

Vocational Internships and Academic Integrity

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INTRODUCTION

- Experience shows that students change attitude towards the issue of academic integrity after their internship experience is over.
- This has become particularly evident when the internship is assessed through written assignments.

OBJECTIVES

The effort of this poster presentation is to:

- Explore whether there is a connection between academic integrity, i.e. explicit university rules, with integrity of internships, as this becomes evident in the tasks assigned and in the working conditions prevailing in the experiential learning placement;
- Explore whether students appreciate the role and importance of academic integrity after having been exposed to real-life working conditions in the industry in which they would like to work in the future.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology includes a literature review on the topic of internship integrity, as well as student attitude towards integrity. For reasons of efficiency the focus of this poster presentation is on the tourism and hospitality industry.

CONTRIBUTION

This poster aims to contribute the following:

- To give insight to faculty as to how to further reinforce the concept of academic integrity to students;
- To help students assess the importance of academic and experiential learning integrity.

LITERATURE REVIEW QUANTIFIED

15 search keywords used, of which
9 produced results
6 did not yield results

In total 109 articles were reviewed

Search terms with no results:

- integrity in internship; academic dignity; internship dignity; integrity after internship; placement integrity; return from internship;

LITERATURE REVIEW

Search keywords and results retrieved

- Academic integrity: The keyword produced 8 results. The most pertinent discuss aspects of the academic integrity within the tourism and hospitality discipline in a definitional and abstract manner (Morris, 2009; Ottenbacher, Harrington, Parsa, 2009; Hein, Grand, 2011).
- Academic integrity after internship: The keyword produced 12 results. The most pertinent discuss the role of internship in helping students grow in terms of individual learning and self-efficacy (Chang, Chu, 2009; Cullen, 2010a, 2010b, Tse, 2010).
- Academic integrity (and) dignity: The term was researched in an effort to explore whether the topic is approached in a dual manner. Rendtorf (2009) includes both terms in his discussion; however, he mainly focuses on the healthcare sector.
- Experiential learning academic integrity: This keyword produced 36 results; however none was clearly focused on internship, let alone integrity and internship, mainly because the experiential learning itself is multi-facet and involves a large variety of applications.

- Internship integrity: The search yielded one result. Somerick, 2001, focuses on the responsibilities of the students towards their own learning process during the internship
- Tourism internship academic integrity: The keyword produced 10 results. The most pertinent to the research objectives were Yiu and Law, 2012, Stansbie, Nash, Jack, 2013, Lee, 2014 discussing the importance of internship design and the need for all stakeholders being involved. Other articles were focusing on the internships being an opportunity for students to explore their career potential in the tourism and hospitality industry (Siu, Cheung, Law, 2012; Chen, Song, Wu, Ma, 2013; Canziani, 2014; Wang, Cai, Yang, Qu, 2015).
- The keyword hospitality internship academic integrity yielded exactly the same results with the tourism one.

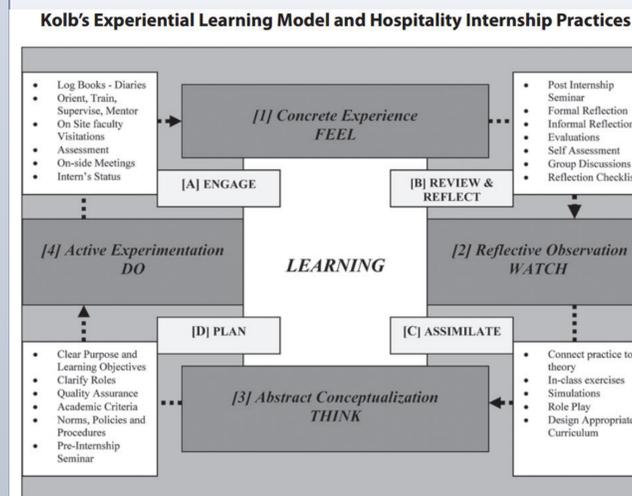
Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education

In an effort to further focus the research and yield more pertinent results, a keyword search was made only in the Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education; the choice of the specific Journal was made on the basis of comprehensiveness and focus to the discipline.

- Internship: The keyword yielded 34 results revolving around internship as a tool for education, with Zopiatis & Theocharous (2013) giving the most comprehensive view of the topic; none was specifically tackling the theme of integrity.
- Internship integrity: The keyword yielded 6 results, however, none was discussing the relationship of academic integrity and internship upon return of the students on campus.

DISCUSSION

- Using as a starting point Kolb's graph as presented in Zopiatis and Constanti (2012), this poster is trying to look into how the concept of integrity is understood by the students after the completion of the internship.



- The literature review shows that the internship positively influences the students' practical skills and contributes to their feeling of self-efficacy.
- Students tend to become more responsible and diligent through internships.
- However, there seems to be no direct connection of the importance of academic integrity being reinforced upon returning from the internship.
- An implicit consequence of the internship is that the students, after being exposed to the real work conditions prevailing in the tourism and hospitality industry tend to appreciate the importance of academic integrity more than they did prior to embarking on the internship.

CONCLUSIONS

- Experiential learning allows students to connect academic theories taught in classroom with business practice in the area of their preferred future career field.
- At the same time, through experiential learning students have the opportunity to work in real-life conditions, whereby the rules of integrity usually apply implicitly.

On the other hand

- The careful design of the internship placement;
 - The preparatory process of the students prior to placement;
 - The work ethic and the working environment during the placement;
- further reinforce the students' attitude towards taking responsibility of their own learning and thus implicitly reinforce the role and importance of integrity

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