

# Interns' Feedback on Industry Partners: Inputs for an Enhanced Internship Program

Asia Pacific Journal of  
Education, Arts and Sciences  
Vol. 3 No.2, 74-81  
April 2016  
P-ISSN 2362-8022  
E-ISSN 2362-8030  
www.apjeas.apjmr.com

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*Date Received: March 3, 2016; Date Revised: April 20, 2016*

**Abstract** - *On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs expose the students to work in their field and prepare them once they get out of the university or college. It ensures the possibility of good performer graduate; thus, a quantitative study conducted among (76) senior CEAS students with practicum subjects in Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas enrolled during the 2nd semester of SY 2015-2016 revealed that the industry partners of CEAS support the interns to a great extent in terms of work ethics, collaboration and teamwork, regard for people, decision making and empowerment; however, lowest in communication. Interns consider some problems in the workplace like trainer not having enough time to teach and supervise, lacking good working relationship and having instructions that are not clearly defined. Moreover, the interns' program affects his feedback on his industry partner's performance. The industry profile variables such as industry name, type of business, number of employees and length of operation are related with the problems encountered by the interns during their internship. Therefore, the Internship Office may review the current Memorandum of Agreement / Understanding between CEAS interns specifically by program and their partners to address the problem regarding extent of supervision and training.*

**Keywords** –*industry partnership, linkage, on-the-job training, training*

## INTRODUCTION

The curriculum of various programs in the College of Education, Arts and Sciences in Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas (LPU-B) highlights the internship program with a minimum of 300 to 600 hours spent in different sites; more specifically, for AB Communication; TV, Print and Radio; for Psychology; clinical, industrial, and academe; Judiciary or legal departments for Para

Legal students and educational institutions for future educators. This internship program actualizes the students' competencies learned in theories inside the vicinity of the university.

The programs expose the students to work in their field and to prepare them once they get out of the university or college. It ensures the possibility of good performer graduate.

In collaboration, industry partners' objectives provide students with actual workplace experience, exposure to various management styles, industrial and procedures of various occupations in relation to their respective fields of learning. It also gives standards and guidelines for conducting OJTs such as amount of workload, number of hours, learning objectives, monitoring scheme and sanctions. It clearly establishes the roles and responsibilities of involved parties and provide for protocols regarding different situations that may arise during the OJT. It also promotes the OJT program through standardized procedures that are uniform, manageable, and practical so that more institutions will participate.

Internships are work-based activities in which students engage in learning through practical and relevant experiences at various internship sites. Internships are undertaken by students who are at or near the end of a preparatory academic program [1].

Taladtad et al. [2] moreover asserted that the most effective method to develop the competence and skills of students is through hands-on training, the on-the-job training wherein productivity, and professionalism will normally be high in those individuals that employ a sound OJT program.

Interns performed better when they viewed their supervisors as advocating a balance of concerns for both learning and performance during the internships [3]. Megha [4] claimed that internship can be an important stepping-stone on the career path in communication and it is also a way to show a future employer what one has obtained on-the-job skills. The

investigation conducted by Martinez, Lontoc, Villena and Laguador [5] on the correlation of OJT performance showed that the students obtained an excellent performance rating in their OJT with high academic performance rating in media marketing and average in advertising principle. Students with high academic performance in Advertising principles also obtained high training performance except in adherence to company policy. On the other hand, it was found on the study by Bernardo, Landicho, and Laguador [6] regarding how the AB Paralegal students performed during their OJT that there is a need to enhance the communication skills of the interns through giving them more verbal exercises as learning activity in school as well as more case studies to analyze and simulate for better understanding of the subject; thus, becoming more adept in the workplace.

Others have emphasized the needs for students to acquire skills on analytical ability, computer applications, creative thinking, decision making, and task-related attributes [7], [8].

Industry partners aim to develop student's skills to help them better and more independent learners, which will in turn improve their employability and attitudes towards work. Allowing the graduating students to apply what they have learned from books in a work environment through On-the-Job Training would develop their work values and attitude necessary to achieve the ultimate goal of producing efficient and effective leaders and professionals in cross-cultural and multidisciplinary undertakings [9], [10].

Trainees always have feedback on industry partners. These are additional knowledge to their field, learning acquired during OJT and satisfaction to their industry partner. Busby and Gibson (2010) noted that gaining experience in management and management methods, developing maturity and self-esteem, recognizing problems and determining solution standards, and offering opportunities and career choices for the future.

The institution builds a tie up with companies that may eventually employ their graduates by offering on-the-job training opportunities. The other advantage is that it maintains and makes revision or proposes modifications to the current curriculum to satisfy the requirements of industry [8].

Therefore, it is important to know whether the industry partner is true to their responsibility in providing the student/trainee with opportunities to work with the specific department or area where they

can best apply the theories, principles and ideas learned in the academe. It is also important if they are supervising the student/trainee for the duration of the on-the-job training program in order to ensure effective learning to the trainees.

Program accreditation is one of the quality assurance mechanisms that supports the academic activities of the university [11-15]. In the previous Level IV Accreditation visit to Liberal Arts program, one criterion, which the panel looked into, was the presence of a study conducted by the university regarding evaluation of the industry partner's performance on the improvement of the students and the school as well. Another is the feedback of the interns on their host institution. A lot of evaluation and researches are done on how the students can improve based on the suggestions of the collaborating industry; however, none is written on the assessment of the interns regarding their host companies. Thus, this paper is conceptualized. This study shall analyze the feedback of the students from the College of Education, Arts and Sciences on their industry partners to examine the area for improvement in the program of study and how the students can adapt, develop and enhance their knowledge, values and skills to become qualified future professionals in performing critical and analytical tasks required of them. As researchers, it is their hope that this will contribute to the data bank the department collate pushing the curriculum developers to integrate valuable inputs this paper may result.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study described the profile of student and industry partners; to identify the feedback of the interns on the industry partners; determined problems encountered during internship; identified the difference of responses on the feedback of the interns when grouped according to the profile of student-respondents, determined the relationship between the problems encountered by the interns and the profile of the industry partners; and proposed a plan of action to enhance the internship program of the College based on the result of the study.

#### **METHOD**

##### **Research Design**

The researchers employed the descriptive design in order to figure out the prevailing condition of the CEAS students' internship condition through finding out the Trainees' feedback on industry partners.

Descriptive method of research, according to Bernardes (2011), otherwise known as normative survey is concerned with the prevailing or existing status of an event or problem. This employs questionnaire, interview and observation as data-gathering procedures.

### **Participants**

The respondents of the study were the seventy nine (79) senior CEAS students with practicum subjects in LPU-B enrolled during the 2nd semester of SY 2015-2016 corresponding to a 100% utilizing total sampling. They were asked about their feedback on their industry partners who served as basis for an enhanced OJT performance.

### **Instrument**

The researchers used modified questionnaire in gathering data patterned from the survey questionnaire of Busby and Gibson [16] modified to suit the present study.

To make the questionnaire brief and convenient to answer, a checklist type questions answerable by (1)-to a very little extent (2)-to a little extent, (3)-to some extent, (4)- to a great extent, (5)- to a very great extent was used. This is composed of four parts. The first part deals with the student and industry partner respondents' profile. Second part is the intern's feedback on industry partner and the third are the problems encountered during internship using the following scale; (4)-Always a problem (3)-Sometimes a problem (2)-A problem (1)-Never a problem. A part for unstructured questionnaire is placed where they are free to write their comments and suggestions.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researchers conducted preliminary interview specifically with INTO on the field of CEAS deployment process and areas.

The proponents also read books, journals, encyclopedia, undergraduate theses and online sources until a standardized questionnaire has been found where the researchers patterned their questions. There are about (28) questions which discussed the respondents' feedback on industry partners.

Also, the researchers have come up with their content's study based on facts gathered from the instrument. The indicator has been formulated through the said process.

The questionnaires were distributed to the graduating class of mass communication, paralegal,

psychology, education senior students of University during their revalida.; the researchers explained the importance of the study to encourage them to answer the questionnaire honestly and objectively. To give the respondents adequate time to answer the questionnaire carefully, the questionnaires were retrieved the following day.

### **Data Analysis**

The gathered data from the questionnaire were tallied, tabulated and interpret by using the following statistical tool.

Percentage is used to analyze and interpret the profile of both the student and industry partner respondents. Weighted mean, is considered the proper weights assigned to observed values according to their relative importance. It will be used to determine the feedback of the interns on their industry partners.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine differences in the responses on the feedback of the interns when grouped according to profile variables while Chi-square identified the relationships between the problems encountered by the interns and the profile variables of their industry partners.

The given scale was used to interpret the result of the study: 4.50 – 5.00 – To a Very Great Extent (TVGE); 3.50 – 4.49 – To a Great Extent (TGE); 2.50 – 3.49 – To Some Extent (TSE); 1.50 – 2.49 To a Little Extent (TLE); 1.00 – 1.49 – To a Very Little Extent (TVLE). The given scale was used to interpret the result of the problems encountered: 3.50 – 4.00 – Always a Problem (A); 2.50 – 3.49 – Sometimes a Problem (S); 1.50 – 2.49 A Problem (AP); 1.00 – 1.49 – Never a Problem (N)

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Majority of the interns are female as evidenced by 85.5 percent while a small percentage of 14.5 are males. This maintains the findings that Education and Arts College is mainly composed of members of the female sex (guardian.com).

With regards to program, Psychology students (59.2%) have the highest percentage followed by Communication (22.4%), education (10.5 %) and the least from Paralegal studies (7.9%). The distribution results from the same number of college population belonging under College of Education, Arts and Sciences since the study employed purposive sampling.

Majority of the Psychology interns choose National Center for Mental Health (NCMH) as their

place for training while Communication interns had ABS-CBN in Manila, the Paralegal interns choose Office of the Solicitor General and St. James Academy and Batangas South Elementary School for education interns .

The result means that the university ensures OJT of CEAS students is within the field of their college expertise. It is also the result of the continuing consultation with the Board of Advisors which the university holds yearly to value their partnership. Each program chooses from among their industry partners and discusses with them the needs of both the students and the industries.

In terms of location, interns choose national industry partner (92.1%) because they believe that there is greater opportunity for learning experience. For Mass Communication students, they prefer ABS-CBN, GMA 7 and Channel 9 because they believe the exposure in terms of supervision and facilities, these nationwide television channels shall equip them better in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Likewise for the Psychology students they chose- the National Center for Mental Health and for Para legal students the Office of the Solicitor General.

According to type of business, majority of the Psychology interns prefer public industries like Batangas Medical Center for breadth of exposure and experience; Batangas City East Elementary School for having bigger population; thus, they need more student teachers to assist and Office of the Solicitor General for easy access of Paralegal interns to government alumni of LPU who in turn became very cooperative.

Since these are multinational companies either public or private and is in existence for more than 20 years, they are employing 200 employees and above.

The length operation on the other hand suggests that most of the chosen companies for internship had been established since time in memorial to which hones and grows skills of becoming a professional.

It can be deduced from Table 1 that interns experienced collaboration and teamwork with their industry partners to a great extent as evidenced by a composite mean of 3.95. They considered the people with whom they worked with as effective with the highest WM of 4.11. By effective, they said that the competencies expected of them in the courses they learned inside the classroom were given experiential exposure. They were asked to write their articles or news sourced from their field work. Thus, their writing for print is really honed.

**Table 1. Interns' Feedback on Industry Partners in terms of Collaboration and Teamwork**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The people with whom I worked are an effective team.	4.11	TGE	1
2. The people with whom I worked care about one another.	3.99	TGE	3
3. The people have strong trust among the team members.	3.92	TGE	4
4. The people with whom I worked made themselves available to others to provide assistance.	3.84	TGE	5.5
5. The person to whom I reported helped me solve problems.	3.84	TGE	5.5
6. My team took time to have fun together.	4.00	TGE	2
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>TGE</b>	

Likewise, practice teachers took time to have fun together ranked second with 4.00 weighted mean. During internship in schools, they were able to work well with the other practice teachers as well as the administration and classroom teacher in charge. They attend school activities like different organizations, Junior-Senior, field Demo and Intramurals. In the process, strong trust, 3.92 Weighted Mean is given to each by assigning responsibility so each also care about one another, 3.99 Weighted Mean.

**Table 2. Interns' Feedback on Industry Partners in terms of Communication**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. I had access to the information I needed.	3.96	TGE	2
2. I understood what was expected of me.	4.08	TGE	1
3. People gave feedback about my work.	3.82	TGE	4
4. People enjoin me in constructive discussion/ dialogue.	3.84	TGE	3
5. Communication was clear with no hidden meanings.	3.62	TGE	5
6. Negative gossiping is sensed in the workplace.	3.24	TSE	6
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.76</b>	<b>TGE</b>	

In terms of communication, the interns have assessed their industry partners to a great extent with composite mean of 3.76 revealing that they understood what was expected of them as the highest 4.08, and had an access to the information they had needed, 3.96. The PL interns had mentioned during an interview that the staff in the office of the Solicitor

General guides them most of the time on what to do and enjoyed them in some discussions showing also the indicator with 3.84 weighted mean. However lowest, negative gossiping which is quite sensed in the workplace is experienced to some extent with the weighted mean of 3.24. No organization is perfect, the same is true in Cavite Center for Mental Health (CCMH).

**Table 3. Interns' Feedback on Industry Partners in terms of Regard for People**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. 1. People were listened to as equals regardless of race, gender, position, age, education or career level.	4.46	TGE	1
2. 2. People were treated fairly.	3.84	TGE	3.5
3. 3. I felt cared about as an employee/ intern.	3.75	TGE	6
4. 4. I felt valued for the work I did.	3.84	TGE	3.5
5. 5. My development was a high priority.	3.92	TGE	2
6. 6. People with whom I worked made this a great place to work.	3.82	TGE	5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>TGE</b>	

Table 3 revealed that in terms of regard for people, the interns considered their experience with their industry partners as to a great extent with a general composite mean of 3.94. They said that people in the organization where they stayed listened to them as equals regardless of race, gender, position, age, education or career level. On-the job trainees come from different schools; however, they are treated equally as shown by 4.46 weighted mean which ranked 1. They also feel that their development was prioritized which ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> with a weighted mean of 3.92. All five indicators positively assess good value for people which made them enjoy the place of work.

In terms of decision-making and empowerment, Table 4 registered a composite mean of 3.81, meaning the respondents considered their industry partners to a great extent. Highest with a weighted mean of 4.05, the student interns said that they were trusted to do a good job. It is very well emphasized during the orientation of INTO with students and parents that when in the workplace, they are expected to abide by the policy and do their best; thus, enhancing their capacity to excel and innovate. Also in number 2 with

a weighted mean of 3.86, the interns to a great extent provide input when decisions were being made.

**Table 4. Interns' Feedback on Industry Partners in terms of Decision making and Empowerment**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. I was given authority to make decisions on my own.	3.79	TGE	3
2. The person to whom I reported was supportive of my decisions.	3.74	TGE	5
3. I got to provide input when decisions were being made.	3.86	TGE	2
4. I was comfortable raising issues or questions.	3.66	TGE	6
5. I received regular constructive feedback on my performance	3.78	TGE	4
6. I was trusted to do a good job.	4.05	TGE	1
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>TGE</b>	

In the context of education, State of Victoria [17] stressed on several benefits between stakeholder and colleges agreement. One is higher quality decision-making. On the part of the colleges, greater engagement with stakeholders' interests improves risk management practices allowing problems to be identified earlier, thereby reducing future costs. For industry partners, getting inputs from interns improve access to decision making process also, resulting in the delivery of more efficient and responsive services. The interns mentioned also that there were times; they were given authority to make simple decisions on their own which also ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> with weighted mean of 3.79. Little decisions like when communication students are on field pursuing news articles that will take time beyond office hours, or student teachers who attend activities that necessitate their beyond duty responsibility. They were able to decide on their own in order to finish the leg work, and they were permitted.

**Table 5. Interns Feedback on Industry Partners in terms of Work Ethics**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The people with whom I worked acted with integrity.	4.00	TGE	2
2. The people with whom I worked take ownership for outcomes and results.	3.95	TGE	3.5
3. The people with whom I worked care about their work.	4.09	TGE	1
4. The company values employee satisfaction.	3.95	TGE	3.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>TGE</b>	

With a composite mean of 4.00, Table 5 exhibited that the respondents assess the stakeholders in terms of work ethics to a great extent. It is very evident that they care what they do, how they perform each responsibility with the first rank 4.09 weighted mean. It is followed by display of integrity with 4.00 also to a great extent.

Lyceans are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct guided by its core values God centeredness, leadership, integrity and nationalism. CEAS in coordination with INTO both know this is critical for the success of internships because it builds trust and transparency between LPU Batangas and the industry partners. Integrity means the quality of being honest and fair; one virtue which employers also firstly look into among their employees. Thus, they need to show this also by example in the workplace.

**Table 6. Problems Encountered by Interns during Internship**

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The trainer may not have enough time to teach and supervise the trainee.	1.95	AP	1
2. The trainer lacks good working relationship with the practicum.	1.91	AP	2
3. The trainer manifests bad habits which may be passed on to the trainee.	1.66	AP	6
4. Superiors are not willing to listen to suggestions or recommendations.	1.67	AP	5
5. The training method is inefficient.	1.58	AP	7
6. The company gives task/s not related to the specialization.	1.45	N	9
7. There is a risk of hazard/ accident in the place.	1.71	AP	4
8. The company is distant from the practicum's place.	1.37	N	10
9. There is a time conflict between classes and OJT schedule.	1.22	N	11
10. The right facilities and equipment are not available for the practice.	1.50	AP	8
11. Instructions are not clearly defined.	1.74	AP	3
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>1.61</b>	<b>AP</b>	

As shown in Table 6, the interns assessed that all the indicators have been a problem with a composite mean of quite low 1.61. First among the complaints is lacking of enough time for the trainer to teach or supervise the interns with weighted mean of 1.95. Before the training commence, a contract or agreement is signed between the industry partner and the university. It outlined there among others the

number of hours and working ethics or policies during the internship. In an interview with Communication students, 200 hours is not enough for a TV job exposure to always meet the trainer because of irregular schedule of shootings and tapings. Likewise, for radio and news printing, this usually happen because communication and psychology interns have their three sites of assignment. Therefore, placement must have well-organized and clearly described handover arrangements that ensure continuity of responsibility. Trainers need to be explicit on what the responsibilities to trainees and they need to know what to do. Trainees must be supervised according to their experience and competence during which, component of training workload should increase under guided supervision to full participation in practice.

Second problem is trainer's lack of good working relationship with the practicum with 1.91 weighted mean. However contradicting with the results in collaboration, it cannot still be denied that a little conflict arise with trainer – trainee relationship. This is quite normal in a healthy environment having indifference; like when instructions are not clearly defined (1.74); thus, resulting to lapses or gaps in output or worse, even a risk of hazards in the workplace (1.71).

Lowest among the indicators of problems in the conflict between classes and On-the-job schedule (1.22) meaning it has never been a problem. This is because, as a practice, a regular student does not have other classes during the last semester other than his practicum. In rare cases, where he still has to take one last subject, he will be given a practicum site near LPU.

**Table 7. Difference on the Interns' Feedback on Industry Partners When Grouped According to Profile Variables**

Profile Variables	$\chi^2$	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Industry Name	38.467	0.001	Rejected	Significant
Location	0.746	0.689	Accepted	Not Significant
Type of Business	8.649	0.013	Rejected	Significant
Number of Employees	17.862	0.001	Rejected	Significant
Length of Operation	23.214	0.001	Rejected	Significant

Based on Table 7, the computed f value of the profile variable course/program was greater than the

critical value and the resulted p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance; thus, the null hypothesis of no significant difference on the interns' feedback on their industry partners when grouped according to the aforementioned variable is rejected. This means that significant differences exist, and that respondents from different programs have assessed their industry partners to be different from each other as this is highly significant with f value of 11.617 which means that respondents have experienced different treatment with regards to their on-the-job training in their respective companies. Student teachers may very well be reciprocated in BCES while communication interns may have had difficulty with their production staff and newsroom bosses. In terms of gender, male or female interns do not vary their feedback on their industry partner. They look at things similarly.

**Table 8. Relationship between Industry Profile Variables and Problems Encountered by Interns during Internship**

Profile Variables	$F_c$	P-value	Decision	Interpretation
Gender	0.010	0.922	Accepted	Not Significant
Course/Program	11.617	0.000	Rejected	Highly Significant

*Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05*

Based on table 8, the computed chi – square values of the industry partners profile variables such as industry name, type of business, number of employees and length of operation were all greater than the critical value and the resulted p-values were less than 0.05 level of significance, thus the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the above mentioned profile variables and the problems encountered by interns during their internship is rejected. This means that there is significant relationship between the said profile variables and the problems they encountered in their internship in their cooperating companies. Thus, the industry itself, type of business, number of employees and length of operation of the company, in some cases were considered factors contributory to the problems encountered by the interns during their internship.

#### **Proposed Programs to enhance the Internship Program of CEAS**

The findings of the study suggest that a positive collaboration between the industry partner and the College of Education, Arts & Sciences may be more enhanced if some of the weak points resulted from the feedback of the linkage together with the problems encountered by the interns be addressed. Thus, the researchers draft the following matrix. (see page 32)

#### **CONCLUSION**

Majority of the CEAS interns are female taking up Psychology. The college prefer mental health institutions that are national, public and stable. The industry partners of CEAS support the interns to a great extent in terms of work ethics, collaboration and teamwork, regard for people, decision making and empowerment; however, lowest in communication. Interns consider the following as a problem in the workplace: trainer not having enough time to teach and supervise, lacking good working relationship and having instructions that are not clearly defined. The interns' program affects his feedback on his industry partner's performance. The industry profile variables such as industry name, type of business, number of employees and length of operation are related with the problems encountered by the interns during their internship. A plan of action is proposed to enhance the collaboration between CEAS and the industry partners.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

CEAS may sustain its partnerships with stable institutions both public and national; however, may review also its linkage with local and private. CEAS may continuously implement strategies on inculcating among students values on work ethics, collaboration and teamwork, regard for people, decision-making and empowerment but improve more on skills in communication. The Internship Office may review the current Memorandum of Agreement / Understanding between CEAS interns specifically by program and their partners to address the problem regarding extent of supervision and training. The coordinator responsible for each program and the practicum course professor may study very carefully the deployment of student interns with the proposed industry. Researchers may conduct future study specifically on the relationship between feedback of the industry partners and their profile variables. The proposed plan of action to enhance the CEAS internship program may be considered for implementation and evaluation.

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