

Designing an Effective Training and Internship Model in the University Curriculum from the Perspective of Faculty Members

Mehrangiz Ali Nejad¹, Badrosaadaat Daneshmand² and Hamideh Pakmehr³

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Abstract

Considering the importance and role of training and internship courses in empowering students and graduates, the present study was conducted with the aim of designing an effective training and internship model in the curriculum. The research method was qualitative and the participants included faculty members of University of Tehran, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Isfahan University of Technology, Shahid Sadoughi University of Yazd, Mazandaran University, Valiasr University of Rafsanjan, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Sirjan University of Technology and Shiraz University, who have presented at least one internship course. Validity and reliability of the interview questions were confirmed by experts. After analyzing 30 interviews, the researchers could have limited themselves to the same number of interviews according to the principle of theoretical saturation, but since the variety of academic fields and universities was considerable, the interviews continued up to 80 people on a quota basis. By analyzing the interviews, the current status of the implementation of these courses showed that, according to faculty members, internships are not implemented effectively and 8 components of time, personal problems, organizational structure and organization, lack of allocation of necessary and sufficient resources, lack of proper understanding of the program by individuals, lack of commitment of individuals and organizations, lack of proper evaluation and monitoring system and lack of inter-organizational and interpersonal communication system were as the main obstacles to effective implementation of these courses. Considering that the main problem in the lack of effective implementation of internship courses is the lack of proper and sufficient coordination and communication between the circles of organizations (Ministries, university and work environments) and the circles of individuals

1. Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Kerman, Iran. *Corresponding author: malinejad@uk.ac.ir*

2. Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Kerman, Iran.

3. Assistant Professor of Department of Educational Science, Imam Reza International University, Mashhad, Iran.

(Faculty members, supervisor of internship center and student) with each other, a model was designed based on which it is appropriate to form minimum interactions between faculty member and student in training and internship courses, and the main emphasis should be on creating communication circles.

Keywords: Model design, training, internship, curriculum, higher education.

Introduction

With the rise of globalization, numerous complex and pervasive challenges have emerged in areas such as competition, market evolution, and rapid technological advancements. These challenges demand innovative approaches to Human Resource Management. In this context, a skill-oriented economy has been discussed as a key strategy to address the issue of Human Capital (Khosravipour & Dorrani, 2016). Developing Human Capital with a focus on skill-oriented learning not only helps resolve unemployment and employment concerns but also contributes to the overall economic development and progress of the country (Hallaj -Yousefi & Gharib-Khajeh, 2015). One effective approach towards skill development and job creation is to provide graduates with exposure to the business market during their academic journey. Therefore, apprenticeship and internship training are deemed crucial components of university/college education, having a significant impact on students' accomplishments. These practices should be integrated into every major discipline (Ponce, Davis, Cornish, 2021; Aghaei et al., 2021; Lamb, Shaw, Hilty, Wong, Rosenkranz, 2021; Veselova, Khimich, Terentieva, 2021; den Boer, Klimstra, Denissen, 2021; Mele, Español, Carvalho, Marsico, 2021; Fricas, 2020; Ramakrishnan, Sparks, Farouk, 2020).

Given the crucial role and significance of internship and apprenticeship training in empowering students and graduates, the present research aims to design an effective curriculum model for these programs.

Method

The research method used in this study was qualitative, and the participants included faculty members from several universities: Tehran University, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Technology University of Isfahan, Shahid Sadoughi University of Yazd, University of Mazandaran, Vali-e-Asr University of Rafsanjan, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Technology University of Sirjan, and University of Shiraz. These universities were chosen because they offered internship and apprenticeship courses at least once. To evaluate the current situation and identify obstacles and approaches

towards the effective implementation of internship and apprenticeship training, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interview form consisted of 5 open-ended questions. To determine the validity of the tools, experts evaluated the questions and rated their validity at a desirable level. The reliability of the tools was confirmed through review techniques by fellow experts and the researcher's self-reverification. Initially, 30 interviews were analyzed, which was deemed sufficient based on the theoretical saturation principle. However, due to the wide variation in majors, the researchers increased the number of interviews to 80 to ensure adequate representation.

Discoveries

With analysis of the interviews, current situation of these trainings implementation showed, in faculty members opinion, internship and apprenticeship are not implemented effectively, and 8 components of time, individual issues, organizational structures and formations, misallocation of necessary and adequate resources, lack of proper understanding of the program by individuals, nonalignment of individuals and organizations, lack of proper evaluation and supervising system and lack of interorganizational and interpersonal communications, are the main obstacles in effective implementation of these trainings.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion and the results of the data found in this research, it was concluded that the main problem in the lack of effective implementation of internship and apprenticeship training is disharmony, disaffiliation, and inadequate connection between the organizations' circles (ministries, educational centers, and workplaces) with each other and with the individual circles (course professors, heads of internship centers, and students) with one another. The surveys revealed that the least interaction between students and professors occurs during internship and apprenticeship trainings. In many cases, the course's professor has had no communication, not even a phone call, with the Internship or Apprenticeship center's head. Alternatively, the only connection between the university and the Internship or Apprenticeship center has been a written letter from the university. Thus, in this program, the main emphasis is on creating communication links, as without these links, no actions can be taken towards modifying the details. When the links purposefully connect at different levels, several positive outcomes are achieved: firstly, acknowledgment of parties' aptnesses and abilities is obtained; secondly, trust and acceptance of these aptnesses and abilities are shaped through awareness; and eventually, due to this awareness, trust, and

acceptance, a background is provided for both parties to make the fullest use of these aptnesses and abilities, leading to the effective implementation of internship training.

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