

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



EXPECTATIONS, EXPERIENCES AND CAREER INTENTIONS OF  
HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INTERNS IN TECHNICAL  
UNIVERSITIES OF GHANA

SAMPSON WIREKO-GYEBI

2023

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HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INTERNS IN TECHNICAL  
UNIVERSITIES OF GHANA

BY  
SAMPSON WIREKO-GYEBI

This thesis submitted to the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management  
of the Faculty of Social Sciences, College of Humanities and Legal Studies,  
University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the award  
of Doctor of Philosophy degree in Hospitality Management

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## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature: ..... Date: .....

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### Supervisors' Declaration

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

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## ABSTRACT

Globally, internships play a critical role in hospitality and tourism education. The main objective of this study was to assess the pre-internship activities, expectations, experiences, career intentions of hospitality interns and also to develop a structural model to examine the casual relationship among these constructs. The Expectation-Disconfirmation Theory was adopted to guide study. 684 questionnaires were administered on hospitality interns in eight technical universities in Ghana who were sampled using the simple random technique. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyse the data. AMOS v. 26 was used for the structural equation modelling. Results from the study show that technical universities organise orientation for students and allowed them to participate in on-campus practical training before the internship exercise. Further, it was observed that students mostly sourced for placements themselves. The study revealed that skills development, career path exploration and compensation constitute interns' expectation. Also, experiences derived by interns from internship included skills development, career path and compensation. Five factors (individual factors, supervisor-task clarity, co-worker support, work environment and compensation) influenced internship experiences of interns. Majority of the interns intend pursuing hospitality and tourism careers. Results show that all nine hypotheses were significant. The study recommends that technical universities take steps to scout for placements for students. Management of facilities offering their premises for internship should provide a good working environment for interns and also provide financial support for interns.

## KEY WORDS

Career intentions

Expectation

Experiences

Factors

Hospitality

Internship

Pre-internship activities

Technical Universities





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**DEDICATION**

To my wife, Selorm and my children: Kofi Gyebi, Kofi Anning Bempah and

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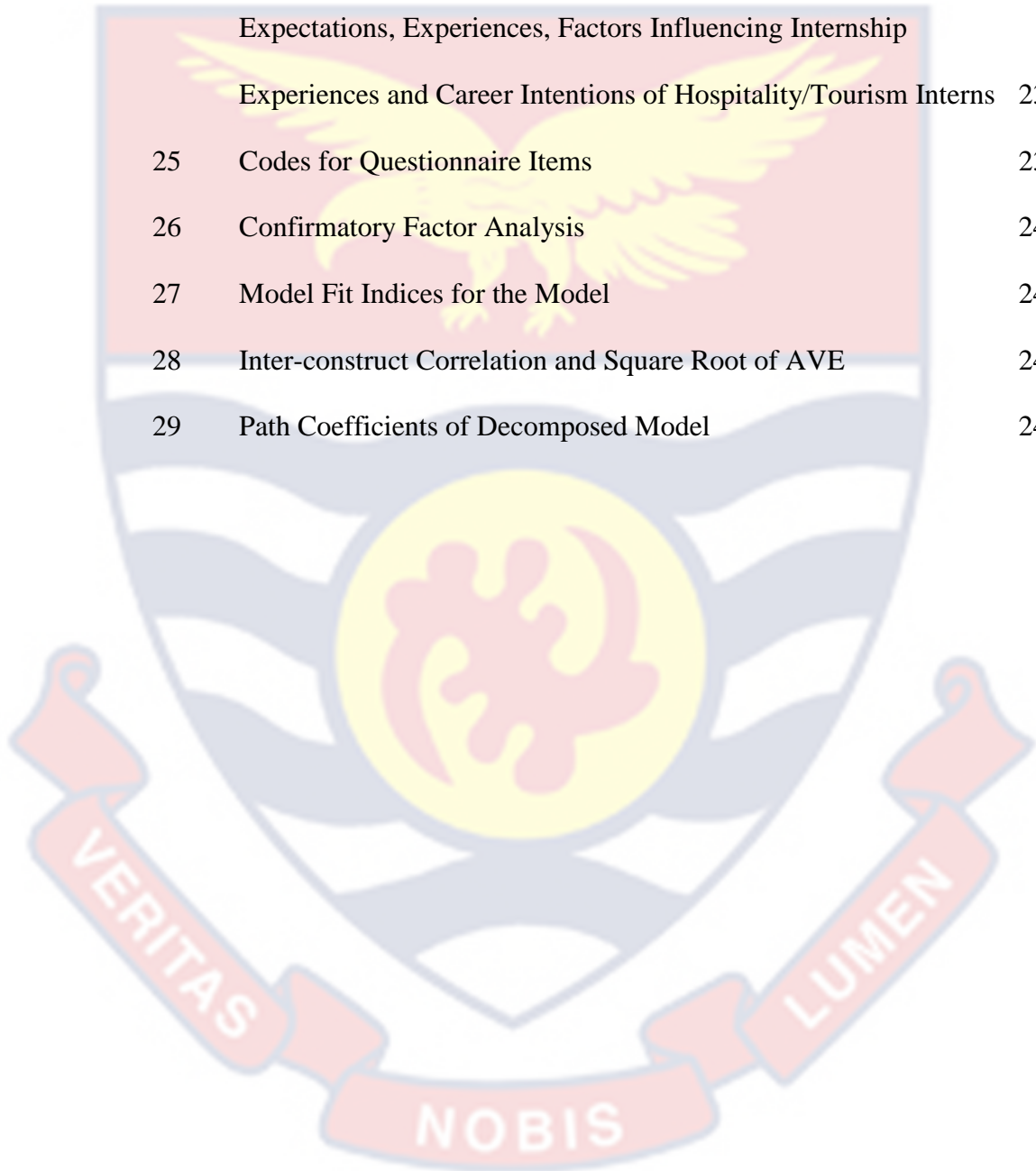
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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS)
ANOVA	One Way Analysis of Variance – ANOVA
AVE	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
CFA	Confirmation Factor Analysis (CFA)
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CR	Composite Reliability
ECT	Expectation Confirmation Theory
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
ELT	Experiential Learning Theory
FA	Factor Analysis
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GES	Ghana Education Service
IDI	In-Depth Interview
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
NAB	National Accreditation Board
NACE	National Association of Colleges and Employers
NCTE	National Council for Tertiary Education
NFI	Normal Fit Index
RFI	Relative Fit Index
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SCCT	Social Cognitive Career Theory
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SLT	Social Learning Theory
TLI	Tucker Lewis Index

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background to the Study

Globally, internships play a critical role in hospitality and tourism education. In view of this, many hospitality and tourism programmes in higher education have included internships in their curricula. As a result, students pursuing such programmes are required to undertake internships with industry; making internships integral part of hospitality and tourism academic programmes (Hughes, Mylonas & Benckendorff, 2013; Robinson, Ruhanen & Breakey, 2016; Stansbie, Nash & Chang, 2016; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). The extant literature indicates higher education programmes in hospitality and tourism require their students to gain work-integrated learning experiences through internships prior to completing their degree or diploma education (Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017).

In the United States for instance, it is a requirement for students pursuing the Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Tourism Management at the Cornell University to participate in four weeks of internship over two semesters before the students are allowed to graduate. Similarly, students offering the three-year Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel Management at the Hong Kong Polytechnic in China are required to undertake ten (10) weeks internship during the long vacation period of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year before they are allowed to graduate (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). In Kenya, the Directorate of Industry Training (DIT) is a government agency that oversees all forms of industrial attachment (internship) and collaborates between academia and industry ensure students in tertiary institutions undergo mandatory internships whilst in school (DIT, 2007;



Kamunzyu, 2010; Republic of Kenya, 2007). More so, higher educational institutions in Ghana offering degree and diploma programmes require their students to participate in internship during the third year long vacation period for a period between eight weeks and twelve weeks. This global trend is understandable because hospitality and tourism programmes tend to be practical oriented; hence, the need for student internships.

Internship, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2010) is:

*“a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent” (p. 28).*

The NACE further suggested that internships experience should be an extension of what is being taught in the classroom so that students could apply the knowledge they acquire in the classrooms. This will enable them to transfer the acquired knowledge in the work environment.

Internships can either be structured or unstructured (Brown, Arendt & Bosselman, 2014; Robinson et al., 2016; Wan, Wong & Kong, 2014). Structured internships are mostly well-defined in the curriculum and stipulates the duration of the internships. With structured internships, placements are either done solely by faculty or students are guided to choose institutions for placement. Additionally, issues such as mode of assessments are laid down and



communicated to faculty, students and industry. These may include written reports by the students, onsite visit by faculty members to assess students as well as assessment done by immediate supervisors from industry. Structured internship may require that students register the internship as academic course and be awarded a grade after the internship; which implies internship becomes a requirement for graduating students (Brown et al., 2014; Robinson et al., 2016). Unstructured internships on the other hand are “loosely” defined in the curriculum and is not mandatory. The implication is that, unstructured internship is not a requirement for graduation, may or may not be supervised by faculty and students are permitted to select institutions for internship on their own (Wan et al., 2014).

Flowing from the above, many higher educational institutions offering hospitality and tourism programmes have adopted the structured or supervised internships. Higher educational institutions in Ghana offering degree and diploma programmes in hospitality and tourism are no exception to this. Empirical evidence suggests that internships have become a critical component of hospitality and tourism degree programmes in Ghana in a bid to offer students the requisite practical exposure they need (Akomaning, 2019; Appietu et al., 2019; Mensah et al., 2020). Technical universities (formerly polytechnics) were created to train people with requisite manpower skills as part of Ghana’s Industrial Development Policy in the 1960’s (Agyefi-Mensah & Edu-Buandoh, 2014). This creates the need to offer students the avenue for industrial practical exposure through internship. Aside offering technical university students the opportunity to have onsite practical training, internships also afford students

invaluable experience to marry what they are taught in school and what pertains to the world of work.

This is because it has been realised that there is variation between theory and practise (Bao & Fang, 2014). This variation stems from the fact that students are expected to demonstrate the ability to perform certain basic practical skills at the workplace with little or no supervision but unfortunately, some students lack the required industrial experience (Ruetzler, Baker, Reynolds, Taylor & Allen, 2014). Anecdotal evidence from industry indicates that students lack the required skills to work in the industry, hence, efforts have been made by tourism and hospitality educators to bridge the gap between theory and practice through internship programmes (Bao & Fang, 2014). Bridging the theory/practice gap through internship is very important. According to Famarki (2018), the value of internship is particularly noticeable within hospitality and tourism. Internships facilitate the transition of students from higher education to employment as well as contributing to the career development of students. This has resulted in universities and colleges using internships as a means of engaging with industry (Mugisha & Nkwasiwe, 2014; Silva, Lopes, Costa, Melo, Dias, Brito & Seabra, 2016) to ensure that students get the needed practical training.

Internship benefits have been well documented in the literature. It should be noted that all stakeholders in the internship cycle – faculty, students and industry – duly benefit from internships. These benefits may include the development of industry-based skills and regulating work encounters and building competences (Alonso & O'Neill, 2011; Mugisha & Nkwasiwe, 2014). Through internships, students get the opportunity to update their classroom knowledge and improve the skills they acquire in school. They become better

at applying already acquired theoretical knowledge to real world situations. Through internships, students are able to assess employment/career options available to them before making any permanent commitment (Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Mensah, Appietu & Asimah, 2020). Industry and universities on the other hand use internships as a recruitment tool and dealing with turnover rates (Armoo & Neequaye, 2014; Hurts & Good, 2010) and testing the relevance and appropriateness of curriculum and establishing solid connection with industry (Brown, Willett, Goldfine & Goldfine, 2018) respectively.

Though benefits from internships accrue to all three key stakeholders (students, academia and industry), students are seen as the main beneficiaries of internships (Bao & Fang, 2014; Felicen, Rasa, Sumanga & Buted; 2014; Ivana, 2019). Students serve as the main channel through which internship programmes are implemented. To take advantage of the benefits derived from internships, student interns should have realistic expectations before engaging in this important exercise. Internship expectation refers to what students perceive before the actual internship takes place (Lam & Ching, 2007). Although many students go on internships as part of their school's curriculum, they usually have some reasons which reflects their expectations from the work they engage in. Whilst some students seek to develop skills and enhance their competencies, others also work to satisfy educational/institutions requirement. Students' expectations from internships may also include taking responsibilities; preparation for real work learning and practicing new skills (Kim & Park, 2013; Lam & Ching, 2007; Ruhanita, Breakey & Robinson, 2012; Zopiatis, 2007). One of the ways in which interns' expectations in other parts

of the world differ from Ghana is seeking to earn money from internships (Hu, 2018; Vélez & Giner, 2015) to support themselves financially.

These expectations are shaped and influenced by interns perceived level of preparedness before participating in the internship (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). The level of preparedness is a function of what the student had been taught in the classroom (academic work) particularly in relation to what pertains in the industry. Again, orientation prior to students' participation in internship also shape students' expectations prior to the exercise. During orientation, students are taken through the objectives of the internship programmes, the dos and the don'ts of the programmes as well as what is expected of them, from both faculty and industry.

However, the literature reports that some students go for internships with unrealistic expectations (Neelam, Bhattacharya, Kejriwal, Bhardwaj, Goyal, Saxena, Dhawan, Vaddi, & Choudaha, 2018). This can have a negative consequence on student's internship experiences (Heidhues, K'oszegi & Strack, 2018). "Experience" from internships represents how students feel after taking part in internships and is one of the most important professional preparations leading to employment in future careers (Chen & Chen, 2011; Lam & Ching, 2007). Quinn, Faerman, Thompson and McGrath (1990) relate internship experiences to the management competencies or roles based on the "Competing Value Framework". The framework comprises of eight different roles with each role having three set of competencies. For instance, the role of a 'mentor' has 'understanding oneself and others, interpersonal communications and developing others as the corresponding competencies. Schmitt (1999) on the other hand categorises internship experience into sensory, affective, creative-



cognitive, physical and relational. Jack, Stansbie and Sciarini (2017) observed that the framework is useful in assessing students' internship experiences because the framework helps in identifying the development of management competencies, which forms part of the experiences students derive from internships.

Internship experience includes soft and technical skills development; where soft skills refers to communication, customer relations, networking, team work, time management and problem solving. Technical skills on the other hand relates to knowledge of a discipline or field of study (Ruhanita, Aini, Zakiah & Rosiat, 2012). Literature on internship have identify plethora of factors that tend to influence students' internship experience. One key factor influencing students' internship experiences is their expectations. Zopiatis and Theocharous (2013) observed that interns' expectations have shaped their experiences, pointing out that studies have neglected how these expectations continue to shape interns' experiences. Largely, internships experiences are measured by expectations of students prior to participating in the internship exercise as demonstrated through the Expectation Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1997). The theory clearly indicates that prior expectation plays a major role in determining the actual experience derived from using a service or product. In relation to hospitality and tourism internship, interns' involvement in activities at the institutions of placement can be determined by the expectations of the students.

Aside expectation, other factors such as the work environment, supervision (from faculty and industry), self-initiative from students, task clarity, challenges on the job and compensation have been found to influence student experiences during internships (Bhattacharya & Neelam 2018;

McHugh, 2017; Omar, Ismail, Hussein, Yi & Yunus; 2017; Reinagel and Gerlach, 2015; Ruslan, Mohamad, Juhari & Abdul Karim; 2020; Vélez & Giner, 2015).

Research has established the existence of a relationship between internship experience and students' intention to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry (Chen & Shen, 2012; Rothman & Sisman, 2016; Yang, Wan & Fu, 2012; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). Whilst some students have had their hopes of pursuing a career in the hospitality and tourism industry dashed through experiences during internships, others have maintained or resolved to pursue hospitality and tourism careers upon graduating. Jenkins (2001) observed that many hospitality students are less interested in choosing careers in hospitality as their first choice after being exposed to the industry through internship. Raybould and Wilkins (2005) also indicated that many hospitality management graduates do not stay in the industry to work as a result of unfulfilled expectations from internships. It appears somewhat that when students are get much exposed into the internal workings of hospitality and tourism firms through internships, they get discouraged from pursuing careers in the hospitality and tourism industry (Koc, Yumusak, Ulukoy, Kilic, & Toptas, 2014; Walsh, Chang & Tse, 2015). However, Lu and Alder (2009) observed in their study that students were influenced through internships to choose a career in the hospitality and tourism industry upon graduation. Other studies have reported both positive and negative intentions regarding career choice of students who have undertaken internships. A study conducted by Richardson (2010) in Australia revealed that hospitality students' early work experiences through internship could either lead to reduced interest and desire



to work in the industry after school or a positive perception and eventual selection of a career in the industry. Kim, McMleary and Kaufman (2010) indicated that students' experiences during internships positively influence their intentions to work in the hospitality industry after school. Aside these, Lee, Chen, Hung and Chen (2011) reported that students' pre-internship experiences with hospitality and tourism firms will not only have a positive influence on the students' socialisation process during internships but will also facilitate students' future career intentions. They concluded that, students with positive pre-internship experiences were likely to develop a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. With reference to the Ghanaian context, Amissah, Opoku-Mensah, Mensah and Gamor (2020) asserted that hospitality and tourism students' perceptions of careers in Ghana's hospitality and tourism industry were generally unfavourable. This can be attributed in part, to the nature of work in the hospitality and tourism industry which tend to be stressful (Wireko-Gyebi, Adu-Frimpong & Ametepeh, 2017).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Research on hospitality and tourism internships is on the ascendancy, cutting across every continent in the world (Akomaning, 2019; Hughes et al., 2013; Mensah et al., 2020; Owusu-Mintah & Kissi, 2012; Richardson, 2010; Robinson et al., 2016; Stansbie et al., 2016; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). This ascendancy can be attributed in part, to the numerous benefits derived from well organised internships. Research on internship has been categorised into two main eras: the early days (1980s and 1990s) and in the new millennium (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). Whilst majority of internship research in the first era were on issues of academic requirement for internship, types of reports

and assessments needed, duration and the essence of academia employing a full-time coordinator for internships in educational institutions, the second era built on earlier research by focusing on “casual relationships that might enhance the overall understanding of the internship experience” (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013, p. 37).

Studies on internship have concluded that internship experiences are influenced by a number of factors, including work environment, supervision, self-initiative, task clarity, challenges on the job and compensation (Bhattacharya & Neelam 2018; McHugh, 2017; Omar, Ismail, Hussein, Yi & Yunus; 2017; Reinagel and Gerlach, 2015; Ruslan, Mohamad, Juhari & Abdul Karim; 2020; Vélez & Giner, 2015). However, majority of the studies that have explored internship experiences do so without assessing the influence of the above factors on interns’ experiences (Fong, Luk & Law, 2014). The indication is that studies on internship experiences have been approached using the single dimensional method; focusing on either internship experiences or the factors influencing these experiences without looking at the factors and the experiences together in a single study. The difficulty arising from such approach is that since the two concepts – experiences and factors influencing these experiences – are not studied together, concluding that these factors really influence internships experiences is far-fetched.

In relation to methodological considerations, the literature on internship expectations and experiences show that students’ expectations and experiences have been measured, using either quantitative (Hsu, 2012; Ivana, 2019; Lam & Ching, 2007; Luu, 2010; Marianakou & Giosmpasoglou, 2013; Munyoro, Nyandoro, & Musekiwa, 2016; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013) or qualitative

(Cheong, Yahya, Shen & Yen, 2014; Famarki, 2018; Ruhanen, Robinson & Breakey, 2013) methods, with limited studies employing the pragmatism approach. The use of pragmatism will ensure that issues are studied from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives for complementary purposes. Again, such an approach lends itself to obtaining a more suitable and consistent results compared to what would have been obtained from a single method approach (Fetters & Freshwater, 2015; Mertens, Bazeley, Bowleg, Fielding, Maxwell, Molina-Azorin & Niglas, 2016; Molina-Azorin & Cameron, 2015).

Theoretically, many studies on internship expectation, experiences and career intention among hospitality and tourism interns have been carried out on methods that are linked to relevant theories (Zehr, 2016). This has the potential of leading to conclusions that are not based on theories. Studies with theoretical justification have done so using other theories such as career construction theory, theory of planned behaviour, attraction-selection-attrition theory, appraisal theory to examine internship experiences and/or the nexus between internship experiences and career intentions (see Chang & Tse, 2015; Ghosh & Jhamb, 2021; Lee et al., Walsh et al., 2015; Wen et al., 2018, Zhou et al., 2021). Though studies such as Ghosh and Jhamb (2021) and Neelam et al. (2018) employed the expectation confirmation theory to examine disparities between interns' expectation and experiences from internship, the application of this theory in the Ghanaian context is yet to be seen. Internship studies in the Ghanaian context have mainly relied on the organisational support theory and social cognitive career theory (see Appietu et al., 2019; Mensah, 2020). It becomes expedient, therefore, to employ the expectation confirmation theory, the experiential learning theory and the social cognitive career theory to

examine the expectations, experiences and career intentions of interns in the technical universities since their application to these internship constructs in the general and the Ghanaian context is limited.

Again, research on internships reveal the existence of relationships between interns' expectations, experiences and intentions to pursue hospitality and tourism careers (Chen & Shen, 2012; Lee & Chao, 2013; Hsu, 2012; Tsai, Hsuan & Yang, 2017; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). However, majority of the studies exploring these relationships have been conducted in Asia, Europe and the Americas, with little empirical research in Africa and Ghana in particular. For instance, Zopiatis & Theocharous (2013) confirmed a significant positive relationship between students perceived benefits (positive experiences) and intentions to pursue hospitality and tourism careers. Using hospitality students in accredited private and public tertiary educational institutions in Cyprus, the study concluded that internship has contributed to the interns' managerial and technical skills development as well as their supervisory abilities, hence, their resolve to pursue a career in the hospitality industry upon graduation. In a study comprising students offering hospitality management degree programmes in twenty universities in Taiwan, Chen and Shen (2012) confirmed that hospitality experiences from internships influence students' willingness to remain and pursue careers in the hospitality industry.

A number of studies on internships have also focused on other aspects of internships. For instance, whilst some have focused on internship and learning outcomes (Beard, 2007; Beck & Halim, 2008; Datta, Biswakarma & Nayak, 2013; Salatan, 2015), others have researched into internships benefits (Coco, 2000; NACE, 2005). The rest have studied internships focusing on



internship stakeholders (Daniel & Daniel, 2013; Hynie, Jensen, Johnny, Wedlock & Phipps, 2014; Maelah, Mohamed, Ramili & Aman, 2014; O'Connor & Bodicoat, 2017; Surujlal & Singh, 2010; Hynie, Jensen, Johnny, Wedlock & Phipps, 2014).

Within the Ghanaian context, the relationship among interns' expectations, experiences and career intentions is relatively unexplored. Majority of research on hospitality and tourism internships have focused on internship organisation, social support and internship satisfaction and perception of stakeholders on internship (Akomaning, Voogt & Pieters, 2011; Blankson, 2014; Mensah et al., 2020; Owusu-Minta & Kissi, 2012). Other studies conducted on internships were done outside the domain of hospitality and tourism. For instance, Efua, Senayah, Tachie-Ofosu and Osei (2016) focused on internship experiences from the perspective students of the Family and Consumer Science Department at the University of Ghana whilst Amponsah, Milledzi and Ofosu-Mensah (2014) assessed the relevance and experiences of undergraduate internship programme using psychology students at the University of Cape Coast as the study population.

With specific reference to internship research in technical universities, much of the research have focused on other aspects of internship. For instance, Akomaning et al. (2011) looked at the perceptions of stakeholders in relation to vocational education and training. Owusu-Mintah and Kissi (2012) focused on the assessment of the effectiveness of internships in tourism education and training. Others have focused on stakeholder perceptions on attachment, the legal and regulatory framework of industrial attachment, human capital development through industrial attachment (Adjei, Nyarko & Nuufan, 2014;



Nunfan, Adjei & Padi, 2015; Nyarko & Amegbor, 2019). Recent studies on hospitality internship from technical universities perspectives have delved into sexual harassment among hospitality interns, work-based social support and hospitality internship satisfaction, the nexus between hospitality internship and employment and internship work-related stress (Appietu, Asimah & Mensah, 2019; Mensah et al., 2020; Mensah et al., 2021; Sarkodie & Commey, 2022).

The forgoing discussions reveal the following gaps in the literature. Research on internship experience and factors influencing this experience has rarely been studied together in a single study. Furthermore, internship studies have largely been conducted from a single methodological approach. In addition, there have been little empirical research on internship expectation, experience and career intention with specific reference to technical universities and the Ghanaian context in general. However, the peculiar cultural and educational background in Ghana might influence results from internship studies.

Flowing from the above discussions, there is a dearth of research on hospitality and tourism interns' expectation, experiences and intentions to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. This study therefore seeks to assess the expectations, experiences and intentions of hospitality and tourism interns using a pragmatist approach.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of the study is to analyse the expectations, experiences and career intentions of hospitality and tourism interns in technical universities in Ghana. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Ascertain the pre-internship activities of interns;

2. Examine the expectation of hospitality/tourism interns;
3. Examine the experiences hospitality/tourism interns derived from internships;
4. Analyse the factors influencing internship experiences of hospitality/tourism interns;
5. Analyse the career intentions of hospitality/tourism interns; and
6. Develop a structural model to explain the interrelationships between pre-internship activities, expectation, experience, factors influencing experiences and career intentions.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are formulated to guide the study:

1. H1: Pre-internship activity has an effect on internship expectations
2. H2: Pre-internship activity has an effect on internship experiences
3. H3: Pre-internship activity has an effect on career intentions
4. H4: There is no significant difference between internship expectation and internship experience
5. H5: Internship expectation has an effect on career intentions
6. H6: Internship experience has an effect on career intentions
7. H7: Organisation factors has an effect on internship experiences
8. H8: Individual factors has an effect on internship experiences

### **Significance of the Study**

A study on the experiences, expectations and career intentions of tourism and hospitality interns is very important in a number of ways. Internships have become central to hospitality curriculum at higher educational institutions (Stansbie et al., 2016). The study will therefore focus on revealing

the theoretical and empirical evidence in relation to students' expectations prior to participating in internships, their experiences after the internships and whether their expectations and experiences influence their intentions for choosing a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. Results from the study could therefore serve as a baseline literature for further studies into understanding the underlying relationships between internship expectations, experiences and intentions.

Furthermore, the study will be very useful for higher level educational institutions offering both degree and diploma programmes in hospitality and tourism. The essence of making internships integral part of hospitality and tourism academic programmes (Stansbie et al., 2016; Robinson et al., 2016) is to ensure that the gap between theory and practice is bridged through internships (Bao & Fang, 2014). However, studies combining internship experiences and factors shaping these experiences have largely not been conducted. Results from a study evaluating both experiences and their influencing factors will be helpful for academia to understand how interns' experiences are shaped. This will be useful in terms of updates on curriculum issues on internships, building stronger collaboration with industry, which according to Akomaning et al (2011) is weak. A collaboration of such nature will ensure that influential factors on internship such work environment, task clarity, supervision at industry will be critically examined to ensure that interns' experiences are positive. Furtherance to this, examining students' expectations prior to internships will bring to the fore issues to be included in internship guidelines and those to discussed during internship orientations.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study employed the concurrent mixed method approach to data collection. The concurrent mixed method approach ensures that both the quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the same time. This approach could have implications for the data collected, especially the quantitative data. Since both data were collected at the same time, there will be no opportunity to make amendments, especially on the qualitative data collection instrument when the need arises.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The study covered hospitality and tourism interns from the technical universities in Ghana. The implication is that, hospitality and tourism interns from the 'traditional' universities were excluded.

### **Organisation of the Study**

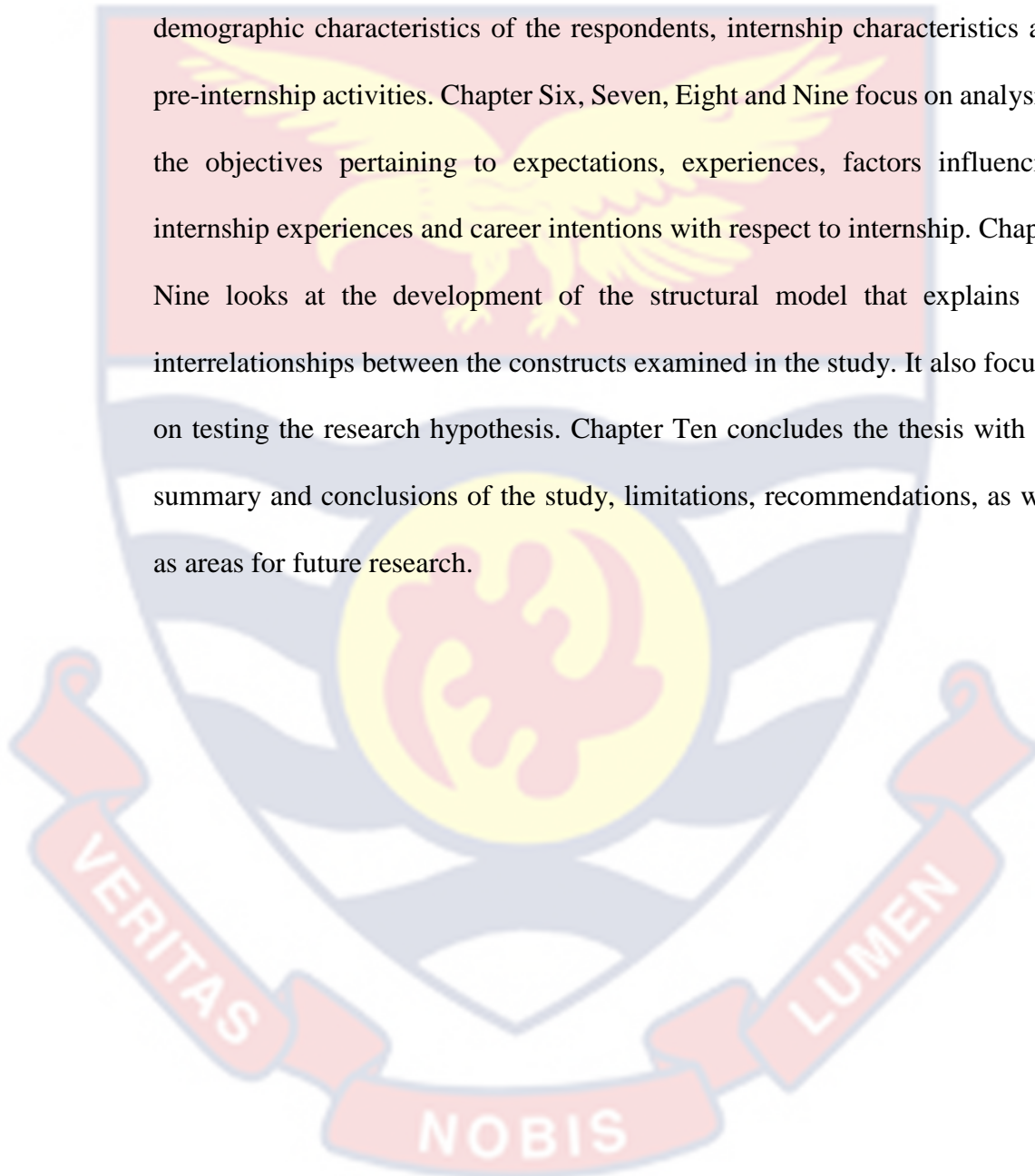
The thesis is organised into ten (10) main chapters. Chapter One presents the background information for the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and research hypotheses. Other sub-headings under this Chapter are the justification of the study. Chapters Two and Three constitute the review of related theoretical and empirical literature respectively. Chapter Two emphasises exploring the theories and models used in the study. Chapter Three, on the other hand, explores the empirical studies on the phenomenon being discussed and the proposed a conceptual framework for the study.

Chapter Four covers the philosophical dimensions of the study. It also presents the methodology which includes information on the study areas, the research approach/design, the population and sampling techniques used, how the research instrument was designed, and the procedure used for the data



collection. Others include the measurement of variables and the statistical techniques used to analyse the data.

Chapters Five, Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine will present the findings of the study. Specifically, Chapter Five focused on analysing the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities. Chapter Six, Seven, Eight and Nine focus on analysing the objectives pertaining to expectations, experiences, factors influencing internship experiences and career intentions with respect to internship. Chapter Nine looks at the development of the structural model that explains the interrelationships between the constructs examined in the study. It also focuses on testing the research hypothesis. Chapter Ten concludes the thesis with the summary and conclusions of the study, limitations, recommendations, as well as areas for future research.





## CHAPTER TWO

### CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the conceptualisation of key variables in the study as well as presenting the theories underpinning the study. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part consists of technical education in Ghana, a brief historical account of internship and the conceptualisation of internship, expectation, experience and career intention. The second section takes into account the various theories and models used in measuring the aforementioned concepts, including Kolb's (1974) experiential learning theory, Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, Oliver's (1977; 1981) expectation-confirmation theory and Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994; 1996) social cognitive career theory.

#### Technical University Education in Ghana

Technical universities as we know them today started as trade schools during the pre-colonial and colonial era. The aim of these crafts schools was to train field and industrial craftsmen who will help in the exploitation of Ghana's natural resources, surveying, mapping and development of physical infrastructure including harbours, roads, among others. However, these trade schools were converted to technical schools in 1951 and later placed under the Ghana Education Service (GES) for proper supervision. The conversation was aimed at training people with requisite manpower skills as part of the Ghana's Industrial Development Policy in the 1960s (Agyefi-Mensah & Edu-Buandoh, 2014).

Later on, the technical schools were upgraded to polytechnic status, still under the supervision of the GES. According to Effah (2005), the Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi Technical institutes were the first to be converted to Polytechnics in 1963, though without any legal backing. This was followed by the Tamale Technical Institute in 1984 and two years later, the Ho Technical Institute. Though the Cape Coast Polytechnic was commissioned in 1986, it did not gain tertiary status until 1993 when the Polytechnic Law (PNDCL 321) was enacted to give legal backing to polytechnic education in Ghana. In 1997, the Sunyani and Koforidua Polytechnics gained legal status and elevated to tertiary status. The Wa and Bolgatanga Technical Institutes were the last to get Polytechnic status, though through a political pronouncement (Akomaning, 2012).

The Polytechnic Law (PNDCL 321) enacted in 1993 gave legal status to Polytechnic education in Ghana. In view of this, the management of Polytechnics was taken away from the GES and placed under the supervision of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). Polytechnics were given full mandate as tertiary education to run full time programmes in manufacturing, commerce, science, technology, applied social science and applied arts with the view of producing efficient and effective manpower with requisite skills for both the public and private sectors (Effah, 2005) by focusing on career-oriented, practical vocational training (Akyeampong, 2010). This gave the polytechnics the right to run Higher National Diploma (HND) and non-HND programmes as may be decided up by their respective Councils in conjunction with the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations and other statutory institutions such as the NCTE and the

National Accreditation Board (NAB). Until recent years, polytechnic education in Ghana was run under four main programmes: Engineering, Applied Science, Applied Arts and Business and Management Studies (Agyefi-Mensah & Edu-Buandoh, 2014).

In 2016, the Technical Universities Act (Act 922) was passed by the Parliament of Ghana to replace the Polytechnic Law (PNDCL 321), thereby converting six out of the ten existing polytechnics into Technical Universities. The six were Accra, Kumasi, Ho, Koforidua, Takoradi and Sunyani Polytechnics. Act 922 provides for harmonised Status and Scheme of Service for all Technical Universities in the country. The Cape Coast and Tamale Polytechnics were later converted to Technical Universities with the Technical Universities (Amendment) Act, 2017. In effect, there are currently eight Technical Universities in Ghana, leaving out the Wa and Bolgatanga Polytechnics which are yet to meet the criteria for conversion to a Technical University.

### **Internship Defined**

The term internship has many meanings and has been used interchangeably with other related but different terms. For instance, internship was known as apprenticeship when the term was first conceptualised (Smits, 2006; Coco, 2000). Some authors (Aggett & Busby, 2011; Leslie & Richardson, 2000; Welch, 1984; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013) have conceptualised internship to mean practical work experiences, work experiences, supervised work experiences, field experience, work-study programme, community-based learning and work placement. Terminologies such as practicum, professional placement/practice, cooperative education, industrial placement, have also been

used (Council for Social Work Education, 2001; Inui, Wheeler, & Lankford, 2006). Internship has also been referred to as service-learning, work-based learning, work-integrated learning (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks 2014; Busby, 2005; Inui et al., 2006).

Interestingly, internship has been conceptualised differently in different countries. Internship is referred to as sandwich placements in the United Kingdom (Busby, 2003; NACE, 2006). Busby (2003) explains that the concept is called sandwich placements because internships are done by students between the first and final year degree programmes. In Vietnam, internship is used interchangeably with the term work-integrated learning (Nghia & Duyen, 2017) but known as industrial placement in Switzerland (Zopiatis, 2004) and labelled as industrial training in Malaysia (Curtin University of Technology, 2006; International Islamic University Malaysia, 2012; Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, 2012).

In Ghana, the term normally used to describe internship is industrial attachment (Effah, 2005) and has been captured in the curriculum of most public universities in Ghana. Though different terms have been used to conceptualise internship in the literature, Busby (2005), Collins (2002) and Ross and Sheehan (2013) observed that each of these terms are rooted in the philosophy of experiential learning. Internship is perceived to be a form of experiencing learning just as service learning, practicum and cooperative education (Moore, 2010). However, each of these concepts has a singular focus of offering interns practical experience (Aggett & Busbsy, 2011) whilst bridging the gap between academia and industry (Mugisha & Nkwasiwe, 2014).



Flowing from the above, providing a universally accepted definition for internship becomes a daunting task. According to Jawabri (2017), the term internship is not a subject that has a formal and accepted definition and that the concept has been conceptualised differently by authors over time. This assertion is primarily because internship might connote different meanings to different people and depending on the experiences one has from internship, a specific definition might be provided to suit such experiences (Domholt, 2018). It is in the light of this that Kim and Park (2013) and Ruhanen et al. (2013) earlier collaborated that internship is not easy to define due to the concept's wide and varied scope.

Despite the aforementioned challenges concerning internship conceptualisation, several authors have attempted to define the concept. For instance, Hall (1976) conceptualised internship to mean a programme that assists students to refine their career goals, develop professional skills, and clarify their workspace values. Koehler (1974, p. 907) defines internship as “one component of a student's educational preparation for career which takes place outside of class learning situation”. Similarly, Maertz et al. (2014) perceived internship as co-curricular activities that are put in place with the view of enhancing the employment capabilities and future careers of students. These definitions seem to capture only one of the three key stakeholders of internships, students. Again, the conceptualisation of internships by these authors tend to focus more on the benefits students are likely to derive from the internship experiences. This could be explained in part, from the view that students are perceived to be the main beneficiaries of internship (Ivana, 2019).



However, conceptualising internships to cover the perceived benefits students derived from internships seems problematic. It has the potential of neglecting the key roles played by the other stakeholders (employers and academia). Since internship focuses on giving work-based experiences to students, Henry, Rehwaldt & Vineyard (2001) suggest that it requires the collaboration of all stakeholders to be successful, hence, the need to incorporate all stakeholders in the conceptualisation of internship. To resolve this, some authors have proposed definitions that move beyond the potential benefits of internships to students and have added other components of internships. Internship has been defined by Konsky (1982) as "undergraduate structured practical professional experiences under the supervision of qualified academic and agency personnel (p. 39). Similarly, Taylor (1988) defines internship as structured and career-relevant work experience obtained by students before graduation from an academic programme.

These definitions reveal some vital characteristics of internship; types of internships and internship supervision. Concerning types of internships, structured internships are distinguished from unstructured internships. With structured internships, internships are part of the academic curriculum and placements are arranged by the school whilst with unstructured internships, students make arrangements for their placements (Horng, 2004; Horng & Lee, 2005). This distinction is very important as it indicates whether the internship would be supervised or not. Konsky's (1982) and Taylor's (1988) definitions give credence to the importance of internship supervision from both academia and host institutions. Nonetheless, these definitions also ignored key issues related to internship. From the perspective of Zopiatis and Theocharous (2013)

definitions of internship should be comprehensive and cover issues such as students, supervised work practice, experiential learning, compensation and academic credit.

Given the foregoing, Zopiatis (2007, p.11) conceptualised internship as "a structured and career-relevant supervised professional work/learning experience, paid or unpaid, within an approved hospitality organization, under the direct supervision of at least one practising hospitality professional and one faculty member for which a hospitality student may or may not earn an academic credit".

Similarly, internship has been defined as by Narayanan et al. (2010, p.61) as "a term-length placement of an enrolled student in an organization – sometimes with pay, sometimes without pay – with faculty supervisor, a company supervisor and some academic credit earned toward the degree". These definitions offer further insights into internships by introducing issues such as compensation and academic credit. In the view of Maertz et al. (2014), two of the most important items that are used in clarifying the boundaries for defining internships are compensation and academic credit. In addition to the conceptualisation of internships by Narayanan et al. (2010) and Zopiatis (2011), one definition that has been widely cited in the internship literature is that of NACE (2018a). The association conceptualises internship as:

*An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical applications and skills development in a professional setting. Internship allows students to gain valuable applied experience*

*and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths, and allow employers to guide and evaluate talent (p. 13).*

Commenting on the above definition, Hora, Parrot and Her (2020) observed that the definition provides two important elements that are not found in many definitions of internships. They believed that the definition covers the perceptions held by all three key stakeholders of internships. Also, it conceptualises internship as experiential learning which enhances students' social capital and employment connectedness (Hora et al., 2020).

### **Historical Background of Internship**

Internship has been in existence for a very long time, though it manifested in different forms. According to Sides and Mrvica (2007), internship takes its root from “on the job training and learning” concept that was developed in countries such as Greece, Italy (specifically Rome) and China about 600BC. Around this time, ‘masters’ will teach their interns craftwork to enable them to get the necessary skills they needed to be able to gain entry into jobs that required those skills. Corroborating this assertion, Walker II (2011) opined that skills transferred from the “masters” to the interns were in three forms – skills for creating products, performing a particular service and conducting business. Similarly, another form of internship arose in the late antiquity and early Middle Ages, particularly in Europe. During this time, people under bondage and indentured servitude got their freedom from their masters through apprenticeships. This took the form of crafts and trade professions. Walker II (2011) termed this apprenticeship as internship. In fact, it has been observed

that all forms of internships around the globe started as an apprenticeship-like model (Coco 2000; Perlin, 2011).

Internship in the form of apprenticeship continued to exist among masters and slaves till the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century when the first collegiate internship in the United States and arguably, the world was implemented. Several scholars (Cook, Parker & Pettijohn 2004; Henry, Razzouk, & Hoverland, 1988; Katula & Threnhauser, 1999) attribute this progress to Herman Schneider, a professor of engineering who is touted to be the pioneer of internship in the United States of America. He is believed to have introduced the concept to electrical engineering students numbering about 27 at the University of Cincinnati in 1906 (University of Cincinnati, 2012). Unlike the earlier form of internship (apprenticeship), this took a different format where students, rather than 'slaves' were connected to what was being taught in the classroom with the workplace to increase student learning and performance (Walker II, 2001). From the perspective of Schneider, internship gave meaning to what students learnt in the classroom by offering them what he termed “employment-related experiences” (Blair, Millea, & Hammer, 2004). Following the introduction of internship in the electrical engineering department was business internships in 1919 at the same university. This time, internships become mandatory for business students (University of Cincinnati, 2012).

The trend continued after college internship was introduced in 1906. This time spreading to other colleges and programmes. For instance, Spradlin (2009) reported that internship was introduced in the medical profession few years before the second world war. Within this period, personnel (medical



residencies) aspiring to be medical doctors were required to undertake internship programmes before their acceptance into the medical profession. Around the same time, other forms of internship programmes which were primarily developed for political campaigns and governmental organisations were introduced at all levels of governance in the 1930s. Later on, medical internship will be changed to "residency" by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education to distinguish medical internship from other kinds of internships (Sprandlin, 2009).

The history of hospitality internship could be traced to Ellsworth Milton Statler (1863-1928), the father of the American Hotel Association and the owner of the Statler Hotel Chain in the United States. As a benefactor of the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, his foundation financed the construction of 50-room Statler Inn (now a 153-bed Statler Hotel) and a hall in 1948 to give students pursuing hotel management a place for practical training (Damonte & Vaden, 1987). Hospitality internship was introduced in Greece in the 1950s. Internship during this period, according to Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2013) took the form of attaching hospitality students to state-owned Xenia hotels in Rhodes and other tourism destinations in Greece. The essence of such attachment was to provide interns with practical training. Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2013) further note that students who completed their hospitality education and have had internship experiences later progressed to assume managerial positions in hotels in Greece, emphasising the importance of having work-related experience through internships. In the USA, Damonte and Vaden (1987) observed that the Cornell University was the first higher educational institution to delineate an outline for hospitality internships



and provided the platform for internships (experiential learning) and hospitality education. The university provided clear documentation on how the linkage between academia and industry could lead to the development of skills for students on internships. Later on, Brewer (1990) and Sparadlin (2009) observed that universities and colleges began to add internships to their undergraduate academic curricula in the 1960s with the view of providing students with work-related experiences. This culminated in several higher learning institutions introducing internships as part of their academic programmes. For instance, in the late 1970s, fashion, as well as clothing and textiles programmes had internship components added to the programmes (Scott, 1978; Sheldon, 1986). Szambowski, Szambowski and Samenfink (2002) indicated that internships programmes have been incorporated into the curricula of almost all academic programmes run by higher educational institution globally.

The introduction of internships into academic curricula of universities and colleges did not only lead to the proliferation of internship programmes but also led to an interest in academic research in hospitality/tourism internship. The precursor to this phenomenon was probably when the first batch of students offering undergraduate programmes in universities in the USA and UK participated in internships (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou 2013). Many scholars in this era (Barron & Maxwell, 1993; Ciofalo, 1989; Schmelzer, Loftus, 1988; Welch, 1984) focused on expanding the understanding on the concept of internships. Specifically, studies looked at how internships were practised in the context of the curriculum (Schmelzer et al., 1987), views on hospitality internships from industry's perspective (Loftus, 1988), as well as the value and effective evaluation of internship programmes (Alm, 1996; Ciofalo,

1989). Several recommendations were made based on the findings from internships research during this era. Zopiatis and Theocharous (2013) observed that the chief recommendation was for higher academic institutions to institutionalise student internships by coming out with specific curriculum on internships and making experiential learning an integral part of every hospitality and tourism programme. Besides, other scholars also proposed the establishment of full-time internship coordinators with the sole responsibility of coordinating internships programmes and establishing a cordial relationship between academia and relevant institutions (Nelson, 1994).

Internship research at the beginning of the new millennium took a different outlook. There was a sharp shift from investigating internship practices and internship curricula issues to establishing the casual relationships, causes and effects among key concepts within the internship vocabulary. This was done through the application of inferential statistics, particularly, structural equation modelling (SEM) (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). For instance, Lee et al. (2011) observed a significant relationship between pre-internship experiences and the socialisation process during internships and further concluded that certain work environmental conditions greatly affect interns' future career intentions. MacManus and Feinstein (2008) also established that interns' willingness to learn during internships is directly related to what he termed "relatedness" (feeling of being cared for by others). The main conclusion from studies in this era related to the duration of internship. Longer duration of between four and six months was recommended as the ideal duration if interns were to fully benefit from the internship experience (Lee et al., 2011; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013).

## Expectation

Expectation as a concept defies a single definition. Olkonen and Luoma-Aho (2018) observed that expectation is mostly used when other related concepts are being defined. In essence, expectation is conceptualised in relation to other concepts. Expectations have been widely used in the customer satisfaction literature (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993) as a means of evaluating the satisfaction of customers for purchasing or consuming products and services by comparing pre-purchase expectation and post-purchase experiences. From the perspective of del Bosque, Martin and Collado (2006), there seem to be lack of consensus as to what constitute expectations. Whilst Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Bery (1988) conceptualised expectation to mean what consumers think providers of services should give them for patronising their products and services, Teas (1993) believes expectation relates to standards offered by the features or attributes of a product or service. This has given rise to the conceptualisation of expectations as efficacy and outcomes (Bandura, 1977), desired and experience-based or predictive and ideal (del Bosque et al., 2006; Luoma-Aho, Olkkonen, & La`hteenma`ki, 2013).

In a literature review on the conceptualisation of expectations, Olkonen and Luoma-Aho (2018) concluded that many authors who used the concept did so without providing definitions for the concept. Notwithstanding, some authors construe expectations to mean beliefs of what must happen, which becomes the basis upon which decisions are made (e.g. Podnar & Golob, 2007). Others see expectation as a reference point or mental models that enable people to make comparisons and interpretations (see Luoma-Aho et al., 2013). Institutional factors that shape people's moral or cultural values and general acceptability of

products or services have also been used to describe what expectation constitutes (Brønn, 2012).

The literature on customer management and consumer behaviour categorise expectation into four: value-based, information-based, experienced-based and personal interest-based. Value-based perception, according to Summers and Granbois (1977), is the normative or ideal state of what people want things to be. As the name suggests, it is basically what is valued or wished for. Information-based expectation largely results from the amount of information available to the person making the decision. The information available can be grouped into two. The first group relates to precise, explicit or official, which means the consumer will have adequate, realistic information to base his or her decision on. The second group deals with lack of information. In this case, expectations are based on unrealistic, insufficient or inaccurate information (Mittila & Jaärvelin, 2001). The third type of expectation, experienced-based, is predominantly as a result of previous experience, either direct or indirect (Summers & Granbois, 1977; Woodruff, Cadotte, & Jenkins, 1983). This is formed if the person had previously experienced the product or service in question and as such, the expectation is influenced by past experiences. Prior experience helps consumers to either minimise their expectation of a particular product or service thereby reducing the possibility of a disappointment in the future (Zeithaml et al., 1993). Personal interest-based expectation is formed from the evaluation of what a consumer is likely to gain from purchasing a product or using a service. In essence, the consumer measures the resources invested into getting the product or service and based on the



outcome, assumes an equal or higher value should be derived from the product of service (Mittila & Jaärvelin, 2001; Zeithaml et al., 1993).

With regards to internship, expectation relates to all the three key stakeholders, with each stakeholder having a different expectation from the other. For industry, expectation connotes what they look for to gaining from interns who are attached to their outfits (Coco, 2000; Swanson & Tomkovick, 2012). To academia, expectation means students enhancing their skills through practical training (internship) in addition to academia enhancing their reputation and visibility through the internship programme (Cook et al., 2004; Weible & McClure, 2011). From the students' front, Lam and Ching (2007) define internship expectation as what students perceive before the actual internship takes place. This varies from intern to intern and will usually include fulfilling academic institution's curriculum requirement, obtaining grades to enhance overall grade point and developing skills that make them relevant on the job market upon graduation (Kim & Park, 2013; Lam & Ching, 2007; Ruhanita et al., 2012; Zopiatis, 2007).

### **Experience**

With the global upsurge of internship as part of many hospitality and tourism programmes, one of the important concepts that have been studied concerning internship is experience. Internship 'experience' is one of the most important professional preparation leading to employment in future careers (Chen & Chen, 2011). Callaman and Benzing (2004), Knemeyer and Murphy (2002) observed that experience is important in internship since it has a great impact on both the professional growth and success of interns.



However, a glance through the literature on internship indicates that there is no agreed definition for the concept of experience. This is to be expected because, experience is a complex concept (Aho, 2001; Atilgan, Akinci & Aksoy, 2003; Gnoth et al. 2009) that requires further theoretical development (Fitzsimmons & Fitzsimmons, 2000; Pullman & Gross, 2003; Stuart & Tax, 2004). Experience is difficult to conceptualise since it varies from person to person. What one might consider as an experience will not be considered by another as experience.

In the internship literature, experience has been equated to internship itself; hence internship experience. This is evident in the definitions proffered by authors (such as Kinsky, 1982; Nghia & Duyen, 2017; Taylor, 1988; Zopiatis, 2007) for internship. For instance, the conceptualisation of internship by Zopiatis (2007, p. 11) to mean "a structured and career-relevant supervised professional work or experience, ..." gives credence to this assertion. Aside from this, experience has been conceptualised in the internship literature to mean perception, that is, the difference between interns' expectation and their experience from internship. In their study on students' perception of internship, Wiseman and Page (2001) conceptualised internship perception to include gaining career comprehension and having a competitive edge in the job market. Tse (2010) listed self-confidence, social and practical skills as perceptions of internship experience. However, a careful look at these "perceptions" show that similar variables have been used to describe internship experience in other studies. Jawabri (2017) conceptualised experience as being confident about finding a job after graduation whilst Cheong et al. (2014) viewed experience as

having practical hands-on experience and skills development such as presentation skills.

Besides, the concept of experience has been defined to mean soft and technical skills interns developed after engaging in an internship programme (Ruhanita, et al., 2012). Specifically, Lee (2008) indicated that experience can be related to having enhanced knowledge about an industry (for instance, hospitality) after an intern has completed internship. Skills such as communication, customer relations, networking, teamwork, time management, problem-solving have identified in the literature to mean experiences from internships (Beggs, et al., 2008; Busby, 2003). Whilst Quinn et al. (1990) conceptualized experience to mean management competencies developed by interns during internships, Schmitt (1999) observed that internship experiences are categorised into sensory, affective, creative-cognitive, physical and relational. In the nutshell, experience could mean how interns feel after taking part in internships (Chen & Chen, 2011; Hou, 2018; Lam & Ching, 2007).

### **Career Intentions**

Career intention has become an important subject for discussion in recent years (Chuang & Dellmann-Jenkins 2010; Song & Chon 2012; Wan, Wong, & Kong 2014). Of particular interest is hospitality and tourism students' decision to pursue a career in the industry upon graduation. This has resulted in several researchers delving into the concept not only to understand the concept but also to unravel the factors influencing hospitality and tourism students' decision to work in the industry or otherwise (Chen & Shen, 2012; Kim & Park, 2013; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). Such understanding is critical to both industry and academia (Lee & Chao, 2013) since it helps industry to put in place

measures to ensure that the industry is attractive to students whilst it helps academia to revise curriculum to meet industry's expectation of the calibre of students to churn out.

The concept could be understood from many perspectives. Firstly, by decoupling the concept to two independent concepts – intention and career. Intention, according to Ajzen (1991) is the amount of effort one is willing to exert to attain a goal. The effort demands careful deliberation and focuses on possible consequences (Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee & Welch, 2001) before the final decision is made. Career, on the other hand, has been conceptualised as the unfolding sequence of a person's work experiences throughout life (Arnold & Cohen, 2008). An earlier meaning put to career by Arthur and Rousseau (1996) is the accumulation of each job during one's professional life. Putting together, career intention is the willingness to commit one's professional life to a particular work throughout the person's life.

Also, career intention could be explained from the perspective of career decision making. Though career decision was used way back in 1909 by Frank Parsons it was not until the 1950s that the concept was formerly accepted (Ghuangpeng, 2011). According to Patton and McMahon (1999), the conceptualisation of career decisions was synonymous to how people chose a vocation. In light of this, Sharf (2002) defined career decision making as the process that describes or explains the choices that a person makes when selecting a particular career. The process results from a person's beliefs and perception held through the accumulation of knowledge and experiences (Nabi, Holden & Walmsley, 2006) on the career in question.

In context, career intention relates to the extent to which hospitality and tourism interns are willing to commit or pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry upon graduation. It could also mean the willingness of hospitality and tourism students to develop careers in the industry. The intention of students committing their career to the hospitality and tourism industry is influenced by successful work experience (Chen & Shen, 2012). Notably among such work experiences is internship, which provides students with the necessary work experiences whilst they are in school. For many students, the dominant motivation for pursuing a degree or diploma in a higher educational institution is to obtain a career (Docherty & Fernandez, 2014; Fidgeon, 2010) in the specific programmes they choose. The NACE's inclusion of "make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths" (NACE, 2018a; p. 13) gives credence to the fact that, internships become the platform where students evaluate their decisions to commit career to the industry or not.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Internship is largely defined from an experiential learning perspective (Busby, 2003; Collins, 2002; Ross & Sheehan, 2013) with some authors proposing that the term is a component of experiential learning (Moore, 2010). This is so because internship provides students with practical learning experience by bridging the gap between classroom learning and what pertains on the job market. Given this, many learning theories can be used to explain internship. Kolb's (1974) and Bandura's (1977) theories on experiential learning are adapted for the current study. Also, the expectation-confirmation theory (Oliver, 1977) and the social cognitive career theory (Lent, Brown &



Hackett, 1994; 1996) were used to explain the concepts of expectation and career intentions respectively.

### **Experiential Learning Theory**

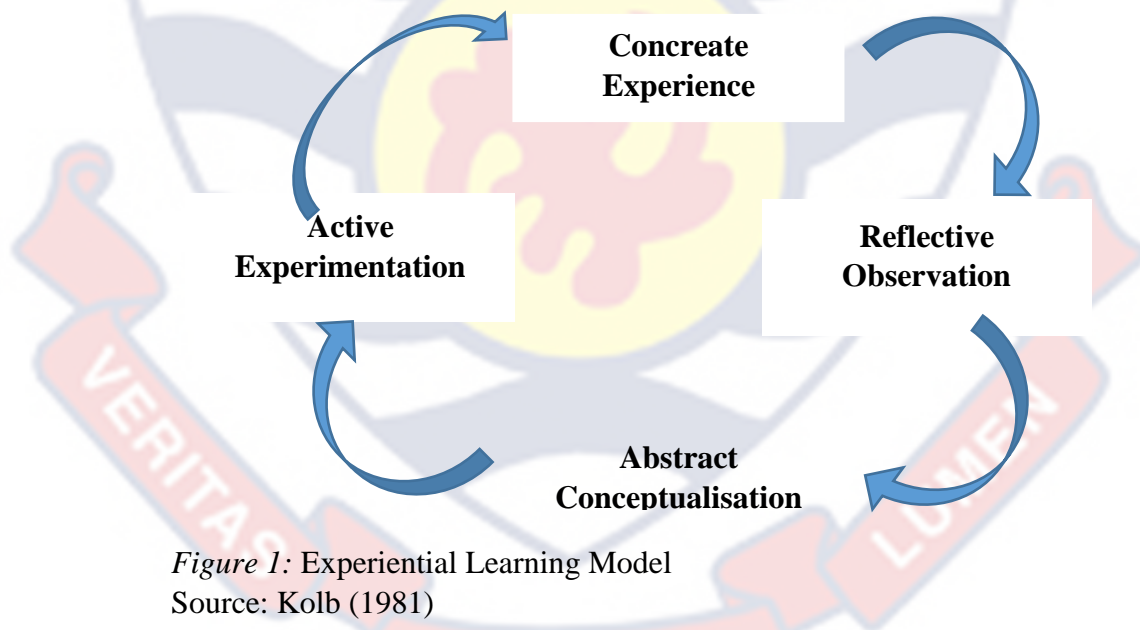
The Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was developed by Kolb (1974) and it is rooted in the writings of philosophers such as Aristotle. In propounding the ELT, Kolb (1974) relied heavily on previous studies such as that of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget, William James and others (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). Dewey had previously proposed that knowledge gained from traditional learning approaches was not sufficient. According to him, knowledge should be attained from what he termed “progressive education”, a process that incorporates actual experiences with traditional pedagogy (Dewey, 1938). Dewey’s theory proposes that when people are exposed to experiences outside the classroom, they learn from each other through experiences by reflecting and understanding what has been taught in the classroom, hence, experiential learning (Neill, 2005).

Flowing from this, Kolb (1984) defines experiential learning as "the process by which knowledge is created through the transformation of experience; knowledge results from the combination of understanding and transforming experience" (p. 41). This conceptualisation distinguishes the ELT from other theories on learning. It places experience at the centre of learning whilst emphasising learning by doing (Northern Illinois University Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center, 2012). The theory is built on six main assumptions: (1) learning is best conceived as a process; (2) all learning is continuous; (3) learning requires resolution of conflicts; (4) learning is a holistic process; (5) learning results from synergetic transactions between the person the



environment and learning create knowledge (Bos, McCabe & Johnson, 2015; Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Further to these assumptions, Kolb developed the ELT model, which consists of two dialectically related mediums of understanding experience and two dialectically related mediums of transferring experience. The model proposes that the learner goes through four stages (see Figure 1) of concrete experience (CE), reflective observation (RO), abstract conceptualisation (AC), before reaching the final stage of active experimentation (AE). In essence, the learner is first taken through the experience after which the learner reflects on and thinks about the experiences before finally acting on the knowledge gained through the experience (Kolb 1984, 1995).



*Figure 1: Experiential Learning Model*  
Source: Kolb (1981)

The theory has been widely applied to many hospitality and tourism curriculum and internship studies (Bos et al., 2015; Bower, 2014; Lei, Lam & Lourenco, 2015; Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Handbook, 2017; Ou, 2015; Zopiatis & Constianti, 2012). Hospitality and tourism education has long been recognised as vocational or practical and as such needs hands-on

experiences to help students compare learning in the classroom environment and industry-based experiential learning (Scott, 2008).

Students on internship require practical experience, responsibilities and diversity in experience (Stirling, Kerr, MacPherson, Banwell, Bandyaly & Battaglia, 2017). These are captured as concrete experiences and defined by Kolb et al. (2001, p. 3) as "getting experience and perceiving new information through experiencing the concrete, tangible, felt qualities of the world, relying on the senses and immersing in concrete reality". This can be achieved in several ways.

Student interns must be rotated through the various departments and sessions within the facility to ensure that they get the opportunity to learn activities at these departments and sessions whilst gaining different experiences under different supervisors. Supervisors must ensure interns are given written down responsibilities and allocate adequate time which will be sufficient for the responsibilities assigned to the interns at the different departments/sections.

Kolb's (1984) model on experiential learning further postulates that learners should do reflective observation and active application of new ideas. Reflective observation connotes mentor shadowing, training and orientation, writing of reports, and discussion with supervisors regarding experiences (Stirling et al., 2017). These specific activities lie in the domain of supervisors. Tse (2010) observed that internship supervision plays a critical role in ensuring interns gain necessary experiences from internship. Since educational institutions may not have control over internship supervision at hospitality and tourism facilities, Akomaning et al. (2011) proposed a closer collaboration between academia and industry. This will go a long way in ensuring that interns

are given the necessary shadowing and training. Pre-internship preparation in the form of orientation from academic institution builds interns' confidence and help them to reflect well during internship (Jiang & Tribe, 2009; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013).

Finally, learners' ability to apply new ideas, curriculum learning to internship and skills into internship, as captured on the active experimentation stage of the model, largely depends on the factors earlier alluded to. If managed well, it results in interns having satisfaction with internship experiences (Chen, Ku, Shyr, Chen & Chou, 2009; Fong et al., 2014; Lam & Ching 2007; Singh & Dutta 2010), enhanced image about the industry and possibility of committing their future career to the industry (Chen & Shen, 2012; Rothman & Sisman, 2016; Yang et al., 2012; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013).

### **Social Learning Theory**

The Social Learning Theory (STL) was developed by Bandura (1977). The theory has been extensively used to inform policies in the fields of education, health and social policy and has been touted as one of the greatest theories underpinning learning and development (Nabiri 2012). The SLT states that:

*Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous if people had to rely solely on the effects of their actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behaviour is learned observationally through modelling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed (Bandura, 1977; p. 22).*

In essence, individuals learn through observation; learning takes place when the individual interacts with others in a social context. By interacting with others, people tend to observe the actions and behaviours of others and thereby assimilating such behaviours and later on, putting them into practice.

McLeod (2016) observed that the SLT serves as a bridge between behavioural learning and cognitive learning theories. The mediating role of the SLT, according to Ebel (1977) is termed as the reciprocal determinism; an indication that behaviour is influenced by personality and the environment. Personality in this context refers to both the one doing the observation (mentee) and the one being observed (mentor) whilst the environment is the social context within which the observation takes place. Commenting on the STL, Schunk (2012) indicated that the theory is about human learning that takes place in a social environment. He further stressed that people learn by observation which then results in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

From the theory, learning takes place when the requirements of attention, retention, replication and motivation are adhered to (Bandura, 1977). During the observation process, the one doing the observation must pay critical attention to whatever is observed. Horsburgh and Ippolito (2018) collaborate this assertion by indicating that learners need to be very observant since this goes a long way in helping them to reproduce what they observed later on. This is attainable in an environment where the learner perceives that what is being observed is 'prestigious and attractive' (Nabavi, 2012).

Whatever is observed should be retained at the second stage of learning. Bandura (1977) refers to this is the cognitive element of the theory and concludes that mental factors are involved in learning, as opposed to the pure



behaviourist theory which downplays cognitive factors by emphasising the environment as the chief influencing factor on learning. McLeod (2016) affirms the importance of cognitive factors in the leaning process. He maintains that without the cognitive dimension, observational learning is not possible. At the third stage, the person doing the observation should have the opportunity to replicate whatever they have observed. This is very essential because it affords the platform to translate the knowledge gained at the attention and retention phases into action (McLeod, 2016). Finally, the learner is motivated to demonstrate or imitate what they have learned. This might vary from one learner to the other because learners tend to differ in their abilities to observe, retained and replicate.

Bandura's (1977) theory is very useful in assessing hospitality and tourism internships (Irby, 1986). Horsburgh and Ippolito (2018) concluded that the SLT's usefulness in providing a framework for internship lies in the theory's ability to help understand the observational learning and modelling during student internships. One of the key forms of learning for student interns during hospitality and tourism internships is through observation. Interns are placed under the direct supervision of industry personnel who serve as mentors for the interns, who in turn observe and learn from their supervisors. This process has been described as psychological matching (Gibson, 2004; Jung, 1986). By extension, interns compare their cognitive abilities (probably from what they have learnt in the classroom) with the behavioural patterns they observed from their supervisors to aid them in their learning. This reinforces Bao and Fang's (2014) assertion that internship bridges the gap between theory and practice.



The theory postulates that learning takes place through attention, retention, replication and motivation (Bandura, 1977). For the intern to pay maximum attention and focus on learning from the supervisor (mentor), certain conditions should be ensured. The intern's level of preparedness to participate in the internship programme is very critical. However, this is a function of both academic adequacy and psychological confidence of the intern (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013) which has been found to have a positive influence on the internship experiences of interns (Chen, Ku, Shry, Chen & Chou, 2009). There is the need for orientation before interns embark on internship; both at the school level and when they arrive at the hospitality or tourism facility. During such orientation sessions, interns are told what is expected of them, duties and responsibilities, work demands, as well as rewards are clarified (Kreitner, Kinicki, & Buelens, 2002). This will result in helping the intern well integrate into the working space whilst alleviating any potential shocks (Singh & Dutta, 2010; Zopiatis, 2007). For most of them, their first interaction with the industry is through internship.

Beyond this point, interns' perception of the role of supervisors is very critical in aiding them to learn through retention, replication and motivation. Supervisors are expected to be in constant contact and communication with interns. Mensah et al. (2020; p. 3) observed that "the quality of the relationships between an employee (intern) and the supervisor can be a source of motivation for the employee (intern) to achieve higher performance and develop positive work attitudes". Supervisors are expected to assign duties to interns to help interns replicate what they have observed from the supervisors.

Typical scenarios include interns placed under supervision at the front desk at hospitality or tourism facility during internship. After observing the front desk supervisor check-in and check-out guests, receive calls, mails and enquiries from guests, it becomes apparent for the front desk supervisor to gradually assign similar duties for the intern to replicate similar activities. Similarly, interns attached to housekeeping, food and beverage, among others should be given the chance to perform activities they have observed over time. Narayanan et al. (2010) reiterated that what makes students learn during internship is the presence of a mentoring relationship between supervisors and interns. Earlier on, Anson and Forsberg (1990) had opined that the mentoring role played by supervisors are impactful even within the shortest possible interaction between the mentor and the intern. The result is that student interns will learn and have positive internship experience as posited by D'Abate, Youndt and Wenzel (2009) that supervisor support during internship indicates a positive relationship with internship satisfaction among interns.

### **Summary of Experiential Learning Theories**

In summary, Kolb's (1984) ELT emphasises learning through experience. This, according to the theory could be achieved through four stages: concrete experiences, abstract conceptualisation, reflective observation and active experimentation (Kolb 1984, 1995). That is, the learner is first taken through experience after which the learner reflects on and thinks about the experiences before finally acting on the knowledge gained through the experience. The SLT by Bandura (1977) on the other hand serves as a bridge between behavioural learning and cognitive learning theories. The theory stipulates that learning takes place in the social context through observation

(Ebel, 1997; McLeod, 2016). Bandura (1977) opined that learning takes place through attention, retention, reproduction and motivation.

It is, however, instructive to note that the two theories share similarities on the approach to learning. Both theories propose that learning takes place through experience, in other words, learning by doing. Bandura (1977) indicated that people are more focused and learn when the same or similar task is given to them in a new environment, preferable, outside the classroom environment. In his theory, Bandura conceptualised this as “attention” which is similar to Kolb’s (1984) conceptualisation of “concrete experiences”. Kolb et al (2001) observed that learning takes place when the learner has a concrete, tangible, felt qualities of the world. Both theories indicate that the traditional form of learning by listening, reading or watching is not sufficient. Rather, the learner must be exposed to learning experiences that are practical oriented.

Further to this, Bandura's theory indicates that the second stage of learning is retention. Specifically, the theory stipulates that learners' recalling and applying abilities occur when the learner is faced with a situation akin to what has been learnt at the initial stage of attention (Bandura, 1977). This is exemplified in Kolb's (1984) ELT as abstract conceptualisation. That is, repeating real workplace scenarios. In essence, the learner reflects on the concrete learning experiences and should be able to do the same or similar when given the opportunity. Both theories allude to the fact that learners should be motivated to reproduce or replicate the experiences they have learnt. The SLT postulates that learners are motivated by punishment or reward whilst the ELT indicates that learners are motivated by the positive and sometimes, the negative outcomes of the learning experience (Bandura, 1977; Kolb, 1984).

In a comparative study on the role of mentoring within the ELT and SLT, Torren, Salinas and Floyd (2017) concluded that Kolb's (1984) conceptualisation of the learning process to consist concrete experience, reflection, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation is equivalent to Bandura's (1977) learning process of attention, retention, reproduction and motivation respectively. The authors further alluded to the fact that both theories emphasise mentoring through the respective learning processes.

Despite the aforementioned similarities in both theories, one key difference between the two theories lies with the space within which learning takes place. Kolb's experiential learning places emphasis on the individual as the main actor in the process of learning thereby belittling the social space within which learning takes place. As put forward by Holman, Pavlica and Thorpe (1997), individual learning cannot be separated from the social and historical position of the learner. However, social learning proponents such as Albert Bandura, are of the view that social context should be embedded in the learning process. Holman et al (1997) re-echoed this notion when he critiqued the ELT as having emphasised the individual and eventually 'decontextualising' the learning process.

The discussions on the two theories have established the fact that both theories apply to 'learning' through internships. Both theories allude that mentoring through supervision during internship is critical in ensuring that interns have the conducive environment for a memorable internship experience. According to Godshalk and Sosik (2000) and Scandura and Williams (2004), the industry environment provides both experiential and social atmosphere for practical learning experiences. Jiang and Tribe (2009), as well as Zopiatis and



Theocharous (2013), posit that the internship experience is a function of both pre-internship experiences and industry-based experiences. Given this, Bandura's (1977) and Kolb's (1984) theories are adapted for the current study due to their complementing roles in ensuring that internships provide both cognitive and social learning platforms for interns to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

### **Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory**

The Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (ECT) was developed by Richard L. Oliver as a cognitive theory that seeks to explain how consumers behave towards the repurchase of products or services based on their expectation and the performance of the product or service in question (Oliver 1977). The ECT is one of the main theories within the expectancy-confirmation paradigms that have been used to measure consumer satisfaction. The theory explains how expectations and experiences are combined to produce customer satisfaction (Brown, Venkatesh, Kuruzovich & Massey, 2008). It has also been widely described as having two phases consisting of expectations and perception/performance (Oliver, 1980; 1997).

At the first phase, consumers construct their expectations of the products or services. Oliver (1977) conceptualised this expectation as the attributes that the consumer anticipates with the service or product. Consumers frame their expectations from previous experience, availability of information on the product or service and recommendations from others (Kotler, Bowen & Markens, 2014). Expectations can either be realistic or unrealistically high. Realistic expectations have been found to lead to “met” or exceeded expectations whilst unrealistic expectations can lead to negative outcomes such



as disappointment (Barber & Odean, 2001; Caliendo & Huang, 2008; Scheinkman & Xiong, 2003).

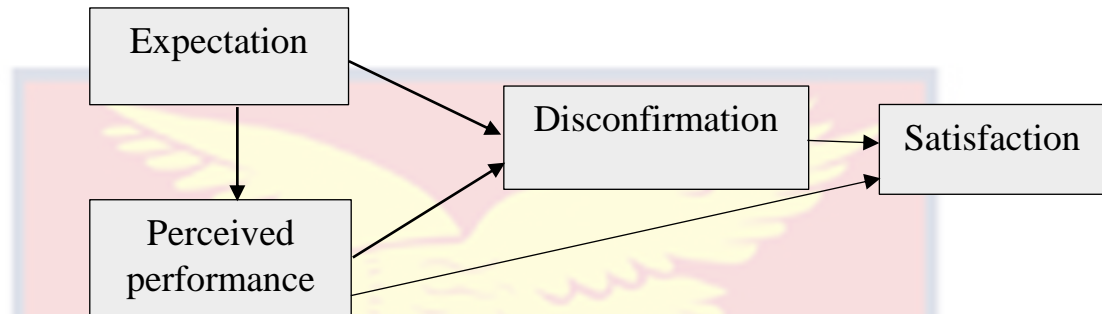


Figure 2: Expectancy-Disconfirmation Model

Source: Oliver (1977)

After expectations are formed, consumers moved to the second stage, that is, where actual consumption of the service or the product takes place. Consumers then match their expectations against their experience leading to a perception of the actual performance of the service or product (Oliver, 1977, 1980). Luoma-Aho et al. (2013) observed that after ‘experiencing’ the product or service, consumers go through a mental model of comparing and interpreting their experiences based on their expectation. This, according to Oliver (1977) is referred to as “disconfirmation of belief”. A positive disconfirmation occurs when consumers perceive the service or product to have met or exceeded their expectation, resulting in satisfaction. On the other hand, a negative disconfirmation arises when consumers perceive their expectation as exceeding the actual performance of the service or product, leading to dissatisfaction (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015; Lai & Hitchcock, 2017; Lai, 2015; Oliver, 1980; 1997). A consumer’s intention to re-use a service or repurchase a product is based on their satisfaction with the service or product (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Oliver, 1980; 1993).

The ECT could be applied to internships to determine the sort of expectation interns hold before participating in the internship and also understand the actual experiences they derived from internship. This will help establish interns' satisfaction from internship and aid in measuring interns' post-internship experience to pursuing a career in the hospitality and tourism industry or otherwise. With specific reference to internship, Reinagel and Gerlach (2015) observed that one of the key factors leading to a positive internship experience includes what students expect to realise from practical exposure such as internship. Interns' expectations may include gaining real work experiences, practising new skills and developing soft and hard skills (Kim & Park, 2013; Ruhanita et al., 2012; Lam & Ching, 2007; Zopiatis, 2007). Such expectations are formed from academic preparation, previous internship experience, advice from other students who might have participated in internships (Croes & Hara, 2014; Feigelson, 2010; Kuncel, Hezlett & Ones 2004; Neelam et al., 2018).

It is worth noting that, expectation can only be realised after interns have participated in internship. Interns' should, however, be realistic in their expectations. One key way of helping interns to have realistic expectation is through pre-internship orientation (Auth & Auth, 1990), frequent interaction between internship coordinators and students before internships (Eyler, 1993) and giving internship manuals to students (Moghaddam, 2011). Positive internship experiences lead to positive disconfirmation. It is therefore important for academic institutions to put in measures to help their student interns' gain the maximum benefits from their internship experiences.

In line with this, a well-structured internship programme that promotes collaboration between academia and industry; a clear, unambiguous

communication between all the three stakeholders as well mentoring and supervision of interns should be instituted (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018; Juznic and Pymm, 2010; Rangan & Natarajarathinam, 2014; Renganathan, Ambri Bin Abdul Karim & Su Li, 2012).

Proponents of performance-based paradigm such as Cronin and Taylor (1992) have raised questions on the applicability of the ECT. The major critique relates to the measurement of satisfaction as a measure of the difference between expectation and performance/perception. From the perspective of performance-based paradigm, satisfaction should be measured by using the actual experiences of consumers without recourse to their expectations before consumption (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Fragoso & Espinoza, 2017; Palese & Usai, 2018; Tse & Wilton, 1988).

Despite the critique, the ECT was deemed fit for the current study. The study seeks to measure the expectation of interns before they participate in hospitality and tourism internships and their actual experiences from the internships. This will aid in evaluating whether interns' expectations will be met after the internship experiences. Positive internship experience will give interns a positive image of the industry and likely lead to interns deciding to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry.

### **Social Cognitive Career Theory**

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) developed by Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994, 1996) explains the relationships between career interests, goals and choices on one side and self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations (Abbot, 2001). The SCCT is one of the social approaches used in explaining career decision-making and is primarily built on two main social

theories of career-decision. These include Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory and Krumboltz's (1979) social learning theory of career decision-making.

The SCCT proposes that an individual's internal and external/environmental factors shape the individual's self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals (Sharf, 2006). Self-efficacy is defined by Lent (2005, p.104) as "a dynamic set of beliefs that are linked to particular performance domains and activities". Outcome expectations relate the perception about the likely consequences or outcomes for performing a particular activity or behaviour (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2002). These may comprise the extrinsic rewards that will accrue to the individual for performing a task. Goals, as captured in the theory, is about the intention to engage in a particular activity, that is, the specific activity one wants to engage in (Lent, 2005). These cognitive variables (self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals) are influenced by other variables within the environment such as gender, ethnicity, social support and barriers (Lent et al., 1996, Lent, 2005). Whilst environmental support such as having access to mentors/supervisors will aid the individual to achieve his goals, barriers such social barriers and financial pressure may hinder the individual's ability to adapt to a career of choice (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2017; 2016).

Several studies in science, maths and entrepreneurship have applied the SCCT to evaluate the vocational decision making of students (Atadero, Rambo-Hernandez, & Balgopal, 2015; Lent et al., 2017; 2016; Mueller, Hall, & Miro, 2015; Segal, Borgia & Schoenfeld, 2002). Authors such as (Appietu et al., 2019; Sabirin & La Are, 2018) have also studied hospitality/tourism internships and career intentions from the perspective of the SCCT. From these studies, it could



be postulated that the vocational and practical nature of hospitality and tourism programmes makes it possible to offer students the much needed educational experiences. This potentially allows students to access the industry and thereby shaping their perception of whether to advance their careers in the hospitality/tourism industry or otherwise. Ghuangpeng (2011) observed that self-efficacy and outcome expectation is a function of exposure to learning experiences and that, the interaction between these two concepts results in career interests and choices. The learning experiences as indicated by Ghuangpeng (2011) is a composed of both the academic learning and learning during internships. According to Appietu et al. (2019; p. 117) SCCT is “relevant to the study of students’ career choice in hospitality employment after their exposure to industrial internships”. Based on these, the SCCT is adapted for the study. This will aid in measuring student intentions to join the hospitality/tourism industry after their internship experiences.

### **Summary**

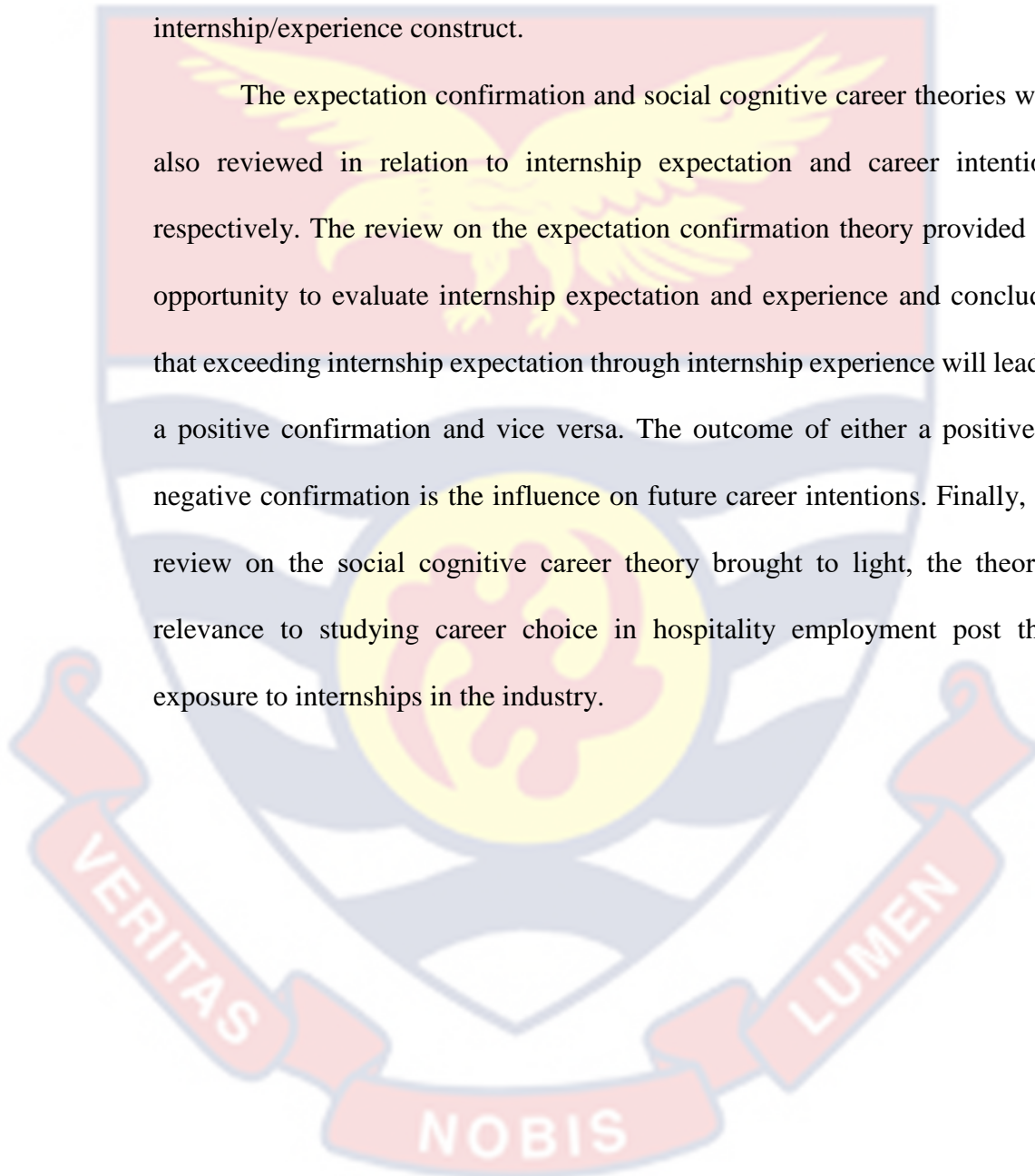
The chapter reviewed literature on the key concepts as well as the theories underpinning the study. The history of internship was traced from the early developmental stages of the concept around 600BC till it became an academic programme in engineering to the time it was incorporated into the curriculum of higher learning institutions. One important observation was that the increased interest in internships led to the proliferation of research into the concept of internship.

The concepts of internship, expectation, experience and career intention were conceptualised. Also, the theories underpinning these concepts were reviewed. With respect to internship experience, experiential learning and social



learning theories were examined. Conclusions emanating from these theories were that both theories were useful due to their complementary roles of helping understand the cognitive and social dimensions of the internship experience. Given this, both theories were deemed fit and thus, adapted for internship/experience construct.

The expectation confirmation and social cognitive career theories were also reviewed in relation to internship expectation and career intentions respectively. The review on the expectation confirmation theory provided the opportunity to evaluate internship expectation and experience and concluded that exceeding internship expectation through internship experience will lead to a positive confirmation and vice versa. The outcome of either a positive or negative confirmation is the influence on future career intentions. Finally, the review on the social cognitive career theory brought to light, the theory's relevance to studying career choice in hospitality employment post their exposure to internships in the industry.



## CHAPTER THREE

### EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF PRE-INTERNSHIP ACTIVITIES, EXPECTATIONS, EXPERIENCES AND CAREER INTENTIONS

#### Introduction

Chapter three reviews the relevant literature on pre-internship activities as well as internship expectations, experiences, interns' intentions to pursue careers in the hospitality and tourism industry post internship. The chapter further examines the factors influencing students' internship experiences and collaborates the linkages between pre-internship preparations and internship expectations; pre-internship preparations and internship experiences; internship expectations and experiences as well as that of internship experiences and intentions to pursue hospitality and tourism careers post internship experiences. Finally, the conceptual framework guiding the study is discussed.

#### Pre-Internship Activities

Internships in general have been found to follow a logical sequence of pre-, actual-, and post-internship activities (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). In view of this, academic institutions that organise structured internships (Robinson et al., 2016) are expected to adequately prepare their students at the pre-internship stage of the internship programme in order to make the students ready for the actual internship exercise. Pre-internship preparations/activities refer to the procedures and activities put in place by academic institutions before sending students out for industrial internships (Karunaratne & Perera, 2019). Studies indicate that hospitality industry professionals are of the view that academia does not commit enough resources to adequately prepare their students before students embark on internships, making it difficult for interns to

adapt well when posted to industry for practical training (Kim & Park, 2013; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2007).

In the literature, academic adequacy, training/seminars, placement procedure for selecting training centers for interns and psychological confidence of interns are found to be the main components of pre-internship events which put interns in the right frame before undertaking internships (Karunaratne & Perera, 2019; Yuan, 2018; Yue & Lin, 2018; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). Specifically, academic institutions, through the students' internship coordinators organise pre-internship seminars for students who are due for internship whilst ensuring pre-internship courses are part of the overall curriculum for which students are supposed to register (Yuan, 2018).

For instance, at the Arizona State University, Bender (2016) reports that the regular three-credit summer internship has been split into two components – a two credit internship at industry and a one credit pre-internship seminar. As opposed to career development seminars which are organised post internships or emphasising on actual internship itself (Sirinterlikci & Kerzmann, 2013), pre-internship seminar is expected to offer the students the needed exposure prior to actual internship (Bender, 2016). Similarly, the Adelphi University places importance on pre-internship preparation of students who are due for internship. Such students are expected to enrol in an internship preparatory seminar which is intended to inculcate better learning and experiential outcomes via a hands-on approach with the aim of making the students adequately equipped for the actual internships (Adelphi University, 2020).

During the pre-internship seminars, Bhattacharya and Neelam (2018) observed that, issues such as supervision and post-internship assessment are made known to the students, thereby providing the impetus for a valuable internship experience. One key ingredient for successful pre-internship seminars is communication (Feigelson, 2010). Neelam et al. (2018) observed that the role and scope of internship as well as expectations regarding interns' behaviour should be clearly communicated to interns before internship begins. In addition, the objectives for the internship are clearly communicated to interns and where possible, academic institutions should involve personnel from industry to engage the students on issues pertaining to organisational culture and policies and industry expectation of interns (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018; Jack et al., 2017; Lam & Ching, 2007). The essence is to clear any uncertainty and ambiguity in the minds of the students so that they have a successful internship experience.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (2013) suggested that pre-internship activities should take the form of actual internship activities in the form of visiting job site, job-shadowing, among others. These could take place both during practical course sessions on campuses and outside the university campuses and should be well catered for in the academic curriculum (Jackling & Natoli, 2015; Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, 2013). Owing to its importance, Graham and Kiraly (2014) encourage academic institutions where actual internship experiences are inadequate or totally absent to ensure that the frequency and duration for pre-internship activities are adequate to cater for the non-existence or inadequate internship. This is to



ensure that pre-internships activities cater for the skills development of students due to either the inadequacy or lack of actual internships.

Though actual internship has been found to help interns develop skills needed for the job market, research has shown that skills development of interns can be enhanced if students are well prepared at the pre-internship stage. Academic institutions are therefore expected to be familiar with the demands and requirements needed for students to be successful during internships and respond by giving their students the needed pre-internship preparation (Jackling & Natoli, 2015; Maertz et al., 2014). If well structured, pre-internship events help in developing the competencies of interns as well as clarifying roles, duties and possible rewards from the internship exercise (Singh & Dutta, 2010; Yuan, 2018). In the long run, such activities ensure that interns are well assimilated into the work environment since for most of these interns, internships serve as the first point of having any interaction with industry (Bhattacharya, & Neelam, 2018).

In their study on the impact interns' preparatory package on internship, McKenzie and Mellis (2018) reported that 93% of the respondents see the internship preparation package as beneficial in providing enhanced knowledge prior to internship, reduction in anxiety as well as building confidence in them. Based on this, they recommended the implementation of a transitional course in the form of pre-internship seminar for students prior to their participation in internship exercises. Yuan's (2018) study on pre-internship activities concluded that orientation, theoretic base and conceptual framework were main specific activities students are carried through prior to engaging in internship schemes. Whilst orientation ensures the development of interns' professional competence

through the amalgamation of knowledge and skills, the theoretic base is responsible to the gradual transmission of theoretical knowledge from the curriculum to the skills and attributes required by interns' during internships. Finally, the conceptual framework establishes a “zone of proximal development”, where students are consciously taught the needed skills not only for internship, but for real work experiences (Yuan, 2018). The conceptual framework for pre-internship activities enables students to develop their professional or workplace competence (Graham & Kiraly; 2014) thereby helping students to acquire knowledge and skills during pre-internship seminars. In a study to examine hospitality internship practices in Cyprus, Zopiatis and Theocharous (2013) found college education (curriculum) and psychological confidence as the main attributes that prepared students before they participated in internship. Specifically, college education and college courses were found to have built the psychological confidence of the students, hence making them confident and ready to participate in the internship programme. The study further recommended that academic institutions should endeavour to put in place adequate pre-internship activities in order to prepare their students and make them ready for the actual internship experiences (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013).

In fact, research has shown that interns who participated in pre-internship preparation courses with hands-on experiences were found to perform better than their colleagues who did not participate in such courses. Such interns were seen to have adequate knowledge and skills and were confident during the actual internship experiences (Blackmore, Austin, Lopushinsky & Donnon, 2014; Wayne, Cohen, Singer, Moazed, Barsuk, Lyons,

Butter, & McGaghie, 2014). Such interns are academically prepared for internships because they might have the ability to transfer and apply the acquired knowledge from school to the internship (Narayanan et al., 2010). In the nutshell, internship programmes should inculcate a training or seminar prior to the internship exercise (Seyitoğlu & Yirik, 2015).

### **Internship Expectations**

Interns' expectations from their internship experiences have been studied across a number of disciplines, particularly within the hospitality, tourism and business (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018; Lin & Anantharajah, 2019; Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017, Hardie, Almeida & Ross 2018; Hou, 2018, Jack et al., 2017; Kim & Park, 2013; Neelam et al., 2018). These studies reveal what constitute interns' expectations from internships and concluded on varying outcomes on whether students' expectations were met or otherwise.

Students' internship expectations have been found to include development of work-related relational and technological skills, well-structured supervision at internship sites and a higher degree of challenging tasks (Sauder, Mudrick, Strassle, Maitoza, Malcarne & Evans, 2019; Vélez & Giner, 2015; Yiu & Law, 2012). Lin and Anantharajah (2019) observed that the expectation of interns prior to their hospitality internship in Malaysia included ability, knowledge, value and influence. Using the Pearson correlation analysis, overall expectation was regressed on the four expectation and found significant differences between the four factors. This is an indication of a high expectation of interns for these factors.

In a study to explore interns' expectation of hospitality internships, Hou (2018) concluded that interns have expectations about their school, workplace (institution), themselves, internship itself and future jobs prior to participating in internships in hospitality facilities in Taiwan. Specifically, the study found "reasonable pay" as the top expectation of interns from the industry whilst "devoting myself to the work" was found to be one of the main interns' expectations about themselves. The study concluded that a strong correlation existed among the five expectation variables and that interns' overall expectation was generally high for all five variables.

Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017) examined the expectations of hospitality and tourism interns during an in-house internship in Thailand. Employing a qualitative study through content analysis, the study concluded that interns' expectations of their internships relates to their anticipated challenges as well as learning and experience outcomes. In relation to the former, interns expected 'conflicts within teams' and 'hotel function and environment'. However, 'hands-on experience', 'understanding the industry', 'having a new experience' and excitement' and 'learning team work' were identified as interns' expectation on learning outcomes. Findings from the study gives a clear indication that aside learning outcomes, interns expect some level of challenges from their internship experience, bringing to fore, the importance of pre-internship seminars and training sessions to discuss students' expectations before embarking on internships.

In an earlier investigation into students' satisfaction from hospitality internship programmes in Greece, Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2013) observed that interns' expectations prior to their participation in structured



internships included working in a professional environment, compensation, academic credit, teamwork, good supervision, networking as well as job offer from the same institutions after graduation. According to Rothman and Sisman (2016) students participate in internship programmes with the expectation to confirm their career paths and also to learn more about job functions and the industry. These expectations help students in deciding which industry or job functions to consider or eliminate when considering future career paths (Swanson & Tomkovick, 2012) or help students to crystallise their vocational self-concept, as put forth by Drewery, Nevison and Pretti (2016). In a systematic review of the literature on internship expectations, Vélez and Giner (2015) summarised interns' expectation of internship to include skills (job, relational and technical), work-experience and job placement, challenging and meaningful assignments, good supervision and compensation.

The study of Hardie et al. (2018) collaborates findings from earlier studies. In their study carried out among business students in Australia, gaining real life work experience, increasing knowledge and experience and validation of career choice were the three most cited pre-internship expectations by the interns. In a recent study, Morales and Jacobson (2019) categorised internship expectations into highly and lowly rated expectations. Using six different Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), the study found hands-on experience, networking and improving on job skills as highly rated expectations whilst job experience, new skills, compensation and having fun were listed as lowly rated internship expectations. In fact, research has shown that, compensation as a means of internship expectation is on the decline (Department of Employment, 2016; Seibert & Wilson, 2013) probably due to the emergence of structured

internships which tends to be compulsory and has the element of assigning academic credit to students for participating in them. Aside this, the decline in seeking financial gains from internships can be attributed to expectation to have relevant work-related experiences before graduation (Cameron, 2013; Grant-Smith & McDonald, 2016) and the possibility of gaining full-employment from host organisations (Loudon, 2015; Stewart & Owens, 2013; Tepper & Holt, 2015).

Having expectations from internships is however not a guarantee that these expectations would be realised. According to Jack et al. (2017), there is high disparity between interns' expectation from internship and what they mostly experience during actual internships. Alluding to this, Neelam et al. (2018) and Koc et al. (2014) opined that the expectations of interns prior to internships can be unrealistic, leading to unmet expectations during the internship itself. However, interns' expectations have been found to evolve and adjustments are made to previously held expectations in course of the internship and sometimes, just before the internship experience is ended. In examining expectations of interns prior, during and after a 12-week internship exercise, Hardie et al. (2018) confirmed the evolving nature of interns' expectation. Though the sampled population listed real life experience, increased knowledge and experience and validation of career choice as their expectations in that order, the study found that by the middle of the internship experience, 40% had varied their expectations either because their initial expectations were not fully met or not met at all. Upon completion, 20% were found to have modified their initial expectations. The significance of this finding is that, conditions

prevailing at the internship facility can cause interns to either vary or modify their expectation before completing the internship exercise.

Hou (2018) identified conflicting expectations as one of the main reasons why interns are forced to modify their initial expectations. Conflicting expectations occur when the expectations of interns are at variance with that of industry or internship supervisors. However, employers at times seem to have different expectations than what interns themselves have. It is therefore incumbent on academia to strengthen their relationship with industry in order to know the expectations of industry concerning students on internships. For instance, whilst industry expects interns to have positive attitudes, good communication skills and be willing and enthusiastic, that of interns might be academic credit and compensation (Hou, 2018; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2013); leading to conflicting expectations (Fok & Yeung, 2016). Hu (2018) advised “it becomes crucial to bridge the gap ... even the gap between employers’ and students’ expectations ...” (p. 533). In view of this, Albu, Calu and Guş (2016) as well as Deloitte (2013) have confirmed the importance of bridging the expectations of both interns and industry. Obviously, this can be achieved when students are adequately prepared through well-thought pre-internship seminars.

Rothman and Sisman (2016) in their study to examine the impact of internship on career consideration among students in the University of San Diego, California reported a combination of met and unmet expectations. Using a sample size of 198 students, the study concluded that 54% of the respondents had their expectations on job functions at host organisations met whilst 45% had their expectation of working with the same host organisations being met. In

essence, 45% and 55% had their expectations on job functions and working with same host organisations not met. Overall, the study showed that interns expectation on career fit was largely met.

However, Pereira, Silva, Esteves, Ribeiro, Guedes, Leão, Soares (2016) observed that interns' expectations on building personal, technical and soft skills were met. From the study, Pereira et al (2016) reported an average mean of 4 for all the 22 items used in measuring students' expectations from internship. Further to this, studies on interns' expectation of developing competencies indicate that these expectations were met (Albu et al. 2016; Cheong et al., 2014; Yu, Churyk & Chang, 2013). Other studies, notably, Lin and Anantharajah (2019) and Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil (2017) reported that expectations of interns were not met after the internship experience. Validating results of previous researches on hospitality students' internships (see Cho, 2006; Lam & Ching, 2007; Petrillose & Montgomery, 1997; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005), Lin and Anantharajah (2019; p. 13) opined that "as many of the high expectations before participating in internship were not met". According to Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017), 18% of students who took part in an in-house internship expressed that their pre-internship expectations were not met, citing short duration of internship as main the reason. Though majority of the students in this study had their expectations either exceeded (28%) or met (54%), those with unmet expectations is still significant since it could lead to dissatisfaction about the tourism and hospitality industry.



**Table 1: Studies on Internship Expectations**

Author(s)	Expectations	Study Area	Study Design
Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017)	Hotel function and environment; hands-on experience; understanding the industry; new experience; team work	Thailand	Qualitative (Content analysis)
Hardie et al. (2018)	Real life work experience; increased knowledge and experience; validation of career choice	Australia	Survey (Questionnaire)
Hou (2018)	Reasonable pay; self-devotion;	Taiwan	Qualitative
Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2013)	Working in a professional environment; compensation; academic credit; teamwork; good supervision;	Greece	Survey
Morales and Jacobson (2019)	Hands-on experience; networking; job offer skills/experience; new skills; compensation; having fun	Florida, USA	Mixed methods (Survey and Focus Group Discussion)
Rothman and Sisman (2016)	Confirmation of career paths; learn job functions/industry	USA	Qualitative (Content analysis)
Vélez and Giner (2015)	Skills (job, relational and technical); work-experience/job placement; challenging and meaningful assignments; good supervision; compensation	-	Systematic review

Source: Author's construct

### **Pre-internship preparations and interns' expectations**

The importance of pre-internship preparation for interns cannot be over-emphasised. Pre-internship, which has been equated to the design phase of learning (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018) has been found to have a direct relationship with the expectations of interns. According to Zopiatis and Theocharous (2013), academic institutions help students nurture realistic expectations of the industry during preparatory events prior to embarking on internship. McKenzie and Mellis (2018) averred that internship preparation packages that include practical training sessions enhance skills, boost confidence and reduce anxiety before actual internship. The advantage is that since internship preparation packages create scenarios akin to what pertains in industry, students are guided as to what to expect during internships.

According to Cheng, Guan, Pan and Wang (2019) issues pertaining to what goes on in industry is critical during pre-internship preparation. In view of this, research has shown that an understanding of the host institution, through pre-internship projects guide students in having realistic expectations from their internship (Cheng et al. 2019; Zhang, 2018; Zheng & Song, 2016). Examining the relationship between pre-internship preparations and interns' expectations from internships, He and Qin (2017) postulated that pre-departure brainstorming training sessions have the potential of helping students to adjust their expectations regarding the tasks that they may be assigned during actual internships.

The extant literature indicates that not knowing the nature of the workload, job demands and requirements in advance is a clear indication that interns might not be fully prepared for internships. It is in the light of this that

Hou (2018) suggested that academic institutions should help students in nurturing their expectations of internship demands through pre-placement activities such as seminars. With this, Chen, Shen and Gosling (2018) support the assertion that academic institutions can influence or manage the expectations of interns for internship through pre-placement activities.

Karunaratne and Perera (2019) examined the relationship between pre-internship orientations and internship expectation. The study concluded that internship orientations organised by academic institutions as part of their pre-internship activities help in guiding interns nurture realistic expectations of their internship experience. This is achieved through communicating the expectations of industry to the interns. Seyitoğlu, and Çakar (2017) earlier indicated that the right form of communication during orientations influence students' expectations of internships. In a review of stakeholders' expectations from internships, Sauder et al. (2019) observed interns' expectation on what constitutes appropriate learning opportunities and performance is at variance with what pertains in the industry. This can impede the realisation of expectations for all stakeholders, especially, interns. To resolve this variation, it is important for academia to hold pre-internship seminars where these pre-internship expectations are explicitly discussed (Gower & Mulvaney, 2012; Sauder et al., 2019).

Aside internship orientations and seminars, academic adequacy (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2007) have a direct influence on interns' expectations. Dickerson (2009) intimated that discrepancies between what is taught in educational schools and what pertains in industry is as a result of inadequate preparation given by interns which leads to interns having unrealistic

expectations of their internships. However, the kind of education given to students have been found to influence the expectations of students (Chang et al., 2014; Lee & Chao, 2013; Wang & Huang, 2014). According to Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017), students' confidence and pre-internship expectations are enhanced through pre-internship on-campus internship activities such as exposing students to practical experiences in on-campus accommodation, food and beverage and other facilities available on campuses. They argue that students should be given practical training on campus before sending them to industry for off-campus internships.

### **Internship Experiences**

Universities and other higher educational facilities offering hospitality and tourism programmes provide structured education to students. However, this structured education often lacks practical, incidental learning opportunities (Garnett, 2016) creating a gap between theory and practise (Bao & Fang, 2014). This has led to academia including internships in their curricula and making internship an essential component of their programmes (Hughes et al., 2013; Robinson et al., 2016; Stansbie et al., 2016; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). The goal is that students will become better at transferring theory to real work situations (Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Mensah et al., 2020); acquired industry-based skills (Mugisha & Nkwasiwe, 2014) thereby bridging the gap between theory and practise (Bao & Fang, 2014).

In the light of the above, a plethora of studies have been conducted on students' internship experiences to ascertain internship experiences outcomes (Jack et al., 2017; Karunaratne, & Perera, 2019; Lin & Anantharajah, 2019; Salatan, 2015; Zehr, 2016). Evidence from hospitality and tourism practitioners



indicate that many students lack the requisite skills needed to work in industry (Ruetzler et al., 2014), hence the increase in research examining students' internship experiences in relation to skills development, building of competencies, learning in real work environment (Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017; McHugh, 2017; Mugisha & Nkwasiwe, 2014; Karunaratne, & Perera, 2019; Okay & Sahin, 2010).

In fact, Barnwell (2016) observed that internships experiences help students to increase their knowledge, skills and abilities and help prepare them for careers in industry. Internship experiences, according to Vélez and Giner (2015) can either be positive or negative. Whilst some interns describe their internships experiences as positive, others perceived their experiences as negative; an indication that internship experiences are not equally beneficial to all interns (Zuo, Weng & Xie, 2019).

In a study to explore the effectiveness of internship, Karunaratne and Perera (2019) found building relationship with industry, acquisition of a good working culture, development of self-confidence and ability to solve problems as interns' experiences from their industrial internship. Other studies found interns' experiences from internship to include helping students to comprehend the working culture of industry (Chen & Shen 2012; Kim & Park 2013; Lin & Anantharajah, 2019), exposure to realities of the working environment they intend to enter after school (Jackson, 2018; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2013), self-confidence and satisfaction from learning from industry (Karunaratne & Perera, 2019).

**Table 2: Studies on Internship Experiences**

Author(s)	Experiences	Study Area	Study Design
Albu et al. (2016); Vélez and Giner (2015)	Skills development for future employment, soft skills acquisition	Romania -	Survey and content analysis Systematic Review
Chen and Shen (2012); Kim and Park (2013); Lin and Anantharajah (2019)	Understanding of industry working culture	Taiwan Korea Malaysia	Quantitative (SEM) Quantitative Quantitative
Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017)	Managerial, supervisory, people-management, self-management skills	Thailand	Qualitative (Content analysis)
Jackson (2018); Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2013)	Exposure to realities of hospitality industry working environment	Australia Greece	Conceptual paper Survey
Smith et al. (2014);	Self-management skills, presentation skills, problem-solving skills	China	Qualitative (Interviews)
Karunaratne & Perera (2019)	Self-confidence, learning from industry; building relationship with industry, working culture, self-confidence, problem solving abilities	Sri Lanka	Case study (Structured questionnaires)
Zehr (2016)	Problem solving, research, professional, communication data analysis skills, self-confidence	United States of America	Mixed method

Source: Author's construct, 2021

Skills and competence development have been found in the literature on students' internship experiences to be the most dominant experiences student derive from internship. Velez and Giner (2015) are of the believe that students'

internship experiences should include development of skills needed for future employment. However, academic institutions train students with technical skills, enabling students to be knowledgeable in the domain of hospitality and tourism. The implication is that, soft skills development might be limited in academic institutions (Albu et al., 2016), hence the need for industrial internship for practical exposure and soft skills development. Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017) assert that internships help students to acquire both managerial and supervisory skills. Corroborating this assertion, McHugh (2017) is of the opinion that work-integrated learning has been used as a means of helping students to acquire skills. Some students report of enhancing their self-management skills, presentation skills, problem-solving skills and other qualities that make them fit into industrial job after graduation (Jackson, 2018; Smith, Ferns & Russell, 2014; Stewart & Owens, 2013).

In a study to explore interns' experiences from a hotel internship in Thailand, Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017) reported that students gained different types of skills from the internship programme. Extracting the views of interns through a content analysis from focus group discussions, the study reported professional service skills, people management skills, self-management skills and basic skills from various departments as the experiences interns derived from the internship. On professional service skills for instance, the interns indicated that the internship helped them to develop a service mind-set and manners, developed positive attitude, helped them become more professional, improved their communications skill as well as enhancing their problems solving skills. In essence, the interns through the

internship deepened their understanding of the operations in hotels whilst developing essential skills that will be helpful in their future career pursuits.

Zehr (2016) explored the types of skills and knowledge student interns learn during their internships. Using a mixed method approach, the findings revealed a plethora of skills learnt by interns. Whilst problem solving, confidence, research, professional interaction, communication and data analysis skills were identified as interns' experiences from the quantitative survey, interpersonal, communication, how business works, self-awareness and project management skills were listed by the interns as their internship experiences through the interview sessions. The study further observed that a higher majority of the interns were satisfied with their internship experience because they learnt skills that they have not learnt throughout their coursework in school.

### **Factors Influencing Internship Experience**

Internship experience is influenced by a myriad of factors (Vélez & Giner, 2015). In the literature, factors such as improving job prospects (Chen et al., 2018); relevant pre-internship preparation, quality mentoring and good supervision (Kim, Kim & Bzullak, 2012; Kim & Park, 2013); challenging assignment, feedback and autonomy (Vélez & Giner, 2015) are found to be factors influencing internship experiences. Other factors influencing internship experiences include: positive attitude of interns and keeping an internship journal (Kim & Park, 2013; Swanson & Tomkovick, 2012) and the duration and previous internship experiences (Nghia & Duyen, 2017).

Further, Reinagel and Gerlach (2015) found factors such as long-term relationships with industry, mentorship from faculty and interns' expectation of obtaining practical skills from internship moderates the nature of experiences



interns will gain from internships. Omar et al. (2017) in their study on factors influencing internship satisfaction among university students in Malaysia identified four main factors – individual factors, university support, job characteristics and organisational environment – as having a direct relationship with internship satisfaction. On their part, Bhattacharya and Neelam (2018) observed that supervisor-intern relationships and the nature of tasks assigned influence internship experience.

Gleaning through the literature on internships, the factors that influence internship experiences can be categorised into two: organisational context and individual contexts (Dabke, 2015). The specific factors constituting organisational and individual factors are elaborated upon.

### **Organisational Factors**

#### **Working Environment**

Working environment is perceived to consist of learning, career development and networking opportunities; support from supervisors and co-workers and organisational satisfaction (D'abate et al., 2009; Ruslan et al., 2020). Other issues such as working hours, job safety and security, relationship with co-workers and management feature prominently as components of working environment (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). A good working environment does not only provide interns with supportive relationship other interns and full-time employees but also them with sufficient direction and encouragement from supervisor and reduces to the barest minimum, the incidence of stress and frustration at the work place (Huang & Jia, 2010; Hurst, 2007; Klee, 2011). However, a hostile working environment puts strain on the

capabilities of interns, thereby limiting them from realising their full potentials (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015).

Other dimensions of the working environment within the literature relates to organisation support and co-worker support (Yuh & Choi, 2017).

Whilst organisational support deals with the extent to which organisations values the contributions of their employees and the extent to which the welfare of employees are catered for (Allen, Armstrong, Reid & Riemenschneider, 2008), co-worker support on the other hand looks at the degree to which colleagues at work provide are reliable in terms of providing necessary help, are dependable in times of need (Kim, Hur, Moon & Jun, 2017). Organisations are expected to make the work of interns comfortable. In fact, the provision of a conducive working environment is beneficial to both the organisation and the interns (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Practically, Mensah et al. (2020) observed that organisations can provide transport to convey interns to their places of residence when work closes at night, provide lunch for interns and where possible, grant interns permission to be absent from work so that they deal with personal issues. This creates a sense of being cared for among interns. Co-workers also serve as important resource for the intern. They provide emotional support as well as serving as conduit to managing work-related stress and burnout (Mensah et al., 2020).

A study conducted by Ruslan et al. (2020) on the influence of internship determinants on hospitality undergraduates' satisfaction with internship in Malaysia revealed that working environment was the most dominant factor influencing internship experience. Using a multiple regression model, the study found that the working environment influenced internship experience than job

characteristics and contextual factors. Jawabri's (2017) study on internship experience and satisfaction among Business students in UAE yielded similar results. The study showed that internship experience and satisfaction is a function of comfortable working environment. The study concluded that interns were inclined to accept job offers from the host organisation as tendency to work at host organisation revealed the strongest correlation. The indication is that working environment has a positive and significant relationship with internship experience (Mabasa & Ngirande, 2015; Mensah et al., 2020).

### **Supervision/Mentorship**

According to Jackson, Fleming and Rowe (2019) one key factor influencing the quality of internship experience is on-site supervisory role in guiding and evaluating the activities of interns. This is due importance of supervisors in ensuring a providing support for an amiable internship experience (To & Lung, 2020). Earlier, Bhattacharya and Neelam (2018) postulated that the relationship between supervisor and interns during internship is a factor that can influence both interns' performance and perceived satisfaction from internship. In fact, Wenger (2010) is of the view that supervisors help interns to align their knowledge to practices in the working environment, modulate their identity and obtain the needed confidence about pursuing their preferred career.

In view of this, Hardie et al. (2018) proposed that organisations should invest resources into developing the capacity of supervisors so that they provide quality supervision and mentoring, not only for their full time employees but also to students on internships. This creates a congenial atmosphere for learning to occur and also ensure the skills and potential development of interns (Hardie et al., 2018; Velez & Giner, 2015). Such interns easily adjust to job demands

and requirements (Kim et al., 2012) and become very competitive on the job market after graduation (Chi, 2015).

In an empirical study on factors influencing internship satisfaction among Chinese students, To and Lund (2020) observed supervisory support leads to internship satisfaction, hence, positive internship experience. Using a SEM, the study found supervisory support has a direct and significant impact on the satisfaction interns derive from their internship experience. Further findings indicated that support from supervisors significantly influenced other internship experience factors such as task clarity, perceived functional value and perceived social value. Employing a mixed method approach, Hora et al. (2020) concluded in their study that support from supervisors has an influence on task clarity, perceived value and internship satisfaction.

These findings are corroborated by previous studies (Jackson et al., 2019; Jawahar, Schreurs & Mohammed, 2018; McHugh, 2017; Rose, Teo & Connell, 2014) on supervisory support and internship experience. For instance, Rose et al. (2014) reported that internship experience and satisfaction is a function of good intern-supervisor relationship. Dabke (2015) on the other hand found that overall satisfaction with internship experience is positively correlated with faculty support. Further analysis using multiple regression revealed mentor support and faculty support as having a positive influence on internship satisfaction. Commenting on the important role played by supervisors, McHugh (2017) observed a direct relationship between supervision and mentoring on internship experience. In a study to identify the factors influencing internship experience, Kuh and Kinzie (2018), the success of internship experience depends largely on the kind of support systems available to interns, hence the



need for effective and efficient supervision and mentoring of interns. In another study, Hardie et al. (2018) examined the factors contributing to positive internship experiences of undergraduate students in Australia. The interns ranked quality supervision as the most important factor that contributed to their positive internship experience. Similarly, Jackson et al. (2019) averred that supervisory support is key to ensuring the transfer of students' knowledge and skills from school to the work environment.

According to Dabke (2015) support from industry mentor/supervisor during student internships emerged as the most critical moderator for successful internship experiences. To and Lung (2020) therefore encourages organisations that open their doors for student internships to put in place training schedules for their supervisors. This will empower supervisors to be able to identify and assign appropriate work tasks to their interns as well as been able to provide social support and timely feedback for their interns.

### **Task Clarity**

Aside supervisory support and mentoring of interns, the nature and clarity of task assigned to interns play a vital role in the experiences interns derived from internships. Task clarity as defined by To and Lund (2020, p. 565) is “the extent to which the duties of interns, the schedule, the procedure and expectations are communicated to interns”. This is particularly important because interns tend to be apprehensive when exposed to the workplace (Read, Hughes, Blagrove, Jeffreys, Edwards & Turner, 2017), largely because for most interns, internship happens to be the first time of having interaction with the industry (Bhattacharya, & Neelam, 2018). In achieving this, on-site supervisors should put in measures to ensure high-quality mentoring, matching tasks to

interns strengths and interests and providing appropriate feedback mechanisms (Jackson et al., 2019).

Task clarity has been found to influence internship experience (Odio, Sagas & Kerwin, 2014; Read et al., 2017; To & Lund, 2020). According to Odio et al. (2014) indicated that lack of task clarity leads to role stress among interns. The study therefore suggested that interns be made aware of the specific roles expected of them by their supervisors. In the review of the internship literature, Maertz et al. (2014) concluded that task clarity has an influence on the success of internship experience. Further to this, Read et al. (2017) opined that it is not enough to communicate interns task to them, but equally important to assign right and diverse tasks that enables interns to build their expertise and prepare them for future work endeavours. Confirming these assertions, Hora et al. (2020) hypothesised the relationships between task clarity and internship satisfaction and found task clarity to significantly influence internship satisfaction.

Nghia and Duyen (2017) explored internship-related learning outcomes and their influencing factors among tourism and hospitality students in Vietnam. The study employed one-way ANOVA to compare the mean values of interns who are assigned few, adequate and many tasks on four learning outcomes. The results showed that interns who were assign many tasks had a higher mean score on all four learning outcomes compared to their those who were given adequate and few tasks. The results showed that: 'advance professional skills and knowledge' (Factor 1); 'consolidate professional knowledge' (Factor 2); 'shape career path' (Factor 3) and 'change approaches

to learning' (Factor 4). The implication is that the higher the frequency of tasks assigned to interns, the more beneficial the internship experience.

### **Compensation**

Compensation from internships has been found to influence internship experience and satisfaction (McHugh, 2017). Accordingly, McHugh (2017) averred that interns who received some form of compensation or financial rewards rated their internship experience as satisfactory and further indicated their willingness to accept job offers from same organisations after graduation. Aside compensation being viewed as issue of equity and fair labour practices as well as legal and regulatory issues; it plays a vital role in how interns view and evaluate their internship experiences (Crain, 2016). Compensation is key motivator and has a role to play in internship satisfaction (Hora et al., 2020).

According to the NACE (2013), interns who were offered financial rewards during internships got more job offers and were paid higher salaries upon entering the job market than those who were not paid. This is an indication of a relationship between compensation and work-related outcomes after internship (McHugh, 2017). On the other hand, Siebert and Wilson (2013) observed that interns who are not offered any form of compensation felt exploited by the host organisation and are found be unsatisfied with their internship. The extant literature posit that many interns view their internship as a form of work, especially because of the nature and intensity of work assigned them during internship. Their view is that, since they perform similar duties as full time employees, they deserve a form of compensation.

A study conducted by Dabke (2015) on determinants of internship satisfaction revealed that interns who received financial rewards from the host organisation rated their internship experience higher than those who did not receive financial rewards. Using an independent sample T-test the study findings revealed the mean value of interns receiving compensation was significantly higher than interns who were not compensated.

### **Individual Factors/Characteristics**

The success of internship experiences depends on a number of factors. According to Zhu, Waxman, Rivera and Burlbaw (2018) and Yoo and Morris (2015), interns' ability to take available opportunities as well as their ability to apply what they have learnt in school to solve practical challenges during internships are key success factors for interns' experiences. In essence, positive internship experiences do not only hinge on academic and organizational factors, but also on individual characteristics.

Individual characteristics consist of interns' dedication and willingness to learn (Chen et al. 2018). Two important personal characteristics that can influence internship experience are positive attitude and self-initiative. Whilst positive attitude relates to interns having realistic internship expectations, self-initiative is about interns' willingness to ask questions, build social relationships with other interns and full-time employees, showing interests in the host organisation and picking quality lessons from constructive feedback (Hussien & Lopa, 2018). In fact, institutions that open their doors to students for internships have high expectations for receiving interns who have proactive attitude with a mind-set portraying interns' dedication and willingness to learn from the internship experiences (Chen & Shen, 2012; Zopiatis, 2007).



Studies have shown that individual characteristics such as dedication to and willingness to learn are associated with internship satisfaction; improving career prospects and enhancing employability of interns (Binder, Baguley, Crook & Miller, 2015; Kong & Yan, 2014). Omar et al. (2017) investigated the factors influencing internship satisfaction among university students in Malaysia. Apart from academia-industry factors, the study found individual factors to have significant positive relationship with internship experiences of the students. Chen et al. (2018) also found individual factors such as self-commitment to influence internship experience and employability. Using SEM, Hussien and Lopa (2018) tested the relationship between individual factors and internship experiences of hospitality students in the USA. The study revealed that there was a significant relationship between intern's positive attitude and internship experience. Similarly, the study found a significant relation between self-initiative and internship experience. The study therefore concludes that interns' who held realistic expectations, asked relevant questions and learnt from constructive feedback from supervisors had a positive internship experience.

### **Pre-Internship Preparation and Internship Experiences**

He and Qin (2017) aver that pre-internship preparation has an influence on students' internship experiences. The indication is that assigning interns with work scenarios that are akin to real work encounters enhance their skills and help them during the actual internships. Similarly, a strong link between academia and industry where students are exposed to experiences in industry during pre-internship seminars and orientations, the students get a foretaste of

industry experience thereby enhancing the students' internship experiences (Lin & Anantharajah, 2019).

The study of Zopiatis and Theocharous (2013) found a significant positive association between interns' readiness to participate in internship and internship experiences. Chen et al. (2018) tested the relationship between pre-internship preparations and internship experiences and found a positive relationship between the two variables.

### **Internship Expectations and Internship Experiences**

Expectation and experiences have been found to be closely related (Kandampully, Mok & Sparks, 2011). Studies have shown that when students expectations are at variance with the expectation of industry, the internship experience is skewed towards negative. This is further worsened by lack of training by host institutions, poor supervision and mentoring and poorly executed internship programmes due to lack of collaboration between academia and industry (Akomaning, 2019; Self et al., 2016; Thessin, Clayton & Jamison, 2018; Yiu & Law, 2012, Zopiatis, 2007). In fact, interns' expectations of good supervision, enhanced technological skills and desire for challenging work if not met during actual internship (Vélez & Giner, 2015) results in dissatisfaction (Farmaki, 2018) and frustration (De Guzman, Bayot, Javier, Liamzon & Moralejo, 2020) hence, negative internship experiences. Applying the Expectation Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1977) to internship, Reinagel and Gerlach (2015) found that expectations formed prior to participating in actual internship is a key factor influencing internship experiences.

### **Factors Influencing Career Intentions of Hospitality and Tourism Interns**

Career intentions are the deliberate plans one puts in place to either pursue a career in a specific industry or not (Amanjeet & Shuchi, 2020). According to Park, Kim and Lee (2017) the intention of selecting a career can be intrinsic, extrinsic or non-factors. Intrinsic intentions culminate from a combination of sense of accomplishment and individual interests in a particular job. Extrinsic factors relate to rewards, salaries and other fringe benefits one will derived from pursuing a career in a particular industry (Park et al., 2017). Dermody, Young and Taylor (2004) however, classified non-factor as no having any intentions or willingness to pursue a career in a particular industry.

Several studies have been conducted to reveal the factors that influence hospitality and tourism students' intentions to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. These studies (including Appietu et al., 2019; Amanjeet & Shuchi, 2020; Amissah et al., 2020; Hui, Rashid & Mohammed, 2017; Nachmias & Walmsley, 2016; Robinson et l., 2016; Sabirin & La Are, 2018; Self, Adler & Sydnor, 2016) found varying factors that influence students' career decisions. For instance, Self et al. (2016) averred that training and orientation has a higher propensity of laying a good foundation for students who will later be attracted to work in the hospitality and tourism industry. According to Domingo, Goh, Richardson and Hui (2016), factors such as pay, opportunities for promotion, career development, job security and the working environment were key determinants of career selection among students. A number of studies had earlier confirmed the assertions of Domingo et al. (2016). For instance, Wan, Wong and Kong (2014) studied the factors influencing students career intentions and found interesting work, potential for

advancement, security of the job, salary, prestige as well as social responsiveness of the organisation as the main influencing career factors. Similarly, salary, job status and opportunities for promotion were identified as predominant factors influencing students career intentions (Xu, 2013). A study by Armoo and Neequeye (2014) on factors underpinning students' perception of hospitality and tourism industry in Ghana revealed that students consider friendliness of industry persons, social factors, professional growth in the industry and competitiveness of jobs in the industry as their career choice factors. A recent study on students' perception of careers in in Ghana's hospitality and tourism industry by Amissah et al. (2020) revealed that five highly rated factors influencing students' career choice in the hospitality and tourism industry were: "care for others"; "opportunity to establish own businesses", "development of transferrable skills", "opportunities for further training or education" and "opportunities for network and use of high quality and resource equipment.

### **Internship Experiences and Career Intentions**

Internship experiences have been identified to have a direct relationship with intention to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry (Amanjeet & Shuchi, 2020). According to Farmaki (2018), failure of internship to meet the expectations of interns leads to negative internships experiences. Belhassen, Caton and Vahaba (2019) studied the internship experiences of students during their internships in hotels in Israel and reported that the interns had both positive and negative experiences as well as having stereotype images of pursuing a career in the hospitality industry. Further, Karunaratne and Niroshani (2019) postulated that though internship provides positive learning



experiences such as development of social interaction and problems solving skills, other negative experiences such as lack of opportunities for developing managerial and research/project skills are also reported by interns.

Largely, the intention to pursue a career in the industry depend on the nature of internship experiences during internships. Kim and Park (2013) indicated that hospitality students' intentions to pursue career in the industry can be influenced by their impressions they form during internships. Depending on whether the impressions are positive or negative, their intention will be to develop careers in the industry or pursue careers in entirely different industry respectively.

Internships give glimpses of the nature of work in the industry (Marinakou & Giousmpoglou, 2013) and help students to improve their employment prospects as well as helping them to be conversant with career opportunities in the industry (Chen & Shen, 2012; Kim & Park, 2013; Lee & Chao, 2013; Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). In essence, students' satisfaction from their internship experience serves as impetus for pursuing a career in the industry after graduation (Koo, Diacin, Khojasteh, & Dixon, 2016; Walsh et al., 2015).

A qualitative study by Robinson et al. (2016) found that students' pre-internship expectations were met during the actual internship when eventually influenced their intention to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. However, intentions of pursuing a career in the hospitality and tourism industry inure more to tourism-related careers than hospitality-related careers. Whilst majority of the students who had previously wanted to pursue careers in hospitality sub-subsector had their intentions changed towards careers in

tourism specific enterprises after their internships, majority of those with initial intention of pursuing careers in tourism subsector maintained their initial intentions after their internship experiences. A study by Self et al. (2016) on students' intentions to seek permanent jobs within the industry revealed a mix reaction from students. From the study, 84% of the students indicated their willingness to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. However, 43% of the students indicated that they would not return to same company for full employment if they had the opportunity to do so. According to the study, lack of passion for the hospitality industry, working at nights, weekends and holidays as well as low pay were reasons adduced by those who did not intend to pursue careers in the industry. Jawabri's (2017) study on the exploration of student internship experiences in the UAE found that all measures of internship experiences influence students' overall satisfaction with internship and led to students' intention of pursuing a career in the industry. The study further found that the positive experiences derived from the internship made the students confident about the prospects of working in the industry, felt equipped with the necessary skills and more prepared to work in the industry after graduation.

The study of Appietu et al. (2019) on perception of hospitality employment post internship experiences reveal that 81.9% of the students saw themselves working in the hospitality industry after graduation whilst 79.2% said they were excited to choose a career in the hospitality industry. Mensah et al. (2020) explored the relationship between internship satisfaction and intentions to pursue hospitality and tourism career after graduation. The study established a positive relationship between internship satisfaction and career intentions.

In another study, Amanjeet and Shuchi (2020) through a literature review on hospitality students career intentions found that not all students intended to pursue a career in the industry post internship. Intentions not to pursue careers in the hospitality industry stems from Welsh et al's (2015) earlier assertion that the industry seems not to be attractive enough for graduates of hospitality and tourism programmes. For all intents and purposes, hospitality and tourism internships play a key role in the formation of this perception. Chen, Shen and Gosling (2021) explored the relationship between interns' satisfaction with internship experience and intentions to pursuing a career in the hospitality industry. The study found that overall satisfaction with internship experience had a positive relation with career intentions. Further to this, Chen et al. (2021) disaggregated the factors influencing internship experiences and found that individual factors (self-commitment) influenced career intentions than the influence organisation factors had on career intentions.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for the study is premised on the ECT developed by Oliver (1977). This model is deemed appropriate since it provides the avenue to measure the key concepts (pre-internship preparations, expectations, experiences and career intentions) in the study. According to the model expectations on goods or services are formed at the initial phase. Expectation is what is attributed that are anticipated from the goods or services (Oliver, 1977) and is influenced by previous experience, available information and recommendation (Kotler et al., 2014). Expectation can either be realistic or unrealistic. After expectations are formed, a second phase emerges where opportunity is granted to test the expectations, then, expectations

are matched with actual experience. When expectations exceed experience, there is dissatisfaction (negative disconfirmation). However, when expectations are equal or more than experience, there is satisfaction [positive disconfirmation] (Eid & El-Gohary, 2015; Lai & Hitchcock, 2017; Lai, 2015; Oliver, 1980; 1997). Finally, the model stipulates that positive and negative disconfirmation will result in intention to re-sue or intention to discontinue the use of the service or product respectively.

Based on the assumptions from the ECT model, the current model (Figure 3) proposes that hospitality and tourism students' intention to pursue a career the industry will be influenced by their internship experiences which is a product of their pre-internship preparations and expectations.

From Figure 3, internships are supposed to begin with pre-internship activities which is a combination of academic work and orientations/seminars. With respect to academic work, students are not only expected to register for internship as a course but also be given opportunity to have practical exposures as part of their academic programmes. This stems from the fact that, hospitality and tourism programmes are mostly practical in nature. Additionally, seminars and orientations are supposed to be organised by academic institutions before students are sent out for off-campus practical attachment (internships). During such meetings, both academic and industry expectations of interns could be discussed. Students would have the opportunity to ask relevant questions and also clarify issues bothering on the internship.



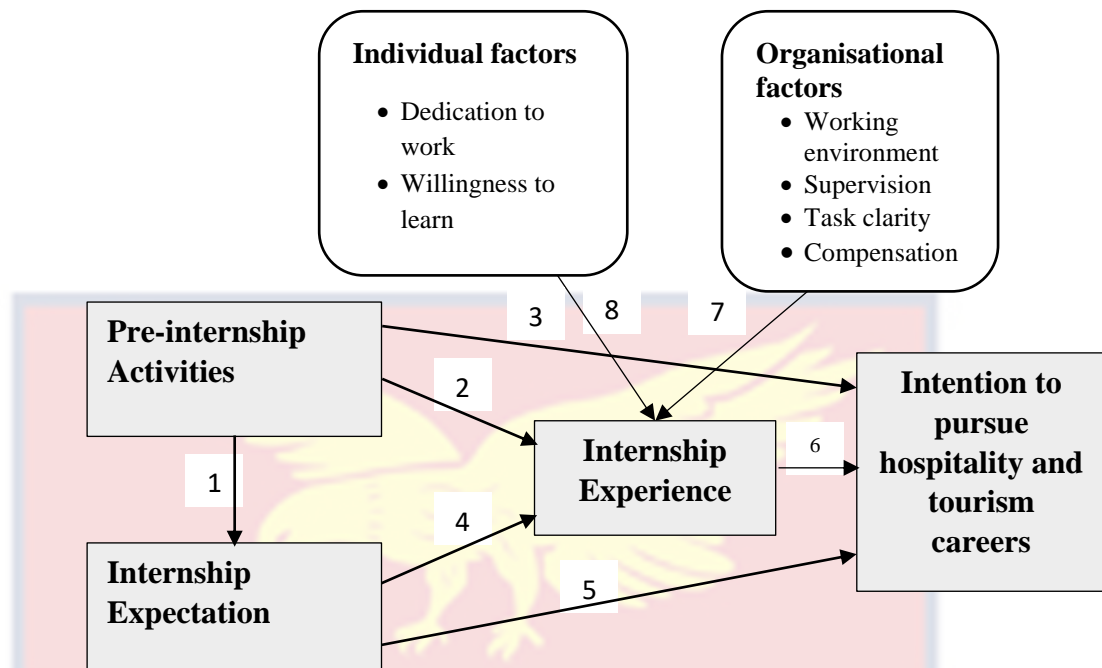


Figure 3: Model of Pre-internship Activities, Expectations, Experiences and Career Intentions

Source: Author's construct

Beyond the pre-internship preparation activities, students formed their own expectations from their internship even before they participate in the actual internship exercise. These expectations might include gaining real work experiences, practicing new skills and developing soft and hard skills (Kim & Park, 2013; Ruhanita et al., 2012). Such expectations are formed based on pre-internship preparation (hypothesis 1). However, such expectations can be realised if students get the opportunity to participate in internships. During internships, students who were adequately prepared through on-campus work experiences which are similar to actual work experiences would find it easier to performed jobs assigned to them and use it a yardstick to measure their internship experiences (hypothesis 2). Again, students could evaluate their internship experiences based on their pre-internship expectations to see their actual experiences are either positive or negative (hypothesis 3).

The extent to which internship experiences would either be positive or negative largely depends the factors prevailing at the internship facility. These factor include the working environment, supervision, task clarity and compensation (hypothesis 4). Similarly, individual characteristics of interns, that is, their dedication to the internship exercise and their willingness to learn during the internship will also influence internship experience (hypothesis 5). It is also expected that individual characteristics will influence the perception of interns regarding organisational factors (hypothesis 6)

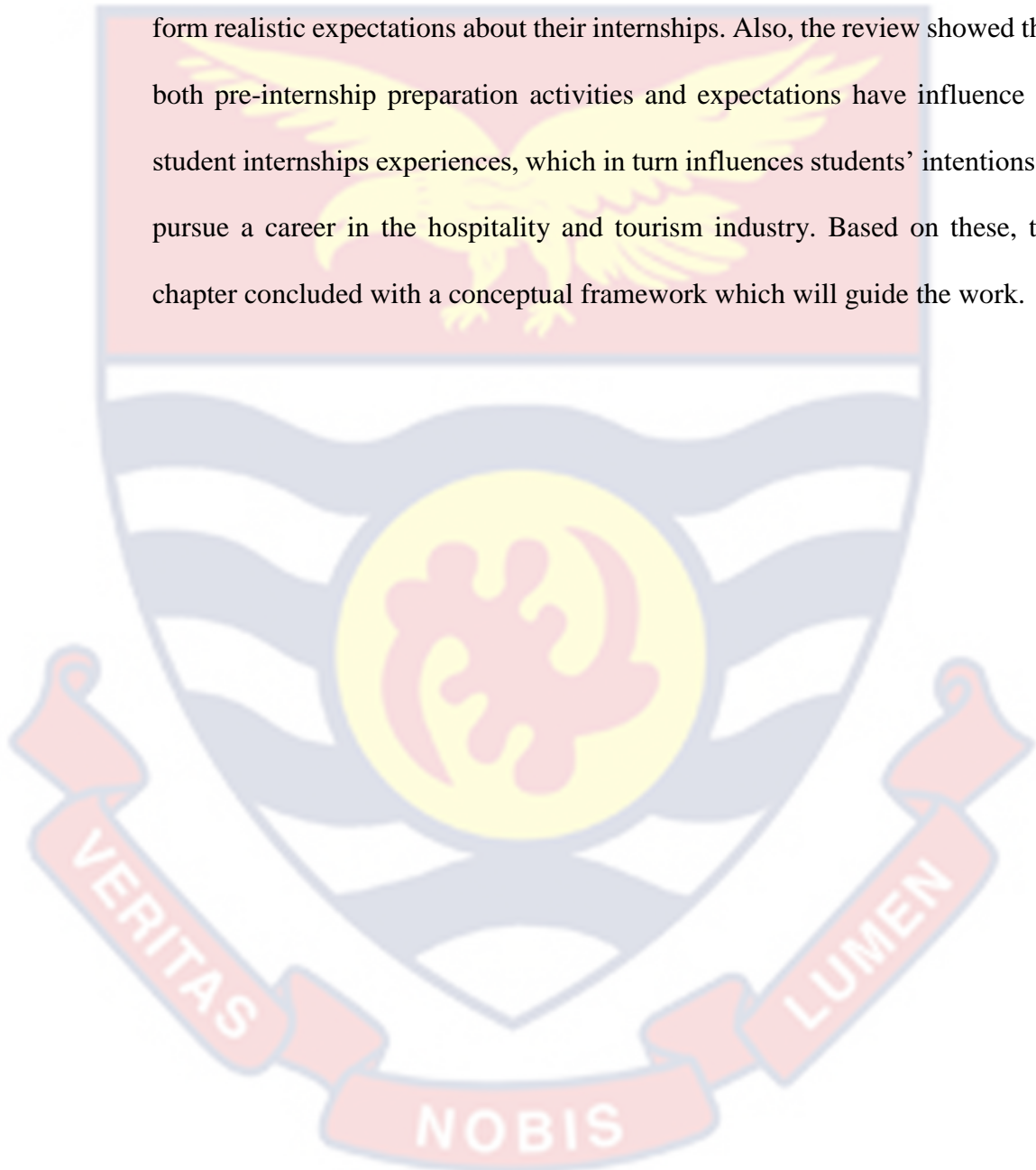
Also, pre-internship activities could also have an influence on interns' willingness to pursue a career in the hospitality/tourism industry (hypothesis 7) just as interns' expectation could have influence on their career choice (hypothesis 8). Eventually, a positive internship experience will lead to interns' willingness to pursue a career in the industry whilst a negative disconfirmation means interns' might either seek careers outside the industry or within the industry but not same institution where they had their internships (hypothesis 9).

### **Summary**

The chapter examined the pre-internship preparation activities that are put in place by academic institutions before students are sent out for internships. Literature on internships expectations was also reviewed to bring to fore, what students expect from the internship exercises. Further, issues pertaining to what constitutes students' experiences from internships were discussed, after which the relationships between pre-internship preparations and expectations, that of pre-internship preparations and experiences as well as that of expectations and experiences were examined. Empirical literature on career intentions pertaining

to hospitality and tourism students was also reviewed. The association between internship experiences and career intentions was further examined

It was established from the empirical review that practical course work and pre-internships orientations/seminars play critical roles in helping students form realistic expectations about their internships. Also, the review showed that both pre-internship preparation activities and expectations have influence on student internships experiences, which in turn influences students' intentions to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry. Based on these, the chapter concluded with a conceptual framework which will guide the work.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

#### Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the research design and methods employed in conducting the study. Specifically, the chapter gives a detailed description of the study area, the research philosophy and research design adapted for the study. Issues such as data sources, target population, sample size determination and sampling techniques are also discussed. Lastly, the design of research instrument(s), data collection procedures, data processing and analysis as well as ethical issues are explained.

#### Study Area

The study area is Ghana, specifically, all the eight (8) public technical universities offering degree and diploma programmes in hospitality and tourism (Figure 4). Technical universities were chosen as the study area premised on the fact that these higher educational institutions were established primary to provide practical training to students. Specifically, Section 3 (1c) of the Technical University Act (ACT 992) stipulates that technical universities are expected to “use competency based and practiced-oriented approach to teaching organisation and delivery of courses” (Technical Universities Act, 2016, p. 4). One of such practiced-oriented approach is through industrial attachment (internship) to compliment what is being done on campus. This approach (internship) was inherited from the erstwhile polytechnics and as such, has been practiced over a long period of time. In addition, the Technical Universities run programmes in either Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management (HCIM),



Hospitality and Tourism Management at the Higher National Diploma or Bachelor of Technology (BTech) levels.

In the light of the forgoing, it becomes expedient that such institutions become the study area. This provides the opportunity to assess the pre-internship activities as well as the expectations, experiences and career intentions of hospitality/tourism interns in the various Technical Universities in Ghana.

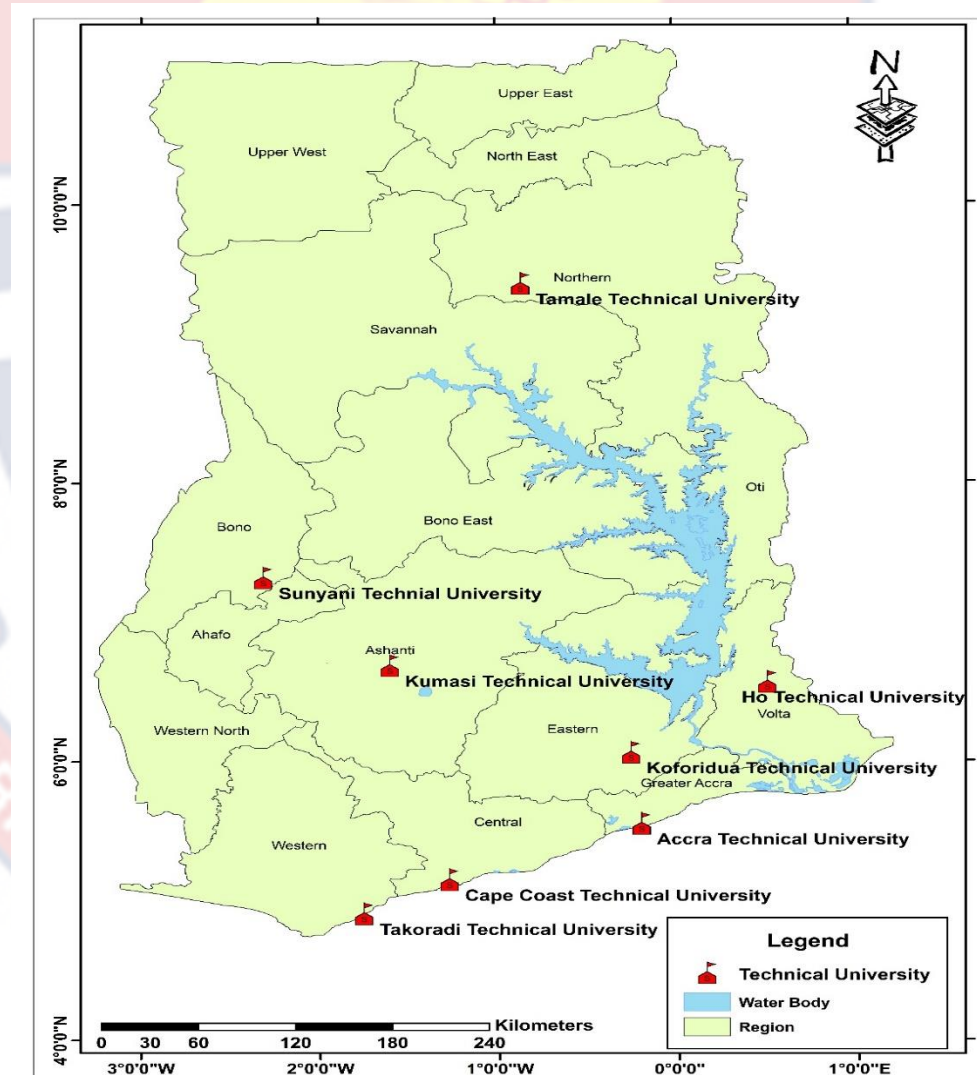


Figure 4: Map of Ghana Showing the Technical Universities  
 Source: Department of Geomatic Engineering, KNUST, 2021

## Research Philosophy

Research philosophy/paradigm is a belief system that relates an understanding of the nature of reality, what can be known about the reality and how to attain knowledge. It is the theoretical framework of how research should be carried out in relation to the ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Research philosophies in social research can be classified into three main domains: positivism, interpretivism and critical social process (Nueman, 2000; Sarantakos, 2005). However, Morgan (2007) indicates that another research philosophy, pragmatism, has emerged to combine the ideals of the positivist and interpretivist philosophies.

The pragmatist philosophy of research was adopted for the study. The paradigm argues that research should not be conducted from single-paradigmatic approach where there is a dependence on either the positivist or the interpretivist paradigm. In essence, proponents of the pragmatic paradigm insist that it is neither possible to study ‘truth’ solely from a positivist approach nor establish social reality solely from interpretivists perspective (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). In view of this, pragmatism, which inured is towards practical and pluralistic orientation emerged to offer a different worldview that allows researchers the opportunity to choose methods that are appropriate for studying a particular phenomenon (Alise & Teddie, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddie, 2003a, 2003b). As opposed to positivism and interpretivism, pragmatism offers a pragmatic way of studying the behaviour of people, the beliefs underlying these behaviours as well as consequences of these behaviours through a “relational epistemology, multiple reality ontology and a mixed approach to methodology’ and a value-laden axiology” (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; p. 35).

The choice of pragmatism as the philosophical foundation for this study is premised on the fact that pragmatism will contribute immensely to achieving the objectives of the study. The study aims at analysing the expectations and lived experiences as well as intentions of hospitality and tourism students after their industrial internships. The research questions which seek answers to the 'what', 'how' and 'why' of hospitality and tourism internships will yield both numerical and personal experiences which need to be interpreted from both quantitative and qualitative perspective, hence, pragmatism. Though majority of research in studying hospitality and tourism internships adopted either the positivist or interpretivist's philosophy, the few that employed pragmatism (see Nghia & Duyen, 2017; Zehr, 2016) have yielded in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

### **Research Design**

Subsequent to the use of the pragmatism as the guiding philosophy of the study, the mixed method approach was deemed as the appropriate design for the study. The mixed method approach, according to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003a) "has emerged as a third methodological movement in social and behavioural science" (p. 697) aside the quantitative and qualitative approaches. Within the mixed method paradigm, many types have emerged. However, Schoonenboom and Johnson (2017) averred that mixed methods can be categorised into sequential and concurrent methods. Sequential mixed method is subdivided into exploratory sequential (qualitative data precedes quantitative data collection) and explanatory sequential (quantitative data precedes qualitative data collection). However, concurrent mixed method suggests that, both quantitative and qualitative designs are executed almost simultaneously.

The study further adopted the concurrent mixed method design to data collection since both the quantitative and qualitative data was collected at the same time.

The adoption of the concurrent approach provides several benefits. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods gives a deeper understanding and perspective on the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002) as well as increase the validity of inferences made from the findings (Molina-Azorin, 2016). In fact, Morgan (2007) had earlier indicated that the use of mixed methods provides the impetus to building on the complementary strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative designs. Again, Amarantunga, Baldry, Sarshar and Newton (2002) asserted that, relying on a single method without sufficient justification can result in methodological biases, giving credence to the use of a combined methods for data collection. Further, the use of the mixed method approach is in tandem with the objectives of the study. With the view of collecting data on students' expectations and experiences from their industrial internship, it becomes necessary to use the mixed method approach so that both quantifiable data and lived experiences of respondents could be collected and analysed.

### **Data and Sources**

The study used primary data as the main source of data. The primary data were obtained from students pursuing hospitality and tourism programmes in all the eight technical universities in Ghana. Such students should have participated in at least, one mandatory internship exercise. Again, primary data was sourced from Liaison Officers of the technical universities.



### Target Population

The target population for the study were hospitality and tourism students as well as Liaison Officers in the eight (8) technical universities. For the students, the inclusion criteria were that the students should be offering hospitality or tourism programmes in the technical universities and should have participated in at least, one mandatory internship. In all, there were two-thousand and twenty-five (2,025) students who had participated in at least one mandatory internship as August 2021.

### Sample Size

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) indicated that it is virtually unfeasible to use all elements in a particular target population, bringing to fore, the need to select samples representative of the target population. From a recognisance survey undertaken by the researcher, the total number of students in the eight (8) technical universities that have undertaken internships amount to 2,025 out of which 769 students were sampled. Large sample size, according to Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (2010) accords the researcher to carry out effective statistical analysis. In view of this, Tabachnick and Fidell (2010; p. 588) averred that “it is comforting to have at least 300 cases for effective analysis”.

The sample size of 769 (Table 1) was arrived at by using the sample size calculator developed by the Creative Research Systems of the American Marketing Association in 2007. The sample size calculator, also known as the survey system is solely for sample size determination. The total number of students (2,025) was keyed into the system at a confidence level of 95%. The confidence interval (margin of error) was set at 0.03. Frankel (1983) as well as

Malhorta and Birks (2000) recommended a margin of error range of between 0.01 and 0.05 as the most appropriate margin of error in social research.

The system uses the following formula in the calculation of the sample size:

$$ss = \frac{Z^2 * (p) * (1-p)}{c^2}$$

Where:

Z = Z value (e.g. 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

p = percentage picking a choice, expressed as decimal (.5 used for sample size needed)

c = confidence interval, expressed as decimal (e.g., .04 = ±4)

Correction for a finite population is given as:

$$new\ ss = ss - 1/1 + \frac{ss - 1}{pop}$$

Where: pop = population

Proportional allocation method was used to distribute the sample size of 323 among the eight technical universities. This was done so that each technical university was fully captured, making the findings of the study representative. Table 3 indicates the eight technical universities with their corresponding sample size.

**Table 3: Sample Size for the Study**

Institution	Population	Proportion (%)	Sample size
TATU	285	14.1	108
STU	198	9.8	75
KsTU	310	15.3	118
KTU	388	19.2	147
CCTU	47	2.3	18
TTU	215	10.6	82
ATU	350	17.3	133
HTU	232	11.5	88
Total	2025	100	769

Source: Recognisance survey

TATU=Tamale Technical University; STU=Sunyani Technical University; KsTU=Kumasi Technical University; KTU=Koforidua Technical University; CCTU=Cape Coast Technical University; TTU=Takoradi Technical University; ATU=Accra Technical University; HTU=Ho Technical University

In relation to the qualitative data, one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) each was organised in five technical universities (STU, KsTU, ATU, KTU and HTU). Students from three other technical universities (TATU, TTU and CCTU) did not avail themselves for the FGDs. Participants of the FGD ranged between eight (8) and ten (10) students. Literature posits that a sample of between eight and fourteen participants is appropriate for FGD (Manoranjitham & Jacob, 2007; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). Again, all the eight Liaison Officers in the eight technical universities were purposively selected for the study to take their views on pre-internship activities organised for students in their respective institutions.

### **Sampling Techniques**

The study employed both probability and non-probability methods of sampling. The probability sampling technique was used to sample the students whilst the non-probability sampling was used to select the Liaison Officers and FGD participants. Specifically, the stratified simple random sampling technique was used to sample the students for the quantitative data collection. Firstly, the number of students in each technical university was determined and grouped accordingly (stratum). After this, proportional allocation was used to determine the same size for each technical university (Table 3).

However, the Liaison Officers were sampled using the purposive sampling technique. This method is deemed appropriate since the officers were in a better position to provide relevant information on pre-internship activities carried on their respective universities. Respondents for the FGD were selected based on the lottery method. Names of students were written on sheets of paper, put in a bowl and drawn. The FGDs were conducted in lecture halls assigned by the respective Liaison Officers/HoDs on the five (5) technical universities. Each FGD comprised of between eight (8) and ten (10) participants. In terms of composition, each FGD had at least two (2) males with the remaining being females.

### **Data Collection Instrument**

As already indicated, the study employed a mixed method approach to data collection. Due to this, two main data collection instruments would be used to collect data from the respondents.



## Questionnaire

With respect to the quantitative data, a structured questionnaire was used. Babbie (2007) as well as Creswell (2010) argued that, structured questionnaire guarantees confidentiality and anonymity, hence, its appropriateness for collecting quantitative data. Again, since the study population consists of students who are capable of reading, the questionnaire was self-administered.

The questionnaire comprised five main sections. Section A of the questionnaire pertains to pre-internship activities. This section covered issues on placement procedures, assessment, academic adequacy and activities. Items on pre-internship activities were sourced from studies such as McKenzie and Mellis (2018), Yuan (2018), Yue and Lin (2018) and Zopiatis and Theocharous (2013). Section B consisted of questions pertaining to students' expectations prior to participating in the internship. The third part (Section C) of the questionnaire focused on eliciting information on internship experiences. Questions on expectations and experiences were sourced from previous studies such as Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017), Hou (2018), Lin and Anantharajah (2019), Kim and Park (2013), Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2013), Vélez and Giner (2015) and Yiu and Law (2012). In addition, the section also measured factors influencing internship experiences with questions taken from the literature (Chen & Shen, 2012; Dabke, 2015; Hora et al., 2020; Hussien & Lopa, 2018; Jawabri, 2017; Mensah et al., 2020; Nghia & Duyen, 2017; Ruslan et al., 2010). Section D delved into respondents' career intentions after participating in internships. Questions pertaining to this section were selected from previous studies (Jawabri, 2017; Koo et al., 2016; Mensah et al., 2020) All

questions in sections B, C and D were measured on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

Finally, Section E solicited for information on respondents' socio-demographic characteristics (age, sex, marital status) and internship information related to the duration, institutions of placement and how internship institutions were sourced.

### **Interview Guide and FDG Guide**

An in-depth interview (IDI) guide was employed to collect data the liaison officers of the technical universities as well as for the students who participated in the FGD. The qualitative data helped in obtaining in-depth information on pre-internship activities as well as on interns' personal experiences from internships and also help validate responses from the quantitative data.

### **Recruitment and Training of Field Assistants**

Four field assistants (Master of Philosophy students from UCC) were recruited and trained to help with the data collection exercise. Among other things, skills and ability to collect data and good communication skills were used as the basis for recruiting the field assistants. Previous data collection experiences were also looked at prior to recruiting the field assistants. The recruited field assistants were given a two-day training (21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 2022) on the study questionnaire, data collection procedures and COVID-19 protocols. Lastly, the recruited field assistants were involved in the pre-testing of the study questionnaire at the University of Energy and Natural Resources

(UENR), Sunyani. This afforded them the opportunity to be conversant with the study questionnaire and also be abreast with the task ahead.

### **Pre-Testing of Instrument**

The study instruments (questionnaire and IDI) were pre-tested at the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR), Sunyani to ensure that respondents will understand the items on the questionnaire as well as to ensure the questionnaire is able to collect the data it is intended to. UENR was selected because the university runs a hospitality programme at both the diploma and degree levels. For the quantitative instrument (questionnaire), thirty (30) students pursuing Bachelor of Science (Hospitality Management) were used for the pre-testing. The pre-testing exercise was conducted from 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2021.

The Cronbach's Alpha scores were used to assess the scale validity and reliability of the measurement items. Specifically, the scale for measuring expectation, experience, factors influencing internship experience and career intentions obtained a Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.92, 0.94, 0.89 and 0.90 respectively. This is an indication the values met the threshold of 0.70 as suggested by Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle and Mena (2012). In addition, the pre-testing also aided in changing the question on internship duration from an open-ended item to a close-ended item to ensure that all respondents for the main study answered that particular question.

In relation to the FGD, eleven (11) students pursuing BSc. Hospitality Management from UENR were selected. The discussions were recorded and later transcribed verbatim. The transcripts from the FGD were compared to the original intents of the questions on the FGD guide to ensure that the responses

adequately reflected the intent of the questions. The pre-testing helped in modifying some of the questions to ensure the questions were clear to avoid any ambiguity.

### **Field Survey**

The actual data collection started on 13<sup>th</sup> October and ended on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2021. The Liaison Officers on each of the eight (8) technical universities were contacted before visiting the universities. Upon arrival, the Liaison Officers introduced the research team to the Heads of Departments to help establish contacts with lectures of the department who at the time of data collection, were handling third year students (targeted population).

For each technical university, the list of students who had participated in compulsory/mandatory internship were obtained from the Heads of Departments and/or Departmental Internship Coordinators. The allocated samples for each university were then drawn from the list. The study instruments were then administered to the sampled students in a hall dedicated for such purposes by the Head of Department and/or Liaison Officers.

In each technical university, the purpose of the study was explained to the sampled respondents after which the questionnaires were distributed to respondents for completion. Respondents who needed clarification on some of the items on the questionnaires were assisted. The administration and completion of the questionnaires took place between 8am and 10am on days the respondents did not have lectures. This was done to avoid a possible conflict between lectures and data collection.



One FGD was conducted in five (5) out of the (8) technical universities. As already indicated, the number of discussants for the FGDs ranged from eight (8) to ten (10). In total, there were sixty-eight (68) discussants involved in the FGDs. With respect to the in-depth interviews, the Liaison Officers were allowed to choose the venue and time at their own convenience. FGDs were conducted in lecture halls provide by HoDs and lasted for between one and two hours. All the interview sessions took place at the offices of the Liaison Officers and interviews were conducted during break hours (12:30pm to 1:30pm).

### **Challenges Encountered on the Field**

One key challenge faced during the data collection exercise was the availability of students to respond to the study questionnaire. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, universities were implementing a teaching regime that required that 70% of lectures are conducted online whilst 30% are done face to face. This meant that students spent less hours on campus because they preferred participating in online lectures from their halls of residents or hostels than doing that on campus. To maintain smaller class sizes and ensure compliance to COVID-19 protocols, universities with large class sizes had divided their students into two or three different classes, making it difficult to get students to respond to the questionnaires.

Further to above, those who accepted to participate in the study were cautious in completing the questionnaire. Some indicated the preference of completing online questionnaires to paper questionnaire due to the fear of contracting COVID-19.

To handle these challenges, the researcher sought clearance from the Head of Department who assigned one of the lecturers to assist in getting the students to participate in the study. With the help of the assigned lecturer, one lecture hall was assigned to the research team for the administration of the questionnaire to the students. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the students after which they agreed to participate. All COVID-19 protocols were observed during the administration of the instrument to allay the fears of the students in contracting the virus. Specifically, students were provided with alcohol-based hand sanitisers to sanitise their hands before and after completing the questionnaire. Again, students who did not come along with nose masks were given free nose masks before they were allowed to complete the questionnaire. During the administration of questionnaire, physical distance was observed.

### **Response Rate**

In all, a total of seven hundred and sixty-nine (769) questionnaires were administered. All the questionnaires were returned. However, six hundred and eighty-four (684) were deemed fit for further processing and analysis. This represents a response rate of 89%.

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

The quantitative data was checked for accuracy and completeness. The questionnaires were then numbered serially, edited and imputed into the IBM SPSS version 21 for processing. The study employed both descriptive (frequency, mean and standard deviation) and inferential (Factor Analysis, Independent Samples T-test; One Way Analysis of Variance – ANOVA, Paired Sample T-test, and SEM) statistics to analyse

Objectives One and Five which looked at pre-internship activities and career intentions respectively were analysed using descriptive statistics. The data were presented in frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. Four (4) different inferential statistical tools – ANOVA, T-test, Paired T-test and Factor Analysis – were used to analysis objectives two, three and four. Whilst the ANOVA and T-test were used to explore the variations in expectation, experience and factors influencing experience across socio-demographics, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities, the Paired T-test was used to establish differences in interns' expectations and experiences. In addition, the Exploratory Factor Analysis was employed to explore the factors underlying internship expectations, internship experiences and factors influencing internship experiences.

Objective six, which aimed at developing a structural model to explain the interrelationships between the constructs (pre-internship activities, expectation, experience, factors influencing experience and career intentions) was analysed using FA (Exploratory and Confirmatory) and SEM.

To begin with, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), using principal component analysis via Varimax rotation was employed to identify the dimensions of the original measured scale of the constructs. According to Tabachnick and Fidel (2010), Bartlett's test of sphericity of  $p < 0.05$ , KMO index of between 0 and 1 is indication that the data is well correlated for EFA. Again, the eigenvalues of more than 0.5 was set as the criteria for accepting items into the EFA analysis. The Confirmation Factor Analysis (CFA) was then performed to test how well the measured variables represent a smaller number of constructs (Constello & Osborne, 2005; Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006).

The CFA is well noted for its ability to indicate how well the specification of the factors matches the actual data. It has also been proven to be a tool useful in confirming or rejecting a preconceived theory; an indication of CFAs usage in a theory testing (Constello & Osborne, 2005; Hair et al., 2006; Schumacker & Lomax, 2010).

Finally, the Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) version 21 was employed to test efficacy of the proposed conceptual framework of the study. Hair et al. (2010) posit that SEM has been identified as having the ability to test relationships among a number of latent constructs in a way that reduced the error in the model. Unlike other statistical tools, SEM is able to simultaneously evaluate multiple variables and their relationships.

Data from the interviews and FGDs were processed and analysed from the first interview and FGD section. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to access the data and explored the issues emerging so that it forms the basis for questioning in subsequent interviews and FGDs. The expectation was that; this process will ensure the depth of data to be collected. At the end of the entire qualitative data collected, all tape-recorded interviews were transcribed, printed and read through a number of times so that the researcher becomes conversant with the data.

“If qualitative research is to yield any meaningful and useful results, it is imperative that the material under scrutiny is analysed in a methodical manner” (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 386). Further to this, Attride-Stirling (2001) proposed the use of thematic network technique as means of analysing qualitative data which seeks to explore the understanding of underlying issues. Thematic network technique uses basic, organising and global themes as a



means of data extraction. Basic themes represent the simple premises characteristics of the data and might lack meaning on their own. To make meaning, basic themes must be re-grouped into organising themes and finally to global themes.

Practically, the data obtained from the interviews and FGDs were coded after transcription was completed. The basic themes emerging from the data were grouped into basic themes based on the conceptual and theoretical assumptions underlying the study. Issues emerging from the basic themes were further explored and categorised into organising themes from which global themes were deduced. Throughout this process, patterns, trends and contradictions between the codes were observed for better interpretation of the data. A narrative approach was employed to report the results. The results were then interpreted and compared with the literature.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues were strictly adhered to in order not to infringe on the rights and privacy of the respondents. In view of this, ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), UCC with respect to the data collection instruments. The approval was given on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 (ID – UCCIRB/CHLS/2021/27). Other issues bothering on ethics that would be considered include right of entry, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Right of entry into the technical universities would be sought by presenting a letter of introduction to the respect heads of departments where data collection would take place. This would help the researcher to be accorded the reception needed before data collection.

Further, the consent of each respondent was sought before the data collection began. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents with the aim of obtaining their consent prior to administering questionnaires or conducting interviews/FGDs. Participants who declined from being part of the study were allowed to do so without any form of coercing. Again, the identity of participants was protected. In view of this, names and other information that could easily lead to the identification of participants were intentionally omitted from the study report and final work. Codes were used to represent the views of participants during the presentation and analysis of data. Finally, participants' information divulged during data collection were strictly used for academic purposes and were not under any condition released to third-parties.

### **Summary**

The chapter dealt with the methodological issues of the study. Specifically, the issues presented included the description of the study area whilst the philosophy underpinning the study (pragmatism) and the adopted research design (concurrent mixed method) were discussed. Other pertinent issues discussed were data and sources, target population, sample size and sampling technique, data collection instrument and pre-testing of instrument as well as data processing and how data was analysed. Finally, the issues bothering on ethics were presented.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CHARACTERISTICS AND ACTIVITIES OF HOSPITALITY INTERNSHIP

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the results and discussions on the socio-demographic characteristics of the studied respondents. In addition, the chapter focuses on the characteristics of internship and activities carried out before interns participate in the actual internship exercise. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, mean and standard deviations were used to report these characteristics in tables.

#### **Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Hospitality Respondents**

As evident from Table 3, the majority (n=630; 92.1%) of the respondents who participated in the study were females with the remaining 7.9% (n=54) being males. Females constituting majority of the sampled respondents does not deviate from previous studies (Chen et al., 2021; Lin, & Anantharajah, 2019; Marinakou, & Giousmpasoglou, 2013) on hospitality students and internship. In fact, Mensah and Azila-Gbettor (2018) concluded that the population of hospitality students in technical universities in Ghana is skewed towards females.

Regarding the age of respondents, results from the study indicated that more than half of the respondents (n=410; 59.9%) were less than 25 years whilst 35.7% (n=244) of the respondents were between the ages of 25 and 30 years. Respondents above 30 years represented 4.4% (n=30) of the total number of respondents. The average age of the respondents for the study was 24 years. The age distribution of the respondents is a reflection of a student population in

Ghana. Per the education system in Ghana (Ministry of Education, 2012), tertiary students are expected to be within the age brackets of 19years and 22years. From Table 4, the single respondents (n=591; 86.7%) outnumbered their counterparts who indicated they were married (n=91; 13.3%).

**Table 4: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Variable	Frequency (N=684)	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	54	8
Female	630	92
<b>Age</b>		
< 25 years	410	60
25-30 years	244	36
> 30 years	30	4
Average age = 24 years		
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	593	87
Married	91	13

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Since the study adopted a mixed method approach, the socio-demographic characteristics of the FGD participants are presented in Table 5. As seen in Table 5, most of the discussants (82%) of the discussants were females whilst the remaining 18% being males. In terms of age, most of the discussants were less than 25 years whilst seven percent and five percent of the discussants were between 25 and 30 years and more than 30 years respectively. Lastly, majority of the discussants (93%) were single. With respects to the interviews, all the Liaison Officers (interviewees) were males and were married.



Their ages ranged between 40 years and 50years having worked as Liaison Officers for a minimum of three years.

**Table 5: Profile of Discussants**

Variable	Frequency (N=68)	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	12	18
Female	56	82
<b>Age</b>		
< 25 years	60	88
25-30 years	5	7
> 30 years	3	5
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	63	93
Married	5	7

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

### **Pre-Internship Activities**

Pre-internship activities, that is, procedures and activities interns go through before internship placements have been found to adequately prepare interns for a successful internship experience (Karunaratne & Perera, 2019; Yuan, 2018; Yue & Lin, 2018). In line with this proposition, the study sought to identify the pre-internship preparation activities in the studied institutions before respondents participated in the actual internship experiences. Results are presented in Table 6.

Kim and Park (2013) are of the view that academic institutions do not commit enough resources to adequately prepare their students prior to participating in internships. One of such areas of preparation is “scouting for placements” for the students.

Confirming the assertion by Kim and Park (2013), the study shows that more than two-thirds of the respondents (n=478; 69.9%) personally found internship institutions on their own. This means the interns had to look for own placements for internships. This was confirmed by one of the liaison officers.

*We use to look for placement for students and that's why we have signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with some of the institutions so that we can place the students with such institutions. However, we have reneged on this because of a number of reasons. Some of the students do not respond well to the institutions the university places them in with the excuse that the facilities are far from their places of residence. Others also say they prefer looking for their own placements. Also, some of the institutions do not respond to our MoUs and it seems they prefer to deal with the students instead of the university. But we support the students by giving them attachment letters to institutions. We also ensure that students go to institutions that are aligned to their programmes of study at the university (45-year-old male liaison officer).*

**Table 6: Pre-internship Activities**

Variable	Frequency (N=684)	Percentage (%)
<b>Method of placement</b>		
Personal	478	69.9
Department/University	147	21.5
Request by internship facility	59	8.6
<b>Orientation before internship</b>		
Yes	456	66.7
No	228	33.3
<b>Attendance at Orientation</b>		
Yes	414	60.6
No	42	6.1
Not applicable	228	33.3
<b>Assessment procedure discussed during orientation</b>		
Yes	373	54.5
No	41	6.0
Not applicable	270	39.5
<b>Orientation by attachment facility</b>		
Yes	496	72.5
No	188	27.5
<b>Work experience before internship</b>		
Yes	372	54.4
No	312	45.6
<b>Curriculum allows for on-campus practical training</b>		
Yes	419	61.3
No	265	38.7
<b>Did you participate in any on-campus practical training</b>		
Yes	419	61.3
No	265	38.7
<b>On-campus practical training**</b>		
Food and beverage practical	235	29.5
Accommodation practical	199	25.0
Food production practical	246	30.9
Events/functions practical	116	14.6
<b>Is internship a registered course</b>		
Yes	444	64.9
No	240	33.1

\*\* Multiple response

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Further to the assertion by one of the liaison officers that interns look for their own placement, a discussant had this to say during the FGD:

*You are given a letter from the university and sent to where you want to do your attachment. You are also given a log book to enter your weekly activities The university never gives placements, it's your own decision (22-year-old female intern).*

In addition to the method of placement, the study sought to find out whether seminars/orientations were organised for the respondents before they embarked on internship. Pre-internship orientation/seminar is essential and precedes the actual internship experience (Zopiatis & Theocharous, 2013). Results from the study show that a little above two-thirds (n=456; 66.7%) of the respondents indicated orientations were organised for them before they participated in internship. Majority (n=414; 60.6%) of the respondents who affirmed that orientations were organised attended the orientation sessions whilst 6.1% (n=42) did not participate in the orientation sessions. The above alludes to the assertion by Yuan (2018). According to Yuan (2018), one of the practical ways academic institutions prepare their students for internships is to organise pre-internships seminars or orientations for students who are due for internships. This arguably puts the students in the right frame of mind as it gives them the necessary exposure and adequately equipping them before the actual internship (Adelphi University, 2020; Bender, 2016).

More than half (n=373; 54.5%) of the respondents agreed that the mode of assessment was discussed during the orientation session. The FGD revealed other issues that were discussed during orientation sessions. In response to a



question on issues discussed during internship orientations, one respondent had this to say:

*They tell us a number of issues. We discuss issues like supervision, how to carry ourselves at the attached institution, the dos and don'ts of attachment, how we will be assessed during and after the attachment. They also talk to us about our attitude and behaviour, dressing codes and punctuality (23-year-old male intern).*

The finding confirms the claim by Bhattacharya and Neelam (2018) and Jack et al. (2017). According to these studies, one of the key issues for discussion during pre-internship seminar/orientation is assessment. Neelam (2018) further indicates that pre-internship seminar/orientation serves as the medium through which academic institutions communicate issues on the role and scope of the internship as well as the expectations regarding intern's behaviour.

Further to the pre-internship orientation provided by academic institutions for interns, majority of the respondents (n=469; 72.5%) indicated that the facilities they did their internship oriented them before they started the actual internship. This is very important because such orientation provides interns the opportunity to learn about organisational culture, policies and the organisation's expectations of interns (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018; Jack et al., 2017).

Karunaratne and Perera (2019) as well as Yuan (2018) and Yue and Lin (2018) identified academic adequacy – practical-based curriculum and allowing students to register for internship – as key component of pre-internship

preparation. In line with this, respondents were asked to indicate whether the curriculum allowed for on-campus practical training as well as whether internship was both compulsory and a registered course. With regards to the curriculum being practical oriented, the study found that the hospitality curricular used by the studied technical universities were practical oriented. The curricula allowed for on-campus practical training for students and that, students have the opportunity to participate in practical training before they embark on internship. Majority (n= 419; 61.3%) of the respondents affirmed this, conforming to the tenets of the Technical Universities Act, 2016 (Act 922). Section 3 (1c) of the Act enjoins technical universities to “use competency based and practiced-oriented approach to teaching organisation and delivery of courses” (Technical Universities Act, 2016, p. 4). Although 38.7% (n=265) of the respondents indicated that the curriculum was not practical oriented, all the liaison officers confirmed that the curriculum used in their respective technical universities conform to the Section 3 of the Technical Universities Act and the specific curricula of their various programmes run by the faculties on the technical university campus. One of them said:

*Yes, the curriculum we use in the technical universities are all practical focused and give students the opportunity to have hands on training during their stay on the university campus. As you might be aware, the polytechnics (now technical universities) were established to train middle level manpower for industries so we do that by providing practical training for students. It is even enshrined in the act establishing technical universities that our programmes*

*should be practical oriented. Because of this, we ensure that programmes that are sent out for accreditation have practical component (52-year-old male liaison officer).*

Specifically, the respondents listed four broad categories as the areas where they had on campus practical training. Majority (n=246; 30.9%) of the respondents listed food production as the most identified category in terms of on campus practical training. Whilst 29.5% (n=235) of the respondents cited food and beverage as the on-campus practical training they have participated in, exactly a quarter (n=199; 25%) of the respondents mentioned accommodation as the on campus practical training they have had. The remaining 14.6% (n=116) of the respondents cited events/functions as the on campus practical training they have engaged in. The indication is that, the curricular of the various technical universities are practical focus, giving opportunities for on campus practical training before (and even after) the students engaged in internship. An examination of the curricular of some of the technical universities indicate that almost all the core hospitality courses have practical component attached to them. Interestingly, these courses are spread over the entire six (6) semesters students are expected to cover during their stay at the technical universities.

The above observation supports the propositions of Jackling and Natoli (2015) and Maertz et al. (2014). These studies indicate that skills development of interns is better enhanced during the pre-internship stage through on campus practical training. When well structured, pre-internship events have the potential of developing the competencies of prospective interns (Yuan, 2018) and also help interns to assimilate well into the work environment, especially

for those without any work experience prior to participating in the actual internship (Bhattacharya, & Neelam, 2018).

From Table 6, 64.9% (n=444) of the respondents indicated that internship was a registered course. The remaining 35.1% (n=240) said internship was not a registered course. This is however tertiary institution specific. Whilst certain technical universities require their students to register internship as part of the courses they register for the internship semester, it is not a requirement in other technical universities. Both views were expressed during the interview sessions with the liaison officers. Confirming the fact that students were not required to register internship as a credit course, an industrial liaison officer remarked:

*No, internship is not a registered course. Unlike other courses which students are expected to register and write exams on them, the situation is a bit different when it comes to industrial attachment. Our policy does not allow students to register but it is compulsory. Students are expected to at least, participate in one internship before graduation (45-year-old male liaison officer).*

Contrary to the above view, another liaison officer indicated:

*Yes, hospitality students are required to register for internship as part of their courses so that they are graded on internship. It is 3-hour credit course. In view of this, internship appears on the list of registered courses as well as on their transcript (43-year-old male liaison officer).*



The expectation for registering internship as a course was that, respondents would be given the opportunity to attend seminars/lecturers during the semester in which internship was registered as a course. However, just like their counterparts who do not register internship as a course, there will be no opportunities to attend seminars/lectures on internship. This is contrary to the proposition of Adelphi University (2020) and Bender (2016). Bender (2016) indicates that internship is a three-hour credit course at the Arizona State University which consist of two-credit hour internship at industry and a weekly one-hour credit for internship seminar.

Table 6 also shows that more than half (n=372; 54.4%) of the respondents had working experiences within the hospitality industry before they participated in the internship. The remaining 45.6% (n=312) of the respondents indicated that they did not have any working experience with the industry prior to their participation in the internship.

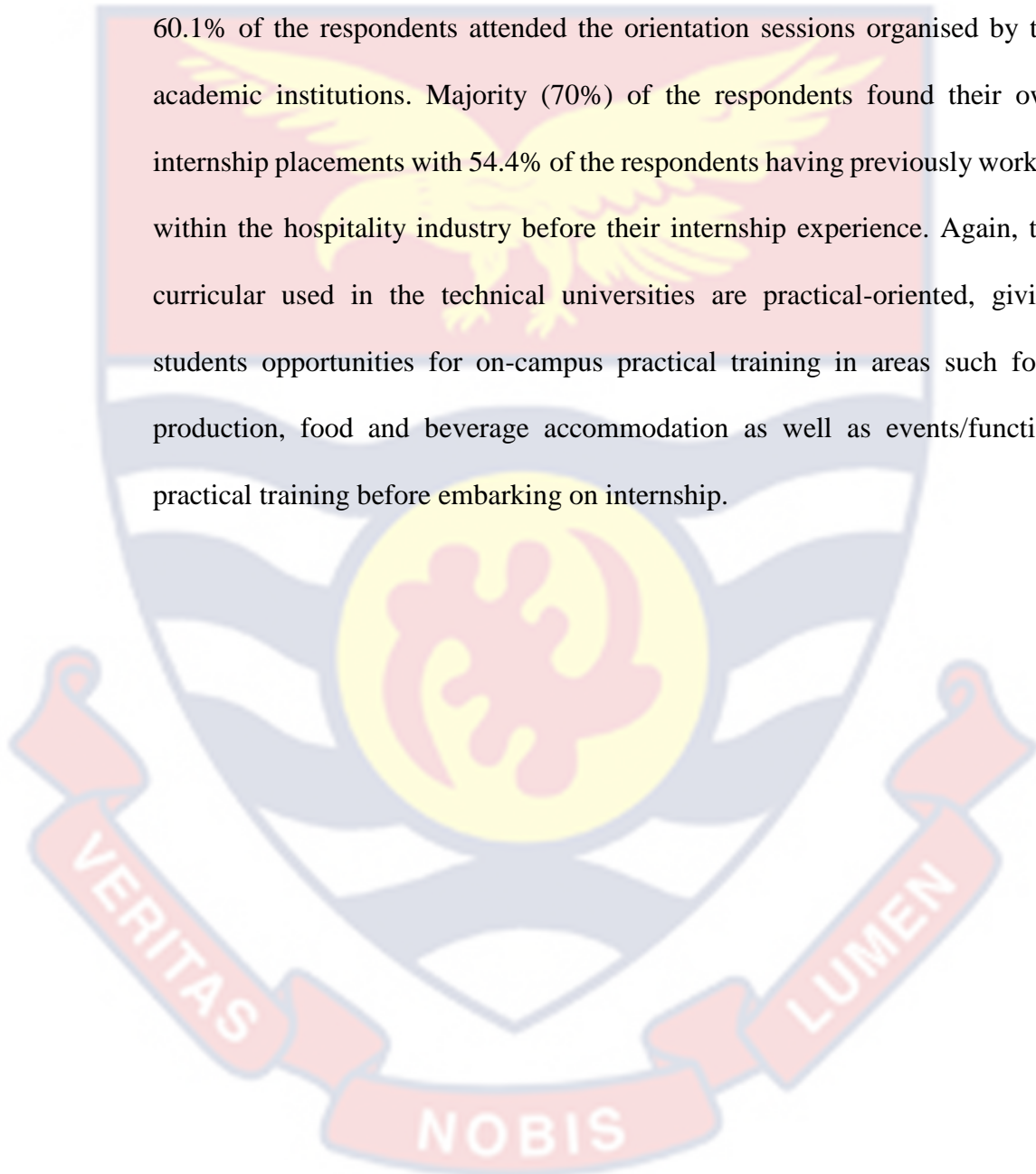
### **Summary**

This chapter focused on the socio-demographic characteristics of hospitality interns and the characteristics of hospitality internship in the studied technical universities. Further, the chapter explored pre-internship activities. The study found that female interns outnumbered their male counterparts. The average age of respondents was 24 years with majority of them being single.

The study also found that majority (66.1%) of the respondents had done internship once and mostly did the internship for a period of three months, exceeding the minimum requirements of two months' duration. Further, it was revealed that accommodation facilities serve as the most utilised facilities for internship. Most (74.9%) of the respondents affirm that supervisors from their

universities/departments visited them during the internship period. Report writing (46.5%) was identified as the most used means of assessment.

Finally, it was clear that both academic institutions and internship facilities organise orientation for interns before the actual internships. However, 60.1% of the respondents attended the orientation sessions organised by the academic institutions. Majority (70%) of the respondents found their own internship placements with 54.4% of the respondents having previously worked within the hospitality industry before their internship experience. Again, the curricular used in the technical universities are practical-oriented, giving students opportunities for on-campus practical training in areas such food production, food and beverage accommodation as well as events/function practical training before embarking on internship.



## CHAPTER SIX

### INTERNSHIP EXPECTATIONS OF RESPONDENTS

#### Introduction

Chapter Six reflects on the results and discussions on the expectations of hospitality interns prior to participating in internship. The results include the descriptive scores of the various internship expectation constructs, the factors underscoring interns' expectations of the internship exercise and the relationship between these factors and sociodemographic characteristics, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities.

#### Expectations of Hospitality Interns

Studies on expectations of hospitality interns have identified a plethora of expectations held by interns prior to their participating in hospitality internships (Chan & Amantharajah, 2019; Hou, 2018; Jack et al., 2019; Rothman & Sisman, 2016). This observation is reflected in the results on interns' expectations represented in Table 7. Five (5) categories of expectation were identified with Cronbach alpha value between 0.74 and 0.90, expending the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). This implication is that, each expectation category measured what it sought to measure.

Generally, the interns were expecting to build their academic skills (M=3.64; SD=1.28) prior to their participation in the hospitality internship. Specifically, they were expecting to enhance their research and project skills (M=3.69; SD=1.16), develop their oral and presentation skills (M=3.67; SD=1.17), apply theoretical work with practices in the industry (M=3.60; SD=1.32) and increase their grades (M=3.58; SD=1.26). Overall, more than half

(65.0%) of the respondents agreed that they were expecting to enhance their academic skills as their expectation from their internship experience.

Research on hospitality internship indicates that students expect internship to help them develop new skills, apply what they learn in classroom to the working environment in order to bridge theory and practice (Bao & Fang, 2014; Morales & Johnson, 2019). Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2013) argue that students engage in internship to increase their academic credit. This confirms findings from the current study. The descriptive statistics shows that more than half of the interns (62.2%) were expecting to increase their academic grades through internships. Evidence from the FGDs with the students' point to the fact that liaison officers and internship coordinators encourage the students to use the internship as a means of improving their academic grades. This they do in order to motivate the students to give our their best during the internship.

One student remarked:

*Yes, our liaison officer and our department internship coordinator always tell us to be serious with our attachment.*

*They tell us to do our best since we are not only likely to get employment with the institution we do our attachment, but attachment is one of the means we can boost our grades (22-year-old female intern).*



**Table 7: Expectations of Interns**

Statement	% in agreement	Mean	SD
Academic skills ( $\alpha=.836$ )			
Apply theoretical work with practices in the industry	65.2	3.60	1.32
Enhance my research and project skills	66.9	3.69	1.16
Develop oral and presentation skills	65.7	3.67	1.17
Increase my grades	62.2	3.58	1.26
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>65.0</i>	<i>3.64</i>	<i>1.23</i>
Personal skills ( $\alpha=.869$ )			
Enhance my creativity	72.2	3.86	1.18
Solve work-related problems	59.7	3.65	2.23
Develop self confidence	75.7	3.96	1.10
Work independently	66.4	3.76	1.91
Develop social interaction skill	73.7	3.87	1.12
Deal effectively with conflicts	54.0	3.45	1.96
Enhance my writing skills	48.4	3.28	1.25
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>64.3</i>	<i>3.69</i>	<i>1.54</i>
Enterprise skills ( $\alpha=.900$ )			
Practice team work with my colleagues	73.0	3.92	1.14
Acquire industry work culture	68.5	3.76	1.16
Effectively prioritize work	60.6	3.60	1.11
Appreciate social and ethical responsibility	62.0	3.63	1.10
Develop managerial skills	71.1	3.82	1.15
Obtain insight into hospitality/tourism operations	69.9	3.79	1.14
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>57.2</i>	<i>3.75</i>	<i>1.13</i>
Career path/job offer ( $\alpha=.922$ )			
Aspire for future education/career in the Industry	69.8	3.79	1.13
Confirm or reinforce my career choice	68.6	3.75	1.11

Table 7 Continued

Provide an advantage in securing Employment	68.8	3.76	1.15
Contribute to my career advancement	73.4	3.87	1.15
Provide opportunities for increased responsibilities at work	66.4	3.70	1.15
Enhance my ability to transit into my employer's organization	63.1	3.62	1.08
Contribute to my satisfaction with my career Choice	68.4	3.73	1.10
Contribute to my overall career development	69.2	3.76	1.11
<i>Overall score</i>	68.5	3.75	0.98
Supervision ( $\alpha=.741$ )			
Receive co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor	69.9	3.74	1.08
Be assisted by my workplace supervisor to help me realise my internship goals	69.1	3.75	1.18
<i>Overall score</i>	69.5	3.75	1.13
Pay ( $\alpha=.850$ )			
Be paid during the internship	42.7	3.01	1.40
Receive allowances for food and transport	43.8	3.05	1.38
Receive financial rewards after the internship	51.1	3.22	1.41
<i>Overall score</i>	45.9	3.09	1.40

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

$\alpha$ = Cronbach's Alpha

On the same issue of using internship as a means of improving students' grades, another intern had this to say:

*The department internship coordinator is always admonishing us to use the internship to improve our GPA. Sometimes, he tells us that it is easy to get grade A in internship than to scoring grade A in the written papers.*

*Because of this, I am encouraged to do my best so I get grade*

*A in internship (23-year-old male intern).*

Approximately 65% of the respondents agreed that enhancing their personal skills was one of their key expectations before the internship began.

With an overall mean of 3.69 (SD=1.54), the interns were specifically expecting that the internship will provide them the opportunity to develop their self-confidence (M=3.96; SD=1.10), develop their social interaction skills (M=3.87; SD=1.12), enhance their creativity (M=3.86; SD=1.18), have the ability to work independently (M=3.76; SD=1.19) as well as executing problem solving activities (M=3.65; SD=2.23). However, the respondents were indifferent in relation to their specific expectations of dealing effectively with conflicts (M=3.45; SD=1.96) and enhancing their writing skills (M=3.28; SD=1.25). As alluded to by Hou (2018), students participate in hospitality internship with the expectation of developing their personal skills so they become relevant for the job industry. These skills which might not be necessarily available through normal classroom teaching can be developed during internship.

Apart from building and enhancing their academic and personal skills, the respondents were also expecting to develop their enterprise skills (M=3.75; SD=1.14). This is reflected in their expectations of the specific variable measuring enterprise skills as a construct. For instance, the respondents agreed that practising team work (M=3.92; SD=1.14), developing managerial skills (M=3.82; SD=1.15), obtaining insight into hospitality/tourism operations (M=3.79; SD=1.14) and acquiring industry work culture (M=3.76; SD=1.16) were part of their pre-internship expectations. Further, they agreed to having the expectations of social and ethical responsibility (M=3.63; SD=1.10) and

effectively prioritising work ( $M=3.60$ ;  $SD=1.10$ ) before participating in the internship exercise. Some authors (Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2013, Saunder et al., 2019) also identified similar enterprise skill factors such as team work, working in a professional environment, development of work-related relational and technological skills, understanding the hospitality industry as well as networking and improving job skills as the expectations of interns prior to the internship exercise.

Also, it was the expectation of the respondents that, the internship will offer them the opportunity to confirm their career path/job offer. More than two-thirds (68.5%;  $n=469$ ) of the respondents agreed to the construct measuring career path/job offer as expectation. This was confirmed by the respondents as more than half (50%;  $n=342$ ) agreed to all the specific variables under career path/job offer. The respondents were expecting the internship to contribute to their career advancement ( $M=3.87$ ;  $SD=1.15$ ), help them aspire for future education/career in the hospitality industry ( $M=3.79$ ;  $SD=1.13$ ), contribute to their overall career development ( $M=3.76$ ;  $SD=1.11$ ), provide an advantage in securing employment ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=1.15$ ), confirm or reinforce their career choice ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=1.11$ ) and also contribute to satisfaction with their career choice ( $M=3.73$ ;  $SD=1.10$ ). Recent developments in relation to internships participation are that interns have shifted from just gaining academic credits to expecting that internship facilities provide them the opportunity to confirm or validate their career choice (Rothman & Sisman, 2016) as well hoping for future career with same institutions they did their internship (Hardie et al., 2018; Hou, 2018).



Further to the forgoing, the respondents had expectation concerning supervision during the internship exercise. Overall, more than two-thirds (69.5%;  $n=475$ ) of the respondents agreed that supervision was one of their expectations. Specifically, they expected to be assisted by their supervisors in order to realise their internship goals ( $m=3.75$ ;  $SD=1.18$ ) and also received co-operation and nurturing from their workplace supervisor ( $M=3.74$ ;  $SD=1.08$ ).

Finally, the respondents were indifferent ( $M=3.09$ ;  $SD=1.40$ ) with compensation/pay. Overall, less than half (45.9%;  $n=314$ ) of the respondents agreed that they were expecting payment from the internship. Specifically, the respondents were indifferent on their expectation of receiving allowances for food and transport ( $M=3.05$ ;  $SD=1.38$ ), getting financial rewards after the internship ( $M=3.22$ ;  $SD=1.41$ ) as well as being paid during the internship ( $M=3.01$ ;  $SD=1.40$ ). The findings are in consonance with the observation that interns' expectation to receive pay or financial rewards from internships is on the decline (Department of Employment, 2016). Unlike other jurisdictions such as Europe and America where interns participate in paid internships (Crain, 2016; Domholt, 2018; Rothschild and Rothschild, 2020), the scenario is a bit different, especially in Ghana.

### **Exploratory Factors Explaining Interns' Expectations**

Further to the descriptive analysis on the expectations of interns prior to participating in the internship exercise, the study explored the factors underlying the expectations of interns by employing Factor Analysis (FA). In order to identify how the specific factors influenced interns' expectation, the thirty (30) items used in the descriptive analysis of interns' expectation (Table 1) were subjected to FA. In all, twenty-three (23) out of the thirty (30) factors

were identified as having accounted for interns' expectation of the internship exercise.

According to Pallant (2005) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2010), the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy are two key primary requirements for using FA. In view of this, the data was subjected to Principal Component Analysis (PCA) using varimax rotation. The varimax rotation is the most commonly used orthogonal rotation method with respect to PCA. Varimax rotation method has the ability to categorise variables on a select set of factors. As alluded to by Brody (2017), this method "attempts to maximise the loading of each variable on an individual factor while limiting the loading on other factors" (p. 9). Based on this, the varimax rotation was deemed appropriate.

The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value of 13665.60 was deemed significant at  $p = 0.000$  and KMO of 0.968, exceeding the recommended KMO value of 0.60 (Pallant, 2005; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2010). In addition, the Kaiser's rule of retaining variables with eigenvalues exceeding 1.0 or more for further analyses was applied whilst factor loading threshold of 0.50 was set as a criterion for including variables into the analysis. Finally, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha was computed for the variables measuring each construct. This was done to determine the internal consistency of the variables. According to Nunnally (1978), a recommended minimum Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 for each construct is considered reliable. As indicated in Table 8, all the constructs were deemed reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of at least 0.70 for all the constructs.

The PCA extracted twenty-three (23) items grouped into four (4) constructs. The four (4) constructs, as indicated in Table 8 were enterprise skills, career path-supervision, academic-personal skills and pay. Together, these constructs explained 62.93 percent of the total interns' expectation from the internship exercise; an indication that other factors contribute to interns' expectation in relation to hospitality internship.

From Table 8, Factor I constitutes intern's expectation of enterprise skills. With an eigenvalue of 14.43, enterprise skills contributed 18.68 percent of the total variation of interns' expectation. Factor I consists of attributes such as appreciating social and ethical responsibility, effectively prioritising work, acquisition of industry work culture, obtaining insight into hospitality/tourism operations, developing managerial skills and practicing team work.

Literature on hospitality interns' expectations of internship cites learning team work (Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2013), learning about the professional work environment (Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Hou, 2018) and knowledge about the hospitality and tourism industry (Lin & Anantharajah, 2019) as students' expectation from the internship exercise. In addition, improving job skills as well as development of work-related relational and technological skills (Morales & Joshson, 2019; Sauder et al., 2019) have also been listed as hospitality interns' expectation. Findings from the current study on interns' enterprise skills expectations allude to that of the conventional literature. The implication is that, hospitality students preparing for internships are more interested in acquiring skills that will make them employable after graduation, hence, prioritising enterprise skills as their most important

expectation from hospitality internships. Obviously, expectations such as acquisition of hospitality industry work culture, insight into hospitality/tourism operations and developing managerial skills are clear indications that the interns wanted to use the internship as medium to building their enterprise skills.

Career path and supervision loaded as Factor II (Career path-supervision) from the FA. This factor relates to interns' expectation that the internship will shape their career path or give the opportunity to be employed. Factor II also deals with interns' expectation of co-operation and nurturing from their supervisors at the internship facilities.

**Table 8: Exploratory Factors Explaining Interns' Expectation**

F	Latent constructs and observed variables	FL	EV	VE (%)	$\alpha$
I	<i>Enterprise skills</i>				0.90
	Appreciate social and ethical responsibility	0.74	14.43	18.68	
	Effectively prioritize work	0.72			
	Acquire industry work culture	0.63			
	Obtain insight into hospitality/tourism operation	0.63			
	Develop managerial skills	0.61			
	Practice team work with my colleagues	0.58			
II	<i>Career path-supervision</i>				0.84
	Contribute to my satisfaction with my career choice	0.75	2.06	17.83	
	Provide opportunities for increased responsibilities at work	0.71			
	Enhance my ability to transit into my employer's organization	0.70			
	Contribute to my overall career development	0.64			
	Receive co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor	0.60			
	Contribute to my career advancement	0.58			



Table 8 Continued

Be assisted by my workplace supervisor to help me realise my internship goals	0.57		
Provide an advantage in securing employment after school	0.56		
Aspire for future education and career in the industry	0.54		
III <i>Academic-personal skills</i>			0.90
Enhance my research and project skills	0.72	1.29	17.61
Develop oral and presentation skills	0.72		
Apply theoretical work with practices in the industry	0.65		
Increase my grades	0.64		
Enhance my creativity	0.63		
Develop self confidence	0.59		
Execute problem solving activities	0.58		
Work independently	0.55		
Develop social interaction skill	0.51		
IV <i>Pay</i>			0.70
Receive allowances for food and transport	0.87	1.11	8.82
Be paid during the internship	0.86		
Receive financial rewards after the internship	0.78		
Total variance explained			62.93

Note: F: Factor, FL: Factor Loading, EV: Eigenvalue, VE: Variance explained,  $\alpha$ : Cronbach's alpha; KMO = 0.929, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx.  $\chi^2$ ) = 11132.02; = 0.000

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Career path-supervision as a factor had an eigenvalue of 2.06 and contributed 17.83 percent of the total variance of interns' expectation from the internship exercise. Specifically, the interns were expecting the internship to contribute to their satisfaction of career choice, provide opportunities for

increased responsibility at work, enhance their ability to transit into the internship organisation, contribute to their overall career development as well as receiving co-operation and nurturing from their workplace supervisors.

The findings collaborate the view held by Drewery et al. (2016). The study found that interns' expectation from hospitality internships is to crystallise their vocational self-concept. In addition, Hardie et al. (2018) as well as Velez and Giner (2015) assertion that validation of career choice and seeking job offer from attachment institution respectively are in line with the findings from the current study. Results from the FA analysis show that there is a close correlation between career path and supervision; implying that interns' expectation of charting a career path through internship and quality supervision during internship exercise is somewhat linked. In fact, interns' expectation of internship contributing to their career advancement with a factor loading of 0.58 is closely related to receiving assistance from workplace supervisor to help realise their internship goals which loaded 0.57. The fact is, validating career choice and transiting into internship organisation does not happen in a vacuum, hence, the need for well-structured supervision at internship organisations (Sanders et al., 2019; Valez & Giner, 2015; Yiy & Law, 2012).

Another factor that was revealed by the FA was termed academic-personal skills (Factor III). This factor has an eigenvalue of 1.29 and contributed 17.81 percent of the total variance explaining interns' expectation from the internship exercise. In terms of specific expectations, the interns had the expectation of enhancing their research and project skills, developing oral and presentation skills and apply theoretical work with practices in the hospitality industry. Besides, the interns also expected the internship exercise to enhance

their creativity, help them develop their self-confidence and execute problem solving activities at the internship facilities.

Academic and personal skills are increasingly becoming one of the key expectations of interns from the internship exercise. Bao and Fang (2014) asserted that hospitality interns expect internship to help them to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Morales and Johnson (2019) noted that students participate in hospitality internship with the aim of developing new skills and gaining hands-on practical experiences. From these observations, it is clear that hospitality interns have high expectations of developing their academic and personal skills from hospitality internships. This is particularly important because, structured education often lacks practical, incidental learning opportunities as observed by Garnett (2016).

The last factor (V) identified was pay. It was measured using three variables: “receive allowances for food and transport”, “be paid during the internship”, and “receive financial rewards after the internship”. With an eigenvalue of 1.11, this factor constituted 8.82 percent of the total variance explaining interns’ expectation from the internship exercise.

As alluded to by Department of Employment (2016) and Seibert and Wilson (2013), the advent of structured, compulsory internships has led to a decline in the expectations of interns with respect to receiving compensation or financial rewards during internships. The possible explanation to this trend could be attributed in part, to the desire of interns to rather seek relevant work-related experiences from internships instead of seeking financial gains. Loudon (2015) as well as Tepper and Holt (2015) indicate that, instead of expecting

compensation from internships, interns are more focused on gaining full-employment from host institutions.

The forgoing discussions on interns' expectation of hospitality internship is in tandem with the confirmation expectation theory, one of theories underpinning the study. The theory stipulates that prior to enjoying any service, individuals would first hold their own expectations of the services. This helps the individuals to evaluate the performance of the goods or services by comparing their expectation with post consumption experiences.

In line with the current study, it was observed that prior to participating in the internship exercise, the students held certain expectations, that is, skills development, career path development, supervision and compensation. These expectations will go a long way in helping the students to evaluate the internship exercise after they had actually participated in the internship (post internship). The disparity between the expectations held and post internship experiences will be the basis for evaluating the internship exercise, hence, their intention to pursue careers in the hospitality/tourism industry or otherwise.

### **Expectation of Interns by Socio-demographic Characteristics**

The study further employed the Independent-sample T-test (T-test) and One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to establish the differences between interns' expectation from the internship exercise and their socio-demographic characteristics. Whilst the T-test was employed on dichotomous variables (sex and marital status), the ANOVA was used in instances where the construct had more than two variables (age). To determine the extent of effect size of the differences, the eta values were computed. According to Cohen (1988), eta



values are interpreted as follows: less than 0.06 = small effect; 0.06-0.13 = moderate effect and 0.14 and above = large effect.

The analysis (Table 9) revealed a significant difference between the sex of interns and enterprise skills as expectation construct ( $t=0.371$ ;  $p=0.011$ ).

Whilst males were uncertain about their expectation from enterprise skills ( $M=3.49$ ;  $SD=0.88$ ), their female counterparts agreed ( $M=3.76$ ;  $SD=0.93$ ) to having enterprise skills as expectation from the internship exercise. However, there was a small effect on the mean differences between enterprise skills as interns' expectation and their sex ( $\eta^2=0.02$ ). The implication is that; females are likely to expect internships to help them build their enterprise skills as compared to their male counterparts. Probably, female interns see themselves as not having the needed skills in relation to enterprise skills. As such, they seek to use the internship exercise as a conduit to developing their enterprise skills.

Again, there was a significant difference between interns' expectation of academic skills and their sex ( $t=0.529$ ;  $p=0.050$ ). Specifically, males ( $M=3.36$ ;  $SD=0.88$ ) were indifferent with having academic skills as expectation before participating in the internship exercise. Females ( $M=3.73$ ;  $SD=0.91$ ) however, agreed that, academic skills were one of the expectations they had prior to the internship exercise. Despite the significant difference, the magnitude of the differences between means was small ( $\eta^2 = 0.01$ ).

**Table 9: Expectation of Interns by Socio-demographic Characteristics**

Characteristics	N	Enterprise skills		Career path-supervision		Academic-personal skills		Pay	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Sex</b>									
Male	54	3.49	0.011*	3.59	0.177	3.36	0.050*	3.10	0.952
Female	630	3.76	(0.02)	3.76	(0.00)	3.73	(0.10)	3.09	(0.28)
			t=-0.371		t=-1.351		t=-0.529		t=0.060
<b>Marital status</b>									
Single	593	3.77	0.264	3.48	0.023*	3.74	0.167	3.06	0.013*
Married	91	3.65	(0.00)	3.56	(0.01)	3.58	(0.00)	3.48	(0.00)
			t=1.118		t=2.216		t=1.391		t=-1.585
<b>Age</b>									
<25	410	3.70	0.014*	3.70	0.129	3.67	0.165	3.08	0.015*
25-30	244	3.82	(0.01)	3.84	(0.01)	3.79	(0.01)	3.09	(0.00)
>30	30	3.39		3.71		3.89		3.52	
			F=1.813		F=2.053		F=1.807		F=0.156

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant exists at  $p \leq 0.05$

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Further inspection on the descriptive statistics reveal that more females than males agreed to three (3) out of the four (4) items used in measuring academic skills. For instance, whilst 66 percent (n=415) of females agreed that “application of theory to practice in industry” was an expectation from the internship, 63 percent (n=34) of males agreed to the same item. Similarly, more females (67.2%; n=415) than males (63.0%; n=34) agreed to “developing oral and presentation skills” as internship expectation. The foregoing gives credence to the fact that females are more likely to use hospitality internships to building academic skills than males.

In addition to the above analysis, it is evident from Table 8 that there is a significant difference between the means of career path-supervision as an expectation construct and the marital status of interns ( $t=1.118$ ;  $p=0.023$ ). This is reflected in the mean scores of the single and married respondents. Whilst the single respondents ( $M=3.48$ ;  $SD=0.92$ ) were uncertain that career path-supervision forms part of their pre-internship expectations, the married respondents agreed ( $M=3.56$ ;  $SD=0.98$ ) that their expectations for the internship exercise included career path-supervision. Despite reaching statistical significance, the exact difference between the means of the single and married respondents was small. This was detected through the computation of the eta squared value which was found to be 0.01.

Aside the marked differences between career path-supervision and marital status, a significant difference was observed between the marital status of interns and pay as an expectation from internship ( $p=0.013$ ). Though the single were indifferent ( $M=3.06$ ,  $SD=1.05$ ), the married respondents agreed ( $M=3.48$ ;  $SD=1.03$ ). In essence, interns who are married expect to be paid after

the internship exercise. The plausible explanation to this could be inferred from the fact that schooling and having a family at the same time could place financial burden on married students, hence their expectation to receive pay from institutions where they interned. Additionally, they might also perceive working as an intern to be the same as working as employees, hence, their expectation of receiving pay from the internship exercise. As observed Siebert and Wilson (2013), interns who do not receive any form of compensation from host institutions felt exploited since the interns believed they perform same or similar tasks as those employed by the host institutions.

Again, Siebert and Wilson (2013) observed that interns who are not offered any form of compensation felt exploited by the host organisation and were unsatisfied with their internship. The extant literature posit that many interns view their internship as a form of work, especially because of the nature and intensity of work assigned them during internship. Their view is that, since they perform similar duties as full-time employees, they deserve a form of compensation.

Finally, the study found significant differences between age and enterprise skills ( $p=0.014$ ) as well as age and pay ( $p=0.015$ ). With respect to age and enterprise skills, respondents less than 25 years ( $M=3.70$ ;  $SD=0.92$ ) and those between 25 and 30 years ( $M=3.82$ ;  $SD=0.92$ ) agreed to having enterprise skills as expectation whilst respondents aged 30 years above were uncertain ( $M=3.39$ ;  $SD=1.00$ ) with enterprise skills as their pre-internship expectation. The post-hoc analysis using Tukey HSD test found the mean score for interns within the age cohort of 25 to 30 years ( $M=3.82$ ) significantly different from that of 30 years and above ( $M=3.39$ ). However, with an eta squared value of



0.01, there was a small effect on the mean differences between the different age groups and enterprise skills as expectation for internship. Pay as interns' expectation also differed among the various age cohorts. The ANOVA test revealed a significant difference ( $F=0.156$ ;  $p=0.015$ ) between age and pay.

Whilst interns aged below 25 years and between 25 and 30 years were indifferent with respect to having pay as pre-internship expectation, interns above 30 years agreed to having pay as one of their pre-internship expectations. The post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test revealed that the mean score for interns aged above 30 years ( $m=3.52$ ) was significantly different from interns below 25 years ( $m=3.08$ ) and interns between 25 and 30 years ( $m=3.09$ ).

#### **Expectation of Interns by Internship Characteristics**

Further to establishing the differences between interns' expectation by their socio-demographic characteristics, the study employed the T-test and ANOVA to explore the extent to which interns' expectation differ across internship characteristics. The analysis (Table 10) shows that interns' expectation of career-path-supervision differ across frequency of internship ( $p=0.030$ ). Though the magnitude of the effect was small ( $\eta^2=0.00$ ), first time interns were indifferent ( $M=3.43$ ;  $SD=0.88$ ) to having career path-supervision as internship expectation whilst interns with previous experience of internship experience agreed ( $M=3.79$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ) to having career path-supervision as internship expectation.

Similarly, there was significant differences between interns' expectation for pay during the internship and frequency of internship ( $p=0.046$ ). However, with an eta squared value of 0.00, the effect size of the difference was low. Whilst interns who did not have previous experience with internship were

uncertain about pay as internship expectation ( $M=3.06$ ;  $SD=1.23$ ), interns who were due to participate in internship again affirm to having pay as their expectation from the internship exercise ( $M=3.53$ ;  $SD=1.21$ ). It can be inferred from the results that, interns who have participated in internship before will have the necessary experiences in relation to what to expect from another internship exercise. This might explain why interns who have previous internship experience agreed that they were expecting the internship to help develop their career path, receive co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor and be paid during the internship exercise.

With the exception of enterprise skills as expectation, the remaining three expectation constructs (career path-supervision, academic-personal skills and pay) differed across internship facilities. Specifically, significant difference was observed between career path-supervision and internship facility ( $F=0.863$ ;  $p=0.047$ ). Post-hoc analysis using the Tukey HSD test revealed that the difference was observed between the mean score of respondents who interned at accommodation facilities ( $M=3.72$ ;  $SD=0.92$ ) and “others” ( $M=3.48$ ;  $SD=0.89$ ). Significant difference was also observed between interns’ expectation of academic-personal skills and internship facilities ( $p=0.003$ ) though the magnitude of the difference was small ( $\eta^2=0.00$ ). Further analysis from the post-hoc test indicates that the difference occurred between interns who had their internship at events organisations and those who did it other institutions such as hospitals.

**Table 10: Expectation of Interns by Internship Characteristics**

Characteristics	N	Enterprise skills		Career path-supervision		Academic-personal skills		Pay	
		Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Internship Frequency</b>									
Once	452	3.75	0.743	3.43	0.030*	3.70	0.039	3.06	0.046*
Twice	232	3.78	(0.00)	3.79	(0.00)	3.76	(0.00)	3.53	(0.00)
			t=-0.328		t=-0.860		t=-0.881		t=-0.860
<b>Internship Facility</b>									
Accommodation	422	3.78	0.461	3.75	0.047*	3.72	0.003*	3.01	0.015*
Food & Beverage	128	3.67	(0.01)	3.67	(0.00)	3.65	(0.00)	3.23	(0.01)
Events	127	3.78		3.83		3.79		3.49	
Others	7	3.38		3.48		3.47		3.24	
			F=0.861		F=0.863		F=0.618		F=1.495

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $\leq 0.05$  p

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

With reference to pay as internship expectation, the study found differences in pay and internship facility ( $p=0.015$ ). Whilst interns at accommodation facilities ( $M=3.01$ ;  $SD=1.25$ ), food and beverage facilities ( $M=3.23$ ;  $SD=1.12$ ) and others ( $M=3.24$ ;  $SD=1.24$ ) were uncertain about having pay as internship expectation, interns at events facilities ( $M=3.49$ ;  $SD=0.79$ ) were hoping to receive pay during their internship.

### **Expectation of Interns by Pre-Internship Activities**

Aside exploring the differences in mean between internship expectations and socio-demographic and internship characteristics, the study further examined the differences between internship expectations and pre-internship activities. This was done by employing T-test and ANOVA for pre-internship constructs that were dichotomous and construct with more than two variables respectively. The results of the analysis is presented in Table 11.

Research has shown that pre-internship preparation activities have a direct impact on the expectation of interns (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018). This assertion is reflected in the findings from the current study. For instance, the T-test analysis revealed significant difference between orientation by university and enterprise skills ( $p=0.015$ ), career path-supervision ( $p=0.001$ ) as well as academic-personal skills (0.002) as internship expectations. The magnitude of the differences in the means for all three expectation constructs were all found to very small with eta squared value of 0.01.

In fact, knowing the nature of the workload, job demands and requirement before the actual internship exercise can guide the interns with regards to their expectations. This information is communicated to interns during pre-placement activities such as seminars. It is therefore not surprising



that the study found orientation by university to influence interns' expectation in relation to enterprise skills, career-path-supervision and academic-personal skills. It is possible that these issues were discussed during the orientation organised by the technical universities.

Again, with the exception of pay as internship expectation, significant differences existed between interns' participation in on-campus practical training and enterprise skills, career path-supervision and academic-personal skills. For instance, interns' participation in on-campus practical training differed considerably ( $p=0.002$ ) on enterprise skills as internship expectation. This is reflected in the means as interns who participated in practical training sessions affirmed ( $M=3.82$ ;  $SD=0.92$ ) that enterprise skills were an expectation whilst interns who indicated they did not participate in practical training were indifferent ( $M=3.45$ ;  $SD=0.92$ ) to having enterprise skills as internship expectation.

Interns' expectation of career path-supervision also differed on interns' participation in on-campus practical training ( $p=0.041$ ), though the magnitude of the difference was small ( $\eta^2=0.01$ ). With a  $p$  value of 0.050, there was a significant difference between practical training participation and interns' expectation of academic-personal skills. Those who participated in on-campus practical training agreed ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ) to having academic-personal skills as internship expectation. However, their counterparts who did not participate in on-campus practical training were uncertain ( $M=3.47$ ;  $SD=0.86$ ) regarding this expectation. The magnitude of the effect on the mean was small ( $\eta^2=0.00$ ).

**Table 11: Expectation of Interns by Pre-Internship Activities**

Characteristics	N	Enterprise skills		Career path-supervision		Academic-personal skills		Pay	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
Orientation by university									
Yes	456	3.82	0.015*	3.79	0.001*	3.80	0.002*	3.14	0.105
No	228	3.33	(0.01)	3.35	(0.01)	3.47	(0.01)	2.98	(0.00)
		t=2.427		t=1.973		t=3.054		t=1.626	
Participating in on-campus practical training									
Yes	419	3.82	0.020*	3.80	0.041*	3.75	0.050*	3.05	0.247
No	265	3.45	(0.01)	3.67	(0.01)	3.47	(0.00)	3.16	(0.00)
		t=2.327		t=1.877		t=1.133		t=-1.158	
Internship is a registered course									
Yes	444	3.76	0.754	3.75	0.915	3.73	0.642	3.09	0.927
No	240	3.74	(0.00)	3.74	(0.00)	3.70	(0.00)	3.08	(0.00)
		t=0.313		t=0.107		t=0.465		t=0.940	

Table 11 Continued

Orientation by internship facility									
Yes	496	3.80	0.035*	3.81	0.004*	3.80	0.001*	3.15	0.039*
No	188	3.43	(0.01)	3.39	(0.01)	3.43	(0.00)	2.43	(0.01)
			t=2.110		t=2.869		t=1.131		t=2.188
Prior work experience									
Yes	372	3.77	0.012*	3.78	0.004*	3.76	0.002*	3.12	0.478
No	312	3.44	(0.00)	3.41	(0.00)	3.49	(0.00)	3.05	(0.00)
			t=0.507		t=0.987		t=1.278		t=0.682
Method of placement									
University/Dept.	147	3.45	0.012*	3.49	0.001*	3.57	0.061	2.97	0.351
Personal	478	3.81	(0.01)	3.82	(0.02)	3.77	(0.01)	3.13	(0.00)
Request from facility	59	3.78		3.80		3.69		3.03	
			F=4.468		F=7.146		F=2.803		F=1.050

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $p \leq 0.05$

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

As observed by Dhevabanchachai and Wattanacharoensil (2017), interns' expectation can be shaped or enhanced by pre-internship on-campus opportunities such as exposure to practical experiences such as on-campus accommodation, food and beverage and other facilities available on the university campus. The argument is that, since such on-campus practical training is akin to what pertains in the industry, students who are given such opportunities are likely to have their internship expectation moderated by such practical exposure.

Further analysis on the data revealed that orientation by internship facility differed across all four internship expectation constructs. Specifically, there was a significant difference between orientation by internship facility and enterprise skills ( $t=2.110$ ;  $p=0.035$ ), career path-supervision ( $t=2.869$ ;  $p=0.004$ ), academic-personal skills ( $t=1.131$ ;  $p=0.001$ ) as well as pay ( $t=2.188$ ;  $p=0.39$ ). A cursory look at the analysis indicates that interns whose internship facility organised orientation for them agreed to having enterprise skills ( $M=3.80$ ;  $SD=0.91$ ), career path-supervision ( $M=3.81$ ;  $SD=0.86$ ) and academic-personal skills ( $M=3.80=0.86$ ) as internship expectation. However, interns who indicated their internship facilities did not organise orientation for them were unclear as to having these internship expectations. With specific reference to pay as internship expectation, interns whose internship facilities organised orientation for them were uncertain ( $M=3.15$ ;  $SD=1.26$ ) whereas those whose internship facilities did not organise orientation for them disagreed ( $M=2.43$ ;  $SD=1.11$ ).



As indicated previously, orientation shapes the expectation of interns. Flowing from the above, it can be deduced that orientation by internship facilities plays a role in shaping the expectation of interns. Arguably, the content of such orientations could serve as guide as to what expectations interns should have regarding the specific internship expectations.

Prior working experience in the hospitality industry was found to have also caused significant differences among enterprise skills ( $p=0.012$ ), career path-supervision ( $p=0.004$ ), and academic-personal skills ( $p=0.002$ ) expectation constructs. With respect to working experience and enterprise skills, interns with prior working experience agreed ( $M=3.77$ ;  $SD=0.96$ ) whereas interns without prior working experience disagreed ( $M=3.44$ ;  $SD=0.88$ ). Whereas interns with prior working experiences affirmed ( $M=3.78$ ;  $SD=0.93$ ) of having academic-personal skills as internship expectation, interns without working experience were neutral ( $M=3.41$ ;  $SD=0.84$ ). However, the magnitude of the effect on the means scores on these three internship expectations were very small with eta squared value of 0.00 for all three constructs.

Finally, the ANOVA analysis also revealed significant differences between method of placement and two internship expectation constructs. Specifically, there was significant difference between enterprise skills and method of placement ( $F=4.468$ ;  $p=0.012$ ). Whereas interns who got placed through their university/department were indifferent ( $M=3.45$ ;  $SD=1.05$ ) towards enterprise skills as internship expectation, interns who got placed through personal efforts ( $M=3.81$ ;  $SD=0.88$ ) and those who got placed through request from internship facilities ( $M=3.78$ ;  $SD=0.86$ ) agreed that enterprise skill

was one of their internship expectation. Using the post-hoc Tukey test indicated that the mean score for interns placed by their university/department was significantly different from the mean score of interns who found their internship through personal efforts. Similarly, career path-supervision differed significantly across method of placement ( $F=7.146$ ;  $p=0.001$ ). Though interns who were placed by the university/department were unclear ( $M=3.49$ ;  $SD=0.99$ ) as to whether career path-supervision was internship expectation, interns who were placed through personal effort ( $M=3.82$ ;  $SD=0.84$ ) and request from internship facility ( $M=3.80$ ;  $SD=0.87$ ) affirmed having career path-supervision as internship expectation. Further analyses using the post-hoc Tukey test found the difference between the means of interns placed by their university/department and those who found their internship placement themselves.

### Summary

This chapter sought to examine the expectations of interns prior to participating in hospitality internship. Overall, six (6) factors – academic skills, personal skills, enterprise skills, career path/job offer, supervision and pay – were identified as the expectations of interns from hospitality internship. However, using FA, the six (6) factors were reduced to four (4) factors, contributing 62.93 per cent of the total interns' expectation from internship. Specifically, the following were found: enterprise skills (14.43, 18.68%); career path-supervision (14.43, 18.68%); academic-personal skills (1.29, 17.61%) and pay (1.11, 8.82%). The scales were deemed to be consistent internally as the Cronbach's alpha coefficient values for the four (4) constructs ranged between 0.70 and 0.90.

In order to determine whether significant differences occurred in interns' expectation and socio-demographic and internship characteristics as well as pre-internship activities, the ANOVA and T-test statistics were employed. With respect to socio-demographic characteristics, marked differences were observed between sex and enterprise skills ( $p=0.011$ ), sex and academic-personal skills ( $p=0.050$ ), marital status and career path-supervision ( $p=0.023$ ), marital status and pay ( $p=0.013$ ), age and enterprise skills ( $p=0.014$ ) as well as age and pay ( $0.015$ ).

In addition to the differences in socio-demographic characteristic and internship expectations, differences were also observed between internship characteristics and internship expectations. For instance, frequency of internship differed across career path-supervision ( $p=0.030$ ) and pay ( $p=0.046$ ) whilst differences occurred between internship facility and career path-supervision ( $p=0.047$ ), academic-personal skills ( $p=0.0030$ ) and pay ( $p=0.015$ ).

Finally, the study found statistically significant differences between three (3) of the four (4) pre-internship activities constructs and some of the internship expectations. For instance, orientation by university differed across enterprise skills ( $p=0.015$ ), career path-supervision ( $p=0.001$ ) and academic-personal skills ( $p=0.002$ ). Again, participating in on-campus practical training was found to be statistically significant with enterprise skills ( $p=0.020$ ), career path-supervision ( $p=0.041$ ) and academic-personal skills ( $p=0.050$ ).

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### HOSPITALITY INTERNS' EXPERIENCES FROM INTERNSHIP

#### Introduction

A plethora of internship experiences have been found in the hospitality internship literature. For instance, Karunaratne and Perera (2019) observed that most interns describe their internship experiences in relation to building relationship with industry, acquisition of good working culture, development of self-confidence and ability to solve work-related problems. However, internships are not always equally beneficial to all interns (Zuo et al., 2019). It is against this backdrop that the study sought to assess interns' experiences from internships.

This chapter therefore, presents the analysis on interns' internship experiences. The chapter further explores the differences between internship experiences of students across their socio-demographic characteristics, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities. In presenting the analysis, the study employed both descriptive statistics (percentages, means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (factor analysis, T-test, ANOVA and paired sample T-test).

#### Experiences of Hospitality Interns

One key role of internship is offering students the opportunity to be able to transfer classroom knowledge to actual work situations whilst acquiring industry-based skills and developing self-confidence (Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Mensah et al., 2020; Rothman & Sisman, 2016). Internship experiences are grouped into four: bridging the gap between



classroom and workplace (academic skills), professional skills development, personal skills and improving interns' employability (Alpert et al., 2009).

The analysis of interns' experiences from internship exercise follows Alpert's et al (2009) categorisation. Additional constructs – supervision and compensation – were also analysed as part of interns' experience. This is to provide a basis for comparing all constructs that emerged as interns' expectation with interns' experiences in order to identify disparities between interns' expectations and experiences as prescribed by the ECT.

As indicated in Table 12 interns generally agreed (65.7%; M=3.66) that academic skills were among the experiences they derived from the internship exercise. Specifically, the interns agreed that they developed their oral and presentation skills (M=3.71; SD=1.12), were able to apply theoretical work with practices in the industry (M=3.68; SD=1.24), enhanced their research and project skills (M=3.63; SD=1.14) as well as increase their grades (M=3.63; SD=1.12).

One key experience interns derived from hospitality internship was 'personal skills'. On the average, 66.1 percent (M=3.69; SD=1.14) agreed to this. Specifically, interns agreed that their creativity have been enhanced (M=3.86; SD=1.20), developed self-confidence (M=3.81; SD=1.11) and social interaction skills (M=3.80; SD=1.08) as well as gaining skills in relation to working independently (M=3.76; SD=1.13) and dealing with conflicts (M=3.58; SD=1.14). They were however indifferent regarding internship enhancing their writing skills (M=3.45; SD=1.18). A study by Karunaratne and Perera (2019) found that experiences derived by hospitality interns from internships included development of self-confidence and ability to solve problems which are similar

to ‘developed self-confidence’ and ‘dealing with conflicts’ in the current study. It is however surprising that interns were indifferent to enhancing their writing skills in the study. One of the key components of internship assessment is the writing of reports by interns. It is expected that interns transfer information recorded in their log books into formal reports to be submitted for grading. Hopefully, this is supposed to help students enhance their writing skills.

Further to academic skills, one key experience interns derived from hospitality internship was ‘personal skills’ development. On the average, 66.1 percent ( $M=3.69$ ;  $SD=1.14$ ) agreed to this. In addition, interns agreed to six (6) out of the seven (7) items used in measuring personal skills development as a construct. They agreed that their creativity have been enhanced ( $M=3.86$ ;  $SD=1.20$ ), developed self-confidence ( $M=3.81$ ;  $SD=1.11$ ) and social interaction skills ( $M=3.80$ ;  $SD=1.08$ ) as well as gaining skills in relation to working independently ( $M=3.76$ ;  $SD=1.13$ ) and dealing with conflicts ( $M=58$ ;  $SD=1.14$ ). They were however indifferent when it comes to enhancing their writing skills ( $M=3.45$ ;  $SD=1.18$ ).

Research on internship experiences indicates enhancing employment opportunities, development of professional expertise and the prospects of connecting interns to employers are key experiences gained from internship (Behrendt, 2017; Schmidt, 2017). Confirming this assertion, most of the interns (66.2 percent;  $M=3.72$ ) agreed to ‘career path/job offer’ as one of their experiences from the internship exercise. They believe the internship has led them to aspire for future education/career in the hospitality industry ( $M=3.76$ ;  $SD=1.07$ ), provided them with the advantage of securing employment ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=1.10$ ) and contributed to their career advancement ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=1.13$ ).

**Table 12: Experience of Interns**

Statement	% agreement	in	Mean	SD
Academic ( $\alpha=.836$ )				
Applied theoretical work with practices in the industry	68.0		3.68	1.24
Enhanced my research and project skills	65.5		3.63	1.14
Developed oral and presentation skills	66.8		3.71	1.12
Increased my grades	62.4		3.63	1.12
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>65.7</i>		<i>3.66</i>	<i>1.16</i>
Personal skills ( $\alpha=.869$ )				
Enhanced my creativity	73.8		3.86	1.20
Solved work-related problems	59.6		3.54	1.17
Developed self confidence	71.2		3.81	1.11
Worked independently	69.6		3.76	1.13
Developed social interaction skill	71.7		3.80	1.08
Dealt effectively with conflicts	61.2		3.58	1.14
Enhanced my writing skills	55.5		3.45	1.18
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>66.1</i>		<i>3.69</i>	<i>1.14</i>
Enterprise skills ( $\alpha=.900$ )				
Practiced team work with my colleagues	72.2		3.87	1.10
Acquired industry work culture	67.2		3.76	1.10
Effectively prioritized work	66.0		3.73	1.07
Appreciated social and ethical responsibility	65.9		3.70	1.10
Developed managerial skills	66.3		3.74	1.11

**Table 12 Continued**

Obtained insight into hospitality/tourism operations	67.4	3.74	1.09
<i>Overall score</i>	67.5	3.76	1.10
Career path/job offer ( $\alpha=.922$ )			
Aspired for future education/career in the Industry	68.3	3.76	1.07
Confirmed or reinforced my career choice	66.1	3.72	1.11
Provided an advantage in securing Employment	67.5	3.75	1.10
Contributed to my career advancement	67.8	3.75	1.13
Provided opportunities for increased responsibilities at work	66.2	3.69	1.10
Enhanced my ability to transit into my employer's organization	61.7	3.61	1.10
Contributed to my satisfaction with my career choice	67.5	3.75	1.08
Contributed to my overall career development	64.6	3.75	1.08
<i>Overall score</i>	66.2	3.72	1.10
Supervision ( $\alpha=.741$ )			
Received co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor	68.5	3.74	1.08
Assisted by my workplace supervisor to help me realise my internship goals	62.6	3.55	1.27
<i>Overall score</i>	65.6	3.65	1.18
Compensation/pay ( $\alpha=.850$ )			
Paid during the internship	38.4	2.74	1.48
Received allowances for food and transport	36.7	2.73	1.46
Received financial rewards after the internship	40.4	1.81	1.50
<i>Overall score</i>	38.5	2.43	1.48

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

$\alpha$ = Cronbach's Alpha

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)



Additionally, interns indicated that the internship exercise had provided them the satisfaction with their career choice ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=1.08$ ) and contributed to their overall career development in the hospitality industry ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=1.08$ ). Also, the interns were of the firm belief that the internship has confirmed or reinforced their career choice ( $M=3.71$ ;  $SD=1.11$ ) and enhanced their ability to transit into the organisations they had their internship ( $M=3.61$ ;  $SD=1.10$ ).

In general, interns agreed (65.6 percent;  $M=3.65$ ) one of their internship experiences relate to supervision during the internship. Specifically, interns indicated that their supervisors co-operated and nurtured them ( $M=3.74$ ;  $SD=1.08$ ). They also affirmed that their internship supervisors assisted them to realise their internship goals ( $M=3.55$ ;  $SD=1.27$ ). In fact, internship supervisors are key in determining the experiences interns derive from internship. The results affirm the assertion by Jackson et al. (2019) that on-site supervising role is critical in providing guidance and evaluating activities undertaken by interns during the internship exercise. This goes a long way in enhancing interns experience and might serve as a conduit for memorable internship experience.

Finally, interns disagreed to compensation/pay as internship experience. Overall, less than half (38.5 percent;  $M=2.43$ ) of the respondents alluded to compensation/pay as internship experience. Specifically, interns indicated that they did not receive financial rewards after the internship exercise ( $M=1.81$ ;  $SD=1.50$ ). However, they were indifferent regarding being paid during the internship ( $M=2.74$ ;  $SD=1.48$ ) and receiving allowances for food and transport ( $M=2.73$ ;  $SD=1.46$ ). The result is indicative of interns' expectation. As observed in the preceding chapter, interns were indifferent with

compensation/pay as internship expectation. The implication is that, though interns expected that they will receive some form of compensation in the form of financial rewards for transportation, that expectation did not materialise.

In sum, the descriptive analysis has revealed that interns had varied experiences from the internship exercise. These experiences included bridging the gap between what is learnt in the classroom and what pertains in the industry as well as enhancing their personal and entrepreneurial skills, confirming their career path/job prospects and having the opportunity to be guided by onsite supervisors. However, interns were indifferent with respect compensation as internship experience.

### **Exploratory Factors Explaining Interns' Experiences**

Similar to the analysis on interns' expectations, additional analysis using the FA was employed on the factors underlying interns' experiences from their internship. Using the varimax rotation method, the thirty (30) items measuring interns' experiences were subjected to the PCA.

In doing this, two most important requirements for employing FA analysis was checked. The KMO value of 0.969 exceeded the recommended KMO value of 0.60 whilst the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity's values of 14803.519 was deemed appropriate at  $p=0.000$  (Pallant, 2005; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2010). Factors loadings of 0.5 were set as a means of including variables into the analysis. Also, Kaiser's rule of retaining variables with eigenvalues of more than 1.0 was applied. With a Cronbach's coefficient alpha value of more than 0.7 for each subscale measuring experience as a construct meant that the scale was internally consistent.

Overall, the PCA extracted twenty-three (23) items coalesced under three (3) constructs (Table 13). These constructs accounted for 66.11 percent of the total interns' experiences from participating in the internship programme. The implication is that, other factors aside those identified in this study contribute to interns' experience in relation to hospitality internship. The three factors, as indicated on Table 13 are academic-personal skills, career path-supervision and compensation/pay.

Factor I was labelled as academic-personal skills. This factor relates to interns' experience from internship in terms of benefits for academic work and personal skills they developed after the internship exercise. Factor I, with eigenvalue of 8.65 accounted for 28.85 percent of the total variance explaining interns' experiences from internship exercise they undertook.

**Table 13: Exploratory Factors Explaining Interns' Experiences from Internship**

F	Latent constructs and observed variables	FL	EV	VE (%)	A
I	<i>Academic-personal skills</i>				0.927
	I have enhanced my research and project skills	0.74	8.65	28.85	
	I developed oral and presentation skills	0.71			
	I developed self confidence	0.70			
	I was able to solve work-related problem	0.70			
	I developed social interaction skill	0.69			
	I have enhanced my creativity	0.69			
	I was able to apply theoretical work with practices in the industry	0.69			
	I can deal effectively with conflicts	0.63			
	I have enhanced my writing skills	0.62			
	My grade point increased	0.61			
II	<i>Career path-supervision</i>				0.920

Table 13 continued

The internship has contributed to my satisfaction with my career choice	0.78	7.40	24.68	
The internship has contributed to my overall career development	0.77			
I received co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor	0.72			
I have enhanced my ability to transit into my employer's organization	0.71			
Provide opportunities for increased responsibilities at work	0.70			
The internship has contributed to my career advancement	0.68			
I can take an advantage in securing employment after school	0.65			
I aspire for future education and career in the industry	0.63			
I have confirmed or reinforce my career choice	0.63			
III <i>Compensation/pay</i>				0.872
Received allowances for food and transport	0.89	2.58	8.58	
Paid during the internship	0.88			
Received financial rewards after the internship	0.87			
Total variance explained			62.11	

Note: F: Factor, FL: Factor Loading, EV: Eigenvalue, VE: Variance explained,  $\alpha$ : Cronbach's alpha; KMO = 0.969, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx.  $\chi^2 = 14803.519$ ; = 0.000

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Specifically, interns indicated that they had enhanced their research and project skills (0.74), developed their oral and presentation skills (0.71), developed self-confidence (0.70), have the ability to resolve work-related



problems (0.70) as well as developing social interaction skills (0.69) after their internship. Other academic and personal skills interns developed after the internship exercise included enhancing their creativity (0.69) and having the ability to apply theory to practical work situations (0.69).

Skills development, as evident in the conventional literature on interns' experiences from internship exercise, is the most dominant experience interns derived from internship participation. It is therefore not surprising that academic-personal skills were extracted as the most dominant internship experience in the study. Confirming this, Zehr (2016) observed in a study to explore internship experiences and concluded that interpersonal, communication and project skills were dominant skills interns derived from the internship experience. Other studies (Jackson, 2018, Stewart & Owens, 2013; Velez & Giner, 2015) have also concluded on skills development – presentation, problem solving, self-management, self-confidence – being prominent experiences interns derived from hospitality internships.

Developing these soft skills from hospitality internship is very critical because such skills become useful in the world of work. For instance, skills such as communication, problem solving and self-confidence are relevant skills needed in the hospitality industry (Mugisha & Nkwasiwe, 2014). As observed by Albu et al. (2016), soft skills are mostly limited in academic institutions. In essence, internship becomes a platform for interns to develop these relevant skills which are missing from the classroom.

The notion that skills development is the dominant experience interns derived from internship participation was evident during the FGD. In sharing their experiences from internship, one discussant had this to say:

*I did my internship at the university cafeteria. During my time there, the cafeteria did a lot large scale cooking for events in the university. I had a good experience with the internship because I learnt a lot. Before the internship, I did not know to handle large scale cooking and also learnt how to prepare meals like jollof rice. This is important because, after school, I intend starting my own restaurant or eatery so learning how to do large school cooking will be helpful to me (24-year-old female intern)*

This view was re-echoed by another discussant:

*For me, the major experience I had during my internship was learning how to cook for a large group of people. Unlike the practical we have been doing in school where we cook for few people, I witness and participated in large scale cooking. This will go a long way in helping me to put this into practise when I get the opportunity to join any food and beverage outlets that is into large scale cooking (22-year-old female intern).*

Aside large-scale cooking, the FGD revealed that intern's experiences from the internship relate to how to deal with guests/customers. For instance, one intern said that:

*The internship was very beneficial to me. I learnt how to relate to people, especially, guests/customers. In addition, since I was at the front desk, I was taught how to respond to guests/customers on the phone, how to make reservation for guests/customers and how to check in and check out guests.*

*This has been very good since we don't get opportunity to learn this during normal school periods (22-year-old female intern).*

Another interns retorted:

*I also learnt how to relate to people at my internship organisation. I served as a waiter in a hotel restaurant which was always busy. Because of this, there were many customers I had to handle and this taught me how to handle multiple tasks at a time (24-year-old male intern).*

Despite the positive experiences interns had with guests/customers during the internship, others had negative experiences dealing with both guests and hotel workers. On this, one intern indicated:

*Hmmmm! There is one time I had a very bad experience with one customer. During my internship at a hospital canteen, a customer I was serving porridge and bread spoke to me harshly. As I am speaking, I don't really know what I did but the moment I put his food on the table, this man started talking harshly to me. I wanted to find out why but he would not answer but kept insulting me as if I have done something wrong. I left him and reported the case to my supervisor (23-year-old male intern).*

On the same issue of having a negative internship experience, one discussant had this to say:

*Though I had pleasant moments, I will never forget how a hotel employee treated me during my internship at one of the*

*top hotels in Accra. My supervisor had asked me to cut onions but unfortunately, I did not cut it according to how my supervisor wanted. One of the kitchen staff employees saw it and started hurling insults at me. She was so furious and told me she thought students from the university know better than they do but unfortunately university students are worse than those who did not go to the university (22-year-old female intern).*

From the forgoing, it can be deduced that internship experiences could be negative as expressed by some interns during the FGDs. Farmaki (2018) observed similar trend in a study that explored hospitality and tourism interns' experiences from internship. In the study, majority of the interns reported of having negative experiences with staff, supervisors and management of the facilities they interned. The negative experiences as indicated by Farmaki (2018) was largely as a result of cultural differences between interns and supervisors, gender discrimination and unmet interns' expectations. If unchecked and properly managed, such negative experiences could lead to interns not willing to work in the hospitality/tourism industry after graduation.

The next factor (Factor II) which consisted of nine (9) items was labelled as career path-supervision. This factor is made of issues of interns' internship experiences relating to careers within the hospitality industry as well as matters regarding how they felt about their internship supervisors. With an eigenvalue of 7.40, factor II contributed 24.68 percent of the overall variance explaining interns' experiences with hospitality internship. Items that loaded on this factor includes the internship contributing to interns' satisfaction with their career



choice (0.78), overall career development (0.77) as well as giving them the opportunity to transit into the organisation where they interned (0.71). Other experiences related to career path as indicated by the interns were internship contributing to their career advancement (0.68), aspiring for future career in the hospitality industry (0.63) and their career choice being confirmed (0.63) as a result of the internship. Interns' experiences with supervision relates to interns' perception of being nurtured by their on-site supervisors (0.72).

Literature shows that interns participate in hospitality internship with the view of learning in real working environment, acquire good working culture and be exposed to the realities of working in the hospitality industry (Dhevabanchachai & Wattanacharoensil, 2017; Karunaratne & Perera, 2019; Jackson, 2018; Lin & Anantharajah, 2019). The implication is that, as students are exposed to the hospitality working environment through internships, they are able to assess themselves to see if these experiences enable them to confirm their career choice. Others use these experiences to examine their ability to gain employment with the internship host organisation. In fact, Karunaratne and Perera (2019) observed in their study that interns' satisfaction with the learning from industry during internships help confirm or reinforced their career choice.

Confirming the above assertion that internship reinforces interns career choice, one of the interns said this during the FGD:

*I think the internship has helped me to decide to work in the hospitality industry after school. You see, though I was shy, I developed self-confidence during the internship. I am now confident. Also, I have gained a working experience and have been exposed to what pertains in the industry. Due to*

*this, I am very sure I will work in the industry (25-year-old male intern).*

Another discussant said this:

*I learnt how to be punctual to work, working with timelines and how to relate to co-workers. I even learnt how to carry drinks and serve guests. I enjoyed doing these so and it makes me want to build my carrier in the hospitality industry when I complete school. Even if I don't get a job quickly, I will try and set up a small business such as a joint that serves drinks and pastries (23-year-old intern).*

The last factor identified by the FA was compensation/pay. Three (3) items measured this factor with all three (3) factors loading above 0.8. Specifically, interns indicated that they received allowances for food and transport (0.89), were paid after the internship (0.88) and were rewarded financially after the internship exercise (0.87). Internally, this factor was consistent with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.872. Overall, compensation/pay contributed 8.58 percent of the total variance explaining interns' experiences from the internship programme with an eigenvalue of 2.58.

'Compensation/pay' as an internship experience factor contributing the least to the overall variance of internship experience is not surprising. This factor accounted for 8.58 percent with an eigenvalue of 2.58. An examination of the descriptive statistics shows that more than half of the respondents disagreed to all the three specific variables used in measuring compensation/pay. As alluded to by Department of Employment (2016), financial rewards during internship is on the decline. Confirming this, Capek,

Klein and Gassman (2017) observed that “being a source of financial income” was the least of the experience interns had from their internships. In a similar study, Mekawy and Abu Bakr (2014) noted that hospitality and tourism interns were not given financial assistance during their internships. In Ghana, Akomaning et al (2011) made similar observations that non-payment of hospitality interns is seen as one of the main challenges confronting hospitality internships.

### **Experiences of Interns by Socio-demographic Characteristics**

In addition to the descriptive and exploratory factor analysis, the study further used T-test and ANOVA to ascertain if interns’ socio-demographics differ across their experiences gained from the internship. Whilst the T-test was used on sex and marital status, the ANOVA was employed on interns’ age. The extent of effect size on the differences, the eta values were computed and interpreted using Cohen’s (1988) suggestion on interpreting eta values. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 14.

The analysis established that compensation/pay as internship experience differed across interns’ sex characteristic ( $t=1.983$ ;  $p=0.048$ ). Despite the significant difference, the means of the sex of interns (Male:  $M=3.10$ ; Female:  $M=2.73$ ) did not differ much in terms of their actual mean values. An examination of the mean values of both males ( $M=3.10$ ;  $SD=1.23$ ) and females ( $M=2.73$ ;  $SD=1.32$ ) reveal that both were uncertain of benefitting from the internship institutions in terms of financial rewards.

Though none of the internship experience variables differed across marital status, significant differences were observed between academic-personal skills and age of interns ( $F=4.621$ ;  $p=0.010$ ) as well as career path-

supervision and age of interns ( $F=2.175$ ;  $p=0.014$ ). With regards to academic-personal skills and age of interns, the differences in the face value of means did not differ much ( $<25 - M=3.61$ ;  $25-30 - \text{Mean}=3.80$ ;  $>30 - \text{Mean}=3.90$ ). However, using the post-hoc comparison analysis using Tukey-HSD test, the differences occurred between interns whose ages were  $<25$  years and those who were aged between 25 and 30 years.

Similar results were observed in relation to age of interns and career path-supervision as internship experience construct. Though significant differences occurred in the mean ages of the respondents ( $F=2.175$ ;  $p=0.014$ ), the differences in the means of the age cohorts were not much. Using the post-hoc for further analysis, differences were observed between the mean ages of interns who were  $<25$  years ( $M=3.66$ ;  $SD=0.86$ ) and interns between 25 and 30 years ( $M=3.80$ ;  $SD=0.87$ ).

The results show the significant role certain socio-demographic characteristics play in shaping the internship experiences of interns. For instance, whilst interns perceive that their sex can determine whether they will receive compensation during internship or not, age also determines interns' experiences from internship with respect to academic-personal skills and career-path supervision as constructs of internship experiences.

In essence, both interns' sex and age can influence interns' internship experiences. This confirms the assertion by Omar (2015) that interns individual characteristics, including age and sex can have influence on their perception of internship experiences. Again, an earlier study by Green and Farazmand (2012) found that females as compared to males, benefit more or had a more positive experiences from their internship. This further cements the view that interns'



demographics thus relate the experiences interns derived from the internship exercise.



**Table 14: Experiences of Interns by Socio-demographic Characteristics**

Characteristics	N	Academic-personal skills		Career path-supervision		Compensation/pay	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	54	3.60	0.440	3.69	0.797	3.10	0.048*
Female	630	3.70	(0.00)	3.72	(0.00)	2.73	(0.01)
			t=0.772		t=0.257		t=1.983
<b>Marital status</b>							
Single	593	3.69	0.788	3.73	0.502	2.72	0.082
Married	91	3.67	(0.00)	3.66	(0.00)	2.98	(0.00)
			t=0.269		t=0.671		t=1.741
<b>Age</b>							
<25	410	3.61	0.010*	3.66	0.014*	2.82	0.326
25-30	244	3.80	(0.00)	3.80	(0.01)	2.67	(0.00)
>30	30	3.90		3.75		2.64	
		F=4.621		F=2.175		F=1.124	

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $\leq 0.05$  p

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

### Experiences of Interns by Internship Characteristics

Using the Independent T-test and ANOVA, additional analysis was carried out to ascertain if differences exist between interns' experiences from internship and internship characteristics (Table 15). Significant difference was observed with respect to compensation/pay as internship experience and frequency of internship ( $t=2.139$ ;  $p=0.033$ ). Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean score of first-time intern' ( $M=2.68$ ;  $SD=1.29$ ) and second time interns ( $M=2.91$ ;  $SD=1.37$ ) was a bit small. The computed eta value of 0.01 indicates a small effect on the mean differences.

This means that interns perceive that the number of times they participate in internship determines whether they will be compensated or not. Whilst this is possible, it cannot be conclusive. In fact, both first time interns and interns with previous internship experiences may be compensated or not. In any case, interns with previous internship experiences do not always intern at the same facility, making it difficult to determine whether interns have had a previous internship experience or they are first-time interns. Factors such as internship facility policy on interns' compensation is likely to influence compensation of interns more than internship frequency.

From Table 12, significant differences occurred between internship facility and academic-personal skills ( $F=0.001$ ). Further inspection indicates that whilst interns agreed that accommodation ( $M=3.69$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ), food and beverage ( $M=3.64$ ;  $SD=0.85$ ) and events ( $M=3.75$ ;  $SD=0.82$ ) facilities influenced their internship experience in terms of academic-personal skills, those who interned at "other" facilities were indifferent ( $M=3.07$ ;  $SD=3.07$ ).

The post-hoc comparison using Tukey HSD test indicates that the differences in the mean were caused by those who interned at accommodation facilities and those who interned at “other” facilities such as hospitals and travel agents.

Interning at hospitality/tourism related facilities such as hotels, restaurants and events organisations will more likely result in interns having the opportunity to develop specific personal and academic skills needed in the hospitality/tourism industry. The same argument cannot be made for interns who had their internship at “other” facilities. These facilities are not limited to hospitality/tourism facilities but includes other facilities such as hospitals. Obviously, such interns are not likely to be given the necessary attention in terms of building hospitality/tourism skills as compared to those who interned at hospitality/tourism facilities. As observed from the FGD, a discussant who interned at a hospital revealed:

*I did my internship at a hospital because I was not getting a hotel or restaurant. Initially, I didn't like that idea but because it was compulsory, I had to find a place to do it and that was a hospital. I was posted to the records department. My duties included looking for patients' folders and arranging them to enable them see the doctor. Certain times, I was asked by my supervisor to write receipts for patients who had visited the hospital for the first time and need to pay for their cards. That is all that I did for the two months I was there. I wished they had put me at the front desk but they did not (22-year-old female intern).*



**Table 15: Experiences of Interns by Internship Characteristics**

Characteristics	N	Academic-personal skills		Career path-supervision		Compensation/pay	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Frequency of internship</b>							
Once	452	3.64	0.073	3.69	0.253	2.68	0.033*
Twice	232	3.77	(0.00)	3.77	(0.01)	2.91	(0.001)
		t=1.798		t=1.144		t=2.139	
<b>Internship Facility</b>							
Accommodation	422	3.69	0.001*	3.76	0.012*	2.78	0.015*
Food & Beverage	128	3.64	(0.01)	3.61	(0.01)	2.89	(0.01)
Events	127	3.75		3.71		2.56	
Others	7	3.07		3.17		2.38	
		F=1.494		F=1.902		F=1.655	
<b>Internship duration</b>							
1month	191	3.57	0.049*	3.67	0.048*	2.60	0.039
2months	242	3.78	(0.01)	3.83	(0.01)	2.91	(0.01)
3months	251	3.68		3.65		2.73	
		F=3.037		F=3.058		F=0.051	
<b>Visits by Supervisors from Department</b>							
Yes	512	3.72	0.050*	3.74	0.012*	2.80	0.136
No	172	3.58	(0.01)	3.65	(0.00)	3.63	(0.00)
		t=1.891		t=1.236		t=1.493	

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $\leq 0.05$  p

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Similar observations were made regarding internship facility and career path-supervision ( $p=0.012$ ). With the exception of “other” facilities where interns were undecided ( $M=3.17$ ;  $SD=1.03$ ), interns who interned at accommodation facilities ( $M=3.76$ ;  $SD=0.89$ ), food and beverage facilities ( $M=3.61$ ;  $SD=0.78$ ) and events facilities ( $M=3.71$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ) agreed that internship facilities influenced internship experience in terms of career path-supervision. However, the actual difference was found between those interning at accommodation facilities and their counterpart who did their internship at “other” facilities.

The implication is that, interns who had their internship at hospitality/tourism facilities are more likely to develop their career paths than those who interned at “other” facilities. This is particularly true for interns who have the desire to chart a career path in the hospitality industry. Such interns get the opportunity to develop their career path since they are interning in facility that is biased towards hospitality/tourism.

Further, the study found a significant difference between internship facility and compensation/pay as internship experience ( $F=1.655$ ;  $p=0.015$ ). An inspection of the mean values for the different categories of facilities shows that aside “other” facilities where interns disagreed ( $M=2.38$ ;  $SD=1.08$ ), interns were uncertain as to whether accommodation facilities ( $M=2.78$ ;  $SD=1.34$ ), food and beverage facilities ( $M=2.89$ ;  $SD=1.22$ ) and events ( $M=2.56$ ;  $SD=1.36$ ) influenced compensation/pay as internship experience. The post-hoc analysis, using the Tukey HSD found the mean value of accommodation facility ( $M=2.78$ ) to be statistically different from the mean value of “other” facilities ( $M=2.38$ ). Though interns mostly do not receive financial rewards during

internship (Akomaning et al., 2011; Mensah et al., 2021), the findings suggest that accommodation facilities are more inclined to provide interns some financial rewards as compared to the remaining facilities such as food and beverage, events and non-hospitality related facilities. Aside the fact that hotels and other accommodation facilities dominate in terms of hospitality facilities, accommodation facilities' inclination to offer interns financial rewards might have accounted for why majority of interns chose accommodation facilities as a place to do their internship.

Significant differences were also found between duration of internship and academic-personal skills ( $p=0.049$ ) as well as career path-supervision ( $p=0.048$ ). Despite reaching statistical significance, the differences in the mean values of those who interned for 1month ( $M=3.57$ ;  $SD=0.98$ ), 2months ( $M=3.78$ ;  $SD=0.81$ ) and 3months ( $M=3.68$ ;  $SD=0.86$ ) was small. Using the post hoc test, the mean of internship duration of 1month ( $M=3.57$ ) was found to be significantly different from the mean of internship duration of 2months ( $M=3.78$ ).

Also, the difference in the mean values of interns who did their internship for 1month ( $M=3.67$ ;  $SD=0.93$ ), 2months ( $M=3.83$ ;  $SD=0.79$ ) and 3months ( $M=3.65$ ;  $SD=0.91$ ) was small, though there was a significant statistical difference between internship duration and career path-supervision ( $F=3.058$ ;  $p=0.048$ ). Further inspection using the post hoc analysis indicates that the difference occurred between the means of those who interned for 1month and 3months.

The forgoing suggests that, internship duration plays a significant role in determining the experiences interns derived from hospitality/tourism internship. All things being equal, the longer interns stay at the facility, the more likely they are to have enhanced experiences from the internship exercise. It is therefore not surprising that the interns perceived that duration of internship impacts on their internship experience in terms of developing their academic-personal skills and career path as well as having an enhanced experience with onsite supervisors. This confirms the assertion that the duration or length of internship enhances interns' experiences (Omar, 2020; Tuasikal, Hartoto, Prakoso, Kartiko & Hariyanto, 2021). Specifically, Tuasikal et al. (2021) believes that longer internship periods substantially enrich interns' experiences from internship.

Finally, the study sought to find out if visits by supervisors from the university/department caused differences in mean values across academic-personal skills, career path-supervision and compensation/pay experience sub-constructs. From Table 15, the study observed that academic-personal skills differed by visits by supervisors from the university/department ( $t=1.891$ ;  $p=0.050$ ). A look at the means indicates that interns who were visited by university/department ( $M=3.72$ ;  $SD=0.89$ ) and those who were not visited by supervisors from the university/department ( $M=3.58$ ;  $SD=0.85$ ) agreed that visits by supervisors influenced their internship experience in relation to academic-personal skills. Similar findings were observed with regards to career path-supervision experience sub-construct and visits by supervisors from the university/department ( $t=1.236$ ;  $p=0.012$ ). The difference in the mean values of



interns who were visited ( $M=3.74$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ) and those who were not visited ( $M=3.65$ ;  $SD=0.79$ ) is quite small.

The above findings could be attributed in part, to the fact that visits by university supervisors during internship has the potential of boosting the confidence of interns. In fact, some interns feel proud, cared for and important upon visit by university supervisors. This could create in them a sense of worth and produce confidence in them to give out their best.

### **Experiences of Interns by Pre-Internship Activities**

Using the T-test and ANOVA, significant differences were observed between all the three internship experience sub-constructs (that is, academic-personal skills, career path-supervision and compensation/pay) across the various pre-internship activities. For instance, significant difference occurred between academic-personal skills and orientation by university before internship ( $p=0.000$ ) as well as career path-supervision and orientation by university before internship ( $p=0.002$ ). Examining their respective means, it was observed that whilst interns who went through pre-internship orientation agreed ( $M=3.80$ ;  $SD=0.87$ ) that the orientation influenced their internship experience in terms of academic-personal skills, their counterparts whose universities did not organise pre-internship orientation remained indifferent ( $M=3.48$ ;  $SD=0.85$ ).

As earlier alluded to, pre-internship orientation offers universities the opportunity to communicate to the interns the expectations of both the university and industry about the internship as well as monitoring and assessment procedures. Such information has the potential of inculcating in the interns the desire to take advantage of the internship exercise to develop their

academic-personal skills. In fact, the communication of information on assessment procedures and visits by faculty members for monitoring alone can motivate interns to be serious with internship exercise. In essence, pre-internship orientation plays an important role in creating a positive internship experience. Interns who get the opportunity to participate in pre-internship orientations are therefore likely to take steps in ensuring that their internship expectations of developing their academic and personal skills are achieved.

Significant difference also occurred between compensation/pay and participation in on-campus practical training ( $t=2.376$ ;  $p=0.018$ ). The mean values of interns who participated in on-campus practical training ( $M=2.85$ ;  $SD=1.34$ ) and interns who did not participate in on-campus practical training ( $M=2.61$ ;  $SD=1.28$ ) were indecisive as to whether participation in campus practical training influenced their being given financial rewards during the internship exercise. The implication is that; other factors might have contributed to the interns' compensation during the internship. Probably, interns who were compensated were fortunate to have interned at facilities where compensating interns is a policy. In such situations, interns are likely to receive allowances for transportation and might be given monetary compensation when the internship is completed.

There were significant differences between provision of orientation by internship facility and academic-personal skills ( $p=0.005$ ) and career path-supervision ( $p=0.004$ ). With specific reference to academic-personal skills, interns who underwent orientation at the internship facility agreed that the orientation influenced the development of academic-personal skills ( $M=3.64$ ;  $SD=0.84$ ). Interns who were not given orientation at the internship facility were

however not sure ( $M=3.22$ ;  $SD=0.97$ ). Similarly, whilst interns who were taken through orientation at the internship facility agreed ( $M=3.72$ ;  $SD=0.82$ ) that the orientation contributed to helping them decide on their career path, their colleges whose internship facility did not take them through orientation were indifferent ( $M=3.30$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ).

Aside pre-internship orientations organised by academic institutions, one other important orientation is the one organised by the internship facility. This is where interns are taken through the rudiments of the roles that will be assigned them during the period of the internship. The internship facility's expectations of interns, as well as interns' expectations for the internship are discussed. Orientation at the workplace has been found to positively affect socialisation among workers (Self et al., 2015) including interns. Encounters during such orientation have the potential of building self-confidence in interns whilst dealing with any anxiety that interns might have about the internship. Possibly, this gives the intern the peace of mind and self-confidence to perform roles and duties assigned them. Eventually, interns' expectation of developing their academic and personal skills as well as shaping their career path through internship will be fulfilled.

With the exception of academic-personal skills and prior work experience before internship ( $p=0.016$ ), there were no significant differences between prior work experience and career path-supervision ( $p=0.67$ ) and compensation/pay ( $p=0.483$ ).

It could be adduced from the findings that; interns' prior working experiences shape their internship experiences of developing their academic and personal skills. It is possible that since such interns have had a stint with the

industry by way of prior working experience, they might be familiar with what entails in the hospitality/tourism industry, hence their willingness to pursue a career in in the hospitality industry after graduation. Some of them might return to their previous working places after graduation. In view of this, they might not be so much enthused about charting a career path. Rather, after engaging in academic work, their expectation will be to develop their academic and personal skills so that they can either become more productive upon their return or when they get the opportunity to work in the industry after graduation.

With reference to method of placement, significant difference was reported across the explanatory variable and career path-supervision ( $p=0.052$ ). All the three (3) sub-constructs; university/department ( $M=3.67$ ;  $SD=0.90$ ), personal ( $M=3.74$ ;  $SD=0.85$ ) and request from facility ( $M=3.66$ ;  $SD=0.95$ ) agreed that the method of placement influenced their internship experience in terms of career path-supervision. From the post hoc analysis, the mean of interns who found their internship placement themselves ( $M=3.74$ ) was significantly different from the mean of interns whose placement were requested by the facilities they interned ( $M=3.66$ ). The mean of interns who were placed by their university/department did not differ significantly from the interns who were either requested by internship facility or those who found their own internship placement.



**Table 16: Experiences of Interns by Pre-Internship Activities**

Characteristics	N	Academic-personal skills		Career path-supervision		Compensation/pay	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
University orientation							
Yes	456	3.80	0.000*	3.80	0.002*	2.80	0.257
No	228	3.48	(0.03)	3.57	(0.02)	2.68	(0.01)
			t=4.449		t=3.157		t=1.134
On-campus practical training							
Yes	419	3.73	0.088	3.57	0.198	2.85	0.018*
No	265	3.61	(0.00)	3.66	(0.01)	2.61	(0.00)
			t=1.708		t=1.289		t=2.376
Internship registration							
Yes	444	3.72	0.204	3.71	0.678	2.75	0.787
No	240	3.61	(0.00)	3.74	(0.00)	2.78	(0.00)
			t=1.271		t=0.416		t=0.271
Facility orientation							
Yes	496	3.64	0.005*	3.72	0.004*	2.81	0.075
No	188	3.22	(0.01)	3.30	(0.01)	2.61	(0.02)
			t=2.819		t=2.949		t=3.282
Work experience							
Yes	372	3.67	0.016*	3.66	0.268	2.90	0.298
No	312	3.32	(0.01)	3.50	(0.00)	2.69	(0.00)
			t=2.438		t=1.112		t=1.043
Method of placement							
University/Dept.	147	3.67	0.067	3.67	0.052*	2.66	0.483
Personal	478	3.73	(0.01)	3.74	(0.01)	2.80	(0.00)
Request from facility	59	3.67		3.66		2.67	
			F=2.400		F=2.592		F=0.729

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $\leq 0.05$  p

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

### Comparison between Interns' Expectation and Experiences

The study sought to compare interns' internship expectations and the actual experiences they derived from participating in hospitality internship. This stems from the adoption of the ECT, which stipulates that pre and post activities relating to a phenomenon need to be examined in order to determine the disparity between pre and post activities. In relation to the current study, it becomes relevant, based on the ECT that the disparity between interns' expectation of internship and their post internship experiences be determined. To achieve this, the paired sample T-test was employed to compare the means of interns' expectation and experiences on the various constructs used in measuring expectations and experiences.

The result of the paired sample T-test is presented in Table 17. As evident, the analysis from Table 17 shows that generally, interns experience with academic skills (bridging the gap between academic and industry) exceeded their expectation. The mean difference between experience and expectation of academic skills was .088. Despite the positive experience regarding academic skills, the difference was not significant ( $p=.046$ ).

Again, there were positive disparities between the experiences and expectations of all but one of the individual statements measuring academic skills. Specifically, interns' expectations regarding improving their research and project skills were not met ( $M=-.058$ ;  $SD=1.18$ ). Possibly, tasks related to research and project were not assigned to interns during the internship exercise. It is also possible that interns were not tasked by their academic institutions to identify research problems during internships and later developed them into final year project topics. These could possibly account for the negative disparity

between interns' experience and expectation of developing their research and project skills during the internship.

With respect to personal skills, there was a positive disparity between interns' experiences and expectations of the construct ( $M=.024$ ;  $SD=.679$ ) which was significant ( $p=.000$ ). However, there were negative disparities with three (3) out of the six (6) items measuring personal skills. In essence, interns' expectation of being able to solve work-related problems ( $M=-.034$ ;  $SD=1.122$ ), developing self-confidence ( $M=-.152$ ;  $SD=1.058$ ) and developing social interaction skills ( $M=-.069$ ;  $SD=1.090$ ) were not met.

With exception of developing self-confidence ( $p=.000$ ), the remaining disparities were not significant. Similarly, there was a positive disparity between the overall means of interns' experiences and expectation of enterprise skills ( $M=.001$ ;  $SD=.703$ ) as a construct. This disparity was however not significant ( $p=.978$ ). An inspection of the specific items measuring enterprise skills show that there was negative disparity between interns' experiences and expectation with respect to team work ( $M=-.045$ ;  $SD=1.091$ ), acquisition of industry work culture ( $M=-.007$ ;  $SD=1.092$ ) and developing managerial skills ( $M=-.076$ ;  $SD=1.00$ ).

The negative disparities with specific items measuring both personal and enterprise skills raise a lot of concerns regarding the role of internship in developing and building interns' personal and enterprise skills. These are critical skills that interns will later need when they join the hospitality/tourism industry. Internship is supposed to help interns to acquire good working culture, develop self-confidence and ability to solve work-related problems (Karunaratne & Perera, 2019) primarily because the development of these skills,

according to Albu et al (2016) is lacking in the main stream academic environment.

Interns had a positive experience regarding their expectations of on-site supervisors. As observed from Table 17, there was a positive disparity between the overall means of experience and expectation of supervisor ( $M=.271$ ;  $SD=1.129$ ) which was significant ( $p=.000$ ). Specifically, the results show that there were positive disparities regarding the two items used in measuring supervisor as a construct. Both items were significant with a p value of .000. The implication is that, what interns expected onsite supervisor to do was largely met. In essence, onsite supervisors provided the needed nurturing and also help interns in meeting their goals as expected by the interns. This is supported by the assertions of Jackson, et al. (2019), Jawahar et al. (2018), as well as McHugh (2017) that supervisors' mentoring and guidance enables interns to achieve internship goals thereby allowing interns to have a positive internship experience or satisfaction.

Despite the positive disparity between interns' experiences and expectations regarding the three skills constructs, the paired sample t test (Table 17) revealed a negative disparity with respect to interns' expectations and experience on career path/job offer ( $M=-.034$ ;  $SD=.667$ ) and compensation/pay ( $M=-.579$ ;  $M=1.352$ ). In relation to career path/job offer, there were negative disparities with all the specific items measuring the construct except internship contributing to interns' satisfaction with career choice. In essence, interns had a negative internship experience with regards to either reinforcing/confirming their career path or considering future education in hospitality/tourism.



**Table 17: Interns' Experiences and Expectations of Hospitality Internship**

Pair	Experience-Expectation	Paired differences					t-statistics	df	Sig. (two-tailed)
		Mean	SD	SE mean	Lower	Upper			
<i>Academic skills</i>									
Pair 1	I applied theoretical work with practices in the industry – to apply theoretical work with practices in the industry	.088	1.297	.050	.010	-.185	-1.769	683	.077
Pair 2	My research and project skills were enhanced – to improve my research and project skills	-.058	1.175	.045	.147	-.030	1.301	683	.194
Pair 3	I developed oral and presentation skills – to develop my oral and presentation skills	.047	1.173	.045	.041	-.135	-1.043	683	.297
Pair 4	I increased my grades – to increase my grades	.048	1.305	.050	.050	-.146	-.967	683	.334
	<i>Overall</i>	.252	0.891	.0341	-.412	.092	.740	683	.0459
<i>Personal skills</i>									
Pair 5	My creativity was enhanced – to enhance my creativity	.006	1.121	.043	.078	-.090	-.136	683	.891
Pair 6	I am now able to solved work-related problems – familiarise with how to solved work-related problems	-.034	1.221	.047	.125	-.058	.720	683	.472
Pair 7	I have developed my self-confidence to develop self-confidence	-.152	1.058	.040	.231	.073	3.759	683	.000

Table 17 Continued

Pair 8	I can now work independently – to learn how to work independently	.057	1.147	.044	.029	-.143	-1.300	683	.194
Pair 9	I developed my social interaction skills – to develop my social interaction skills	-.069	1.090	.042	.151	-.013	1.648	683	.100
Pair 10	I can now deal effectively with conflicts – to learn conflict resolution	.187	1.255	.048	-.093	-.281	-3.899	683	.000
Pair 11	My enhanced my writing skills – to enhance my writing skills	.171	1.281	.049	-.075	-.267	-3.492	683	.001
	<i>Overall</i>	.024	.679	.026	-.027	.075	.916	683	.000
<i>Enterprise skills</i>									
Pair 12	I can practiced team work with my colleagues – to learn how to work in teams	-.045	1.091	.042	.127	-.037	1.086	683	.278
Pair 13	I acquired industry work culture – to acquire industry work culture	-.007	1.092	.042	.089	-.075	.175	683	.861
Pair 14	I effectively prioritized work – learn how to prioritized work	.124	1.116	.043	-.040	-.208	-2.913	683	.004
Pair 15	I now appreciate social and ethical responsibility – acquaint myself with social and ethical responsibility	.066	1.090	.042	.016	-.148	-1.578	683	.115
Pair 16	I developed managerial skills – develop managerial skills	-.076	1.100	.042	.159	-.007	1.808	683	.071
Pair 17	I have obtained insight into hospitality/tourism operations – obtain insight into hospitality/tourism operations	.057	1.044	-.040	.135	-.021	1.428	683	.154
	<i>Overall</i>	.001	.703	.027	-.052	.035	.027	683	.978

Table 17 Continued

<i>Career path/job offer</i>									
Pair 18	I am inspired for future education/career in the industry – aspire for future education career in the hospitality industry	-.035	1.090	.042	.117	-.047	.842	683	.400
Pair 19	I have confirmed or reinforced my career choice – to confirm or reinforced my career choice	-.029	1.106	.042	.112	-.054	.691	683	.490
Pair 20	I have advantage in securing employment – to get advantage in securing employment	-.010	1.154	.044	.097	-.076	.232	683	.817
Pair 21	Internship has contributed to my career advancement – internship should contribute to my career advancement	-.120	1.140	.044	.205	.034	2.749	683	.006
Pair 22	Internship has provided opportunities for increased responsibilities at work – get opportunities for increased responsibility at work	-.012	1.104	.042	.095	-.071	.277	683	.782
Pair 23	I have enhanced my ability to transit into my employer’s organization – get opportunity to transit into internship facility	-.018	1.108	.042	.101	-.066	.414	683	.679
Pair 24	Internship has contributed to my satisfaction with my career choice – to get satisfaction with my career choice	.022	1.105	.042	.061	-.105	-.519	683	.604
Pair 25	Internship has contributed to my overall career development – to enhance my overall career development	-.072	1.137	.043	.157	-.014	1.647	683	.100
	<i>Overall</i>	-.034	.667	.0255	-.084	.016	-1.339	683	.181

Table 17 Continued

<i>Supervision</i>									
Pair 26	I received co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor – obtain co-operation and nurturing from on-site supervisor	.732	1.648	.063	-.609	-.856	-11.621	683	.000
Pair 27	My workplace supervisor helped me to realise my internship goals – my on-site supervisor should help me to realise in internship goals	-.190	1.295	.050	.287	.093	3.839	683	.000
	<i>Overall</i>	.271	1.129	.0432	.186	.356	6.285	683	.000
<i>Compensation/ Pay</i>									
Pair 28	I was paid during the internship – get paid during the internship	-	1.765	.067	1.141	.876	14.947	683	.000
		1.009							
Pair 29	I received allowances for food and transport – receive allowances for food and transport	-.319	1.634	.062	.441	.196	5.103	683	.000
Pair 30	I received financial rewards after the internship – receive financial rewards after the internship	-.411	1.689	.065	.538	.284	6.363	683	.000
	<i>Overall</i>	-.579	1.352	.052	-.681	-.478	-11.208	683	.000

Source: Field work, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)



The negative disparity for career path/job offer as a construct is a bit surprising. This is because, results from the analysis had previously indicated a positive disparity concerning academic, personal and enterprise skills as well as for onsite supervisors. It is anticipated that a positive disparity for the aforementioned constructs will lead to a positive disparity for interns' expectation concerning their career choice. Probably, the negative disparity recorded for some specific items measuring personal and enterprise skills might have accounted for this deviation. For instance, interns indicated that their expectation for ability to solve work-related problems, developing self-confidence, developing social interaction skills (personal skills) as well as team work, acquisition of industry work culture and developing managerial skills (enterprise skills) were not met after the internship exercise.

The negative disparity between interns' expectation and experience of compensation ( $M=-.579$ ;  $M=1.352$ ) was significant ( $p=.000$ ) with all the three items measuring compensation also being significant. Specifically, interns' expectation of being paid ( $M=-.579$ ;  $M=1.352$ ) during internship was met. However, their expectation of receiving allowances for food and transportation ( $M=-.319$ ;  $SD=1.634$ ) and receiving financial rewards ( $M=-.411$ ;  $SD=1.689$ ) during internship were not met.

As alluded to, the conceptual framework for the study which is based on the ECT developed by Oliver (1997) provides the basis for evaluating interns' expectation prior to internship and their post internship experiences. From the data analysis, interns' experiences exceeded their expectation regarding academic, personal and enterprise skills as well as supervision. The expectation is that, the positive disparities in these constructs will lead to interns' intention

of charting a career path in the hospitality and tourism industry. This assertion is based on the fact that both the conceptual framework underpinning the study and the ECT stipulated that a positive disparity in expectation and experience leads to satisfaction and eventual commitment to the phenomenon under study.

In the current work, the implication is that, a positive disparity between interns' expectation of and experiences from internship will lead to interns' intention to work in the hospitality and tourism upon graduation.

### **Summary**

The focus of the chapter was to examine the experiences of interns. In doing this, descriptive statistics was used to explain the various experiences interns derived from participating in hospitality/tourism internship. Additionally, the exploratory factor analysis was employed to examined the underlying factors that account for internship experiences. Results from the factor analysis show that internship experience fall into three domains – academic-personal skills, career path-supervision and compensation. Also, the study employed T-test and ANOVA to examine the variations of internship experiences across the socio-demographics of interns as well as internship characteristics and pre-internship activities. Significant differences were observed in terms of internship experiences across socio-demographics, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities.

Based on the ECT which is one of the theories underpinning the study, further analysis was carried on to ascertain the disparity between interns' expectation of and experiences from internship. Generally, there were positive disparities of internship experiences in terms of academic skills, personal skills, enterprise skills and supervision. However, the analysis showed a negative

disparity in relation to career path and compensation. Despite the general positive disparity between interns' expectations and experience with respect to personal and enterprise skills, there negative disparity of some specific variables used in measuring these constructs.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES AND CAREER INTENTIONS OF HOSPITALITY STUDENTS

#### Introduction

Analysing the factors influencing internship experiences and career intentions of hospitality interns post internship were part of the objectives the study sought to address. In view of this, this chapter presents matters relating to the factors influencing interns' internship experiences, which of the constructs influences internship experiences and whether interns' intention to pursue careers in the hospitality/tourism industry increases or decreases after their internship experiences. Again, the chapter presents analysis on factors influencing internship experiences across interns' socio-demographics as well as internship characteristics and pre-internship activities. Both descriptive (percentages, means and standard deviation) and inferential (factor analysis, T-test and ANOVA) were employed to carry out the analysis.

#### Factors Influencing Interns' Internship Experiences

Internship experiences have been found to be influenced by a plethora of factors (Vélez & Giner, 2015). The indication is that; experiences interns derive from their internship exercises do not happen in a vacuum. As seen from Table 18, certain factors influence internship experiences. A little over half (52.4%) were of the view that the working environment has an influence on their internship experiences. However, the overall mean scores for working environment indicates that interns were indifferent ( $M=3.33$ ;  $SD=1.24$ ) as to whether work environment influences their internship experiences.



**Table 18: Factors Influencing Internship Experiences**

STATEMENT	% in agreement	Mean	SD
<b>Work environment (<math>\alpha=.896</math>)</b>			
The place I did the internship cared about my well-being	55.8	3.38	1.28
The organisation I did the internship cared about my opinions	50.8	3.27	1.26
The organisation I did the internship paid attention to my learning objectives and needs	55.3	3.39	1.25
The organisation where I did the internship forgave an honest mistake on my part	50.7	3.31	1.21
Help was available from the organisation when I had a problem	50.6	3.30	1.21
The organisation showed much concern for me	53.8	3.37	1.24
If given the opportunity, the organisation would have taken advantage of me	50.1	3.28	1.30
The organisation cared about my general satisfaction at work	51.3	3.28	1.21
The organisation appreciated any extra effort from me during the internship	57.3	3.45	1.22
During the internship, my complaints were addressed by the organisation	48.2	3.29	1.22
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>52.4</i>	<i>3.33</i>	<i>1.24</i>
<b>Co-worker support (<math>\alpha=.904</math>)</b>			
Workers at the internship workplace were friendly to me	67.1	3.73	1.14
Workers at the internship workplace were helpful to me	67.5	3.71	1.15
Workers at the internship place were competent	63.0	3.63	1.01
Workers at the internship place always encouraged me	62.5	3.62	1.12
Workers were helpful in getting my job done	63.0	3.59	1.16
Workers gave useful advice on job problems	63.4	3.40	1.13
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>64.4</i>	<i>3.61</i>	<i>1.12</i>
<b>Supervisor support (<math>\alpha=.925</math>)</b>			
My supervisor at the internship workplace paid attention to me during the internship	59.8	3.53	1.20
My supervisor at the internship workplace was concerned about my work/learning needs	60.1	3.56	1.17
My supervisor was helpful to me	65.8	3.70	1.14

Table 18 Continued

My supervisor was a good organiser	67.1	3.71	1.14
My supervisor showed concern about my welfare	58.5	3.45	1.27
My supervisor cared about my learning goals and aspirations.	62.3	3.55	1.19
My supervisor cared about the achievement of my learning objectives	61.6	3.55	1.19
My supervisor supported me to acquire additional training or education, if necessary, to further my career	58.5	3.47	1.23
My supervisor was noted for over-intervention when I was working	48.5	3.30	1.12
My supervisor was very autocratic/authoritative	48.3	3.24	1.28
My supervisor showed double standards at the workplace	53.8	3.43	1.45
My supervisor showed good attitude towards me	64.4	3.68	1.12
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>59.1</i>	<i>3.51</i>	<i>1.21</i>
<b>Task clarity (<math>\alpha=.867</math>)</b>			
The goals and objectives for my job were well defined	63.6	3.61	1.15
I was told about the expected outcome of tasks assigned to me	63.6	3.61	1.14
My daily tasks were scheduled by my supervisor	63.4	3.62	1.13
Clear instructions about how to do my job were provided	66.7	3.68	1.18
I knew when I had completed tasks assigned to me	62.3	3.53	1.20
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>63.9</i>	<i>3.61</i>	<i>1.16</i>
<b>Compensation (<math>\alpha=.961</math>)</b>			
Payment during internship	43.8	2.29	1.46
Allowances for food and transport	44.3	2.29	1.47
Financial rewards when I completed the internship	47.9	3.09	1.27
<i>Overall score</i>	<i>45.3</i>	<i>2.56</i>	<i>1.14</i>
<b>Individual characteristics (<math>\alpha=.871</math>)</b>			
I treated my internship like a real job	65.9	3.68	1.27
I treated my internship as a learning opportunity	71.5	3.83	1.19
I proactively asked questions of my supervisors/co-workers to learn as much as possible	64.0	3.63	1.23

Table 18 Continued

I took the initiative to get acquainted with other employees	60.5	3.56	1.17
I proactively asked for feedback on my performance during internship	57.2	3.47	1.20
<i>Overall score</i>	63.8	3.6	1.2

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

$\alpha$  = Cronbach's Alpha

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

The interns were ambivalent with all the items used in measuring working environment as a factor that influences internship experience. Specifically, the interns were neutral with internship organisation caring about their well-being (M=3.38; SD; 1.28), caring about their opinions (M=3.27; SD=1.26), paying attention to their learning objectives (M=3.39; SD=1.25); providing help when needed by interns (M=3.30; SD=1.21), showing concern for interns (M=3.37; SD=1.24), caring about the general satisfaction of interns during internship (M=3.28; SD=1.21), appreciating extra efforts by interns (M=3.45) and addressing complaints by interns (M=3.29; SD=1.22).

Interns' uncertainty about the contributory role of working environment on their internship experience is at variance with the findings of Ruslan et al. (2020) that the working environment is the most dominant factor that influences hospitality undergraduates' internship experiences. Probably, environmental factors pertaining to their study area (Malaysia) might be quite different from those in the geographical area of this study.

Most of the interns (64.4%) agreed (M=3.61; SD=1.12) that co-worker support contributes to internship experiences. Aside being indifferent with 'workers giving advice on job problems' (M=3.40; SD=1.13), interns agreed that the remaining items used in measuring co-worker support played specific

roles in moderating their internship experiences. Hence, they agreed that workers at the internship workplace were friendly ( $M=3.73$ ;  $SD=1.14$ ), helpful ( $M=3.71$ ;  $SD=1.15$ ) and competent ( $M=3.63$ ;  $SD=1.01$ ). Furthermore, the interns agreed that they were always encouraged by workers at the internship workplace ( $M=3.62$ ;  $SD=1.12$ ) as well as workers being helpful in getting their jobs done during the internship ( $M=3.59$ ;  $SD=1.16$ ). The finding is in conformity with the assertion that co-worker support has a significant relationship with internship experience/satisfaction (Hussien & La Lopa, 2018; Kim & Park, 2013; Mensah et al., 2020). Specifically, Mensah et al. (2020) in a study to evaluate work-based support for interns concluded that co-worker support directly impacts on interns' satisfaction from their internship experience. In essence, the internship experiences of interns can be predicted by the level of support they receive from co-workers. Arguably, co-workers mostly spend time with student interns for both formal and informal interactions. In view of this, it can be deduced that the quality of such interactions might result in a healthy relationship between co-workers and interns; hence, extension of support from co-workers to interns.

The role of supervision in guiding and evaluating activities of interns during internship has been found to be a key predictor of positive internship experience (Jackson et al., 2019; To & Lund, 2020). This assertion is reflected in the responses given by interns in examining the influence of supervision on internship experience. As evident in Table 18, more than half of the interns (59.1%) agreed that supervisor support moderated their internship experience. This is further confirmed by the overall mean score ( $M=3.51$ ;  $SD=1.21$ ) of supervisor support as a construct. Specifically, interns agreed that their onsite



supervisors paid attention to them ( $M=3.53$ ;  $SD=1.20$ ), was concerned about their learning needs ( $M=3.56$ ;  $SD=1.17$ ), helpful ( $M=3.70$ ;  $SD=1.14$ ), cared about their learning goals and aspirations ( $M=3.55$ ;  $SD=1.19$ ) and generally showed good attitude towards them ( $M=3.68$ ;  $SD=1.12$ ).

However, the interns were indifferent regarding their supervisors showing concern about their welfare ( $M=3.45$ ;  $SD=1.27$ ), supporting them to acquire additional training ( $M=3.47$ ;  $SD=1.23$ ), and showing double standards at the workplace ( $M=3.43$ ;  $SD=1.45$ ).

In general, interns agreed ( $M= 3.61$ ;  $SD=1.16$ ) that clarity about tasks assigned them during internship also played a role in shaping their internship experiences. More than half (63.9%) of the interns affirmed this assertion. With regards to the specific items measuring task clarity, interns agreed that the goals and objectives for their jobs were well defined ( $M=3.61$ ;  $SD=1.15$ ), expected outcomes of tasks assigned them were communicated to them ( $M=3.61$ ;  $SD=1.14$ ), daily tasks were scheduled by their supervisors ( $M=3.62$ ;  $SD=1.13$ ), and clear instructions about how to go about jobs were provided ( $M=3.68$ ;  $SD=1.18$ ). Confirming the findings of the study, Odio et al. (2014) observed that making interns aware of their specific roles by onsite supervisors play a key role in ensuring that interns have positive internship experience.

Besides the afore mentioned moderators of internship experience, the study found compensation to be one of the factors that can moderate hospitality internship experiences. As captured on Table 18, less than half (45.3%) of the interns agreed that compensation influenced their internship experiences. This is reflected in the overall mean score ( $M=2.56$ ;  $SD=1.14$ ) of compensation as a construct; an indication of a disagreement that compensation moderated their

internship experiences. With the specifics, the interns were not sure ( $M=3.09$ ;  $SD=1.27$ ) about the influence of financial rewards on internship experiences. Interns, however, disagreed that payment during internship ( $M=2.29$ ;  $SD=1.46$ ) and allowances for food and transport ( $M=2.29$ ;  $SD=1.47$ ) influenced the experiences they derived from the internship.

Interns' disagreement of the role of compensation in internship experience contradicts the views of Crain (2016) and Hora et al. (2020) that compensation is key moderator of internship experience. The plausible explanation to this deviation could be attributed to geographic gap. Whilst the studies of Crain (2016) and Hora et al. (2020) were conducted in jurisdictions where paid internship seems to be an acceptable norm, the same cannot be said about Ghana, the study area. Also, with the advent of compulsory/supervised internship, attention on getting financial rewards from internship has primarily shifted to gaining academic credit. In essence, interns now focus more on what they would get from internship in terms of building career oriented skills and improving their grade points through internship than focusing on financial rewards. This is not to say that they will reject any form of financial rewards from internship facilities. Rather, it is a shift from financial benefits to academic benefits from the internship exercise; hence interns disagreement on compensation's influence on their internship experiences.

Lastly, the study observed that individual characteristics also served as a factor which influenced internship experiences. Majority of the interns (63.8%) generally agreed ( $M=3.6$ ;  $SD=1.2$ ) that their personal/individual characteristics contributed to their internship experiences. Aside being indifferent ( $M=3.47$ ;  $SD=1.20$ ) to the statement 'I proactively asked for

feedback on my performance during internship’, interns agreed to the remaining statements measuring individual characteristics construct. For instance, interns agreed to treating their internship as real job ( $M=3.68$ ;  $SD=1.27$ ), treating the internship as a learning opportunity ( $M=3.83$ ;  $SD=1.19$ ), proactively asking questions from supervisors/co-workers to learn as much as possible ( $M=3.63$ ;  $SD=1.23$ ) and taking the initiative to get acquainted with other employees ( $M=3.56$ ;  $SD=1.17$ ).

The above findings corroborate earlier findings by Hussien and La Lopa (2018) and Omar et al. (2017) on factors influencing internship experiences in the U.S.A and Malaysia respectively that significant relationship exists between individual characteristics and internship experiences. In both studies, individual characteristics such as positive attitude, self-commitment and self-initiative positively influence interns’ experiences from the internship exercise. In essence, interns’ personal attributes help them to have positive internship experiences.

### **Exploratory Factors Explaining Factors Influencing Internship Experiences**

After assessing the descriptive responses of the variables that explain factors that moderate the internship experiences of interns, the study further explored the underlying structure of factors that account for moderators of internship experiences. In doing this, factor analysis was employed to establish the specific factors that combine to moderate internship experiences.

The principal component analysis through varimax rotation method was applied on the 41 items measuring the factors the moderate internship experience. To confirm the appropriateness of employing factor analysis, the

Bartlett's test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was checked. Whilst the former was 15723.803 significant at  $p=0.000$ , the latter was found to be 0.962 (exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.60). Factor loadings of 0.5 was set as a means of including variables into the analysis. Again, Kaiser's rule of retaining variables with eigenvalues of more than 1.0 was applied. A Cronbach's coefficient alpha value of at least 0.8 for each subscale measuring factors that moderate internship experience was recorded. This gives an indication that the scale employed was internally consistent.

The results from the factor analysis is presented in Table 19. The 41 items were reduced to five factors. Overall, the five factors explained 63.53% of the total variance of factors that moderate internship experiences. In essence, the factor analysis technique provides five important issues that indicate the basis for understanding how hospitality internship experiences are shaped.

From Table 16, Factor one (I) was labelled individual characteristic. Factor I had an eigenvalue of 15.62 and contributed 45.49 percent of the overall variance explaining the factors influencing internship experiences. Specifically, the individual characteristic delved into issues relating to interns' dedication to the internship exercise and their willingness to learn during the internship exercise. Due to this, interns took the initiative to get acquainted with employees of the internship facility (0.773) whilst proactively asking questions from their supervisors and co-workers (0.745). Additionally, interns took the opportunity to learn (0.684) during the internship, proactively asked for feedback on their performance (0.677) during the internship exercise and took the internship as real job (0.581).



The current finding confirms the assertion by Binder et al. (2015), Chen et al. (2018), Hussien and La Lopa (2018) and Kong and Yan (2014) that individual characteristics such as dedication and willingness to learn during internship influence experiences derived from participation in internship. In essence, the intern should not see the internship exercise as just fulfilling an academic exercise of getting grades but rather, be interested in enhancing their learning experiences by being committed to the internship exercise. Such interns are expected to exhibit a positive attitude and self-initiative tendencies by asking relative questions, building social networks with other interns and employees at the internship facility and learning key lessons from constructive feedbacks from supervisors and co-workers. These will go a long way in enhancing the experiences of interns during hospitality and tourism internship. In the end, such interns have the potential of improving their career prospects and possibly obtaining employment with hospitality facilities where they interned (Binder et al., 2015; Kong & Yan, 2014).

The second factor measured supervisor support-task clarity and contributed 6.51 percent of the total variance explaining factors influencing internship experiences. In essence, two moderators of internship experiences loaded onto one factor. The supervisor support component of Factor II consists of issues such as onsite supervisors' care and concern about interns' meeting their learning goals and aspirations as well as supervisors' concern about the welfare of interns. Supervisor support also includes guidance giving by onsite supervisors to help interns acquire additional knowledge and being helpful in ways that enables interns to practice what they have learnt in the classroom during internship.

This finding supports the notion that onsite supervisory role in guiding and providing support for interns is key in enhancing internship experience (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018; Jackson et al., 2019; To and Lund, 2020). Specifically, Bhattacharya and Neelam (2018) are of the view that, an established relationship between onsite supervisor and interns does not only ensure increased performance of interns but it also guarantees perceived positive internship experience leading to internship satisfaction.

**Table 19: Exploratory Factors Explaining Factors Influencing Internship Experience**

F	Latent constructs and observed variables	FL	EV	VE (%)	A
I	<i>Individual characteristics</i>		15.620	45.492	.907
	I took the initiative to get acquainted with other employees	0.773			
	I proactively asked questions of my supervisors/co-workers to learn as much as possible	0.745			
	I treated my internship as a learning opportunity	0.684			
	I proactively asked for feedback on my performance during internship	0.677			
	I treated my internship like a real job	0.581			
II	<i>Supervisor support-task clarity</i>		2.212	6.506	.925
	My supervisor cared about my learning goals and aspirations.	0.742			
	My supervisor cared about the achievement of my learning objectives	0.734			
	My supervisor showed concern about my welfare	0.702			
	My supervisor supported me to acquire additional training or	0.633			

Table 19 Continued

	education, if necessary, to further my career			
	My supervisor was helpful to me	0.603		
	My daily tasks were scheduled by my supervisor	0.591		
	My supervisor at the internship workplace was concerned about my work/learning needs	0.591		
	My supervisor was a good organiser	0.578		
	I knew when I had completed tasks assigned to me	0.546		
	I was told about the expected outcome of tasks assigned to me	0.523		
	Clear instructions about how to do my job were provided	0.521		
III	<i>Co-worker support</i>		1.427	4.197 .902
	Workers were helpful in getting my job done	0.754		
	Workers gave useful advice on job problems	0.701		
	Workers at the internship place always encouraged me	0.667		
	Workers at the internship workplace were friendly to me	0.653		
	Workers at the internship workplace were helpful to me	0.653		
IV	<i>Work environment</i>		1.197	3.522 .871
	If given the opportunity, the organisation would have taken advantage of me	0.704		
	Help was available from the organisation when I had a problem	0.692		

Table 19 Continued

The organisation where I did the internship forgave an honest mistake on my part	0.687			
The organisation I did the internship paid attention to my learning objectives and needs	0.610			
The place I did the internship cared about my well-being	0.540			
V Compensation		1.145	3.367	.842
I received allowances for food and transport	0.855			
I was paid during the internship	0.810			
I was given financial rewards when I completed the internship	0.772			
Total variance explained			63.534	

Note: F: Factor, FL: Factor Loading, EV: Eigenvalue, VE: Variance explored,  $\alpha$ : Cronbach's alpha; KMO = 0.967, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx.  $\chi^2$ ) = 22248.383; = 0.000

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

The other component of Factor II (task clarity) comprised issues such as scheduling of daily task of interns by supervisors, communication of expected outcomes of interns' assigned tasks and clear instructions on how interns are expected to handle assigned tasks. This finding is similar to the finding of Odio et al. (2014), Read et al. (2017) and To and Lund (2020). These findings suggest a relationship between task clarity and internship experience. Internship facilities are expected to clearly communicate the duties, schedule, procedures and expectations of internship facilities to interns. Interns are mostly inclined to be apprehensive when they are exposed to the working environment. This is particularly true about interns whose first time interaction with industry is



through internship. In view of this, a clear communication of duties and expectations will eliminate role stress, resulting in a positive internship experience.

Issues relating to support interns receive from co-workers during internship was captured as Factor three (III). This factor had an eigenvalue of 1.43 and contributed 4.20 percent of the total variance explaining factors influencing internship experiences. Under co-worker support, interns are expected to receive help from full time employees in order to accomplish tasks assigned to them by supervisors. Also, co-workers provide useful advice on handling job problems, encourage interns as well as being friendly to interns. These forms of support provided by co-workers during internship go a long way in providing a conducive working environment for interns. As alluded to by Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) and Ruslan et al. (2020), a good working environment, which consists of support from co-workers and relationship between interns and co-workers provide interns with the necessary support. In such situations, coupled with interns' dedication and willingness to learn, internship becomes a conduit through which theories learned in the classroom are reinforced by hands-on industry practices. In essence, when co-workers extend reliable and dependable support to interns (Kim et al., 2017), interns get the necessary assurances to cope with the demands of the working environment. This leads to a positive internship experience.

Work environment was captured as Factor IV (EV=1.20; VE=3.52 percent). The factor delved into issues relating to provision to caring for interns, providing the necessary assistance in times of difficulties, paying attention to interns' learning objectives and needs. Also, this factor considered the extent to

which the internship facility took advantage of interns. The findings collaborate an earlier finding by Jawabri (2017) that internship experience and satisfaction is a function of comfortable working environment. Jawabri (2017) study further indicates that a conducive working environment does not only lead to a positive internship experience. It also leads to interns leaving with the conviction that accepting job offers from such internship organisation is a choice worth considering. This assertion flows from the fact that, interns use the internship exercise as a means of evaluating the working conditions of host organisations and forming their perceptions on whether to accept future job opportunities with the same institution or not.

The last factor was labelled compensation. This factor consisted of three main items. That is, whether internship host organisations gave interns allowances for food and transport and whether interns were paid during the internship. The last items looked at the provision of other financial rewards for interns during the internship or after the internship. Factor V explained 1.145 of the variance, representing 3.367% of the total variance. This finding is consistent with the assertion by McHugh (2017) that compensation influences internship experience. McHugh (2017) further averred that interns who were either paid or received financial reward rated their internship experience as satisfactory and that such interns were willing to accept job offers from the same internship facility after graduation. This is further supported by the view of held by Crain (2016) that compensation plays a critical role regarding how interns view and evaluate their internship experiences. Dabke (2015) had earlier concluded in a study on determinants of internship satisfaction that interns who received financial rewards from the host organisation rated their internship

experience higher than their colleagues who did not receive any form of financial rewards.

However, it should be noted that paying interns is not a common practice in Ghana as compared to other jurisdiction in Europe, Asia and America where the practice seems mandatory. For instance, studies conducted by Akomaning et al. (2011) and Mensah et al. (2021) concluded that non-payment of interns is a major challenge that confronts hospitality internships in Ghana. Beyond Ghana, Mekawy and Abu Bar's (2014) study found a similar trend among hospitality and tourism interns in Egypt. Non-payment or not giving interns any financial rewards can create transportation challenges for interns. This is largely due to the nature of transportation system in the country where an intern would have to use multiple 'trotros' or taxis when commuting from the place of residence to the internship facility. Such situations can put extra financial constraints on the interns and therefore, rate the internship experience as negative.

### **Factors Influencing Internship Experiences by Interns' Sociodemographic Characteristics**

To further explore the differences in factors influencing internship experience and interns' sociodemographic characteristics, the independent sample T-test and ANOVA were employed. Since interns' sex and marital status were measure on a dichotomous scale, the T-test was used whilst the ANOVA was used on interns' age. The extent of effect size on the differences, the eta values were computed and interpreted using Cohen's (1988) suggestion on interpreting eta values. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 20.

It is evident from Table 20 that there were a statistical significant differences in individual characteristics and interns' sex ( $t=-0.249$ ;  $p=0.038$ ). The implication is that, individual characteristics differed between males and females involved in the study. Further to this, the results showed that whilst females agreed ( $M=3.61$ ) that individual characteristic moderates their internship experience, their male colleagues ( $M=3.49$ ) were ambivalent as to whether their personal characteristics influence their internship experiences.

Again, the analysis revealed that supervisor support-task clarity differed across interns' sex. Specifically, there were statistically significant differences ( $t=0.303$ ;  $p=0.001$ ) in relation to support offered by onsite supervisors between male and female interns. In essence, male interns and female interns differed in terms of the influence of supervisor support on internship experiences.

Similarly, the study showed that co-worker support differed across interns' sex. As evident in Table 17, significant differences ( $t=1.423$ ;  $p=0.054$ ) occurred in terms of co-worker support as a moderator of internship experience between males and female interns. Despite the significant differences, both males ( $M=3.83$ ) and females ( $M=3.65$ ) agreed that co-worker support moderates their internship experiences. This further cements the importance of the support received by interns from co-workers in shaping the internship experiences of interns.

It was further established that variations occurred across interns' sex and work environment as well as sex and compensation. Specifically, work environment differed ( $t=0.853$ ;  $p=0.034$ ) between male and female interns.

In essence, differences existed in the opinions of male and female interns in relation to the influence of the working environment at the internship facility



on the experiences they derived from the internship. This was further revealed in the mean values of male and female interns. Whilst male interns agreed (M=3.50) that working environment influences internship experience, their female colleagues were indifferent (M=3.34).

In relation to compensation, statistically significant differences were observed between compensation and sex ( $t=2.132$ ;  $p=0.018$ ). As observed from the mean values, male interns were of the opinion that compensation plays a vital role in the experiences they derived from the internship exercise. This, notwithstanding, female interns disagreed (M=2.49) to the assertion that internship experiences are moderated by monetary rewards given them during internship. By extension, females never consider compensation as forming part of the issues that influence the experience they derived from the internship exercise. Probably, they look forward to other factors such as support from supervisors and co-workers as evident in their agreement to the influence of these factors on internship experience.

**Table 20: Factors Influencing Internship Experiences by Interns' Socio-demographic Characteristics**

Characteristics	N	Individual characteristics		Supervisor support- Task clarity		Co-worker support		Work environment		Compensation	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
		<b>Sex</b>									
Male	54	3.60	0.038	3.61	0.001	3.83	0.054	3.50	0.034	3.33	0.018
Female	630	3.61		3.57		3.65		3.34	()	2.49	
		t=-0.249		t=0.303		t=1.423		t=0.853		t=2.132	
<b>Marital status</b>											
Single	593	3.63	0.421	3.58	0.005	3.67	0.002	3.45	0.963	2.96	0.027
Married	91	3.55		3.52		3.64		3.53		3.12	
		t=0.806		t=0.557		t=0.251		t=-0.046		t=-1.105	
<b>Age</b>											
<25	410	3.48	0.050	3.53	0.002	3.64	0.005	3.33	0.040	2.96	0.811
25-30	244	3.63		3.65		3.70		3.37		3.01	
>30	30	3.62		3.57		3.66		3.51		2.98	
		F=0.227		F=1.139		F=0.376		F=0.541		F=0.210	

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $\leq 0.05$  p

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

With the exception of compensation, there were significant differences between the remaining four constructs used in measuring moderators of internship experience and the age of interns. Specifically, individual characteristic differed across the age cohorts of interns. As evident on Table 17, there were significant differences between age and individual characteristics ( $F=0.227$ ;  $p=0.050$ ). Further inspection of the mean values of the three age cohorts shows that whilst interns whose ages were less than 25 years were ambivalent ( $M=3.49$ ), their counterparts whose ages were either between 25 years and 30 years ( $M=3.63$ ) or above 30 years ( $M=3.62$ ) agreed that their individual characteristics influenced their internship experiences. The post-hoc comparison using Tukey HSD test shows that the differences in the mean were observed between interns whose ages were below 25 years and those who were aged 30 years and above.

Similarly, the analysis indicated that there were significant differences between supervisory support-task clarity and age ( $F=1.139$ ;  $p=0.002$ ). Despite reaching statistical significance, there were no variations in the mean values of three age cohorts. Interns who were less than 25 years ( $M=3.53$ ), as well as those aged between 25 years and 30 years ( $M=3.65$ ) and those above 30 years ( $M=3.57$ ) all agreed that supervisory support-task clarity influences internship experiences.

Further to the above, findings from the study show that co-worker support differed across the three age cohorts. Specifically, there were significant differences between co-worker support and interns' age ( $F=0.376$ ;  $p=0.005$ ). The post-hoc analysis using the Tukey test indicated that the differences in the mean occurred between interns aged below 25 years and those aged above 30

years. A further inspection of the descriptive statistics shows that whilst less than half (47.3%) of interns who were less than 25 years previous work experience in the hospitality industry prior to the internship exercise, all interns aged above 30 years had previous work experience in the industry before participating in the internship exercise.

This probably accounts for the difference in perceived role of co-worker support in moderating internship experience between interns aged below 25 years and those above 30 years. Interns with previous similar experience might not necessarily rely on co-workers but probably on their work experience whilst those without previous experience might need such support, hence influencing their internship experiences.

Another notable difference observed from the analysis was in relation to work environment and age of interns ( $F=0.541$ ;  $p=0.40$ ). As observed from the mean values of the age cohorts, interns aged less than 25 years ( $M=3.33$ ) and those aged between 25 and 30 years ( $M=3.37$ ) were indifferent as to the whether work environment plays any role in influencing their internship experiences. However, interns who are above 30 years ( $M=3.51$ ) agreed that work environment influences internship experience.

#### **Factors Influencing Internship Experiences by Internship Characteristics**

The study further sought to explore the differences in the factors influencing internship experiences and internship characteristics (Table 21). To achieve this, the Independent T-test and ANOVA were employed. Whilst the T-test was used in the case of frequency of internship participation, the ANOVA was applied to facilities of internship and duration of internship.



**Table 21: Factors Influencing Internship Experiences by Internship Characteristics**

Characteristics	N	Individual characteristics		Supervisor support- Task clarity		Co-worker support		Work environment		Compensation	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	p	Mean	p	Mean	p (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
Frequency of internship											
Once	452	3.60	0.028	3.56	0.041	3.64	0.033	3.30	0.287	2.95	0.448
Twice	232	3.67		3.59		3.71		3.38		3.03	
		t=1.072		t=-0.330		t=-0.988		t=-1.066		t=-0.759	
Internship Facility											
Accommodation	422	3.69	0.046	3.64	0.036	3.73	0.013	3.50	0.014	3.02	0.216
Food & Beverage	128	3.58		3.43		3.56		3.26		3.03	
Events	127	3.45		3.51		3.57		3.25		2.82	
Others	7	3.23		2.90		3.34		2.83		2.33	
		F=2.688		F=2.687		F=1.889		F=1.782		F=1.490	
Internship duration											
1month	191	3.61	0.979	3.49	0.032	3.64	0.006	3.33	0.054	2.96	0.811
2months	242	3.63		3.65		3.70		3.37		3.01	
3months	251	3.62		3.57		3.66		3.51		2.98	
		F=0.227		F=1.139		F=0.376		F=0.541		F=0.210	
Visits by Supervisors from Department											
Yes	512	3.62	0.880	3.59	0.049	3.67	0.053	3.37	0.983	3.00	0.424
No	172	3.63		3.53		3.67		3.21		2.91	
		t=-0.150		t=0.681		t=-0.022		t=0.898		t=0.801	

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $\leq 0.05$  p

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Aside work environment and compensation, the three remaining factors differed across frequency of internship. For instance, there were significant differences between individual characteristics and frequency of internship ( $t=1.072$ ;  $p=0.028$ ). Though there were significant difference, the differences in the mean values for participation in internship once ( $M=3.60$ ) and twice ( $M=3.67$ ) was small. The implication is that, an interns' dedication to work and willingness to learn can be predicted by the number of times an intern has participated in internship.

Probably, an intern who had had a previous experience with internship might show signs of dedication and willingness than an intern who does not have prior experience with internship and vice versa.

Another notable finding from the study is that supervisor support-task clarity differed across the number of times an interns had participated in internship. Specifically, there were statistically significant difference with regards to supervisors-task clarity across first time interns and second time interns ( $t=-0.330$ ;  $p=0.041$ ). Similarly, co-worker support differed across frequency of participating in internship ( $t=-0.988$ ;  $p=0.033$ ).

The implication is that, support interns receive from supervisors and/or co-workers during internship could be determined by number of times an intern participates in internship. Probably, previous internship experiences could be helpful in getting the needed support from both supervisors and co-workers. Again, interns who had prior internship experience, especially those interning at the same internship facility might have gotten some acquaintances with employees of the facility and might leverage on such acquaintances to get the needed support. However, caution should be exercise with regard to this

assertion since not all interns are likely to return to the same internship facilities for another internship experiences.

Evidence from Table 21 shows that significant differences occurred between personal characteristics and type of facilities internship took place ( $F=2.688$ ;  $p=0.046$ ). Further inspection of the mean values indicates that interns who did their internship at accommodation facilities ( $M=3.69$ ) and food and beverage facilities ( $M=3.58$ ) agreed that their individual characteristics were influenced by where they did their attachment. However, interns who had their internship at events facilities ( $M=3.45$ ) as well as other facilities ( $M=3.23$ ) were indifferent regarding this assertion. The implication is that, demonstration of interns' personal characteristics during internship could be determined by the type of facility internship takes place. It is possible that whilst those who interned at accommodation and food and beverages were assigned roles related to their study area, those who interned at events and other facilities were not. In situations where interns are turned into "messengers" by running errands for supervisors and staff or giving roles contrary to their study area, it becomes practically impossible for interns demonstrate their personal characteristics of dedication to work and willingness to learn.

Discussants at the FGD confirm the assertion that type of facility they interned had an influence on their personal characteristics. One of them remarked:

*I did my internship in a 3-star hotel in Accra. The hotel had two different restaurants, one dedicated for local and the other for continental cuisines. Because of this, I was rooted at the front office, kitchen, restaurants and I was sometimes asked to come*

*during the weekends when there were events. This really helped to be committed to the internship since I knew that I will get the necessary skills which will help me if I get employed in the hotel (24-year-old female intern).*

On this, another discussant had indicated that:

*I had my internship at one of the restaurants near our university. It was just an awesome experience because I was given a lot of tasks to complete on daily basis. This let me to be very dedicated and committed to the work (22-year-old male intern).*

Finally, one intern had this to say:

*My internship was done at a hospital. I was placed at the records department. My supervisors and other staff were mostly sending me on errands to buy food for them. In fact, I regretted doing my attachment at that hospital. There were times I didn't even feel like going to work (23-year-old female intern).*

It was further revealed (Table 18) that both supervisor-task clarity and co-worker support differed across type of internship facilities. Specifically, significant differences occurred between supervisor support-task clarity and internship facility ( $F=2.687$ ;  $p=0.036$ ). This can be confirmed from the mean values of the various internship facilities. Whilst interns who interned at accommodation facilities ( $M=3.64$ ) and events facilities ( $M=3.51$ ) agreed that support received from supervisors was dependent on the internship facilities, their colleagues who interned at food and beverage facilities ( $M=3.43$ ) and other



hospitality facilities ( $M=2.90$ ) were indifferent. The finding suggests that support and assigning tasks that are unambiguous to interns might be dependent on the type of facilities interns choose for their internship. From the mean values, it can be deduced that task clarity and supervisor support might be prevalent at accommodation and event facilities than at food and beverage and other facilities.

Similarly, the result shows that differences were observed in terms of co-worker support as a construct and internship facility. As seen from Table 18, significant differences were found between co-worker support and internship facility ( $F=1.889$ ;  $p=0.013$ ). An examination of the mean values of the variables for internship depicts that interns at accommodation facilities ( $M=3.73$ ), food and beverage facilities ( $M=3.56$ ) and events facilities ( $M=3.57$ ) were certain about the influence of type of internship facility has on co-worker support. Despite this, interns who had their internship at other facilities ( $M=3.34$ ) were undecided. This is a clear indication that the reception of support from co-workers by interns can be attributed to the type of facilities they do their internship. Whilst employees in some facilities will be willing to give all the necessary support to interns for a better internship experience, others might want to deny interns of such support.

Finally, it could be deduced from Table 18 that a significant difference occurred in work environment as a construct moderating internship experience and type of facility for internship ( $t=1.782$ ;  $p=0.014$ ). Whilst interns who did their internship at accommodation facilities agreed ( $M=3.50$ ) that they type of internship facility can dictate the nature of working environment, their counterparts who interned at food and beverage facilities ( $M=3.26$ ), events

facilities (M=3.25) and other facilities (M=2.83) were uncertain about this. Certainly, the type of facility will definitely determine the kind of conditions that will prevail. Facilities that value interns' contributions and care about interns' welfare are likely to provide the necessary support and create an amiable condition for interns to work. However, if the facility sees interns as cheap labour, they are likely to take advantage and exploit interns, thereby creating an unfavourable working environment for interns.

With respect to factors influencing internship experiences and internship duration, there were no significant differences between internship duration and two of the factors that influence internship experiences – individual characteristics and compensation. However, there were significant differences between internship duration and supervisor support-task clarity (F=0.277; p=0.032), co-worker support (F=0.376; p=0.006) and work environment (F=0.541; p=0.054). Specifically, duration of internship contributed significantly to the differences in respect to supervisor support-task clarity. As observed from the mean values, those who interned for 2 months (M=3.65) and 3 months (M=3.57) agreed that the duration of internship affects the support received from supervisors. Meanwhile, their counterparts who interned for 1 month (M=3.49) were ambivalent as to how internship duration affects supervisor support.

The implication is that, the longer the intern stays at the internship facility, the more support they receive from supervisors. Arguably, the first few weeks of internship are mostly spent on orientations and getting interns accustomed to the new environment and as such interns who spend shorter durations are likely to be affected with the kind of support they receive from

supervisors. Anecdotal evidence suggests that organisations are gradually losing interest in offering short periods of internship opportunities for students. Some organisations are beginning to fix a minimum of three months as the internship period for interns.

The study found co-worker support differing across various levels of internship durations ( $F=0.376$ ;  $p=0.006$ ). In essence, how long an intern stayed at the internship facility can determine the support they receive from co-workers. Presumably, the longer interns stay with the internship facility, the likelihood they will be well acquainted with co-workers and as such, receive the necessarily support from them. This is particularly possible with interns who have the willingness to learn and are dedicated to the internship exercise.

The analysis of variance further proved that there were significant differences between work environment as a moderator of internship experience across various levels of internship duration ( $F=0.541$ ;  $p=0.054$ ). Specifically, whereas interns who did their internship for 1month ( $M=3.33$ ) and 2months ( $M=3.37$ ) were uncertain about the internship duration work environment nexus, their counterparts who interned for 3months ( $M=3.51$ ) agreed. This further strengthens the argument on the importance of longer internship duration for interns. Malekpour and Salamatbakhsh (2014) affirmed in their study that the length of internship is one of the key factors that directly affects the quality of the internship experience. In essence, the length of the internship programmes should be optimised to allow interns to have enough time to learn in during internship.

The results in Table 21 suggests that there were significant differences between visits by departmental/university supervisors and on-site supervisor support ( $t=0.681$ ;  $p=0.053$ ). Similar result was obtained for visits by departmental/university supervisor and co-worker support ( $t=-0.022$ ;  $p=0.053$ ).

The findings suggest that the presence of supervisors from the university during students' internship is very important since it has the potential of ensuring that interns get the needed of support from both on-site supervisors and co-workers.

However, it has been observed that supervisors from universities mostly visit interns for assessment when interns had spent more than half of their intended duration at the internship facility. In such situations, the visits of supervisors from universities might do little to impact on the kind of support interns receive from on-site supervisors and co-workers.

#### **Factors Influencing Internship Experiences by Pre-Internship Activities**

Further to establishing the differences in the means between factors influencing internship experiences and interns' socio-demographics as well as internship characteristics, the study sought to find out if differences existed between the means of the various constructs of factors influencing internship experiences and pre-internship activities. Both T-test and ANOVA were used employed.

As shown on Table 22, significant differences were observed between individual characteristics and orientation by university ( $t=2.553$ ;  $p=0.002$ ). Further checks indicate that interns' whose universities organised orientation for them agreed ( $M=3.68$ ) that orientation by university shaped their individual characteristics. However, their colleagues who did not have the opportunity to be part of orientation before the actual internship were uncertain ( $M=3.49$ ).



Further to the above, there were significant differences in relation to orientation by university and supervisor support-task clarity as observed from Table 19. Specifically, there were significant difference between on-site supervisor support/task clarity and university orientation for interns ( $t=3.049$ ;  $p=0.002$ ). Whereas interns who participated in university organised orientation agreed ( $M=3.68$ ) that the orientation organised by their university helped with the support they received from on-site supervisors, interns who did whose universities did not organise pre-internship orientation were ambivalent ( $M=3.41$ ). Similarly, co-worker support differed in terms of whether or not universities organised internship orientations for the interns ( $t=2.937$ ;  $p=0.003$ ).

The plausible reason accounting for this difference might be as a result of the important role pre-internship orientation plays in the overall internship experience for interns. Accordingly, pre-internship orientations have been found to put interns in the right frame of mind before the actual internship takes place (Karunaratne & Perera, 2019; Yuan, 2018; Yue & Lin, 2018). During such orientations, students are educated on the kind of behaviours they are expected to put up during the internship exercise. Students who imbibe and practice what they are told during the orientation are likely to put up good behaviours and as such, get the necessary support they need.

Another notable difference was found between work environment and orientation for interns by university. Specifically, work environment differed in terms of interns either having the opportunity to attend orientations by organised by universities or not ( $t=4.050$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). Despite reaching significant difference, the differences between the means of interns whose university

organise pre-internship orientation ( $M=3.43$ ) and those whose university did not organised pre internship orientation ( $M=3.23$ ) was not that much.

Participation in on-campus practical training was found to have caused significant differences in relation to individual characteristics-task clarity ( $t=2.415$ ;  $p=0.016$ ), supervisor support ( $t=3.193$ ;  $p=0.001$ ), work environment ( $t=3.329$ ;  $p=0.001$ ) and compensation ( $t=0.980$ ;  $p=0.003$ ). This finding re-echoes the importance of including on-campus practical training as part of the pre-internship preparation activities. As suggested, pre internship activities that take the form of actual internship (Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, 2013) have the potential of developing the competencies of students, help in clarifying roles, duties and possible rewards from the internship and ensuring that interns are well assimilated into the work environment (Bhattacharya & Neelam, 2018; Jackling & Natoli, 2015; Yuan, 2018). This might have contributed to the assertion of interns who participated in on-campus practical training that on-campus practical training relates to receiving support from both supervisors and co-workers. They might have also been motivated by the on-campus practical training to be dedicated to work and willingness to learn during the internship. Such interns are mostly likely to get support from supervisors and co-workers and eventually be rewarded after the internship.

**Table 22: Factors Influencing Internship Experiences by Pre-Internship Activities**

Characteristics	N	Individual characteristics		Supervisor support- Task clarity		Co-worker support		Work environment		Compensation	
		Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )	Mean	P (Eta <sup>2</sup> )
University orientation											
Yes	456	3.68	0.011	3.68	0.002	3.74	0.003	3.43	0.000	3.03	0.124
No	228	3.49	()	3.41		3.51		3.13		2.87	
		t=2.553		t=3.049		t=2.937		t=4.050		t=1.538	
On-campus practical											
Yes	419	3.69	0.016	3.67	0.001	3.68	0.436	3.42	0.001	3.09	0.003
No	265	3.51	()	3.42		3.63		3.18		2.80	
		t=2.415		t=3.193		t=0.780		t=3.329		t=0.980	
Internship registration											
Yes	444	3.60	0.365	3.53	0.117	3.62	0.050	3.31	0.317	2.99	0.743
No	240	3.66	()	3.65		3.76	()	3.38	()	2.95	()
		t=-0.906		t=-1.568		t=-1.919		t=-1.001		t=0.327	
Facility orientation											
Yes	496	3.70	0.000	3.66	0.000	3.71	0.031	3.43	0.000	3.50	0.006
No	188	3.39		3.32		3.54		3.06		2.76	
		t=3.832		t=4.103		t=2.614		t=4.771		t=2.781	
Work experience											
Yes	372	3.69	0.045	3.61	0.054	3.70	0.038	3.41	0.022	3.05	0.130
No	312	3.54		3.52		3.63		3.24		2.90	
		t=2.012		t=1.141		t=0.873		t=2.293		t=1.516	

Scale: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Neutral; 3.50-4.49 = Agree; 4.50-5.0 = Strongly agree

\* Significant difference exists at  $\leq 0.05$  p

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

With reference to whether internship was a registered course or not and moderators of internship experience, the study found that there were significant differences between internship as a registered course and co-worker support ( $t=1.919$ ;  $p=0.050$ ). There were however no significant differences between internship as a registered course and the other constructs measuring moderators of internship experiences. In effect, interns who registered for internship believe that registering for internship as course affects the support they receive from co-workers. It is possible that such interns, after registering for internship takes the exercise serious. As such, they may do all they can to receive the necessary support from co-workers, knowing well they have registered for internship and are going to be graded. This might have accounted for the differences in mean of those who registered for internship and those who did not.

The results on Table 22 showed that orientation by internship facility differed across all the five constructs of moderators of internship experiences. Specifically, there were significant differences between internship facility orientation and individual characteristics-task clarity ( $t=3.832$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). An examination of the mean values indicates that interns whose internship organisation organised orientation for them agreed ( $M=3.70$ ) that orientation at the internship facility helps them to be dedicated to work and willing to learn whereas their colleagues who did not participate in any form of orientation at the internship facility were uncertain ( $M=3.39$ ). Similarly, supervisor support differed across interns whose internship facility organised orientation for them and those whose internship facility did not organise orientation ( $t=4.103$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). Whilst interns who participated in orientation at the internship facility agreed ( $M=3.71$ ) that such orientation ensure that they receive support from



supervisors, interns who did not have the privilege of orientation at the internship facility before the actual internship were uncertain ( $M=3.32$ ).

Again, the study found that there were significant differences between co-worker support and orientation by internship facility ( $t=2.614$ ;  $p=0.031$ ).

Despite reaching statistical difference, the mean values of interns who participated in orientation by internship facility ( $M=3.71$ ) and those did not ( $M=3.54$ ) did not differ much.

Orientation by internship facility was found to have caused significant differences among work environment ( $t=4.771$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) and compensation ( $t=2.781$ ;  $p=0.006$ ) as factors influencing internship experience constructs. With reference to compensation, orientation by internship facility contributed significantly to the differences herein. Specifically, whereas internship facilities that organised orientation had their interns agreeing ( $M=3.50$ ) that the orientation by internship facility account for the reception of compensation from the internship facility, interns whose internship facilities did not organise orientation for them were ambivalent ( $M=2.76$ ) on the issue.

The findings suggest that interns whose internship facilities organise orientation for them before the actual internship began are in a pole position to have a better internship experience. Such orientation helps in assimilating interns into the working environmental whilst helping interns to build valuable relationships with potential supervisors and co-workers. This will go a long way in building in the interns the desire to be dedicated to the internship exercise and the willingness to learn from the internship. In the long run, such interns will be committed and put up good behaviour, thereby attracting support from

on-site supervisors and co-worker as well as possibly receive some form of compensation from the internship organisation.

Finally, the study sought find out whether differences existed between interns' prior working experience before participating in the internship exercise and the moderators of internship experience. As evidenced from Table 19, significant differences existed between individual characteristics and work experience ( $t=2.012$ ;  $p=0.045$ ). The implication is that, interns previous work experience before internship to some extent, determines interns' willingness to learn and dedication to work during the internship exercise. The possible reason accounting for this might arise from the fact that interns might have gathered enough experience from similar job situations and as such will exhibit behaviours that makes them willing and dedicated to the internship exercise. Again, interns with previous work experiences are mostly likely to treat the internship as real job and as such exhibit personal traits of dedication to work and willingness to learn from the internship experience.

Work experience also accounted for some differences with respect to receiving support from supervisors and co-workers. Regarding supervisory support, both interns who had previous working experience ( $M=3.61$ ) and those without previous working experience ( $M=3.52$ ) agreed that working experiences account for receiving supervisory support ( $t=1.141$ ;  $p=0.054$ ). Similarly, both interns who had previously worked in the hospitality/tourism industry ( $M=3.70$ ) as well as their counterparts who did have any working experience before the internship exercise ( $M=3.63$ ) agreed that having a previous working experience before internship has the potential of attracting support from co-workers ( $t=0.873$ ;  $p=0.038$ ).

Here too, the findings underscore the importance of having a prior working experience, especially in the hospitality/tourism industry prior to participating in hospitality internship. Interns with such experiences at their disposal can leverage on the experience gained from working with supervisors and co-workers at their previous work stations to get the needed supervisor and co-worker support at the internship facility.

The results further revealed significant differences in working environment with respect to whether or not interns had previous working experience before the internship ( $t=2.293$ ;  $p=0.022$ ). Despite the statistical difference between the mean values, interns with previous work experience ( $M=3.05$ ) and those without it ( $M=2.90$ ) were both uncertain as to whether work experience relates to the prevailing working environment at the internship facility. Probably, the two groups of interns in terms of previous working experience might have been treated with similar conditions during the internship, hence, their indication of indifference.

### **Intention to Pursue a Career in Hospitality/Tourism Industry**

Interns' decision to work or not work in the hospitality industry has been found to relate to the kind of experiences interns derived from internship. According to Chang and Busser (2020) interns' career expectations are shaped by the kind of learning experiences they derived from internships. In view of this, the study sought to identify the intentions of interns towards building career in the hospitality/tourism industry after their internship experiences. Three (3) main items were used to measure interns' intention to remain in the hospitality/tourism industry. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 23.

Overall, interns agreed ( $M=3.63$ ;  $SD=1.22$ ) to pursue a career in the hospitality/tourism industry. As evidenced on Table 23, more than half (61.3%) of the interns expressed their desire to pursue a hospitality/tourism career post internship experience. Specifically, close to two-thirds (65.5%) of interns indicated that they were certain of joining the hospitality/tourism industry after graduation. A similar proportion (65.2%) of the interns said they will be happy to have a career in the hospitality/tourism industry. Lastly, a little over half (53.1%) of the interns were of the view that they will want to join the same internship facility after graduation.

**Table 23: Intentions to Pursue Hospitality/Tourism Career**

STATEMENT	% agreement	in	Mean	SD
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in the hospitality/tourism industry	446 (65.2)		3.67	1.27
I will certainly join the hospitality/tourism industry upon graduation	448 (65.5)		3.77	1.12
I will want to join the same company after graduation	363 (53.1)		3.44	1.27
<i>Overall</i>	<i>61.3</i>		<i>3.63</i>	<i>1.22</i>

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

As observed from the previous chapter, interns generally agreed to having positive internship experiences. This confirms findings of previous studies (Chen et al., 2021; Mensah et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2021) that positive internship experience or satisfaction from internship influences interns' decision to develop a career in the hospitality/industry after graduation. Again, the positive disparities regarding academic, personal, enterprise skills as well as



supervision might have accounted for interns' intention for pursuing a career in the hospitality/tourism industry. This is clearly postulated by the ECT that positive disparity between expectation and experiences lead to a positive evaluation of a service/product, hence, the intention to reuse the service or repurchase the product. By extension, a positive disparity between internship expectation and experience will lead to interns' intention to pursuing hospitality/tourism careers in the future.

This could be adduced from the practical nature of hospitality internships. Studies that have used the SCCT to evaluate hospitality/tourism internships have all concluded that the vocational nature of hospitality education (particularly internship) allows students to have the needed practical exposure in the industry thereby helping them to decide on whether to pursue careers in the industry or not (Appietu et al., 2019; Sabirin & La Are, 2018).

One interesting trend from the results is the decline in the number of interns who were willing to work with the same internship facility as compared to the number of interns' who had earlier indicated that they will pursue a career or joining the hospitality/tourism industry upon graduation. The shortfall could be attributed, in parts, to the perception interns might have developed with reference to specific internship organisations. Whilst this is interesting, it should be noted that this trend is probably localised and might not reflect the general overview of the interns.

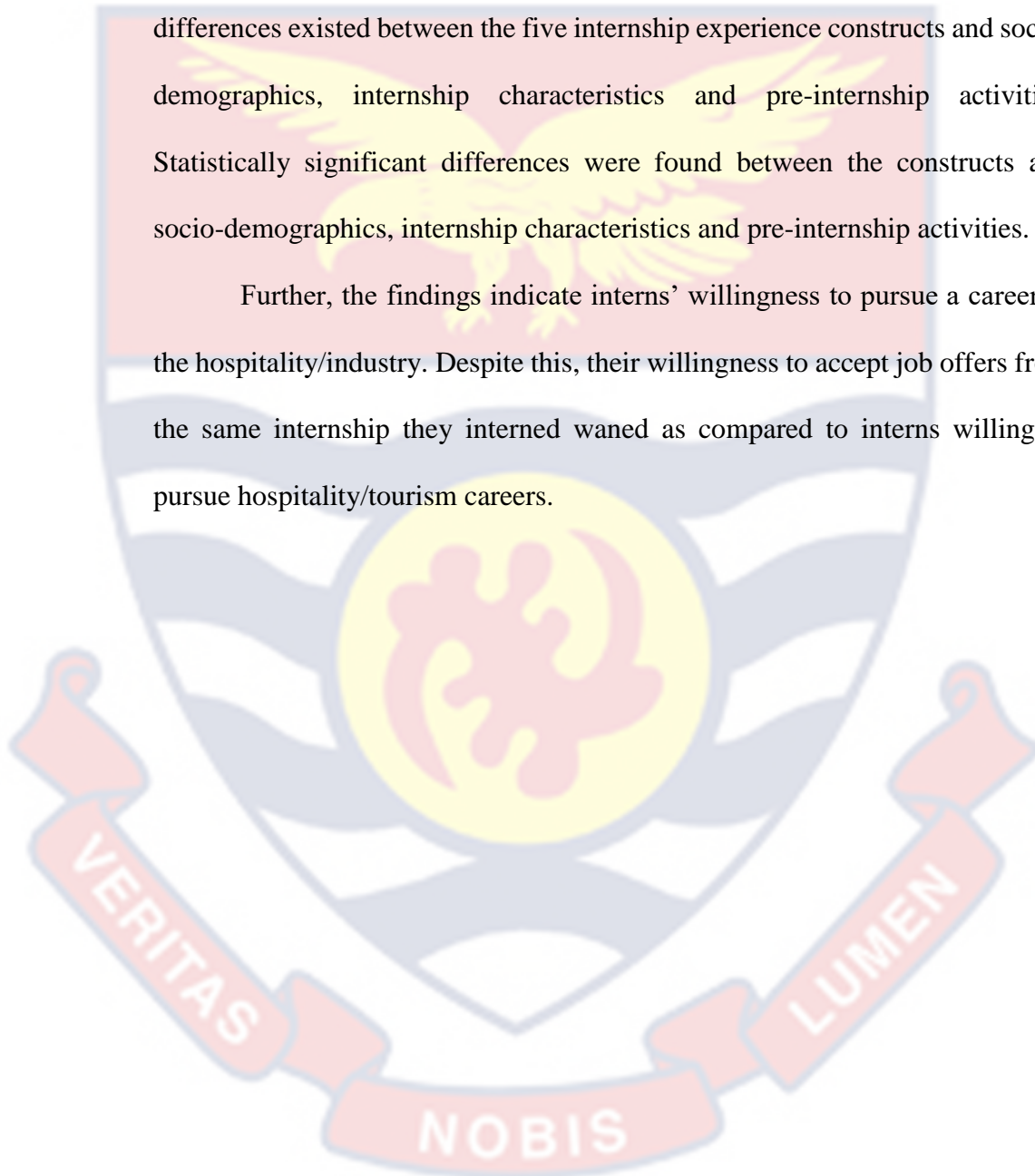
### **Summary**

This chapter considered the factors that moderate internship experiences. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics were employed. Results the exploratory factor analysis revealed that five main factors underpin interns'

internship characteristics. In essence, internship experiences are influenced by interns' individual characteristics, supervisor support-task clarity, co-worker support, work environment and compensation.

The independent sample T-test and ANOVA were then used to verify if differences existed between the five internship experience constructs and socio-demographics, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities. Statistically significant differences were found between the constructs and socio-demographics, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities.

Further, the findings indicate interns' willingness to pursue a career in the hospitality/industry. Despite this, their willingness to accept job offers from the same internship they interned waned as compared to interns willing to pursue hospitality/tourism careers.



## CHAPTER NINE

### STRUCTURAL EQUATION ANALYSIS OF THE INTER- RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRE-INTERNSHIP ACTIVITIES, EXPECTATIONS, EXPERIENCES, FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES AND CAREER INTENTIONS

#### **Introduction**

The last objective of the study sought to develop a structural model that explains the relationships among pre-internship activities, expectations of and experiences from internship, factors influencing internship experiences, and intention to pursue a career in the hospitality/tourism industry. In view of this, the chapter discusses the results from the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis as well as the determination of the inter-construct relationships, direct relationships between the constructs, the path coefficients of the model. Finally, the conceptual model underpinning the study was confirmed using the SEM model which was used to test the study hypotheses.

#### **Exploratory Factor Analysis of Internship Variables**

According to Hair et al. (2006), factor analysis is the foundation upon which SEM is built. Based on this, EFA as well as CFA were performed before the SEM was done. The EFA was used to determine the underlying structure of pre-internship activities, expectation, experiences, factors influencing experiences and career intentions with the aid of the PCA using varimax rotation method (Table 24).

**Table 24: Exploratory Factors on Pre-Internship Activities, Internship Expectations, Experiences, Factors Influencing Internship Experiences and Career Intentions of Hospitality/Tourism Interns**

F	Loaded variables	FL	EV	VE (%)
	<i>Expectation variables</i>			
I	Effectively prioritize work	0.76	30.90	29.30
	Obtain insight into hospitality/tourism operations	0.74		
	Acquire industry work culture	0.73		
	Practice team work with my colleagues	0.72		
	Provide an advantage in securing employment after school	0.71		
	Develop managerial skills	0.70		
	Receive allowances for food and transport	0.70		
	<i>Experience variables</i>			
II	I have enhanced my ability to transit into my employer's organization	0.76	9.99	18.26
	Provided opportunities for increased responsibilities at work	0.76		
	The internship has contributed to my overall career development	0.76		
	The internship has contributed to my career advancement	0.71		
	I have confirmed or reinforce my career Choice	0.69		
	The internship has contributed to my satisfaction with my career choice	0.68		
	<i>Factors influencing internship experience</i>			
	<i>Organisational factors</i>		4.40	10.52
III	Workers at the internship place were competent	0.74		
	Workers were helpful in getting my job done	0.71		
	Workers at the internship place always encouraged me	0.68		
	Workers gave useful advice on job problems	0.68		



Table 24 Continued

	My supervisor was a good organiser	0.67		
	Workers at the internship workplace were helpful to me	0.66		
IV	Individual characteristics		3.84	2.38
	I took the initiative to get acquainted with other employees	0.72		
	I proactively asked for feedback on my performance during internship	0.66		
	I proactively asked questions of my supervisors/co-workers in order to learn	0.66		
	<i>Pre-internship variables</i>		3.25	1.71
V	I attended internship briefing/seminar	0.94		
	Internship briefing/seminar was organised	0.93		
	Assessment was discussed at briefing/seminar	0.91		
	The attachment facility organised orientation	0.90		
	I had previous working experience	0.88		
	<i>Career intention variables</i>		2.51	1.26
VI	I will want to join the same company after graduation	0.75		
	I will certainly join the hospitality/tourism industry upon graduation	0.73		
	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in the hospitality/tourism industry	0.72		
	Total variance explained			63.43

Note: F: Factor, FL: Factor Loading, EV: Eigenvalue, VE: Variance explained

KMO=0.877, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx.  $\chi^2$ ) = 22464.45;  $p$  = 0.000

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

From Table 24, the items measuring the constructs loaded well with a factor loading between 0.66 and 0.94. However, items that cross-loaded were either deleted or re-specified based on the underlying philosophy of the constructs. Overall, the EFA resulted in a total of six factors including expectation (7 items), experience (6 items), organisational factors (6 items) and

individual factors (3 items). In addition, five (5) items and three (3) items measured pre-internship activities and career intentions respectively. In essence, the EFA served as a pre-testing tool for the SEM.

Overall, the six (6) constructs (expectation, experience, organisation factors, individual characteristics, pre-internship activities and career intentions) accounted for 63.43 percent of the total variance explaining hospitality interns' pre-internship activities, expectation, experiences and career intentions. Factor I looked as expectation with an eigenvalue of 30.90 and accounted for 29.30 percent of the total variance explained. Seven (7) items loaded on this factor with each item loading above 0.60. Factor II was termed experience and accounted for 18.26 percent of the total variance explained with an eigenvalue of 9.99. Items measuring factor II had a factor loading between 0.68 and 0.76.

Factors III and IV were considered as organisational factors and individual characteristics influencing internship experience respectively. Whilst organisational factors accounted for 10.52 percent, individual characters accounted for 2.38 percent of the total variance explained. Organisational factor had six (6) items measuring it with factor loadings between 0.66 and 0.74 whilst three (3) items measured individual characteristics with a least factor loading of 0.66.

The final two factors, pre-internship activity (Factor V) and career intention (Factor VI) had five (5) and three (3) items loading on them respectively. The factor loadings of these constructs were between 0.72 and 0.94.

### Testing the Proposed Model

Based on an extensive literature review, the study proposed a structural model consisting of the constructs of the study. The study proposed that pre-internship activities have a direct and positive effect on internship expectation, internship experience and career intention. Also, internship expectation has a direct and positive effect on internship experience and career intention whilst internship experience has a direct and positive effect on career intention. Finally, the study proposed that both organisational factors and individual characteristics have a direct and positive effects on internship experience.

### Codes for the Questionnaire Items

For the purposes of easy identification, the items for the study questionnaire were coded. In view of this, the main constructs – expectation, experience, moderators of internship experience, pre-internship activities, career intentions were coded as follows: expectation (EXPT), experience (EXPR), organisational factors (ORG\_FACT), individual characteristics (IND\_FACT), pre-internship activities (PRE\_ACTI) and Career intentions (CAR\_INTE).

**Table 25: Codes for Questionnaire Items**

Construct	Variable code	Item
Expectation	EXPEC1	Effectively prioritize work
	EXPEC2	Obtain insight into hospitality/tourism operations
	EXPEC3	Acquire industry work culture
	EXPEC4	Practice team work with my colleagues
	EXPEC5	Provide an advantage in securing employment after school
	EXPEC6	Develop managerial skills
	EXPEC7	Receive allowances for food and transport
Experience	EXPER1	I have enhanced my ability to transit into my employer's organization
	EXPER2	Provided opportunities for increased responsibilities at work
	EXPER3	The internship has contributed to my overall career development
	EXPER4	The internship has contributed to my career advancement
	EXPER5	I have confirmed or reinforce my career Choice
	EXPER6	The internship has contributed to my satisfaction with my career choice
Organisational factors	ORG_FACT1	Workers at the internship place were competent
	ORG_FACT2	Workers were helpful in getting my job done
	ORG_FACT3	Workers at the internship place always encouraged me
	ORG_FACT4	Workers gave useful advice on job problems
	ORG_FACT5	My supervisor was a good organise



Table 25 Continued

	ORG_FACT6	Workers at the internship workplace were helpful to me
Individual characteristics	IND_FACT1	I took the initiative to get acquainted with other employees
	IND_FACT2	I proactively asked for feedback on my performance during internship
	IND_FACT3	I proactively asked questions of my supervisors/co-workers in order to learn
Pre-internship	PRE_ACTI1	The university/department organised internship seminar
	PRE_ACTI2	Participated in on-campus practical training
	PRE_ACTI3	Assessment procedures were discussed before the internship exercise
	PRE_ACTI4	The internship facility organised orientation
	PRE_ACTI5	I had previous working experience before participating in the internship
Career intentions	CAR_INT1	I will want to join the same company after graduation
	CAR_INT2	I will certainly join the hospitality/tourism industry upon graduation
	CAR_INT3	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in the hospitality/tourism industry

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

### Structural Equation Modelling

SEM usage in the social sciences has gained significant consideration since the later part of the 1990s (Hershberger, 2003) due to its varied analytical and multivariate techniques (Hair et al., 2006; Shaheen, Ahmad, Waqas, Waheed & Farooq, 2017). In view of this, the SEM (using AMOS 24) was employed to test the proposed hypotheses of the study. As observed from the

EFA (Table 21), thirty (30) variables under the six (6) constructs were deemed appropriate for the SEM analysis.

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

The confirmatory factor analysis was employed to validate the structure of the items that were used to measure the constructs – pre-internship activity, expectation, experience, factors influencing experience and career intention. As shown on Table 26, the standardised regression estimates ( $\beta$ ), Composite Reliability (CR), and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were reported as a measure of ensuring the suitability of the CFA. The CR is used to estimate the extent to which a set of latent construct indicators share in their measurement of a construct. It is mostly used as a measure of internal consistency of a construct. A CR value of 0.6 or higher is recommended (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2006; Lawson-Body & Limayem, 2004). The AVE on the hand is a measurement of the amount of common variance among latent construct indicators (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998). Han, Lee and Seo (2008) proposes an AVE value of 0.05 as appropriate. In view of this, both the CR and AVE values reported on Table 26 met the accepted threshold values for both measurements, hence appropriate for the CFA.

**Table 26: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

F	Loaded variables	$\beta$	CR	AVE (%)
	<i>Expectation variables</i>		0.908	0.584
I	Effectively prioritize work	0.793		
	Obtain insight into hospitality/tourism operations	0.781		
	Acquire industry work culture	0.778		
	Practice team work with my colleagues	0.771		
	Provide an advantage in securing employment after school	0.732		
	Develop managerial skills	0.722		
	Receive allowances for food and transport	0.770		
	<i>Experience variables</i>		0.889	0.572
II	I have enhanced my ability to transit into my employer's organization	0.782		
	Provided opportunities for increased responsibilities at work	0.771		
	The internship has contributed to my overall career development	0.759		
	The internship has contributed to my career advancement	0.756		
	I have confirmed or reinforce my career Choice	0.738		
	The internship has contributed to my satisfaction with my career choice	0.729		
	<i>Factors influencing internship experience</i>			
	<i>Organisational factors</i>		0.893	0.584
III	Workers at the internship place were competent	0.829		
	Workers were helpful in getting my job done	0.796		
	Workers at the internship place always encouraged me	0.779		
	Workers gave useful advice on job problems	0.762		
	My supervisor was a good organiser	0.743		
IV	Individual characteristics		0.865	0.682

Table 26 Continued

	I took the initiative to get acquainted with other employees	0.851		
	I proactively asked for feedback on my performance during internship	0.847		
	I proactively asked questions of my supervisors/co-workers in order to learn	0.778		
<i>Pre-internship variables</i>				
V	I attended internship briefing/seminar	0.952	0.971	0.872
	Internship briefing/seminar was organised	0.949		
	Assessment was discussed at briefing/seminar	0.912		
	The attachment facility organised orientation	0.900		
	I had previous working experience	0.880		
<i>Career intention variables</i>				
VI	I will want to join the same company after graduation	0.901	0.869	0.690
	I will certainly join the hospitality/tourism industry upon graduation	0.860		
	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in the hospitality/tourism industry	0.720		
GFI = 0.945; NFI = 0.927; RFI = 0.920; IFI = 0.954; TLI = 0.949; CFI = 0.954; RMSEA = 0.049				

Note: F: Factor,  $\beta$  = Standardised Estimates; C.R. = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

In determining the suitability of models in SEM, a number of fit indices have been proposed. In the current study, the goodness fit index (GFI), the normal fit index (NFI), relative fit index (RFI), incremental fit index (IFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI, also known as the non-normed fit index), comparative fit index (CFI) and RMSEA fit indices were used to assess the suitability of the data for the model. A value of 0.90 and above for GFI, NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI and



CFI is acceptable for the suitability of a fit model (van de Schoot, Lugtig & Hox, 2012; Weston & Gore, 2006). In terms of the RMSEA, a value ranging from 0.04 to 0.08 indicates the data is fit for the model (Schermelel-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003). As shown on Table 24, the fit indices (GFI = 0.945; NFI = 0.927; RFI = 0.920; IFI = 0.954; TLI = 0.949; CFI = 0.954; RMSEA = 0.049) indicate the fitness of the model (Table 27).

**Table 27: Model Fit Indices for the Model**

Fit statistics	Recommended value	Model Value
Probability value (p)	$\leq 0.050$	0.000
Good of fit index (GFI)	$\geq 0.900$	0.945
Normal fit index (NFI)	$\geq 0.900$	0.927
Relative fit index (RFI)	$\geq 0.900$	0.920
Incremental fit index (IFI)	$\geq 0.900$	0.954
Tucker-lewis index (TLI)	$\geq 0.900$	0.949
Comparative fit index (CFI)	$\geq 0.900$	0.954
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	Between 0.040 and 0.080	0.049

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

**Table 28: Inter-construct Correlation and Square Root of AVE**

Inter-construct	EXPEC	PRE_ACTI	ORG_FACT	IND_FACT	EXPER	CAR_INTE
EXPEC	(0.825)					
PRE_ACTI	0.093	(0.902)				
ORG_FACT	0.008	0.076	(0.856)			
IND_FACT	0.013	0.126	0.636	(0.996)		
EXPER	0.416	0.100	0.338	0.328	(0.671)	
CAR_INTE	0.306	0.062	0.357	0.480	0.448	(1.073)

Value in parenthesis is the square root of the AVE of the construct

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Further to the above, Table 26 shows that the standard regression estimates ( $\beta$ ) meet Kim, Woo and Uysal's (2015) recommendation of 0.50 since all the constructs loaded above 0.50. By this, the convergent validity of the items measured was attained. The composite reliability used in measuring the latent variables loaded between 0.865 and 0.971, above the recommended threshold of 0.60 (Lawson-Body & Limayem, 2004). This is an indication that the scale was internally consistent. Finally, the AVE for the six (6) constructs, as shown on Table 29 were above the recommended estimate of 0.05. This implies that the degree to which the constructs are related was established.

#### **Conceptual Path Model (Structural Model)**

Based on the goodness-of-fit indices, the conceptual path model (structural model) is presented in Figure 5. All eight (8) estimated hypotheses were statistically significant (Figure 5). The model was further simplified for pictorial clarity (Figure 6). The eight (8) estimated hypotheses are as follows:

1. Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Pre-internship activity has a direct and positive effect on internship expectation.
2. Hypothesis 2a (H2a): Pre-internship activity has a direct and positive effect on experience.
3. Hypothesis 3a (H3a): Pre-internship activity has a direct and positive effect on career intention.
4. Hypothesis 4 (H4a): Expectation has a direct and positive effect on experience.
5. Hypothesis 5 (H5a): Expectation has a direct and positive effect on career intention.

6. Hypothesis 6 (H6a): Experience has a direct and positive effect on career intention.
7. Hypothesis 7 (H7a): Organisational factor has a direct and positive effect on experience.
8. Hypothesis 8 (H8a): Individual factor has a direct and positive effect on career experience.

As reported on Table 27, the model fit indices (GFI = 0.945; NFI = 0.927; RFI = 0.920; IFI = 0.954; TLI = 0.949; CFI = 0.954; RMSEA = 0.049) show that the data fit the model per the estimates reported in the literature (Forza & Filippini, 1998; Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; van de Schoot et al., 2012; Weston & Gore, 2006). With respect to the research hypotheses, pre-internship activity influenced expectation (H1a:  $\beta = 0.094$ ; SE = 0.033;  $p = 0.005$ ), experience (H2a:  $\beta = 0.035$ ; SE = 0.026;  $p = 0.034$ ) and career intention (H2a:  $\beta = 0.015$ ; SE = 0.037;  $p = 0.050$ ). This finding supports the assertion that pre-internship activities such as orientation, pre-internship seminars and on-campus practical training has direct relationship with factors that influence internship experience. Also, internship expectation had a positive effect on internship experience (H4a:  $\beta = 0.579$ ; SE = 0.037;  $p = 0.000$ ) as well as career intention of hospitality interns (H8a:  $\beta = 0.184$ ; SE = 0.056;  $p = 0.000$ ). Literature posits that expectation and experiences are closely linked (Kandampully et al., 2011). In furtherance to this, Reinagel and Gerlach (2015) observed that expectations formed by interns before internship participation is a key influencer of what interns' experience during actual internship. The explanation is that; interns are likely to put in much effort during their internship exercise to ensure that their pre-internship expectations are met.



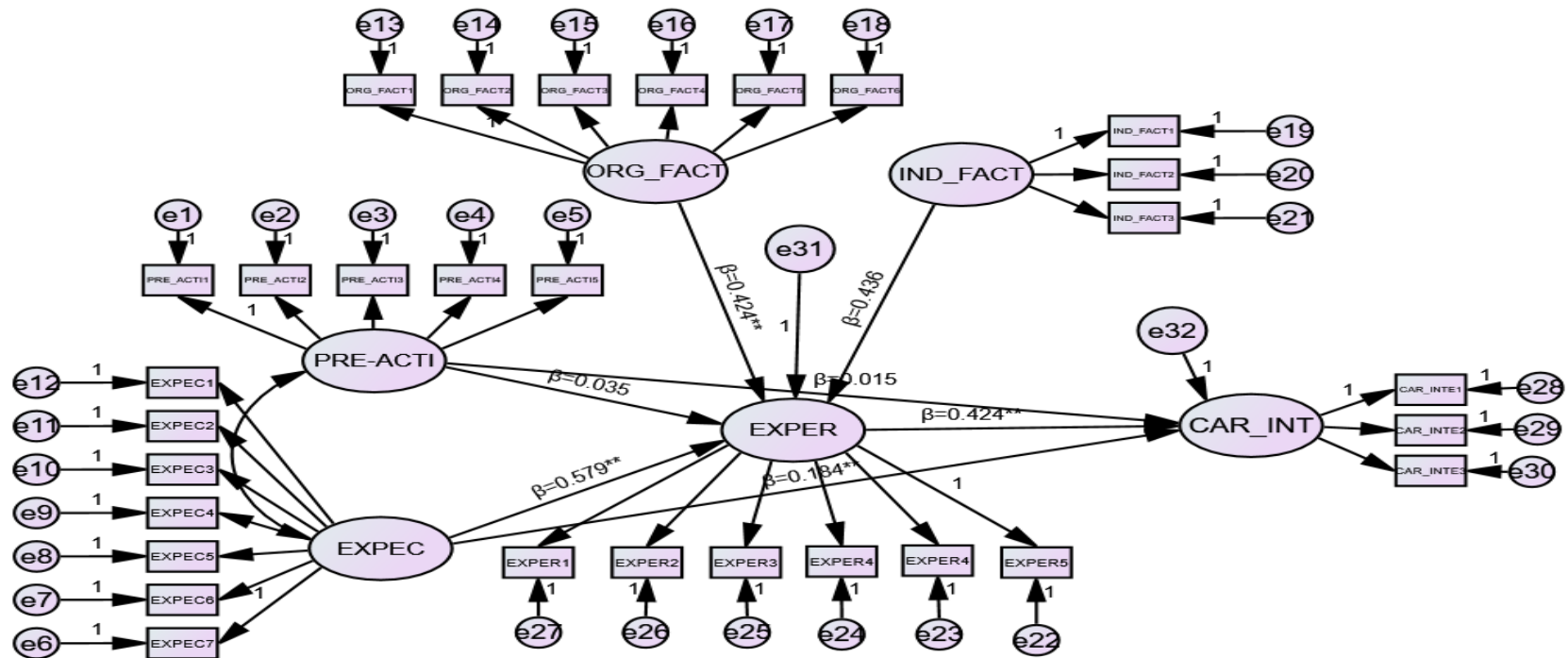


Figure 5: SEM Conceptual Path Model on Pre-Internship Activities, Expectation, Experience, Factors Influencing Internship Experience and Career Intentions of Hospitality/Tourism Interns Indicating the Significant Relationship  
 Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

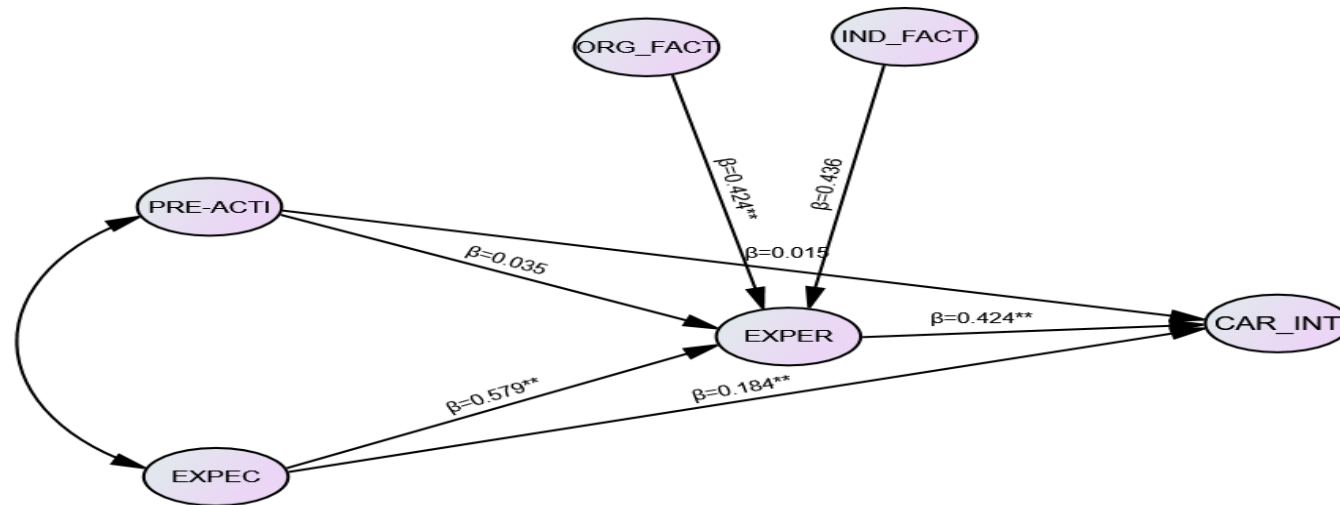


Figure 6: Simplified Conceptual Path Model on Pre-Internship Activities, Expectation, Experience, Factors Influencing Internship Experience and Career Intentions  
 Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

**Table 29: Path Coefficients of Decomposed Model**

Hypothesis (H)	Path	$\beta$	S.E	<i>P</i>
H1	Pre-internship activity ↔ Expectation	0.094	0.033	0.005**
H2	Pre-internship activity → Experience	0.035	0.026	0.034*
H3	Pre-internship activity → Career intention	0.015	0.037	0.050*
H4	Expectation → Experience	0.579	0.037	0.000**
H5	Expectation → Career intention	0.184	0.056	0.000**
H6	Experience → Career intention	0.462	0.065	0.000**
H7	Organisational factor → Experience	0.424	0.032	0.000**
H8	Individual factor → Experience	0.436	0.054	0.020*

Note: GFI = 0.954; NFI = 0.927; RFI = 0.920; IFI = 0.954; TLI = 0.949; CFI = 0.954; RMSEA = 0.049; Cr = Covariance relationship  $p \leq 0.010^{**}$ ;

$p \leq 0.050^*$

Source: Field survey, Wireko-Gyebi (2021)

Interns' personal characteristics such as dedication to work and willingness to learn (individual factor) had a direct and positive effect on experiences derived from internship (H8a:  $\beta = 0.436$ ; SE = 0.054;  $p = 0.020$ ). In fact, interns who proactively ask question from supervisors/co-workers in their bid to learn are likely to have positive internship experiences. Again, interns are expected to take the initiative to acquaint themselves with other employees and also ask for performance feedback from their supervisors during internships. Such personal characteristics will definitely influence the internship experience. Admittedly, interns who possess such characteristics will have a positively internship experience which is likely to have an influence on their intentions to pursue careers in the hospitality/tourism industry.

Similarly, there was a positive relationship between organisational factor and experience (H7a:  $\beta = 0.424$ ; SE = 0.032;  $p = 0.000$ ). The finding agrees with the assertion of Chen et al. (2018). In their study, they found that organisational factors such as work environment influences interns' career experience after participating in hospitality/tourism internship. Studies such as Binder et al. (2015), Kong and Yan (2014) and Omar et al. (2017) confirmed the influence of conducive working climate is a prelude to having a positive internship experience.

Experience derived from internship was found to have significantly influenced intern's intention to pursue hospitality/tourism careers (H6a:  $\beta = 0.462$ ; SE = 0.056;  $p = 0.000$ ). As alluded to by Amanjeet and Shuchi (2020), Koo et al. (2016) and Walsh et al. (2015), internship experience is a precursor to interns' intention to pursue careers in the hospitality/tourism industry. Other studies such as Jawabri (2017), Mensah et al. (2020) and Self et al. (2016) found



significant relationship between internship experiences and career intention of hospitality/tourism interns. Largely, such intentions depend on the nature of the experiences derived from the internship exercise. All things being equal, positive internship experiences are likely to result in intention to pursue hospitality/tourism careers whilst negative experiences from the internship exercise will result in intentions to pursue careers other than hospitality/tourism after graduation.

Finally, it could be deduced from Figure 6 that the two exogenous variables – pre-internship activities and internship expectation had a positive influence among themselves (Cr1:  $\beta = -0.094$ ; SE = 0.033; p = 0.005). Confirming this, Bhattacharya and Neelman (2018) observed a direct relationship between pre-internship activity and internship expectation. Other studies (Cheng et al., 2019; McKenzie & Mellis, 2018; Zhang, 2018; Zheng & Song, 2016) have also confirmed the relationship between pre-internship activity and internship expectation. The indication is that, pre-internship activities such as on-campus practical training and pre-internship orientation seminars, interns have the opportunity to participate in scenarios akin to what pertains in industry. This inadvertently influences their expectation of what actual internship exercise will be. Again, interns with previous work experiences with the hospitality industry are mostly likely to have their expectations influenced by the previous work experiences.

### Summary

The chapter tested the study hypotheses with the aid of SEM. Before employing the SEM, the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used as a testing tool to determine the underlying structure of the dimensions of pre-internship

activity, expectation, experience, factors influencing experience and career intentions. In all, thirty (30) items comprising seven (7) items for expectation, six (6) items each for experience and organisational factor, five (5) items for pre-internship activity and three (3) items each for individual factor and career intentions were included in the EFA.

The confirmation factor analysis (CFA) was then used to confirm the underlying structure of the constructs – expectation, experience, organisation factor, individual factor, pre-internship activity and career intentions. Subsequently, the SEM was employed to validate the structural model that guided the study (Figure 3). The hypothesised paths of the study constructs were tested. With a goodness-of-fit index (GFI = 0.945; NFI = 0.927; RFI = 0.920; IFI = 0.954; TLI = 0.949; CFI = 0.954; RMSEA = 0.049), the model path indicated that the data fit the model. Again, the data was deemed to have a convergent validity since all the CR coefficients exceed the recommended threshold of 0.60 with the AVE values of the various factors exceeding the 0.50 recommended threshold. All the eight (8) stated hypotheses (estimated coefficients) were statistically significant. The covariance of the exogenous variables (pre-internship activity and expectation) was significant, an indication that both variables interacted with each other to have an effect on the endogenous variables.

## CHAPTER TEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. It summarises the thesis and presents the main findings of the study. The main conclusions were drawn based on the results and recommendations are also outlined in this chapter.

#### Summary of Thesis

The main objective of the study was to assess the pre-internship activities, expectation, experiences and career internship of hospitality/tourism interns. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the pre-internship activities of interns;
2. Examine the expectation of hospitality/tourism interns;
3. Examine the experiences hospitality/tourism interns derived from internships;
4. Analyse the factors influencing internship experiences of hospitality/tourism interns;
5. Analyse the career intentions of hospitality/tourism interns; and
6. Develop a structural model to explain the interrelationships between pre-internship activities, expectation, experience, factors influencing experiences and career intentions.

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Pre-internship activity has a direct and positive effect on internship expectation.

2. Hypothesis 2a (H2a): Pre-internship activity has a direct and positive effect on experience.
3. Hypothesis 3a (H3a): Pre-internship activity has a direct and positive effect on career intention.
4. Hypothesis 4 (H4a): Expectation has a direct and positive effect on experience.
5. Hypothesis 5 (H5a): Expectation has a direct and positive effect on career intention.
6. Hypothesis 6 (H6a): Experience has a direct and positive effect on career intention.
7. Hypothesis 7 (H7a): Organisational factor has a direct and positive effect on experience.
8. Hypothesis 8 (H8a): Individual factor has a direct and positive effect on career experience.

The ECT (Oliver, 1977) model was adopted as the conceptual model for the study. Based on the study objectives, the framework captured the five constructs of pre-internship activity, expectation, experience, factors influencing experience and career intentions. The study was situated in the pragmatist approach. Consequently, the concurrent mixed method was used as the study design. The study was conducted among hospitality/tourism interns who were sampled from eight (8) technical universities in Ghana. Primary data was sourced from 684 hospitality/tourism students who have participated in at least one compulsory internship. The study questionnaire was structured into five sections with each section covering an objective of the study. The study instrument was pretested between 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 among hospitality



students at UENR who had participated in least one compulsory internship exercise. However, the actual field survey was conducted between 13<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2021. Three research assistants were recruited and trained to assist with the data collection. A total of 769 questionnaires were administered out of which 684 were considered useful for analysis. Five in-depth interviews were conducted among five liaison officers (officers responding for industrial attachment) of the technical universities whilst five (5) different FGD were held among interns.

Data collected from the field was first cleaned before processing using IBM SPSS version 22. Both descriptive (frequency, mean and standard deviation) and inferential (T-test, paired T-test, ANOVA and FA) statistics were employed to analyse the data. In addition, SEM (AMOS version 26) was used to explain the interrelationships between pre-internship activities, expectation, experience, factors influencing experience and career intention and test the study hypotheses as well. The data from the in-depth interviews and FGDs were manually transcribed and presented thematically.

### **Summary of Main Findings**

The findings from the study are presented based on the objectives set out in chapter one of this study. Regarding pre-internship activities, the study found that interns were taken through pre-internship orientation by universities and internship facilities as well as on-campus practical training. Also, the study found that students had prior working experience in the hospitality/tourism industry before internship. Specifically, students had on-campus practical training, opportunity to participate in food production practical, food and beverage practicals, accommodation practicals as well as events/functions

practicals. In terms of methods of placement, interns mainly looked for their own placement as compared to the university or department looking for internship placement for interns. Though internship is compulsory across all the technically universities, the study found that whilst some technical universities require their students to register for internship, it is not a requirement for the students in other technical universities.

With regards to interns' expectations prior to participating in internship, the study found that interns' had four (4) main expectations – development of enterprise skills, career path-supervision, academic-personal skills and compensation – for participating in internship. These expectations present the varied reasons for which interns participate in hospitality/tourism internships. Aside this, the study also found variations in interns' expectations across interns' socio-demographic characteristics (age, sex and marital status), internship characteristics (duration, frequency and type of facility) and pre-internship activities (orientation, on-campus practical training, method of placement and previous working experience).

Further to the above, the study also found that academic-personal skill development, career path-supervision and compensation were the main experiences interns derived from participating in the internship. These experiences differed across interns' socio-demographic characteristics, internship characteristics and pre-internship activities.

Five factors influenced internship experience. These factors included individual characteristics, supervision-task clarity, co-worker support, work environment and compensation in that order. Further, the findings show that factors influencing internship experience were varied depending on interns'

socio-demographic characteristics, internship characteristics as well as activities interns undergo before participating in the actual internship exercise.

The study also found that, interns were generally positive about pursuing a career in the hospitality/tourism industry. Specifically, interns indicated their willingness to spend the rest of their lives to develop a career in the hospitality/tourism industry or certain about they joining the industry. Other interns express interest in working with the facility they interned when given the opportunity.

Lastly, the study found significant relationships between the five (5) constructs (pre-internship activities, expectation, experience, factors influencing experience and career intention). For instance, pre-internship activities had a direct and positive influence on organisational factor. Again, expectation and individual factor were found to influence both experience and career intention whilst experience significantly influenced career intention.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the objectives of the study and the main findings emanating from the analysis, the study puts forward the following conclusions: the study that internship was not a registered course across all technical universities; though it was compulsory for all students to undertake internship. Further, the study concludes that not all technical universities and internship facilities organise orientations before the students start the internship exercise. The implication is that, students could participate in internship without any formal orientation by technical universities and the facilities where the students interned. It can be further concluded that students mostly look for their own

internship placement. Also, the study concludes that not students on internships were visited and supervised by lecturers from technical universities.

From the findings, the study concludes that the overriding expectation for the students for participating in hospitality internship was to 'enterprise skills, that is, managerial and team work skills as well as acquiring knowledge into industry work culture, obtaining insight into hospitality/tourism industry. However, other internship expectations of students included career path-supervision, academics-personal and pay. This means that students have varied expectations before participating in hospitality/tourism internships.

Further, the study concludes that students had varied experiences from the internship exercise. The most dominant of such experiences was academic-personal skills. By extension, students were able to enhance their research/project skills, developed oral/presentation skills as well as increasing their grade point after the internship exercise. However, the internship contributed to students' satisfaction with their career choice and received training and nurturing from onsite internship supervisors. In other words, onsite supervisors contributed immensely to providing the needed support whilst helping the students to validate their career choice during the internship. It can be inferred from both the ELT and SLT that when given the opportunity, internship can help students to derive experiences which they do not normally get from the classroom, hence the above internship experiences.

It can also be concluded that though there were positive disparities between students' expectation and experience in relation to skills development (academics, personal, enterprise) and supervision, there were negative disparities in terms of career path development and compensation. In essence,



students' expectations with respect to developing their skills and getting good supervision at internship facilities were met whilst their expectations regarding validating their career path and being compensated during and after the internship exercise were not met. In sum, not all expectations of students were met.

The study concludes that the main factor influencing students' internship experiences was individual characteristics. The implication is that students' dedication to the internship exercise and willingness to learn during the internship exercise play a major role in shaping their internship experiences. However, other factors such as supervisory support, task clarity and co-worker support also influenced students' internship experiences. It is also concluded that work environment and compensation were the factors that influenced internships experiences the least.

Further, based on the SCCT, the study concludes that students are willing to pursue a career in the hospitality/tourism industry. However, whilst students were willing to spend the rest of their career in the hospitality/industry or join the hospitality/tourism industry after graduating, the same could not said about students' willingness to join the same institution they interned after graduation.

Finally, it can be concluded that there were statistically significant relationships with the nine (9) conceptual paths (hypotheses) in the model used in explaining the casual relationships between pre-internship activities, expectations, experiences and career intentions.

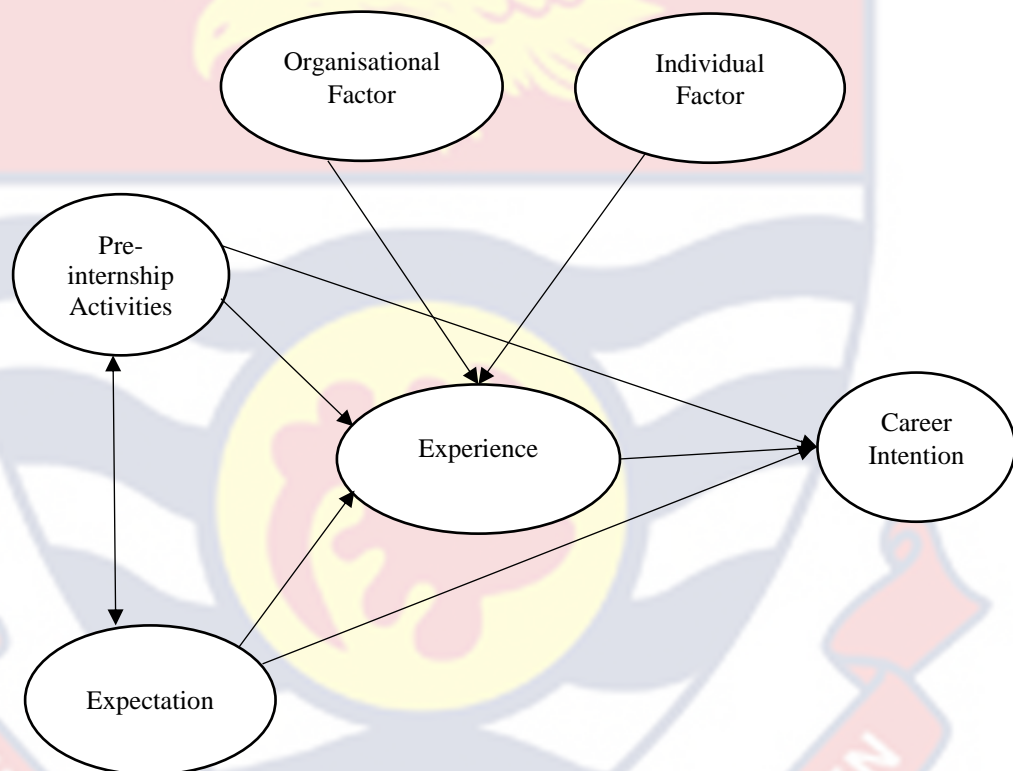
### Contribution to Knowledge

The study makes some contributions to the internship literature. Research has shown that casual relationships exist between internship experience and career intentions as well as between internship expectations and internship experiences. However, the relationship between internship expectation, experiences and career is rarely explored in the internship literature. The study therefore contributes by exploring the causal relationships between internship these three concepts – expectation, experience and career intention of hospitality interns. This can serve as a base line study for other studies that will explore the relationships among these three concepts.

The study employed the expectation-disconfirmation theory to shed lights on the disparities between students' expectation of and experiences from hospitality internship and to establish if these disparities have any influence on students' career intentions. This theory had rarely been employed in internship studies. The study therefore has provided the basis for and extended the application of the ECT to internship studies. The study further introduced other variables (such as pre-internship activities) to the existing various of expectation, experiences and satisfaction found in the original ECT model. The implication is the, the original model can be extended to include other variables when applying it to internship studies.

Finally, the study proposes a framework for explaining hospitality internships from a broader perspective. Most frameworks used in explaining hospitality internships have ignored pre-internship activities and factors influencing internship experiences. Further, the model decomposed factors influencing internship experience into organisational factors and individual

factors (characteristics) for a better understanding of how these two distinct factors influence internship experience. In essence, the model can be used to explain hospitality internships by examining the casual relationships between pre-internship activities, expectations, experiences, factors (organisation and individual) influencing experiences and career intentions. In view of this, the proposed model as captured in Figure 7 is put forward by the study.



*Figure 7: Model of Pre-Internship Activities, Expectation, Experiences, Factors Influencing and Career Intention*  
Source: Author's Construct

### **Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

Drawing on the main findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made in order to ensure that hospitality/tourism internships are carried out in a manner that brings maximum benefits to all stakeholders, especially students.

### **Recommendation for Technical Universities**

Since internship is compulsory across all technical universities, it is recommended that registering for internship becomes compulsory. This will mean that internship will appear on students' transcripts as a registered course.

It will ensure that students are properly graded and results reflected on their academic transcript. This could enhance the chances of students who intend using internship as work experience to gain employment after graduation.

In line with the above recommendation that internship registration becomes compulsory in all technical universities, it is further recommended that technical universities take steps in allocating credit hours to internship just as credit hours are assigned to regular hospitality/tourism courses. In such situations, weekly or bi-weekly internship seminars could be organised for students. Resource persons from industry could be invited to such seminars to share industry expectations of interns during internships. This will go a long way in shaping students' expectations prior to participating in internships.

Internship liaison officers, together with departmental attachment coordinators should ensure that internship orientations are continuously organised for students who are due for internships. In doing so, they should ensure that every student participate in such orientations by taking attendance during such orientations. This will ensure that students fully participate in orientations.

The study further recommends that technical universities through liaison officers should build a strong collaboration with industry by signing MoUs with industry so to help liaison offers to place students for internship with such



institutions. This will reduce the stress on students who have to look for internship placement by themselves.

The study also recommends that technical universities through liaison officers put in place a policy that ensure strict adherence to monitoring and supervision of all students on internship. The policy should be well communicated to the departmental internship coordinators who are the implementing agents for monitoring and supervision of students on internship. Apart from this building the self-confidence and enhancing students' internship experiences, visiting and monitoring students during internship serves as a platform of building stronger relationships between academia and industry. During such visits, supervisors could be abreast with first-hand information on what students on internships go through.

#### **Recommendation for Industry**

In relation to factors influencing internship experience, working environment and compensation were listed as the least. The study therefore, recommends that internship facilities create the necessary working environment such as caring for the wellbeing of interns and paying attention to their suggestions. Further, internship organisations could offer monetary rewards in the form of stipends for transportation and where possible, provide meals (at least lunch) for interns. This could create a congenial working environment where interns could give out their best during the internship period.

It is also recommended that institution that offer internship placement for students to organise orientations for students before actual internship begins. For most of the students, internship is their first time of having any form of interaction with industry. During such orientations, expectations of industry of

students during attachment as well as roles and responsibilities could be communicated to the students. This will help student interns to be well assimilated into the working environment and help reduce anxiety before they start the internship.

Since students indicated their willingness to pursue hospitality and tourism careers, it is recommended that hospitality and tourism firms where students intern provide the necessary training during internship. When this is done, the attrition rate of hospitality and tourism students moving away from hospitality

### **Recommendation for Students**

Students expectations of receiving financial rewards from internship institutions should be reviewed. With the advent of compulsory internship, the focus should be shifted from receiving financial rewards to gaining practical exposure from the internship experience. This can go a long way in ensuring that students get the needed skills development required for further job placement.

In relation to the above recommendation, the study finally recommends that students on internship should be willing to learn and be dedicated during the internship exercise. This will help students on attachment to enhance their internship experiences since these factors were found to influence internship experience. In essence, students on internship are likely to have a positive internship experience when these personal characteristics are exhibited.

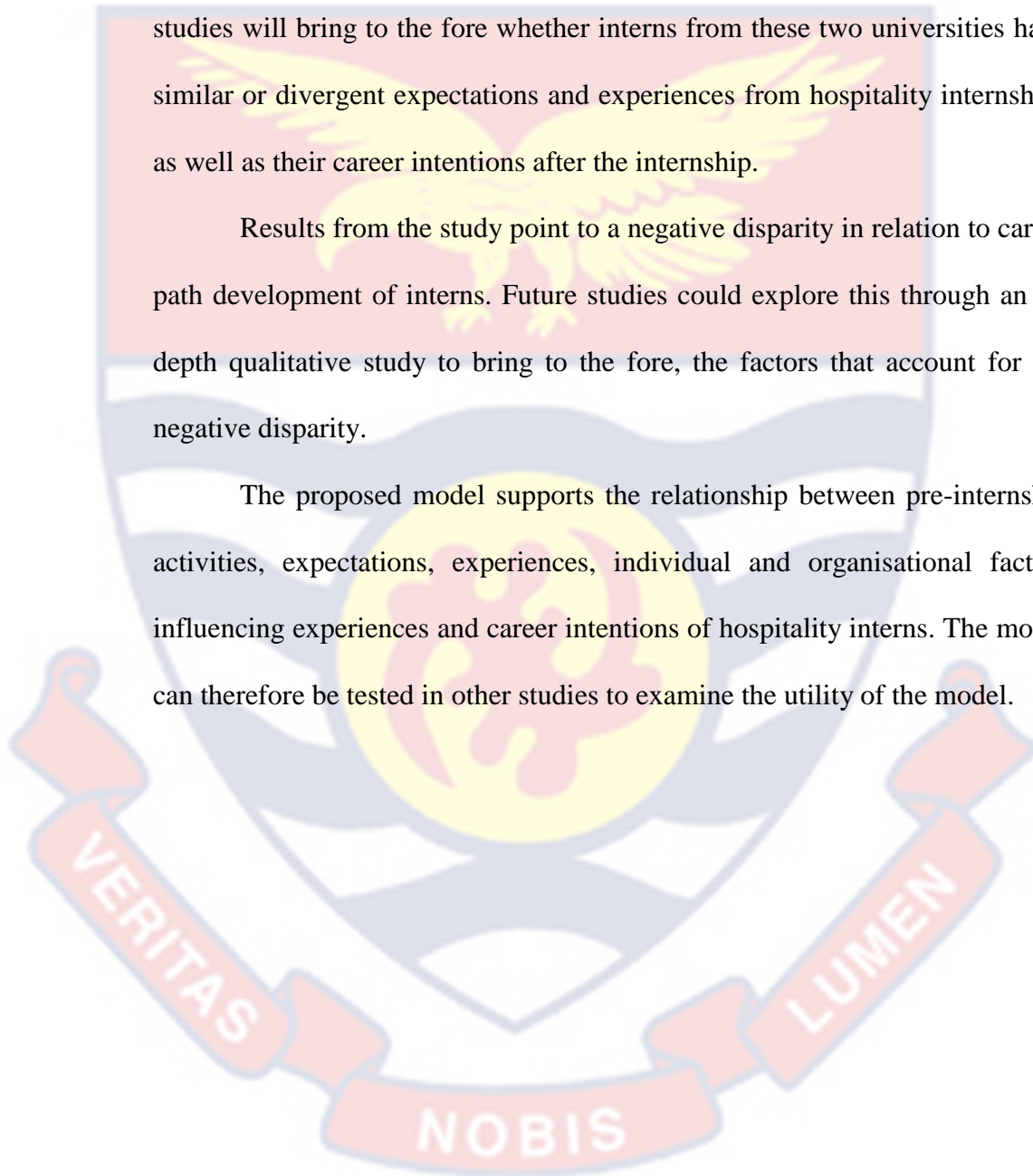
### **Recommendation for Future Research**

The current study explored pre-internship activities, expectations, experiences and career intentions of hospitality interns in technical universities

in Ghana. It is therefore recommended that future studies explore similar constructs in a different study context. Such studies could focus on hospitality interns in the “traditional” universities or a comparative study between hospitality interns in technical and “traditional” universities. Results from such studies will bring to the fore whether interns from these two universities have similar or divergent expectations and experiences from hospitality internships as well as their career intentions after the internship.

Results from the study point to a negative disparity in relation to career path development of interns. Future studies could explore this through an in-depth qualitative study to bring to the fore, the factors that account for the negative disparity.

The proposed model supports the relationship between pre-internship activities, expectations, experiences, individual and organisational factors influencing experiences and career intentions of hospitality interns. The model can therefore be tested in other studies to examine the utility of the model.



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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERNS

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOSPITALITY/TOURISM INTERNS**

This research questionnaire is intended for hospitality/tourism students who have participated in internship. I would be grateful if you could participate in the study by providing responses to the items below as best as you can. However, your participation is voluntary. This is an academic exercise and I can assure you of your anonymity and confidentiality. You may contact me on **0244470660/ 0571601601** or through my email at **swireko-gyebi@st.ucc.edu.gh**.

Thank you.

**Sampson Wireko-Gyebi**

**PhD. Student**

**SECTION A: PRE-INTERNSHIP PREPARATION (PLACEMENT PROCEDURES, ASSESSMENT & ACTIVITIES)**

1. Have you ever participated in any internship as a student in this university?
  1. Yes [  ]
  2. No [  ]
2. Is internship in your school/department compulsory?
  1. Yes [  ]
  2. No [  ]
3. How many times have you participated in internship?
  1. Once [  ]
  2. Twice [  ]
  3. Thrice [  ]
  4. More than thrice [  ]
4. In which of these facilities did you do your internship?
  1. Accommodation [  ]
  2. Food and Beverage [  ]
  3. Transport [  ]
  4. Events [  ]
  5. Travel and tour [  ]
  6. Attraction site [  ]
  7. Other, please specify: .....
5. Indicate how you found an organization to do your internship
  1. The school/department placed me [  ]
  2. I found my own placement [  ]
  3. The institution requested [  ]
  4. Other, please specify: .....

6. Were you satisfied with the method of placement?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
7. How long did you work as an intern?
  1. 1month [ ]
  2. 2months [ ]
  3. 3months [ ]
  4. More than 3months [ ]
8. Did the university or department organise briefing or orientation for you before the internship exercise?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
9. If yes, did you attend the briefing or orientation session?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
  3. Not Applicable [ ]
10. If yes, were assessment procedures discussed during the briefing/orientation?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
  3. Not Applicable [ ]
11. How were you assessed during the internship? (Tick as many as apply)
  1. Oral presentation [ ]
  2. Report writing [ ]
  3. Supervisors from [ ] internship organization
  4. Supervisors from school [ ]
  5. Other (Please Specify): .....
12. Were assessors from your school/department present to assess you during the internship?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
13. Does the curriculum allow for on-campus practical training before participating in internships?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
14. If yes, did you ever have the opportunity to participate in any on-campus practical training before internships?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
  3. Not applicable [ ]
15. Please list at most, three (3) on-campus practical trainings/events/programmes you participated in.
  1. ....
  2. ....
  3. ....
16. Is internship a registered course in your school?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
17. If yes, did you ever attend any lectures/seminars on the registered internship course in the semester?
  1. Yes [ ]
  2. No [ ]
  3. Not applicable [ ]

#### SECTION B: INTERNSHIP EXPECTATIONS

18. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or otherwise with these statements on a scale of 1-5; where SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2) N=Neutral (3); A = Agree (4) and SA = Strongly Agree (5)

	STATEMENT	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5
	Before participating in the internship, my expectations were:					
AS1	Apply theoretical work with practices in the industry					
AS2	Enhance my research and project skills					
AS3	Develop oral and presentation skills					
AS4	Increase my grades					
PS1	Enhance my creativity					
PS2	Execute problem solving activities					
PS3	Develop self confidence					
PS4	Work independently					
PS5	Develop social interaction skill					
PS6	Deal effectively with conflicts					
PS7	Enhance my writing skills					
ES1	Practice team work with my colleagues					
ES2	Acquire industry work culture					
ES3	Effectively prioritize work					
ES4	Appreciate social and ethical responsibility					
ES5	Develop managerial skills					
CP1	Obtain insight into hospitality/tourism operations					
CP2	Aspire for future education and career in the industry					
CP3	Confirm or reinforce my career choice					
CP4	Provide an advantage in securing employment after school					
CP5	Contribute to my career advancement					
CP6	Provide opportunities for increased responsibilities at work					
CP7	Enhance my ability to transit into my employer's organization					
CP8	Contribute to my satisfaction with my career choice					
CP9	Contribute to my overall career development					
SV1	Receive co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor					

SV2	Be assisted by my workplace supervisor to help me realise my internship goals					
CO1	Be paid during the internship					
CO1	Receive allowances for food and transport					
CO3	Receive financial rewards after the internship					

### SECTION C: INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES (POST INTERNSHIP PERCPETIONS)

19. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or otherwise with these statements on a scale of 1-5; where SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2) N=Neutral (3); A = Agree (4) and SA = Strongly Agree (5)

	STATEMENT	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5
AS1	I was able to apply theoretical work with practices in the industry					
AS2	I have enhanced my research and project skills					
AS3	I developed oral and presentation skills					
AS4	My grade point increased					
PS1	I have enhanced my creativity					
PS2	I was able to solve work-related problem					
PS3	I developed self confidence					
PS4	I can work independently					
PS5	I developed social interaction skill					
PS6	I can deal effectively with conflicts					
PS7	I have enhanced my writing skills					
ES1	I can practice team work with my colleagues					
ES2	I acquired industry work culture					
ES3	I can effectively prioritize work					
ES4	I appreciate social and ethical responsibility					
ES5	I developed managerial skills					
CP1	I have insight into hospitality/tourism operations					
CP2	I aspire for future education and career in the industry					
CP3	I have confirmed or reinforce my career choice					



CP4	I can take an advantage in securing employment after school					
CP5	The internship has contributed to my career advancement					
CP6	Provided opportunities for increased responsibilities at work					
CP7	I have enhanced my ability to transit into my employer's organization					
CP8	The internship has contributed to my satisfaction with my career choice					
CP9	The internship has contributed to my overall career development					
SV1	I received co-operation and nurturing from workplace supervisor					
SV2	I got assistance from workplace supervisor to help me realise my internship goals					
CO1	I was paid during the internship					
CO1	I received allowances for food and transport					
CO3	I got financial rewards after the internship					

#### SECTION D: FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES

20. Please indicate extend to which the following influenced your internship experiences on a scale of 1-5; where SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2) N=Neutral (3); A = Agree (4) and SA = Strongly Agree (5)

S/N	STATEMENT	SD 1	A 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5
WE1	The place I did the internship cared about my well-being					
WE2	The organisation I did the internship cared about my opinions					
WE3	The organisation I did the internship paid attention to my learning objectives and needs					
WE4	The organisation where I did the internship forgave an honest mistake on my part					
WE5	Help was available from the organisation when I had a problem					
WE6	The organisation showed much concern for me					
WE7	If given the opportunity, the organisation would have taken advantage of me					
WE8	The organisation cared about my general satisfaction at work					

WE9	The organisation appreciated any extra effort from me during the internship					
WE10	During the internship, my complaints were addressed by the organisation					
CS1	Workers at the internship workplace were friendly to me					
CS2	Workers at the internship workplace were helpful to me					
CS3	Workers at the internship place were competent					
CS4	Workers at the internship place always encouraged me					
CS5	Workers were helpful in getting my job done					
CS6	Workers gave useful advice on job problems					
SV1	My supervisor at the internship workplace paid attention to me during the internship					
SV2	My supervisor at the internship workplace was concerned about my work/learning needs					
SV3	My supervisor was helpful to me					
SV4	My supervisor was a good organiser					
SV5	My supervisor showed concern about my welfare					
SV6	My supervisor cared about my learning goals and aspirations.					
SV7	My supervisor cared about the achievement of my learning objectives					
SV8	My supervisor supported me to acquire additional training or education, if necessary, to further my career					
SV9	My supervisor was noted for over-intervention when I was working					
SV10	My supervisor was very autocratic/authoritative					
SV11	My supervisor showed double standards at the workplace					
SV12	My supervisor showed good attitude towards me					
TC1	The goals and objectives for my job were well defined					
TC2	I was told about the expected outcome of tasks assigned to me					
TC3	My daily tasks were scheduled by my supervisor					

TC4	Clear instructions about how to do my job were provided					
TC5	I knew when I had completed tasks assigned to me					
CO1	Payment during the internship					
C02	Allowances for food and transport					
C03	Financial rewards during the internship					
IF1	I treated my internship like a real job					
IF2	I treated my internship as a learning opportunity					
IF3	I proactively asked questions of my supervisors/co-workers to learn as much as possible					
IF4	I took the initiative to get acquainted with other employees					
IF5	I proactively asked for feedback on my performance during internship					

**SECTION E: INTENTIONS**

21. Please indicate the extent of your agreement or otherwise with these statements on a scale of 1-5; where SD = Strongly Disagree (1); D = Disagree (2) N=Neutral (3); A = Agree (4) and SA = Strongly Agree (5)

	STATEMENT	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5
1.	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in the hospitality/tourism industry					
2.	I will certainly join the hospitality/tourism industry upon graduation					
3.	I will want to join the same company after graduation					

**MODULE F: SOCIO DEMOGRAPHICS**

22. Sex

1. Male [ ]                      2. Female [ ]

23. Age: ..... years

24. Marital status

1. Single [ ]    2. Married [ ]

25. Programme of Study

1. Hospitality Management [ ]  
 2. Tourism Management [ ]  
 3. HCIM [ ]

26. Year of Study

1. Level 100 [ ]                      3. Level 300 [ ]  
 2. Level 200 [ ]                      4. Level 400 [ ]

27. Name of University: .....
28. Where specifically did you do the internship? .....
29. Did the facility organise orientation for you before you began the internship?  
1. Yes [ ]                      2. No [ ]
30. Did you have any work experience before participating in the internship?  
1. Yes [ ]                      2. No [ ]





**APPENDIX 2: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LIAISON  
OFFICERS**

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

Dear Sir/Madam,

It will be greatly appreciated if you could offer your time to participate in a research on the topic “**Expectations, experiences and career intentions of hospitality and tourism interns in Technical Universities in Ghana**”. This study is being undertaken by a PhD candidate in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a PhD degree in Hospitality Management (Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Cape Coast, Ghana). The findings from this study would be used solely for academic purposes. Your anonymity and confidentiality is assured. However, you are permitted to withdraw from the interaction at any point in time if you so desire.

Thank You.

Sampson Wireko-Gyebi  
(PhD Candidate)

Name of Interviewer:  
Date of interview:  
Place of Interview:  
Code for Interviewee:  
Organization/Institution:

**Issues for Discussion**

**1. Organisation of internships at the institution**

- Is internship compulsory in this institution?
- How is internship organised in this institution?
- How many times are students supposed to participate in internship?
- How are students placed in institutions for internship?
- What is the duration for internship in this institution?
- Do you have MoUs with any institution(s) for student internship?  
(Request for sample MoUs/List of institutions)

**2. Pre-internship preparations**

- Are students expected to register for internships?
- If yes, do students attend any form of lectures/seminars for the registered internship course?
- Are students graded for participating in internships?

- Do you organise seminars for students before they participate in internship? (How often, what time in the semester)
- Does the curriculum allow students to participate in on-campus practical training? (**elaborate**)
- How are students assessed during internships?
- Are students made aware of the assessment procedures? (How and when are they these made known to the students)
- Does the university/department send faculty members to monitor and assess students during internships? (At what point during the internship?)



**APPENDIX 3: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

Dear Sir/Madam,

It will be greatly appreciated if you could offer your time to participate in a research on the topic “**Expectations, experiences and career intentions of hospitality and tourism interns in Technical Universities in Ghana**”. This study is being undertaken by a PhD candidate in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a PhD degree in Hospitality Management (Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Cape Coast, Ghana). The findings from this study would be used solely for academic purposes. Your anonymity and confidentiality is assured. However, you are permitted to withdraw from the interaction at any point in time if you so desire.

Thank You.

Sampson Wireko-Gyebi  
(PhD Candidate)

Name of Interviewer:

Date of FGD:

Place of FGD:

Code for Interviewees:

Organization/Institution:

**Issues for Discussion**

**1. Organisation of internships at the institution**

- Is internship compulsory in this institution?
- How is internship organised in this institution?
- How many times are you supposed to participate in internship?
- How did you find an institution for your internship?
- What is the duration for internship in this institution?
- How long did you do the internship?

**2. Pre-internship preparations**

- Are you expected to register for internships?
- If yes, do you attend any form of lectures/seminars for the registered internship course?
- Are you graded for participating in internships?
- Are seminars organised for students before participating in internship? (How often, what time in the semester)
- Does the curriculum allow students to participate in on-campus practical training? (**Please elaborate**). Please mention some of the on-campus practical training you have participated in.
- How are students assessed during internships?

- Are you made aware of the assessment procedures? (How and when are they these made known to the students)
- Do faculty members from the university visit you during internships?
- What exactly do they do when they visit during the internship?

### 3. Internship expectations

- Before you participated in the internships, what were your expectations?
- What influenced these expectations?
- Were these expectations met after the internships? (**Please elaborate**)
- If they were not met, what were the possible causes? (Probe: Duration, task assigned, etc)
- In your opinion, how different were your expectations from that of the institution you interned or your supervisor? (Did the variations in expectations, if any, had any influence on you)
- Did you at any point during your internship vary/change your expectations? (At what point – beginning, middle or end of the period)

### 4. Internship experiences

- Please describe your experiences after the internships
- What skills in your opinion did you learn from the internship?
- In what ways were the internship beneficial to you?
- Were your initial expectations confirmed with the actual internship experiences? How?
- Would you say your actual internship experiences were positive or negative? Why?
- What factors did you consider to have influence your internship experience? (Positive and negative experiences)

### 5. Career intentions

- Have your internship experiences had any influence on your career intentions? Please elaborate
- Given the opportunity, would you want to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism industry?
- Would you accept a job offer from the place of internship after graduation? Why?



**APPENDIX 4: ETHICAL CLEARANCE**

## UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309  
E-MAIL: [irb@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:irb@ucc.edu.gh)  
OUR REF: UCC/IRB/A/2016/1061  
YOUR REF:  
OMB NO: 0990-0279  
IORG #: IORG0009096

20<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021

Mr. Sampson Wireko-Gyebi  
Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management  
University of Cape Coast

Dear Mr. Wireko-Gyebi,

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/CHLS/2021/27)**

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted Provisional Approval for the implementation of your research titled **Expectations, Experiences and Career Intentions of Hospitality and Tourism Interns in Ghana**. This approval is valid from 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021 to 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022. You may apply for a renewal subject to submission of all the required documents that will be prescribed by the UCCIRB.

Please note that any modification to the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation. You are required to submit periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Samuel Asiedu Owusu'.

Samuel Asiedu Owusu, PhD  
UCCIRB Administrator

