



Progress of the university internship program on professional skill development of undergraduates in Faculty of Social Sciences in University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Hansika.D.G.N.¹; Sakalasooriya.N.²

Abstract

This study evaluates the Progress of the university internship program on professional skill development of undergraduates in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Kelaniya. The majority of Arts graduates of Sri Lankan universities have been suffering to finding a first job. On the other hand, the researches show that the lack of professional experience is one of the major reason for hunting a job. Consequently, The Arts faculties of Sri Lankan universities have introduced an institutional internship program to provide professional experience and targeted to reduce the waiting period for the first job. In the process, it is imperative to find out how the internships offered by the universities contribute to the development of students' professional skills. There has also been the realization that imparting the relevant practical skills is a partnership between the training institution and prospective employers through student internships. However, despite these positive intentions, interns on field attachment have faced serious challenges among which are insufficient time and lack of funding for the programs. The main objective of this program is to study the problems and challenges they face during the training period. Concurrent studies often identify a gap in the quality of these training, and there are some problems when it comes to employer or marketplace services. The Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Kelaniya was selected as the study area for this study. The reason for the selection of this sample was the fact that the University of Kelaniya has the lowest graduate employment rate of 41.6% and the unemployment rate is 25.5%. 80 students were selected from 833 students in the Faculty of Social Sciences under the simple random sampling method. Secondary data and primary data are used for data collection. The observational method collects data under a selective, questionnaire. Internship training is very important in the development of students' professional skills in this research. The need for the reorganization of the training was identified to be beneficial to the student professionally while minimizing the problems and challenges encountered in the training. Similarly, quarterly training on vocational skills development is influenced by the changes that need to be made at the university, institutional and individual levels.

Key Words: university education, Internship, professional skills

¹Department of Geography, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. (niuok1996@gmail.com)

²Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka (sakalasooriyanp@yahoo.com)