

# Ethics Education for Internship and Career Development : A Pilot Study for Constructing an Ethics Training Framework

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# Literature Review

## The effects of internship:

- \* Gault *et al.* (2010) studies the relationship between internship participation and students' employment marketability.
- \* Their study confirmed the value of internship experience on the students' employment marketability.

# Literature Review

The effects of internship:

- \* Maelah *et al.* (2014) reported some evidences that internship may help develop students' soft skills such as working in group, meeting deadlines, communication skills, problem solving skills, coping with stress and ability to general practical ideas.

# Literature Review

## Preparing for work readiness:

- \* Gysbers (2013) discussed the meaning of “Career Ready”. One way to interpret career readiness is about how students equip the knowledge, skills, and interpersonal relationship skills for engaging in different settings in workplace.
- \* Gysbers (2013) also discussed how school counselling programs and a whole school-community approach help students become career ready.

# Literature Review

## Preparing for work readiness:

- \* 40% of the respondents (internship providers) indicated that interns failed to show they are “work ready” in the aspects such as handling unfamiliar problems and communication skills (Jacking and Natoli, 2015)

# Literature review

Literature related to ethics in workplace:

- \* Integrity and character/personality are two of the top ten most important elements when employers recruit new graduates. (Archer and Davison, 2008)
- \* McMurray *et al.* (2016) also pointed out the importance of personal attitude and trustworthiness when recruiting graduates.
- \* Some studies discussed the need of preparing students for the possibilities of ethical issues in workplace (e.g. gender discrimination (Sipe *et al.*, 2009)

# Objectives

The importance of ethics justifies more attention on ethics training for internship and career development

This pilot study aims to achieve two objectives:

- \* (i) to understand students' perception on the need of ethics training for internship or students' readiness for entering workplace settings; and
- \* (ii) to collect students' input on pedagogy for establishing an ethics training framework

# Methodology

- \* Semi-structured interview approach (Streubert & Carpenter, 1995)
- \* A Pilot Study - Three tertiary students were invited to participate voluntarily in semi-structured individual interviews with the aid of a questionnaire.
- \* Covered aspects including:
  - (i) Personal attitudes;
  - (ii) Interpersonal communication;
  - (iii) Internship responsibilities;
  - (iv) Rules and regulation of the respective industry or workplace;
  - (v) Host company/college's support to interns

(Related literature: Archer & Davison (2008); Maelah *et al.* (2014); Maertz *et al.* (2014); McMurray *et al.* (2016); Nolan *et al.* (2010))



# Findings

Results of this pilot study show three findings.

- \* First, students indicate relatively higher training need on internship responsibilities, rules and regulations of respective industry or workplace.
- \* Second, students have mixed views on the training needs on personal attitudes and interpersonal communication.

# Findings

- \* Some possible explanations:
  - Students may learn personal attitudes and interpersonal communication skills through other training opportunities?
  - It may be difficult to change one's attitudes through an ethics training programme?
  - Or it is related to the “effectiveness of the training methodology”?
  - Students without/ with less working experience report higher needs on ethics training ?

# Findings

- \* Third, some evidences suggest that there is a need for using interactive approach for ethics training.
- \* Some responses also show that there may be a need to use a combination of interactive approach and other traditional approaches (e.g. lecturing, cases for discussion, notes of reminders, reading materials, etc), depending on the nature of the ethics training content.

# Conclusion

- \* This pilot study suggests further studies and evaluation for establishing an ethics training framework (acronym as “A.I.R. Codes” framework) that comprises four main training aspects:
  - \* (i). Attitudes;
  - \* (ii). Interpersonal communication/relationship,
  - \* (iii). Responsibilities to stakeholders; and
  - \* (iv). Codes and relevant regulations

# References

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