Undergraduate students future career intention in the hotel industry: The impact of implementing the certified internship program

Feri Ferdian[1], Asmar Yulastri[1], Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari[2], Hijriyantomi Suyuthie[1] and Pasaribu[1]

[1] Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality, Universitas Negeri Padang, **Indonesia**
[2] Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, UCSI University, **Malaysia**

*Corresponding author: feri_ferdian@fpp.unp.ac.id

Abstract: This scholarly investigation examines the effect of hotel hallmarks of the hotel industry, service quality of internship and internship satisfaction on undergraduate hotel management students' future career intentions in the hotel industry. A quantitative approach through a cross-sectional study with a self-reported survey questionnaire was undertaken. The sample and the unit of analysis is among hotel management students from Universitas Negeri Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia who had undergone internships program. The study employs Partial-least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) in response to the hypotheses. The results clearly demonstrated that hallmarks of the hotel industry (less pleasant work environments, heavy job responsibilities, slow career development opportunities, and less recognition of work achievement) did not possess negative impact on hospitality interns' students future career intentions in the hotel industry. Hotel internship service quality and internship satisfaction strongly influence hospitality interns' students future career intentions in the hotel industry. The findings manifestly provide valuable insights and far-reaching consequences for students, hospitality institutions, industry stakeholders and policymakers.

Keywords : hospitality management; certified internship program; internship service quality; internship experience

1.   Introduction

The hotel industry is rapidly expanding reflects a broader trend of economic development and globalization, which demands a more skilled and adaptive workforce. This industry is undoubtedly offering diverse and exciting employment opportunities for students pursuing hospitality management. Ghani et al. (2022) emphasized that the industry's significant growth trajectory and its capacity to generate dynamic career pathways, particularly for those equipped with formal education and training in hospitality management. Consequently, hospitality management students are well-positioned to thrive in this ever-evolving sector, as their academic preparation aligns with the industry's increasing complexity and the rising expectations of global consumers. This situation directly provides a wealth of opportunities for hospitality students who intend to build future career in the hotel industry after completing their education (T. Chen et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022). In this sense, future career intention is an internal drive that involves individual intentions and ambitions to achieve certain professional goals (Qiu et al., 2017). In hotel, a career intention can mean a passion for working in areas such as hotel management, operations, marketing, human resources, or even opening its own hotel business (Ghosh & Jhamb, 2021).

To ensure students' future intentions toward pursuing careers in the hotel industry, various innovative initiatives are designed to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry demands. According to Wang and Hsieh (2022), one such initiative involves integrating experiential learning through internships, cooperative education programs, and practical training. Institutions are also increasingly partnering with industry leaders to offer mentorship programs, workshops, and guest lectures, as noted by Jones and Smith (2022), which provide students with insights into emerging trends and the skills required for success. Further initiatives include the incorporation of technology-driven learning tools, such as simulation software and virtual reality, which mimic hotel management scenarios (Buhalis et al., 2024). These tools not only improve technical proficiency but also prepare students to adapt to technological advancements in the industry. Furthermore, hospitality programs are emphasizing soft skill development such as communication, cultural competence, and problem-solving through collaborative projects and role-playing activities (Carlisle et al., 2023). Such efforts are complemented by the introduction of sustainability-focused modules, which resonate with the growing demand for eco-conscious practices in hospitality (Mandal et al., 2025).

In Indonesia, the Certified Internship Program (CIP) or internship program is pivotal initiative aimed at enhancing the employability of students and aligning academic training with industry requirements. This program is particularly significant in the context of the hospitality sector, where practical skills and industry exposure are critical for career success. The Certified Internship Program (CIP) typically spans two semester. Septiandiani et al. (2021) noted that the Certified Internship Program provides students with structured, hands-on training within industry settings, enabling them to develop both technical and soft skills necessary for navigating the complex demands of the hospitality and tourism sectors. Rodriguez (2015) argue that the duration is strategically designed to provide students with sufficient time to gain in-depth exposure to real-world hospitality operations, including front-office management, food and beverage services, housekeeping, and customer relations.

In line with the above notion, during the Certified Internship Program (CIP) students are undoubtedly gone through various experiences such as hallmark of the hotel industry (less pleasant work environment, heavy job responsibilities, slow career development opportunities, and less recognition of work achievements (Ariza-Montes et al., 2019; Ferdian, 2021; Ferdian, Zahari, Hanafiah, et al., 2024). These factors can play a significant impact in shaping students' perspectives on the hotel industry and influencing their intention either to build or not a career in this sector (Ozturk et al., 2014). Besides, internship experience is also an important component in which students spend their time at various hotels department to learn about hotel operations first-hand (Pusiran et al., 2020). The service quality of the internship students receives can also have a significant impact on their perceptions of the hotel industry and their intention to have a career in it (Ghosh et al., 2022). As internships serve as a bridge between academic knowledge and practical application, offering students firsthand exposure to real-world professional environments, satisfaction is crucial for students as it significantly impacts their overall learning experience, career readiness, and future aspirations in their chosen field (Ansari, 2025). All in all, these attributes are assumed to influence students' intention toward careers in hospitality and tourism industry.

Although numerous studies have explored future career intentions in the hotel industry Qu et al. (2021), Siu et al. (2012) and Zopiatis et al. (2016), there remains a notable gap in examining the impact of key hallmarks of the hotel industry, internship service quality and the internship experience on students' future career intentions, particularly within the Indonesian hotel industry context. Scholars have widely acknowledged that internships play a pivotal role in shaping students' perceptions of the hospitality industry, influencing their commitment and enthusiasm toward a

career in hotel (Ferdian et al., 2024; Hora et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2019). However, limited attention has been paid to how the quality of internship programs and services directly impacts these career intentions, especially in emerging markets like Indonesia, where the hotel industry is rapidly expanding. Thus, this study seeks to address this void by discovering the effect of hotel hallmarks of the hotel industry, service quality of internship and internship satisfaction on undergraduate hotel management students' future career intentions in the hotel industry. This research can provide valuable insights for educational institutions, hotels, and the hospitality industry as a whole in developing more effective education and internship programs as well as increasing student motivation and future career intentions in the hotel industry.

2. Literature review

2.1 Career intention and hypotheses

Career intention is an individual's conscious decision and commitment to pursue a specific career path, guided by personal aspirations, values, skills, and long-term goals (Ghosh & Jhamb, 2021). It is a critical concept in career development, as it serves as a roadmap that directs individuals toward achieving professional success and satisfaction. According to Ghosh and Jhamb (2021), career intention is shaped by intrinsic factors, such as interests and passions, and extrinsic factors, like socioeconomic influences and opportunities available in the labor market. In the hotel industry, students' career intentions have become a significant area of interest for researchers. Without adequate guidance, students may face unemployment and heightened competition within these sectors (Lee et al., 2019; Rosyidi, 2024; Wong & Mohd Rasdi, 2019). Poorly informed career choices can negatively influence career progression and lead to unfavorable perceptions of the job market, particularly in hospitality and tourism (Richardson, 2009; Rosyidi, 2024). Several factors, including job nature, societal recognition, compensation, alignment with personal values, workplace environment, and opportunities for advancement, play a crucial role in shaping students' career intentions in this field (Mannaa & Abou-Shouk, 2020; Mohammed, 2018; Richardson, 2010). Positive views of these aspects can help attract and retain skilled graduates in the industry. Conversely, misalignment between these factors and students' expectations may result in graduates opting out of careers in hospitality and tourism or leaving the industry altogether (Mannaa & Abou-Shouk, 2020; Roney & Öztin, 2007; Sihite et al., 2019; Yunus et al., 2021).

2.2 Hypotheses development

The hallmarks of the hotel industry, including less pleasant work environment, heavy job responsibilities, and slow career development opportunities, play a pivotal role in shaping intern students' future career intentions. A supportive and well-structured work environment significantly impacts students' perceptions of the industry, fostering positive attitudes and encouraging long-term engagement (Richardson, 2009; Sihite et al., 2019). Internships provide students with firsthand exposure to the realities of the hotel industry, where the quality of their experiences often determines their inclination to pursue careers in this field (Wong & Mohd Rasdi, 2019; Yunus et al., 2021). For instance, a challenging but supportive environment can enhance professional confidence and motivation, whereas unsatisfactory experiences may lead to disinterest or career shifts (Lee et al., 2019; Mannaa & Abou-Shouk, 2020).

Job responsibilities during internships also influence students' career intentions. When interns are assigned tasks aligned with their skills and career aspirations, they are more likely to develop a sense of purpose and satisfaction (Mohammed, 2018; Rosyidi, 2024). Conversely, repetitive or menial tasks may result in disengagement and reduced interest in the industry (Roney & Öztin, 2007;

3

Sihite et al., 2019). Moreover, career development opportunities, such as mentorship and clear growth pathways, significantly enhance interns' perceptions of the industry (Richardson, 2010; Savickas, 2013). Organizations that provide these opportunities are perceived as more attractive, encouraging interns to consider long-term careers in the hotel sector (Ghosh & Jhamb, 2021; H. Kim & Park, 2013). With these, it is hypothesized that;

H1:   Hallmarks of hotel industry influence intern students future career intention

The quality of service experienced during internships plays a pivotal role in shaping students' career intentions within the hotel industry. Internships serve as a practical bridge between academic learning and professional practice, allowing students to immerse themselves in real-world scenarios and evaluate the industry's alignment with their career aspirations (Zopiatis et al., 2016). High-quality internship experiences, characterized by supportive mentorship, structured training programs, and meaningful work assignments, foster positive attitudes among students, thereby enhancing their motivation to pursue long-term careers in hospitality (T. Chen et al., 2021). Conversely, poorly managed internships with inadequate guidance and limited learning opportunities may result in dissatisfaction and deter students from considering careers in the hotel industry (Roney & Öztin, 2007). Service quality within internships also influences students' perceptions of the industry's professionalism and work culture. When interns experience excellent service standards and organizational support, it cultivates a sense of competence and belonging, which are critical determinants of career intention (Yiu & Law, 2012). Moreover, scholars like Richardson (2010) and Mohammed (2018) highlight that the perceived alignment between internship experiences and career expectations strengthens students' commitment to the industry. Thus, we conjecture that;

H2:   Quality of service experienced influence intern students future career intention

The relationship between internship satisfaction and students' career intentions in the hotel industry has garnered significant attention from researchers. Internship experiences serve as a critical bridge between academic learning and real-world application, shaping students' perceptions of the industry and influencing their professional aspirations (Kim et al., 2010; Zopiatis et al., 2016). When hotel interns have positive experiences—such as supportive mentorship, engaging tasks, and favorable working conditions—they are more likely to develop a strong intention to pursue long-term careers in the field (T. Chen et al., 2021; Richardson, 2009). Conversely, dissatisfaction with internship experiences, such as exposure to poor management practices or unfavorable workplace conditions, can lead to disinterest in pursuing a career in the hotel industry (Sihite et al., 2019; Wong & Mohd Rasdi, 2019).

Internship satisfaction not only fosters positive attitudes toward the profession but also enhances students' confidence in their ability to succeed in the industry (Bandura, 1997; Mohammed, 2018). According to Mannaa and Abou-Shouk (2020), a satisfying internship reinforces the alignment between students' expectations and the realities of hotel work, increasing their commitment to the industry. Thus, it can be hypothesized that;

H3:   Satisfaction during hotel internships significantly influences students' future career intentions within the hotel industry

3.   Methods

This study adopted a quantitative approach through a cross-sectional study with a self-reported survey questionnaire. The sample and the unit of analysis were among hotel management students

from Universitas Negeri Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia who had carried out the internships program. The survey instrument is divided into three sections. Section A eliciting demographic information of the respondents and Section B includes measurements of independent variables that are associated with hallmarks of hotel industry, quality of service experienced and satisfaction during hotel internships. Section C deal with future career intention. All items for independent variables and dependent variable are adapted from Ghosh and Jhamb (2021), Kukreti and Dani (2021), Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) and Zopiatis et al. (2016). Minor modifications were made specifically tailored to the study's context.

Respondents are obligated to articulate their viewpoints on a five -point Likert scale, which ranges from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). Furthermore, Bahasa Indonesia version of the survey questionnaire is available, which has been meticulously translated from the original English version by a language expert. A pilot study was conducted to verify the reliability and validity of the questionnaire items before its finalization. The survey questionnaire was executed through google form. The respondents were informed of the objectives of the research and the purpose of the survey before they participated in the study. They were also guaranteed that the information provided would be kept in strict confidentiality, and no individual respondent would be identifiable through the compilation of the data. In the end, the study effectively collected a total of 312 responses. More than half of respondents are female (n=164, 53 percent) against male (n=148, 47 percent). Respondents were among 2019 batch (n=140, 45 percent), 2020 batch (n=97, 31 percent) and 2021 batch (n=75, 24 percent).

The majority of respondents in the range age range between 21–24 years (n=249, n=80 percent and the rest in between 17–20 years age range (n= 63, 20 percent). In addition, more than half of respondents had internship in four-star rating hotels (n= 206, 66 percent), three-star rating hotels (n=48, 15 percent) and five-star rating hotels (n=58, 19 percent). In order to forecast the interaction between the research variables, this study used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) (Hair et al., 2021). (Hair et al., 2021; Ramayah et al., 2016) suggested testing the study framework following the measurement and structural model assessment using the SmartPLS 3.1.1 software. The measurement model assessment looked at the connections between latent or unobserved variables. The assessment of the structural model was done to see how the underlying exogenous and endogenous constructs related to one another.

4. Results and analysis

4.1 Measurement model

The reflective measurement model was subjected to a thorough investigation that covered four crucial dimensions: internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The outcomes are shown in Table 1 together with the outer loading values, AVE scores, composite reliability, indicator reliability, and Cronbach Alpha values. All items loaded significantly acceptable (loadings ranged from 0.718 to 0.881) onto their respective factors, verifying the reliability of their indicators. The model showed sufficient convergent validity as assessed by the AVE values. The AVE values of hallmark of hotel industry (AVE=0.646), quality service experience (AVE=0.648), satisfaction (AVE=0.580) and career intention (AVE=0.682) are well above the minimum required level of 0.50. Hence, the measurement model is deemed to possess discriminant validity. Figure 1 reports the measurement model, and Table 1 reports the factor loadings.
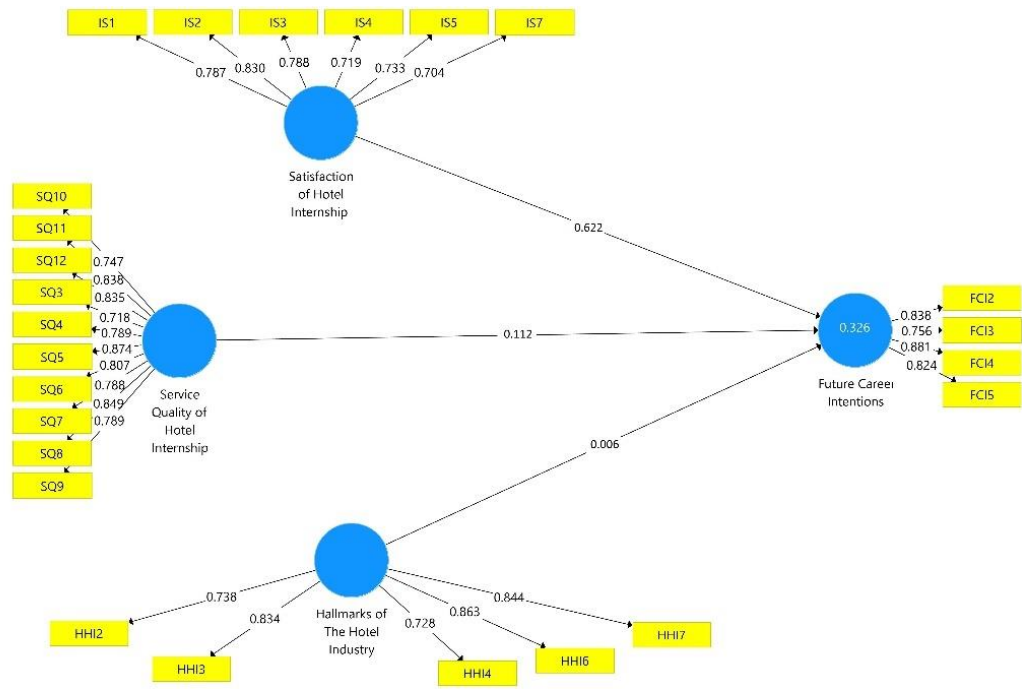
5

Figure 1. Measurement model

Table 1. Measurement model

Indicators	Code	Outer Loadings	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	Ave
Hallmarks of the hotel industry (HHI)			0.864	0.901	0.646
	HHI2	0.738			
Item Removed: HH1, HHI4	HHI3	0.834			
	HHI4	0.728			
	HHI6	0.863			
	HHI7	0.844			
Hotel internship service quality (SQ)			0.940	0.948	0.648
	SQ3	0.718			
Item Removed: SQ1, SQ2	SQ4	0.789			
	SQ5	0.874			
	SQ6	0.807			
	SQ7	0.788			
	SQ8	0.849			
	SQ9	0.789			
	SQ10	0.747			
	SQ11	0.838			
	SQ12	0.835			
Hotel internship satisfaction (IS)			0.869	0.892	0.580
	IS1	0.787			
Item Removed: IS6	IS2	0.830			
	IS3	0.788			
	IS4	0.719			
	IS5	0.733			
	IS7	0.704			
Future career intentions (FCI)			0.843	0.895	0.682
	FCI2	0.838			
Item Removed: FC1	FCI4	0.756			
	FCI5	0.881			
	FCI6	0.824			

Note: At p<0.05, every factor loading is noteworthy

Table 2 displays reliability values for all the constructs examined using Likert scales that were >0.7, demonstrating enough internal consistency and reliability (Hair et al., 2017). Every item's standardized loadings were all significant (p<0.05) and higher than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). According to Table 1, each construct had an AVE value. of more than 0.5, demonstrating convergent validity. Additionally, all the HTMT ratios, as shown in Table 4 (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2015), were below the cutoff of 0.90, and the square root of AVE estimations for all construct pair correlations exceeded the equivalent values (Chin, 1998). These data support the legitimacy of discrimination.

Table 2.   Heterotrait-monotriat ratio assessment

	Hallmarks of the hotel industry	Hotel internship service quality	Hotel internship satisfaction	Future career intentions
Hallmarks of The Hotel Industry				
Hotel Internship Service Quality	0.619			
Hotel Internship Satisfaction	0.559	0.703		
Future Career Intentions	0.231	0.248	0.264	

4.2   Structural models

In response to the put forward hypothesis, structural modeling or path analysis serves as the second evaluation in the PLS-SEM investigation. The purpose of this study is to see the effect of the hallmarks of the hotel industry in the hotel industry, hotel internship service quality and hotel satisfaction on undergraduate hotel management students' future career intentions in the hotel industry and investigates the mediating role of hotel internship satisfactions. Table 3 presents the path coefficients, T-statistics, and regarding significant levels (as a result of Bootstrapping) for the suggested hypothesis. When the significance of the path coefficients is at least 95% sure, it is acceptable.

Table 3.   Path Coefficients, observed T-statistics, and significance thresholds

	Path Analysis	Path Coefficient B	T Statistics	P Values	Result
H1	Hallmarks -> Future Career Intentions	0.006	0.102	0.459	Rejected
H2	Service Quality -> Future Career Intentions	0.112	1.770	0.039	Accepted
H3	Satisfaction -> Future Career Intentions	0.622	10.568	0.000	Accepted

*p<0.05

Result showed that insignificant relationship was seen in H1 between hallmark of hotel industry and intern student future career intention in the hotel industry (β: 0.006, t: 0.102, p=0.459.). This implies that these factors may not strongly deter students from pursuing careers in the field. This could imply that students perceive these challenges as inherent to the industry and are either prepared to adapt or prioritize other factors, such as passion for hospitality, skill acquisition, or long-term career goals. Additionally, positive internship experiences or industry appeal may overshadow these challenges, mitigating their impact on career intentions. H2 is amply substantiated when a significant relationship appears between hotel internship service quality and

intern student future career intention in the hotel industry ($\beta = 0.112$ and $t = 1.770$, $p = 0.039$). This indicates that the quality of the internship experience plays a pivotal role in shaping students' aspirations to pursue a career in the hotel industry. High-quality internships characterized by effective mentorship, skill-building opportunities, supportive management, and structured training positively influence students' perceptions of the industry, fostering a sense of competence and alignment with their career goals. H3 revealed a causal relationship between internship satisfaction and student future career intention in the hotel industry ($\beta = 0.622$, $t = 10.568$, $p = 0.000$). This shows that a positive internship experience can enhance students' confidence, reinforce their interest in the field, and increase their commitment to pursuing a career in hospitality. Conversely, dissatisfaction during internships, such as poor management, lack of guidance, or unmet expectations, may deter students from continuing in the industry.

To assess the research model's predictive capabilities, the R^2 values for future career intentions were presented. For endogenous constructs, it is recommended to classify R2 values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 as weak, moderate, and strong, accordingly (Hair et al., 2017). The R^2 value was calculated as 0.326 for future career intentions. Referring to Figure 1, the hallmarks of the hotel industry, hotel internship service quality and satisfaction were able to account for 32.6% ($R^2 = 0.326$) of the variation in future career intentions. Increases in R^2 about the percentage of the dependent variable's variance that is still unaccounted for are described by the effect size function (f^2), which is comparable to the conventional partial F-test. Table 4, f^2 column indicated that the relationships had effect sizes.

Table 4. f^2 - Factor of the research model

	f^2 Future career intentions	Effect size
Hallmarks of hotel industry	0.331	Substantial
Hotel internship service quality	0.013	Weak
Hotel internship satisfaction	0.010	Weak

Notes: The values of f 2 are 0.02 for weak, 0.15 for moderate, and 0.35 for considerable

Table 5 explains the q2 outcome. A single session of blindfolding results in the removal of all 7 data points from the target construct, as shown by an omission distance of 7. The future career intentions in this study are represented by a q2 value of 0.206, which calculated using the omission distance of 7, suggests a middling predictive model. As the value of q2 rises, likewise, the structural model's ability to forecast outcomes is useful. Indicators of future career intentions and satisfaction with hotel internships are the study's independent variables.

Table 5.   Test of predictive relevance (q2)

Independent variable	Future career intentions
Hallmarks of the hotel industry	
Hotel internship service quality	0.206
Hotel internship satisfaction	

5.   Discussion and implications

This study attempted to demonstrate the explanatory power of hallmarks of the hotel industry, hotel internship service quality and hotel internship satisfaction on hospitality student future career intentions in the hotel industry. The results manifestly indicated that hallmarks of the hotel industry like less pleasant work environments, heavy job responsibilities, slow career development opportunities, and less recognition of work achievement did not give significant negative impact on

Indonesian hospitality interns' students future career intentions in the hotel industry. These factors, traditionally perceived as challenges within the industry, may not necessarily deter students from pursuing a career in hospitality. This finding supports (Richardson, 2009) which noted that despite the demanding nature of hospitality work, students often enter the industry with pre-existing passion or a sense of calling that outweighs negative perceptions. Similarly, Swargiary (2024) emphasized that experiential learning through internships helps students to understand and adapt to industry realities, which could explain the negligible impact of these hallmarks on their career intentions. On the other hand, it contradicts the earlier studies by Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) that challenging working conditions and lack of recognition are significant deterrents for students considering careers in hospitality. Other scholars, including (Barron, 2008), argued that negative internship experiences often result in students reconsidering their career paths. These discrepancies could arise from differences in geographic, cultural, or institutional contexts and job demand.

This study witnessed that hotel internship service quality influence Indonesian hospitality interns' students future career intentions in the hotel industry. This result corroborated well with Lam and Ching (2007) and Zopiatis et al. (2016), who emphasized that well-structured and supportive internships positively influence students' perceptions of the industry and their willingness to pursue long-term careers in it. High service quality in internship characterized by proper mentoring, learning opportunities, and a supportive work environment can instill confidence, motivation, and a sense of belonging in students, thereby enhancing their career intentions. In other words, poor-quality internships led to student disillusionment and negative attitudes toward the hospitality industry (Chiang et al., 2005).

This study further reveals that hotel internship satisfaction significantly influences Indonesian intern students' future career intentions, aligning with previous findings and highlighting the crucial role internships play in shaping career trajectories in the hospitality industry. Kim and Park (2013), Lam and Ching (2007) and Zopiatis et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of high-quality internships in fostering professional commitment and long-term aspirations. Chen and Wen (2016) highlighted that positive mentorship, skill acquisition, and real-world exposure can strengthen students' career resolve. This result also supports Barron et al. (2007), which underscores how experiential learning and hands-on practice significantly influence personal and professional growth, reinforcing the importance of structured and supportive internship programs. In contrast, dissatisfaction, as Cho et al. (2021) and Richardson (2009) argue, can lead to disillusionment and a potential exit from the hospitality field.

On the implications, although need to further confirm, these findings are significant for students, hospitality institutions, industry stakeholders and policymakers. As for students, they perhaps feel that the hospitality program and industrial training undertaken successfully met their expectations thus, satisfied with their career choice and enchanted with the hotel industry employment. Not harsh to say that experience through industrial training attachment is worthwhile as they end up clearer about what they want after graduation. Students may feel their parents' investments of money in hospitality education, along with the effort and time spent for personal skill development during their study period have been worthwhile.

For academic institutions, these findings underscore the critical importance of strengthening strong partnerships and collaborations with hotels that prioritize delivering high-quality internship programs. Such collaborations are essential to ensure that students not only gain hands-on experience but also feel satisfied and prepared for future careers in the hospitality industry. By working closely with hotels, institutions can align internship programs with students' career goals, offering meaningful experiences that foster both professional development and personal growth.

These partnerships should focus on creating structured internship programs that emphasize mentorship, skill development, and opportunities for real-world learning. By doing so, academic institutions can ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge and confidence needed to succeed in the competitive hospitality sector. Collaboration with hotels can help identify and address gaps in the existing internship frameworks, ensuring continuous improvement in program quality. The existing efforts in fostering hotel-academia collaborations should be further strengthened. This includes expanding the network of reputable hotel partners, implementing regular feedback mechanisms to monitor internship satisfaction, and providing tailored support to students during their training. By enhancing these partnerships, academic institutions can play a pivotal role in shaping the future workforce of the hospitality industry while ensuring their graduates are well-prepared and motivated to pursue long-term careers in the field.

For hotels, investing in well-structured internship frameworks is not merely an initiative to support student learning but also a strategic approach to attract and nurture future talent. Internships play a pivotal role in shaping students' perceptions of the industry and their potential career paths. By creating robust programs that prioritize mentorship, provide ample opportunities for skill development, and assign meaningful responsibilities, hotels can significantly enhance the overall internship experience. Such efforts not only contribute to the personal and professional growth of the interns but also leave a lasting impression that influences their long-term career intentions. Additionally, hotels must address common challenges that can hinder job satisfaction, such as unpleasant work environments, excessive workloads, limited career advancement opportunities, and insufficient recognition of achievements. These negative factors can significantly impact employees' perceptions of the industry and their overall career intentions. Proactively tackling these issues is essential to fostering a positive and engaging work culture.

Finaly, policymakers in hospitality education should prioritize the integration of service quality benchmarks into internship frameworks to cultivate a sustainable and motivated workforce. This approach ensures that students are exposed to industry standards early in their training, fostering a culture of excellence and professionalism. By embedding these benchmarks within internship guidelines, students gain a clearer understanding of expectations while developing the skills and attitudes necessary to meet them.

6.   Conclusion

This study successfully highlights the intricate relationship between the hallmarks of the hotel industry, internship service quality, and internship satisfaction in shaping Indonesian hospitality students' future career intentions. Despite the commonly perceived challenges in the hotel industry, such as unpleasant work environments, heavy job responsibilities, slow career development, and limited recognition, it did not significantly deter students from pursuing careers in hospitality. This resilience may stem from students' pre-existing passion for the field and their ability to adapt to industry realities through experiential learning. The study underscores the pivotal role of high-quality internships in fostering positive career intentions. Structured internships characterized by effective mentorship, skill-building opportunities, and a supportive work environment were found to significantly enhance students' satisfaction and professional aspirations. Thus, building stronger collaborations with hotels need to be further strengthened to provide enriching and well-aligned internship experiences. Similarly, for hotels, investing in robust internship frameworks is a strategic move to nurture future talent and improve industry perceptions. Policymakers must integrate service quality benchmarks into internship guidelines to ensure sustainable and motivated workforce development. Ultimately, fostering high-quality internship experiences is key to shaping the future workforce and addressing the evolving needs of the hospitality industry.

This study has several limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the use of a self-reported and self-administered survey may introduce biases such as social desirability or inaccuracies in participants' responses. Second, the sample is limited to hotel management students from a single institution, Universitas Negeri Padang, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions or institutions. Future studies should consider expanding the sample to include students from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. Additionally, a longitudinal approach could provide deeper insights into how career intentions evolve over time and after entering the workforce, offering a more comprehensive understanding.

Author's declaration

Author contribution

Feri Ferdian: Conceptualization, Analyzed and interpreted the data and Wrote the original paper. **Asmar Yulastri**: Conceptualization and Instrument Validation. **Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari**: Conceptualization, Development or design of methodology, and Wrote the revised paper. **Hijriyantomi Suyuthie**: Data Validation. **Pasaribu**: Creation of models.

Funding statement

Acknowledgements

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no competing interest.

Ethical clearance

This research involves human subjects, and permission has been obtained from the relevant institution where the research is being conducted. All participants have provided informed consent to be part of the study.

AI statement

This article is the author's original work, written from original research and no sections or figures are generated by AI. English is checked using Grammarly and has been verified by the authors.

Publisher's and Journal's note

Universitas Negeri Padang as the publisher and Editor of Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Kejuruan state that there is no conflict of interest towards this article publication.

References

Ansari, A. N. (2025). Enhancing Real-World Skills Through Internships: A Qualitative Exploration. In *Innovative Educational Frameworks for Future Skills and Competencies* (pp. 211–236). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. https://www.igi-global.com/gateway/chapter/367103

Ariza-Montes, A., Hernández-Perlines, F., Han, H., & Law, R. (2019). Human dimension of the hospitality industry: Working conditions and psychological well-being among European servers. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *41*, 138–147. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2019.10.013

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=id&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Bandura+%281997%29+&btnG=

Barron, P. (2008). Education and talent management: implications for the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *20*(7), 730–742. https://doi.org/10.1108/09596110810897583

Barron, P., Maxwell, G., Broadbridge, A., & Ogden, S. (2007). Careers in Hospitality Management: Generation Y's Experiences and Perceptions. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *14*(2), 119–128. https://doi.org/10.1375/jhtm.14.2.119

Buhalis, D., Efthymiou, L., Uzunboylu, N., & Thrassou, A. (2024). Charting the progress of technology adoption in tourism and hospitality in the era of industry 4.0. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, *19*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-11-2023-0310

Carlisle, S., Ivanov, S., & Dijkmans, C. (2023). The digital skills divide: evidence from the European tourism industry. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, *9*(2), 240–266. https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-07-2020-0114

Chen, C., & Wen, P. (2016). The effect of mentoring on protégés' organizational deviance. *Psychological Reports*, *119*(1), 200–220. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294116659456

Chen, T., Shen, C., & Gosling, M. (2021). To stay or not to stay? The causal effect of interns' career intention on enhanced employability and retention in the hospitality and tourism industry. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, *28*, 100305. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2021.100305

Chiang, C.-F., Back, K.-J., & Canter, D. D. (2005). The impact of employee training on job satisfaction and intention to stay in the hotel industry. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, *4*(2), 99–118. https://doi.org/10.1300/J171v04n02_06

Chin, W. W. (1998). The Partial Least Squares Approach to Structural Equation Modeling. In *Modern methods for business research* (Vol. 2, pp. 295–336). http://www.researchgate.net/publication/232569511

Cho, E., Smith, K. R., & Hubert, S. K. (2021). Delivering Experiential Learning Through Virtual Study Tour and Alternative Internship Options During a Pandemic. *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*, *113*(2), 14–20. https://doi.org/10.14307/JFCS113.2.14

Ferdian, F. (2021). *The millennial hospitality graduates commitment toward hotel industry career: diagnosing causes of the causations*. Universiti Teknologi MARA. https://ir.uitm.edu.my/id/eprint/60743/

Ferdian, F., Zahari, M. S. M., Abd Fatah, M. O. R., Mat Issa, Z., & Hanafiah, M. H. (2024). Investigating the effectiveness of conventional hospitality education curriculum in shaping Millennials' career commitment: an empirical inquiry. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, *24*(1), 33–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2023.2273496

Ferdian, F., Zahari, M. S. M., Hanafiah, M. H., & Patah, M. O. R. A. (2024). Hotel Workplace Environment, Millennial Culture and Graduates Career Commitment: An Empirical Investigation. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, *25*(2), 294–312. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2023.2273496

Ghani, B., Zada, M., Memon, K. R., Ullah, R., Khattak, A., Han, H., Ariza-Montes, A., & Araya-Castillo, L. (2022). Challenges and strategies for employee retention in the hospitality industry: A review. *Sustainability*, *14*(5), 2885. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14052885

Ghosh, P., & Jhamb, D. (2021). How is the influence of hotel internship service quality a measurable factor in student interns' behavioral intentions? Mediating Role of Interns' Satisfaction. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, *21*(3), 290–311. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2021.1912688

Ghosh, P., Jhamb, D., & Yu, L. (2022). Faculty behavioral intentions in hospitality education: effect of service quality, service value, sacrifice, and satisfaction. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2022.2034121

Hair Jr, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2021). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)*. Sage publications.

Hair Jr, J. F., Matthews, L. M., Matthews, R. L., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). PLS-SEM or CB-SEM: updated guidelines on which method to use. *International Journal of Multivariate Data Analysis*, *1*(2), 107–123. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMDA.2017.087624

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *43*(1), 115–135. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8

Hora, M. T., Chen, Z., Wolfgram, M., Zhang, J., & Fischer, J. J. (2024). Designing effective internships: A mixed-methods exploration of the sociocultural aspects of intern satisfaction and development. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *95*(5), 579–606. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2023.2241330

Jones, J., & Smith, H. A. (2022). A comparative study of formal coaching and mentoring programmes in higher education. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *11*(2), 213–231. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-03-2021-0054

Kim, B. P., McCleary, K. W., & Kaufman, T. (2010). The New Generation in the Industry: Hospitality/Tourism Students' Career Preferences, Sources of Influence and Career Choice Factors. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, *22*(3), 5–11. https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2010.10696979

Kim, H., & Park, E. J. (2013). The role of social experience in undergraduates' career perceptions through internships. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, *12*(1), 70–78. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2012.11.003

Kukreti, R., & Dani, R. (2021). Determining the role of working environment, contextual factors and task characteristics in internship satisfaction of hospitality undergraduates. *Materials Today: Proceedings*, *46*, 11226–11229. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.matpr.2021.02.514

Kusluvan, S., & Kusluvan, Z. (2000). Perceptions and attitudes of undergraduate tourism students towards working in the tourism industry in Turkey. *Tourism Management*, *21*(3), 251–269. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(99)00057-6

Lam, T., & Ching, L. (2007). An exploratory study of an internship program: The case of Hong Kong students. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *26*(2), 336–351. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2006.01.001

Lee, P. C., Lee, M. J., & Dopson, L. R. (2019). Who influences college students' career choices? An empirical study of hospitality management students. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, *31*(2), 74–86. https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2018.1485497

Liu, Y., Draper, J., & Dawson, M. (2022). The relationship between work experience and career expectations: career decision-making self-efficacy as mediator. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2022.2034118

Mandal, S., Raju, S. S., & Yadav, N. (2025). Sustainability Through Technology: How Innovations Are Driving Eco-Friendly Hospitality Practices. In *Marketing Technology-Infused Hospitality: Upskilling Frontline Employees for Competitiveness* (pp. 309–336). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-7127-5.ch012

Mannaa, M. T., & Abou-Shouk, M. (2020). Students' perceptions towards working in the tourism and hospitality industry in United Arab Emirates. *Al-Adab Journal*, *135*, 33–52. https://doi.org/10.31973/aj.v1i135.842

Mohammed, A. alem M. (2018). Students' intention to join the hotel industry in Malaysia: the role of physical working conditions, pay and benefits, and promotion opportunities. *Journal of Business & Retail Management Research*, *12*(04). https://doi.org/10.24052/JBRMR/V12IS04/ART-24

Ozturk, A. B., Hancer, M., & Im, J. Y. (2014). Job characteristics, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment for hotel workers in Turkey. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, *23*(3), 294–313. https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2013.796866

Pusiran, A. K., Janin, Y., Ismail, S., & Dalinting, L. J. (2020). Hospitality internship program insights. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, *12*(2), 155–164. https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-12-2019-0079

Qiu, S., Dooley, L., & Palkar, T. (2017). What factors influence the career choice of hotel management major students in Guangzhou? *Independent Journal of Management & Production*, *8*(3), 1092–1115. https://doi.org/10.14807/ijmp.v8i3.618

Qu, H., Leung, X. Y., Huang, S. S., & He, J. (2021). Factors affecting hotel interns' satisfaction with internship experience and career intention in China. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, *28*, 100311. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2021.100311

Ramayah, T., Ling, N. S., Taghizadeh, S. K., & Rahman, S. A. (2016). Factors influencing SMEs website continuance intention in Malaysia. *Telematics and Informatics*, *33*(1), 150–164. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2015.06.007

Richardson, S. (2009). Undergraduates' perceptions of tourism and hospitality as a career choice. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *28*(3), 382–388. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2008.10.006

Richardson, S. (2010). Generation Y's Perceptions and Attitudes Towards a Career in Tourism and Hospitality. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, *9*(2), 179–199. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332840903383855

Rodriguez, G. E. F. (2015). Craft-Based Learning: Practical and Theoretical Guidance for Teaching and Training in Hospitality Education. In *Educational Strategies for the Next Generation Leaders in Hotel Management* (pp. 196–216). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-8565-9.ch009

Roney, S. A., & Öztin, P. (2007). Career Perceptions of Undergraduate Tourism Students: A Case Study in. *Turkey Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education*, *6*(1), 4–17. https://doi.org/10.3794/johlste.61.118

Rosyidi, A. Z. (2024). The Effect of Training and Career Development on Employee Performance with Employee Engagement as an Intervening Variable. *Jurnal Bisnis, Ekonomi, Manajemen, Dan Kewirausahaan*, *4*(2), 217–224. https://doi.org/10.31955/mea.v8i2.4354

Savickas, M. L. (2013). Career construction theory and practice. *Career Development and Counseling: Putting Theory and Research to Work*, *2*, 144–180.

Septiandiani, F., Nurzukhrufa, A., Munirwan, H., & Setiawan, A. (2021). Evaluating the integration of research-based internship with sustainable environmental thinking. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, *881*(1), 12014. https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/881/1/012014

Sihite, J., Dewi, T. R., & Widyastuti, N. (2019). The tourism student social status: The role nature of work and career prospect. *European Journal of Business and Management*, *11*(23). https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/EJBM/article/download/49209/50838

Siu, G., Cheung, C., & Law, R. (2012). Developing a Conceptual Framework for Measuring Future Career Intention of Hotel Interns. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, *12*(2), 188–215. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2012.678220

Swargiary, K. (2024). *Redefining Reality: My Vision for an Education Rooted in Real-World Experiences*. ERA, US.

Wang, C.-J., & Hsieh, H.-Y. (2022). Effect of deep learning approach on career self-efficacy: Using off-campus internships of hospitality college students as an example. *Sustainability*, *14*(13), 7594. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14137594

Wong, S. C., & Mohd Rasdi, R. (2019). Influences of career establishment strategies on generation Y's self-directedness career: Can gender make a difference?. *European Journal of Training and Development*, *43*(5/6), 435–455. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-08-2018-0082

Yiu, M., & Law, R. (2012). A review of hospitality internship: Different perspectives of students, employers, and educators. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, *12*(4), 377–402. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2012.729459

Yunus, I. Y., Ridzwan, F. S., Azhar, S. N., Rajis, A. S. M., Harun, N. A., & Omar, M. S. (2021). Tourism and Hospitality Students' Perceptions of Careers in the Industry: A Case Study of Politeknik Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Society*, *3*(2), 82–89. https://myjms.mohe.gov.my/index.php/ijares/article/view/13489

Zopiatis, A., Theocharous, A. L., & Constanti, P. (2016). Adult vocational decision, career satisfaction and future intention: insights from the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *28*(12), 2696–2720. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-03-2015-0099