing the target population, it is found that the three most important internship-related factors are: internship duration, internship place and the type of employer; and the four factors that influence career development are: whether the intern is hired by the employer or not, whether the employability is enhanced or not, whether the intern has gained insight into the world of work or not, and whether the work skills have been improved or not. This paper studies the relationship between internship and career development.

2. The relationship between internship duration and career development

Results obtained by sorting out the data from the questionnaire are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that internship lasting for three months or more has noticeable positive impact on the chances of being hired by the employer for internship, the employability, the insight into the world of work and work skills improvement.

According to the data from the survey, there are three main reasons: (1) internship lasting for three months or more is sufficient for university students to fully understand the situation of the enterprise and make efforts to adapt to the needs of the enterprise; (2) longer internship helps students to gain more experience; (3) internship lasting for three months or more provide students with more extensive professional experience through trial and error, helping them to discover themselves, set well-defined goals, enhance their understanding of the workplace and develop a positive working attitude.

Table 1. Statistical results of the effects of different internship durations on career development

			3 months or less	3-6 months	6 months or more	Total
Hired by the employer for internship	Yes	Number of people	13	236	21	270
		Proportion	21.0%	69.4%	84.0%	
	No	Number of people	49	104	4	157
		Proportion	79.0%	30.6%	16.0%	
Employability enhanced	Yes	Number of people	22	287	22	331
		Proportion	35.5%	84.4%	88.0%	
	No	Number of people	40	53	3	96
		Proportion	64.5%	15.6%	12.0%	
Insight into the world of work	Yes	Number of people	17	252	19	288
		Proportion	27.4%	74.1%	76.0%	
	No	Number of people	45	88	6	139
		Proportion	72.6%	25.9%	24.0%	
Work skills improved	Yes	Number of people	23	270	18	311
		Proportion	37.1%	79.4%	72.0%	
	No	Number of people	39	70	7	116
		Proportion	62.9%	20.6%	28.0%	
Total			62	340	25	427

3. The relationship between internship place and career development

Table 2. Statistical results of the effects of different internship places on career development

			In Yunnan province	Outside Yunnan province	In foreign countries	Total
Hired by the employer for internship	Yes	Number of people	128	82	11	221
		Proportion	41.4%	78.1%	84.6%	
	No	Number of people	181	23	2	206
		Proportion	58.6%	21.9%	15.4%	
Employability enhanced	Yes	Number of people	154	84	12	250
		Proportion	49.8%	80.0%	92.3%	
	No	Number of people	155	21	1	177
		Proportion	50.2%	20.0%	7.7%	
Insight into the world of work	Yes	Number of people	175	55	7	237
		Proportion	56.6%	52.4%	53.8%	
	No	Number of people	134	50	6	190
		Proportion	43.4%	47.6%	46.2%	
Work skills improved	Yes	Number of people	201	75	10	286
		Proportion	65.0%	71.4%	76.9%	
	No	Number of people	108	30	3	141
		Proportion	35.0%	28.6%	23.1%	
Total			309	105	13	427

Results obtained by sorting out the data from the questionnaire are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that choosing enterprises or instructions outside Yunnan province for internship has noticeable positive impact on the chances of being hired by the employer for internship, the employability, and work skills improvement. The only factor that has no apparent connection with internship place is “the insight into the world of work”.

According to the data from the survey, there are three main reasons: (1) most of the students choosing enterprises or instructions outside Yunnan province apply internship positions online. Before being accepted as an intern, they have to pass online exams and their resumes should meet the requirements of the employer, which helps them to better align their abilities and skills with the needs of employers; (2) foreign countries and regions provide better conditions for college students to improve their foreign language proficiency and international communication skills; (3) some majors, such as IT, finance, animation have vaster development space outside Yunnan province, and enterprises in developed areas and countries can provide more opportunities and richer rich learning resources for students to hone their skills.

4. The relationship between the type of employer for internship and career development

Table 3. Statistical results of the effects of the type of employer on career development

			State-owned enterprises	Private enterprises	Foreign enterprises	Public institution	Total
Hired by the employer for internship	Yes	Number of people	2	11	218	5	236
		Proportion	3.8%	61.1%	76.8%	6.8%	
	No	Number of people	50	7	66	68	191
		Proportion	96.2%	38.9%	23.2%	93.2%	
Employability enhanced	Yes	Number of people	20	16	153	32	221
		Proportion	38.5%	88.9%	53.9%	43.8%	
	No	Number of people	32	2	131	41	206
		Proportion	61.5%	11.1%	46.1%	56.2%	
Insight into the world of work	Yes	Number of people	16	12	233	26	287
		Proportion	30.8%	66.7%	82.0%	35.6%	
	No	Number of people	36	6	51	47	140
		Proportion	69.2%	33.3%	18.0%	64.4%	
Work skills improved	Yes	Number of people	10	15	211	18	254
		Proportion	19.2%	83.3%	74.3%	24.7%	
	No	Number of people	42	3	73	55	173
		Proportion	80.8%	16.7%	25.7%	75.3%	
Total			52	18	284	73	427

Results obtained by sorting out the data from the questionnaire are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that internship experience in private enterprises and foreign companies has noticeable positive impact on the chances of being hired by the employer, the employability, the insight into the world of work and work skills improvement.

According to the data from the survey, there are three main reasons: (1) private enterprises and foreign companies have a heavier workload, which is conducive for interns to quickly absorb various knowledge and skills; (2) foreign and private enterprises provide a broader platform for interns to participate in large-scale projects, which helps them to grow quickly; (3) most foreign and private companies assign projects according to interns' skills, abilities and interest, and project leaders can directly and accurately assign tasks and provide guidance to members, which lays a solid foundation for their smooth adaptation to the world of work.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the survey and analysis results, the following suggestions are put forward: (1) students should coordinate internship and other affairs, and prolong internship to at least three months; (2) actively seek internship opportunities outside Yunnan province or in foreign countries according to their own situation. Internship opportunities outside the country, but do not listen to partial beliefs. However, if local resources are more aligned with their own professional appeals and career plans, they should choose provincial enterprises; (3) set clear career goals and try to obtain internship positions in private enterprises and foreign companies; for those targeting public institutions and

state-owned enterprises as their ideal work place, internship positions in the above mentioned organizations are also a good choice.

References

- [1] J. van der Geer, J.A.J. Hanraads, R.A. Lupton, The art of writing a scientific article, *J. Sci. Commun.* 163 (2000) 51-59.
- [2] W. Strunk Jr., E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*, third ed., Macmillan, New York, 1979.
- [3] G.R. Mettam, L.B. Adams, How to prepare an electronic version of your article, in: B.S. Jones, R.Z. Smith (Eds.), *Introduction to the Electronic Age*, E-Publishing Inc., New York, 1999, pp. 281-304.
- [4] R.J. Ong, J.T. Dawley and P.G. Clem: submitted to *Journal of Materials Research* (2003).
- [5] P.G. Clem, M. Rodriguez, J.A. Voigt and C.S. Ashley, U.S. Patent 6, 231, 666. (2001).
- [6] Information on <http://www.weld.labs.gov.cn>