

A Study on Emotional Control during Internship Training for Hospitality Students

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Abstract: The present study titled “A Study on Emotional Control during Internship/Training for Hospitality Students” aims to examine the level of emotional control among hospitality students and analyze the impact of internship experiences on their emotional development. The study also explores workplace challenges faced by students and the role of emotional intelligence in enhancing their professional performance.

A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. The sample consisted of hospitality students undergoing or having completed their internship training. The data was analyzed using graphical representation and descriptive statistics.

The findings reveal that a majority of students experience emotional challenges, stress, and pressure during their internship. However, the internship also plays a significant role in developing self-awareness, emotional regulation, and confidence in handling guests. Students reported improvement in their ability to manage stress, control emotions, and maintain professionalism in real-world situations.

The study concludes that emotional intelligence is a crucial competency in the hospitality industry. While internships present challenges, they serve as an effective platform for personal and professional growth. The research suggests the need for structured emotional intelligence training, supportive supervision, and better coordination between educational institutions and industry to enhance the overall internship experience.

Keywords: Emotional Control, Internship, self-awareness, Workplace Challenges

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is widely recognized as one of the most dynamic, customer-centric, and emotionally demanding sectors. It requires professionals to consistently deliver high-quality service while managing diverse guest expectations, long working hours, and high-pressure environments. For students pursuing hospitality education, internships or industrial training serve as a crucial bridge between academic learning and real-world professional practice. These training periods expose students to the realities of the workplace, where technical skills alone are insufficient; emotional control becomes equally, if not more, important. In this context, the study titled “A Study on Emotional Control during Internship/Training for Hospitality Students” aims to explore how students perceive, manage,

and develop emotional control during their training experiences.

1. Self-Awareness in Emotional Control

A fundamental component of emotional control is self-awareness, which refers to an individual's ability to recognize and understand their own emotions. For hospitality students, self-awareness plays a vital role during internships, as they are frequently exposed to unfamiliar and demanding situations. The ability to identify when one is feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or anxious is the first step toward effective emotional regulation.

Students who are self-aware can better understand how their emotions influence their behavior and performance at work. For example, recognizing that stress can lead to irritability or reduced efficiency allows students to take corrective measures such as pausing, prioritizing tasks, or seeking support. Self-awareness also helps students reflect on their experiences, learn from mistakes, and improve their responses in future situations.

In the hospitality context, where interactions with guests are continuous and often unpredictable, being emotionally self-aware enables students to maintain composure and deliver consistent service. It also contributes to personal growth by encouraging mindfulness and emotional intelligence, which are essential traits for long-term success in the industry.

2. Emotional Regulation in Professional Settings

Closely linked to self-awareness is **emotional regulation**, which involves managing and controlling one's emotional responses, especially in challenging situations. Hospitality students are often required to remain calm and composed, even when dealing with difficult guests, heavy workloads, or high-pressure service periods.

The ability to control emotions during such situations is a key indicator of professionalism. For instance, when faced with a dissatisfied guest, students must suppress negative reactions and respond politely and efficiently. Similarly, during busy shifts, managing frustration and avoiding impulsive behavior are critical to maintaining service quality and teamwork.

Emotional regulation also includes maintaining professionalism even when feeling upset, tired, or stressed. This aspect is particularly important in hospitality, where employees are expected to uphold a positive demeanor at all times. Students who develop strong emotional regulation skills are better equipped to handle workplace challenges and build positive relationships with

guests and colleagues.

3. Workplace Challenges and Emotional Responses

Internships in the hospitality industry present a range of **workplace challenges** that can significantly impact students' emotional well-being. These challenges include long working hours, physically demanding tasks, high service expectations, and the need to adapt quickly to organizational standards and culture.

As a result, many students experience emotional strain during their training. Feelings of stress, frustration, and pressure are common, particularly during peak service hours or when dealing with complex guest demands. In some cases, students may even feel like quitting due to the intensity of emotional pressure.

Understanding these emotional responses is crucial, as they directly affect students' performance and learning outcomes. By examining how students react to workplace challenges, this study seeks to identify patterns of emotional behavior and the factors that influence them. This insight can help educators and industry professionals design strategies to better prepare students for the realities of the workplace.

4. Role of Supervisor and Organizational Support

The presence of **emotional support in the workplace** plays a significant role in shaping students' internship experiences. Support from supervisors and colleagues can greatly influence how students cope with stress and manage their emotions.

When students feel supported by their supervisors, they are more likely to seek guidance, share their concerns, and learn from their experiences. A positive and open work environment encourages communication and helps students build confidence. On the other hand, a lack of support can lead to increased stress, feelings of isolation, and reduced motivation.

Creating a supportive environment involves providing constructive feedback, recognizing students' efforts, and offering mentorship. Such practices not only enhance emotional well-being but also contribute to skill development and professional growth. Therefore, the role of organizational culture and leadership is critical in fostering emotional resilience among hospitality students.

5. Learning and Development through Internship Experience

Despite the challenges, internships offer valuable opportunities for **learning and development**, particularly in terms of emotional control. Exposure to real-life situations enables students to develop practical skills that cannot be fully acquired in a classroom setting.

Through repeated interactions and experiences, students learn to handle stress more effectively, adapt to different scenarios, and improve their emotional responses. Many students report that their internships help them become more confident in dealing with guests and managing workplace pressures.

Additionally, internships contribute to the development of problem-solving abilities, communication skills, and professional behavior. Emotional control becomes a learned skill that improves over time, as students gain experience and reflect on their actions. This growth is essential for building a strong foundation for future careers in the hospitality industry.

6. Importance of Emotional Control in the Hospitality Industry

The study also emphasizes the broader **importance of emotional control** as a core competency in the hospitality sector. Since the industry relies heavily on human interaction and service quality, employees' emotional behavior directly impacts guest satisfaction and organizational success.

Students who understand the importance of emotional control are more likely to prioritize its development. This awareness not only enhances their performance during internships but also prepares them for long-term career challenges. Emotional intelligence, including self-awareness and emotional regulation, is increasingly recognized as a critical skill in hospitality management.

Objective–

1. To examine the level of **self-awareness and emotional regulation** among hospitality students during internships.
2. To identify the **workplace challenges** faced by students during internship/training.
3. To analyze the role of **internship experience in developing emotional control**.

4. To evaluate the importance of **emotional intelligence in hospitality careers**.

Literature Review–

According to A Study on Student's Perception about Internship Program and Its Impact on Their Personality, With Reference to Hotel Management Students of Pune Region by Sarika Joshi*, Honey Tyagi (2019), internships are very important in hospitality education as they help students connect classroom learning with real work experience. These internships improve students' skills, confidence, responsibility, and overall personality. Research by Wang, Chiang, and Lee (2014) shows that students may feel stress and anxiety during internships due to work pressure, but these challenges help them become emotionally strong and committed to their careers. Similarly, Chen and Chen (2011) found that internship experiences can affect students' emotions positively or negatively depending on the work environment. Other studies also highlight that internships help students develop practical skills and emotional control, which is important for handling workplace situations. However, issues like long working hours and stress, as noted by Mahadik and Chavan (2016), show the need for better emotional management. Overall, internships play a key role in developing both professional skills and emotional stability among hospitality students.

According to research paper Internship Work-related Stress: A Comparative Study between Hospitality and Marketing Students by Mensah et al. (2020), Internships are an important part of higher education, especially in hospitality and marketing, as they help students develop practical skills and improve their chances of employment. However, research shows that internships can also create significant work-related stress, which may affect students' learning experience and career choices. According to Mensah et al. (2020), common sources of stress during internships include low or no pay, repetitive work, long working hours, transportation problems, and unclear expectations from supervisors. These stress factors are generally higher among hospitality students due to the demanding nature of the industry, including heavy workloads, irregular shifts, and constant interaction with customers. The literature also explains that stressors (external pressures) such as workload, role confusion, and poor working conditions lead to stress (individual reaction). High stress levels can reduce internship satisfaction, lower motivation, and negatively impact learning outcomes. Additionally, students who experience more stress are more likely to think about leaving their internship or not entering the industry in the future. Therefore, while internships offer valuable experience,

unmanaged stress can harm students' well-being and career commitment, highlighting the need for better planning and support during internship programs.

According to research paper *The Role of Emotional Expression and Mentoring in Internship Learning* by Liu, Xu, and Weitz (2011), the study explains that interns are not just passive learners but play an active role in shaping their internship experience. Unlike earlier studies that focused mainly on workplace environment, this research highlights personal factors like emotions and social behavior. It identifies two types of emotional expression: emotional masking (hiding true feelings) and emotional sharing (openly expressing feelings). The study finds that sharing emotions helps interns learn better and build strong mentoring relationships, while hiding emotions can reduce learning. It also shows that social activities like networking and informal interactions improve mentoring. Furthermore, learning and mentoring act as important links between intern behavior and outcomes such as job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and career attitude. Learning strongly improves job satisfaction, which then influences commitment and career outlook, while mentoring mainly supports commitment and career attitude but has less effect on satisfaction. Overall, the study shows that interns can improve their experience by actively engaging, expressing emotions, and building relationships.

According to research paper *Studying The Effect Of Hospitality Interns' Personality Traits And Their Emotional Labor Over Organization Citizenship Behavior* by Li, Kung, and Wang (2012) the study examines how personality traits and emotional labor influence organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among hospitality interns. It highlights that internships are important in the hospitality industry and understanding interns' personal characteristics can help improve their performance. The study explains that interns with positive personality traits are more likely to show good behavior at work, while emotional labor, which means managing emotions in a professional way, also plays an important role in influencing their extra efforts beyond assigned duties. Using a questionnaire method, the research finds that both personality traits and emotional control have a strong positive effect on interns' behavior. It also shows that these factors can help improve performance and reduce the need for extensive training. Overall, the study connects psychological factors with workplace behavior and provides useful insights for better internship management and organizational success.

According to research paper *Challenges Encountered By Hospitality Management Students During Internship* by Genalyn D.P, Myla Jane Y. Jerez, Genelyn R. Baluyos, the study examines

the challenges faced by hospitality management students during their internships. It finds that many students experience emotional difficulties such as homesickness and separation anxiety when they stay away from their families, which affects their well-being. The research also highlights physical challenges like tiredness and heavy workload, especially in departments such as housekeeping where tasks are demanding and time-bound. In addition, students often feel stressed, lack confidence, and feel burdened due to high expectations and limited guidance from supervisors. Safety concerns and unfamiliar work environments further increase their stress levels. Overall, the study shows that although internships are important for learning and skill development, students face several emotional, physical, and social challenges, and therefore better support, proper training, and mentoring are needed to improve their internship experience.

Research Methodology–

- **Research Design-**

The study adopts a descriptive and quantitative research design. This approach was selected to identify patterns, frequencies, and trends in the emotional experiences of hospitality students during their internship training.

- **Target Population and Sampling-**

Population: The target population consists of students enrolled in hospitality management programs who have undergone or are currently undergoing internship training.

Sample Size: A total of 43 respondents participated in the study.

Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling (a non-probability sampling method) was utilized to reach students across different years of study and departments (F&B, Kitchen, Housekeeping, etc.).

- **Data Collection Instrument-**

The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire hosted on Google Forms. The instrument was divided into three segments:

Demographic Profile: Gender, Age, Year of Study, and Department.

Self-Awareness & Regulation: 7 items measured on a 5-point Likert Scale. Workplace Challenges & Development: 8 items measured on a 5-point Likert Scale.

- **Limitations of the Study**

While the study provides valuable insights, it is subject to certain limitations:

1. **Limited Sample Size:** The study was conducted on a relatively small group of respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.
2. **Geographical Limitation:** The data was collected from students within a specific region/institution, which may not represent the experiences of students from other locations.
3. **Uneven Distribution of Respondents:** A higher number of first-year students participated, which may affect the depth of insights related to internship experiences.
4. **Self-reported Data:** The responses are based on students' perceptions and may be subject to bias or inaccuracies.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

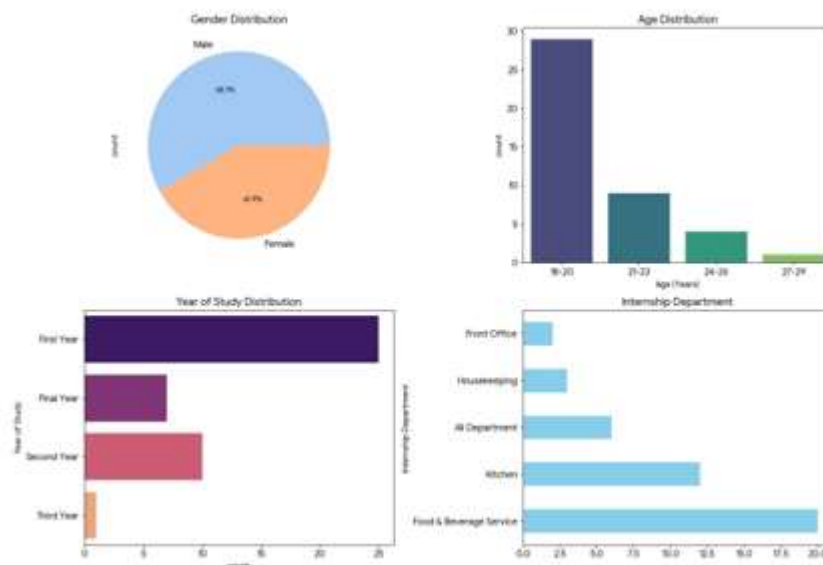


Chart-1: Gender, Age, Year of Study, Internship Department

The given charts present a descriptive profile of the respondents based on gender, age, year of study, and internship department. The gender distribution shows that a majority of the

respondents are male (58.1%), while females constitute 41.9%, indicating a slightly higher male participation in the study. In terms of age, most respondents fall within the 18–20 years category, followed by 21–23 years, with very few participants in the higher age groups (24–26 and 27–29). This suggests that the sample largely consists of younger students who are at an early stage of their academic and professional development.

Regarding the year of study, first-year students form the largest group, followed by second-year students, while final-year and third-year students are comparatively fewer. This indicates that

internships are more commonly undertaken or reported among junior students in this dataset. In terms of internship department, the majority of students are placed in Food & Beverage Service, followed by the Kitchen department, while fewer students are assigned to All Departments, Housekeeping, and Front Office. This distribution reflects a higher concentration of interns in operational and service-oriented departments.

Overall, the data indicates that the typical respondent is a young, early-year student, predominantly male, and primarily engaged in core hospitality departments such as Food & Beverage Service and Kitchen. This trend may influence the type of challenges experienced, as younger and less experienced students in physically demanding departments are more likely to face higher levels of stress, workload, and adjustment difficulties during their internship.

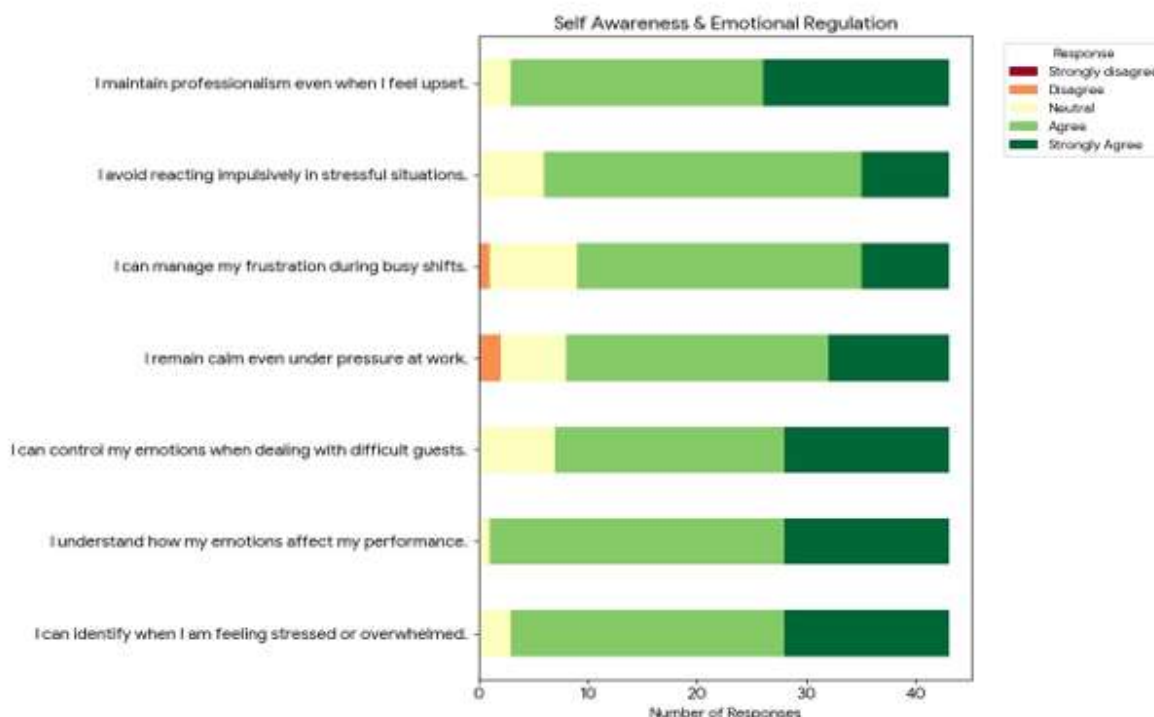


Chart-2: Self Awareness & Emotional Regulation

The chart presents respondents' perceptions of self-awareness and emotional regulation during their internship, measured across seven statements. Overall, the results indicate a strong positive inclination toward emotional control and awareness among students, with the majority selecting "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" for all items.

For the statement "I can identify when I am feeling stressed or overwhelmed," a large proportion of respondents reported agreement, with approximately 30 respondents (around 67%) selecting "Agree" and about 14 respondents (31%) selecting "Strongly Agree," while only a negligible number remained neutral. Similarly, for "I understand how my emotions affect my performance," nearly 29 respondents (64%) agreed and 15 respondents (33%) strongly agreed, indicating a high level of emotional awareness.

In terms of emotional control, for "I can control my emotions when dealing with difficult guests," around 28 respondents (62%) agreed and 14 respondents (31%) strongly agreed, while a small proportion (approximately 7%) remained neutral. For "I remain calm even under pressure at work," about 25 respondents (56%) agreed and 15 respondents (33%) strongly agreed, though a few respondents (around 2–3 individuals, ~5%) expressed disagreement, indicating some difficulty in handling pressure.

Regarding stress management, “I can manage my frustration during busy shifts” shows that nearly 27 respondents (60%) agreed and 14 respondents (31%) strongly agreed, while a small percentage (approximately 5–7%) reported neutrality or disagreement. Similarly, “I avoid reacting impulsively in stressful situations” had about 30 respondents (67%) agreeing and 9 respondents (20%) strongly agreeing, with around 6 respondents (13%) remaining neutral.

For professionalism, “I maintain professionalism even when I feel upset,” about 26 respondents (58%) agreed and 15 respondents (33%) strongly agreed, with approximately 4 respondents (9%) indicating neutrality.

Interpretation:

The findings suggest that hospitality management students generally possess a high level of self-awareness and emotional regulation skills during their internships. The dominance of “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” responses across all variables indicates that most students are capable of recognizing and managing their emotions effectively, even in stressful and demanding work environments. However, the presence of a small proportion of neutral and disagreeing responses—particularly in areas related to handling pressure and managing frustration—highlights that not all students are equally skilled in emotional regulation. This suggests a need for targeted training programs, such as stress management workshops and emotional intelligence development sessions, to further strengthen these competencies. Overall, the results reflect a positive trend but also emphasize the importance of continuous support to enhance students’ emotional resilience in professional settings.

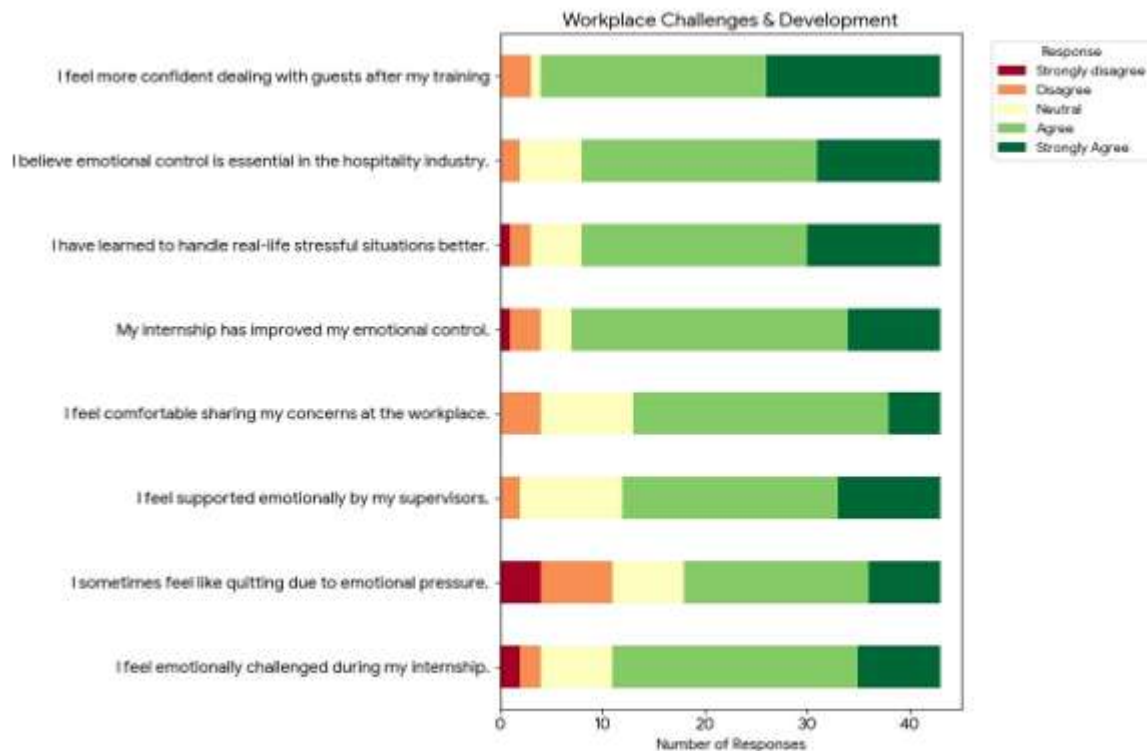


Chart 3: Workplace challenges & Development)

The chart illustrates respondents' perceptions of workplace challenges and personal development during their internship, based on multiple statements. Overall, the responses are largely positive, with a majority selecting "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," indicating that internships contribute significantly to skill development, although some emotional challenges persist.

For the statement "I feel more confident dealing with guests after my training," approximately 25 respondents (around 56%) agreed and 17 respondents (38%) strongly agreed, while a very small number (about 2–3 respondents, ~5%) expressed disagreement. This suggests that training plays a vital role in building confidence among students. Similarly, for "I believe emotional control is essential in the hospitality industry," about 27 respondents (60%) agreed and 15 respondents (33%) strongly agreed, with a small proportion (around 3 respondents, ~7%) remaining neutral.

In terms of handling real-life situations, "I have learned to handle real-life stressful situations better," shows that nearly 26 respondents (58%) agreed and 15 respondents (33%) strongly agreed, while a few respondents (approximately 2–3 individuals, ~5–7%) reported

disagreement or neutrality. Like wise, “My internship has improved my emotional control,” indicates that about

30 respondents (67%) agreed and 10 respondents (22%) strongly agreed, with minimal disagreement (around 2–3 respondents, ~5%).

Regarding workplace support, “I feel supported emotionally by my supervisors,” had around 25 respondents (56%) agreeing and 12 respondents (27%) strongly agreeing, while about 8 respondents (17%) remained neutral, indicating moderate levels of perceived support. For “I feel comfortable sharing my concerns at the workplace,” approximately 30 respondents (67%) agreed, but only around 5 respondents (11%) strongly agreed, while a notable proportion (about 10 respondents, ~22%) reported neutrality or slight discomfort, suggesting some hesitation in open communication.

On the otherhand, responses to negative statements reveal the presence of emotional challenges. For “I sometimes feel like quitting due to emotional pressure,” about 18 respondents (40%) agreed and 8 respondents (18%) strongly agreed, while around 12 respondents (27%) were neutral and approximately 7 respondents (15%) disagreed. Similarly, “I feel emotionally challenged during my internship,” shows that nearly 28 respondents (62%) agreed and 10 respondents (22%) strongly agreed, with only a small percentage (around 3–4 respondents, ~8%) disagreeing.

Interpretation:

The findings indicate that internships significantly contribute to students’ professional growth, confidence, and emotional control, as reflected by the high levels of agreement in positive statements. Students recognize the importance of emotional regulation and report improved ability to handle real-life work situations. However, the results also highlight notable emotional challenges, including stress, pressure, and occasional thoughts of quitting. Additionally, while supervisor support is perceived positively, there is some reluctance among students to openly share concerns, suggesting gaps in communication and mentoring. Therefore, although internships are effective in developing competencies, there is a clear need for stronger emotional support systems, better supervision, and structured mentoring programs to help students cope with workplace stress and enhance their overall internship experience.

Future Scope of Research

This study opens several avenues for further research:

1. Future research could include more students from different colleges and cities to get a more accurate picture of the entire hospitality industry.
2. Studies could compare specific departments (like Front Office vs. Kitchen) to see which areas create the most emotional stress for students.
3. Researchers could follow students over several months to see how their emotional control changes before, during, and after their internship ends.

CONCLUSION

The present study titled “A Study on Emotional Control during Internship/Training for Hospitality Students” aimed to examine the level of emotional control, workplace challenges, and the impact of internship experiences on students’ emotional development.

The findings of the study clearly indicate that internships in the hospitality industry are both **challenging and transformative**. A majority of students reported experiencing emotional stress, pressure, and situations that tested their patience and resilience. Many students even expressed moments of frustration and thoughts of quitting, highlighting the demanding nature of the industry.

However, despite these challenges, the internship experience significantly contributed to the **development of emotional intelligence** among students. Most respondents demonstrated:

- Strong **self-awareness**, including the ability to identify stress and understand emotional impact
- Effective **emotional regulation**, such as controlling emotions, avoiding impulsive reactions, and maintaining professionalism
- Improved **confidence and communication skills**, especially in handling guest interactions

The study also highlighted the importance of supervisor support and a positive work environment, which played a crucial role in shaping students’ experiences. Students who

received guidance and support were better able to cope with stress and perform effectively.

Furthermore, the research confirms that emotional control is an essential competency in the hospitality industry. Students recognize its importance and actively develop these skills during their internship.

In conclusion, internships serve as a critical learning platform that not only enhances technical knowledge but also fosters emotional maturity, resilience, and professional behavior. The study emphasizes the need for structured training, institutional support, and industry collaboration to further strengthen students' emotional preparedness.

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