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# AN ANALYSIS OF INTERNSHIP-RELATED PROBLEMS FACED BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN HEMCHANDRACHARYA NORTH GUJARAT UNIVERSITY.

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**ABSTRACT:**

This study investigates the challenges undergraduate students at Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University (HNGU) face regarding internships under the NEP 2020 framework. Analyzing data from 100 respondents across various streams, the research identifies significant barriers, including financial strain, logistical hurdles, and a lack of formal placement support. Findings reveal that 67% of students receive insufficient or no stipends, while 44% report poor or hostile mentorship. Statistical analysis via Chi-Square tests confirms that stipend availability is significantly linked to the stream of study, and geographical location dictates specific barriers—rural students lack guidance while urban students face high competition. Furthermore, a strong correlation exists between academic preparedness and the quality of work assigned. The study concludes that the internship ecosystem remains fragmented and inequitable, necessitating urgent curriculum alignment, enhanced campus placement drives, and structured mentorship to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and professional practice.

**KEYWORDS:** Internship Barriers, NEP 2020, Undergraduate Employability, Academic Preparedness

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Overview of UGC Internship Guidelines

To enhance employability and research skills, these guidelines emphasize the integration of classroom theory with practical workplace experience. In accordance with the National Education Policy 2020, undergraduate students must complete internships of 60 to 120 hours (2-4 credits) after their fourth semester. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are required to appoint a Nodal Officer and maintain digital portals to facilitate registration and industry collaboration. To support students in gaining hands-on experiential learning, an internal supervisor and an external mentor will provide guidance. Student

evaluations will be based on activity logbooks, project reports, and viva voce examinations, ensuring the development of both professional ethics and technical skills.(Guidelines for Internship / Research Internship for Under Graduate Students University Grants Commission Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, 2023)

**LITRETURE REVIEW:**

Rathod et al. (2023) "A Survey on the Perceived Impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic on Dental Undergraduate Students in the North Gujarat Region, India" investigated the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on dental undergraduates in North Gujarat, India, Based on 160 survey responses, primarily from interns, the study highlights severe disruptions in clinical training caused by reduced patient OPD and fewer training hours, Interns experienced the most significant negative impact on their study careers and future practice readiness, While some students utilized online learning, half argued it was an inadequate substitute for traditional face-to-face lessons,. Psychologically, students reported moderate to high levels of fear and anxiety regarding career progress and infection risks to themselves and their families, Consequently, the research emphasizes the urgent need for universities to implement structured communication and psychological counselling to support student mental health during such global health crises.(Rathod et al., 2023)

Loyi and Ete (2025) "Student Reflections on the First Internship Program Under NEP 2020: A Case Study from Government Model College, Basar" examined the first implementation of NEP 2020 internship programs for 4th-semester students at Government Model College, Basar. Qualitative feedback from 40 students revealed that while internships boost professional confidence and real-world awareness, significant structural challenges exist. Many participants found the program unstructured, struggling specifically with report writing, time management, and professional adjustments. A major concern was the weak coordination between the college and internship providers, leaving some students feeling neglected. To address these gaps, the study recommends pre-internship orientations to equip students with soft skills and technical report-writing techniques. Additionally, establishing clear learning objectives and a strengthened mentorship system is vital to bridging the gap between theory and practice. Providing consistent support ensures these early-semester programs remain successful and meaningful. (Loyi & Ete, 2025)

Heidari et al. (2025) "Experiences of internship nursing students in confronting ethical issues: a qualitative study" conducted a qualitative study on Iranian nursing interns (7th and 8th semesters) facing ethical dilemmas in clinical settings. The central theme identified was "Limited Ethical Maturity," where students often exhibited passive behaviour due to feeling powerless and unprepared. Key challenges

included insufficient ethical preparation in academic courses and a lack of ethical reasoning skills, causing students to remain silent observers rather than addressing professional deviations. Furthermore, an ineffective ethical atmosphere in hospitals, marked by poor communication and a gap between theory and practice, hindered student growth. The study concludes that the current nursing ethics curriculum is inconsistent and lacks a basic structure. It recommends strengthening ethical sensitivity and courage through revised curricula and better clinical mentorship to bridge the academic-practice gap.(Heidari et al., 2025)

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. This section outlines the research design, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and analytical tools used to study the internship-related problems faced by undergraduate students at Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University (HNGU).

- **Research Problem**

The study aims to investigate the "Analysis of Internship-Related Problems Faced by Undergraduate Students in Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University." It focuses on identifying barriers such as financial constraints, lack of guidance, and curriculum gaps that hinder effective internship experiences.

- **Research Objectives**

1. To study the demographic profile of undergraduate students pursuing internships at HNGU.
2. To identify the primary barriers (logistical, financial, and academic) faced by students in securing and completing internships.
3. To examine the relationship between the student's stream of study and stipend availability.
4. To analyse the impact of college location (Urban vs. Rural) on the challenges faced by students.
5. To determine the association between academic preparedness and the quality of work assigned during internships.

- **Research Design**

1. Descriptive Research: Used to describe the current situation regarding internship problems (e.g., frequencies of students facing financial issues).
2. Analytical Research: Used to analyse the data and test hypotheses to find relationships between variables (e.g., Stream vs. Stipend).

- **Sampling Design**

1. Target Population: Undergraduate students (Arts, Commerce, Science, IT) enrolled in colleges affiliated with HNGU.
2. Sample Size: 100 Respondents.
3. Sampling Method: Stratified Convenience Sampling. The population was stratified based on the stream of study (Commerce, Arts, Science, IT) to ensure representation from all major disciplines, and respondents were selected based on availability and willingness to participate.

- **Data Collection**

1. Primary Data: Collected through a Structured Questionnaire designed in a Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ) format. The questionnaire covered demographic details, awareness, logistical challenges, workplace experiences, and suggestions.
2. Secondary Data: Gathered from university reports, existing research papers on higher education in Gujarat, and online journals to support the theoretical framework.

- **Variables of the Study**

1. **Independent Variables:** Stream of Study, College Location, Academic Preparedness.
2. **Dependent Variables:** Stipend Status, Internship Barriers, Nature of Work Assigned.

- **Tools for Data Analysis**

The collected data was coded and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The following statistical tools were applied:

1. **Frequency & Percentage Analysis:** To present the demographic profile and general responses in tabular form.
2. **Cross-Tabulation:** To compare two variables side-by-side (e.g., Location vs. Barrier).
3. **Chi-Square Test of Independence (X2):** Used to test the statistical significance of the hypotheses at a 5% level of significance (95% Confidence Level).

- **Hypothesis Testing**

- **Hypothesis 1:** Stream of Study vs. Stipend Availability
- **$H_0$:** There is no significant association between the stream of study and the stipend status of the internship.
- **$H_1$:** There is a significant association between the stream of study and the stipend status of the internship.
- **Hypothesis 2:** College Location vs. Internship Barriers
- **$H_0$:** There is no significant relationship between the location

of the college and the primary barrier faced by students in securing internships.

- **$H_1$:** There is a significant relationship between the location of the college and the primary barrier faced by students.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Academic Preparedness vs. Nature of Work Assigned
- **$H_0$:** There is no significant association between a student's perception of academic preparedness and the nature of work assigned during the internship.
- **$H_1$:** There is a significant association between a student's perception of academic preparedness and the nature of work assigned.

## DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS:

### 1) Frequency Analysis

**A) Stream of Study, Year of Study, College Location**

| Variable | Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Stream of Study** | Commerce / Management | 34 | 34.0 |
| | Arts | 22 | 22.0 |
| | Science | 22 | 22.0 |
| | Computer / IT | 22 | 22.0 |
| **College Location** | Urban area | 34 | 34.0 |
| | Semi-urban area | 33 | 33.0 |
| | Rural area | 33 | 33.0 |

**Interpretation**

Table 1 outlines the demographic profile of 100 respondents. In terms of study streams, Commerce/Management has the highest participation (34%), while Arts, Science, and Computer/IT are equally represented (22% each). Regarding the year of study, Third/Final Year students form the majority (56%), significantly outnumbering First Year students (11%). Finally, college locations are almost perfectly balanced, with Urban areas (34%) slightly exceeding Semi-urban and Rural areas (33% each).

**B) Source of Internship, Primary Barrier, NOC Process**

**Table 2: Internship Awareness and Acquisition**

| Variable | Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Source of Internship** | Campus placement | 18 | 18.0 |
| | Online portals | 27 | 27.0 |
| | Personal contacts | 34 | 34.0 |
| | None / Not found | 21 | 21.0 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Primary Barrier** | Lack of guidance | 27 | 27.0 |
| | Limited opportunities | 40 | 40.0 |
| | High competition / Experience required | 23 | 23.0 |
| | Lack of skills | 10 | 10.0 |
| **NOC Process** | Yes, Easy | 45 | 45.0 |
| | Yes, Slow | 23 | 23.0 |
| | No, Unsupportive | 11 | 11.0 |
| | Not Applicable | 21 | 21.0 |

**Interpretation**

Table 2 details internship awareness and acquisition trends. The data reveals that Personal contacts (34%) were the most effective source for securing internships, outperforming Online portals (27%) and Campus placements (18%). Regarding challenges, the most significant hurdle was Limited opportunities (40%), followed by a Lack of guidance (27%). Administratively, the NOC process was largely favourable, with 45% finding it "Easy," though 23% described it as "Slow".

**C) Distance to Workplace, Stipend Status, Transportation Issues**

**Table 3: Logistical and Financial Aspects**

| Variable | Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Distance to Workplace** | 0 – 10 km | 23 | 23.0 |
| | 10 – 30 km | 33 | 33.0 |
| | More than 30 km | 33 | 33.0 |
| | Remote | 11 | 11.0 |
| **Stipend Status** | Paid (Satisfactory) | 22 | 22.0 |
| | Paid (Low/ Insufficient) | 34 | 34.0 |
| | Unpaid (Travel reimbursed) | 11 | 11.0 |
| | Completely Unpaid | 33 | 33.0 |
| **Transportation Issues** | Easy / Affordable | 45 | 45.0 |
| | Irregular | 24 | 24.0 |
| | Costly | 22 | 22.0 |
| | Exhausting | 9 | 9.0 |

**Interpretation**

Table 3 covers logistical and financial aspects. Commuting is a major factor, with 66% of respondents traveling either 10–30 km or over 30 km. Financially, conditions are

challenging: the largest segment (34%) reports low pay, and 33% work completely unpaid, while only 22% are satisfied with their stipend. Regarding transportation, although 45% find it affordable, significant barriers remain, including irregular services (24%) and high costs (22%).

**D) Preparedness (Curriculum), Nature of Work, Language Barriers, Mentorship Quality**

**Table 4: Workplace Experience and Skill Application**

| Variable | Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Preparedness (Curriculum)** | Fully Prepared | 28 | 28.0 |
| | Partially Prepared | 29 | 29.0 |
| | Gap (Theory vs Practice) | 22 | 22.0 |
| | Unrelated Work | 21 | 21.0 |
| **Nature of Work** | Core Technical | 33 | 33.0 |
| | Mix (Technical + Admin) | 23 | 23.0 |
| | Menial Tasks (Filing, etc.) | 23 | 23.0 |
| | No specific work | 21 | 21.0 |
| **Language Barriers** | Native (Gujarati) | 45 | 45.0 |
| | English Difficulties | 16 | 16.0 |
| | Technical Terminology | 17 | 17.0 |
| | Fluent | 22 | 22.0 |
| **Mentorship Quality** | Excellent | 28 | 28.0 |
| | Average | 28 | 28.0 |
| | Poor | 34 | 34.0 |
| | Hostile | 10 | 10.0 |

**Interpretation**

Table 4 highlights mixed workplace experiences. While 28% of students felt fully prepared by their curriculum, a significant 21% ended up doing unrelated work. Task distribution varied, with only 33% securing core technical roles, while others faced mixed or menial tasks. Language barriers were minimal for the 45% using native Gujarati, though some struggled with English or technical terms. However, mentorship was a critical pain point: the largest group (34%) rated it as "Poor," and 10% encountered hostility.

**E) Impact on Attendance, Project Report Issues, Suggestions for HNGU**

**Table 5: Academic Impact and Student Suggestions**

| Variable | Category | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Impact on Attendance** | No Issue | 27 | 27.0 |
| | Managed with difficulty | 40 | 40.0 |
| | Attendance Shortage | 22 | 22.0 |
| | Skipped Internship | 11 | 11.0 |
| **Project Report Issues** | Clear Guidelines | 49 | 49.0 |
| | Unclear Format | 32 | 32.0 |
| | Data Access Issues | 7 | 7.0 |
| | Time Constraints | 12 | 12.0 |
| **Suggestions for HNGU** | Make Mandatory | 21 | 21.0 |
| | Better Exam/ Internship Schedule | 23 | 23.0 |
| | More Campus Drives | 33 | 33.0 |
| | Provide Stipend/ Funding | 23 | 23.0 |

**Interpretation**

Table 5 assesses the academic impact of internships and student feedback. Attendance was a significant challenge, with 40% managing it "with difficulty" and 22% facing attendance shortages. Regarding project reports, nearly half (49%) reported clear guidelines, though 32% struggled with unclear formats. The primary suggestion for the university (HNGU) was to increase Campus Drives (33%), followed equally by requests for better scheduling and stipend funding (23% each).

**2) Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis 1: Stream of Study vs. Stipend Availability**

**Table 6: Chi-Square Test Results for Stream vs. Stipend**

| Statistic | Value (X2) | Degrees of Freedom (df) | Asymptotic Significance (p-value) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 108.418 | 9 | <.001 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 129.982 | 9 | <.001 |
| N of Valid Cases | 100 | | |

**Interpretation**

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 108.418 with a p-value of <.001. Since the p-value is significantly less than the standard alpha level of 0.05, we Reject the Null Hypothesis (H0). This indicates a statistically significant relationship between the stream of study and whether a student receives a stipend. The data reveals that students in professional streams (like IT and Commerce) are more likely to receive paid internships compared to students in Arts or Science.

**Hypothesis 2: College Location vs. Internship Barriers**

**Table 7: Chi-Square Test Results for Location vs. Barrier**

| Statistic | Value (X2) | Degrees of Freedom (df) | Asymptotic Significance (p-value) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 86.970 | 6 | <.001 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 104.381 | 6 | <.001 |
| N of Valid Cases | 100 | | |

**Interpretation**

The Chi-Square test yielded a value of 86.970 with a p-value of <.001, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, we Reject the Null Hypothesis (H0). This confirms that the challenges students face is dependent on their location. Rural students primarily struggle with a "Lack of Guidance," whereas Urban and Semi-urban students face issues related to "Limited Opportunities" and "High Competition," suggesting that intervention strategies must be tailored by region.

**Hypothesis 3: Academic Preparedness vs. Nature of Work Assigned**

**Table 8: Chi-Square Test Results for Preparedness vs. Nature of Work**

| Statistic | Value (X2) | Degrees of Freedom (df) | Asymptotic Significance (p-value) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 262.573 | 9 | <.001 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 196.262 | 9 | <.001 |
| N of Valid Cases | 100 | | |

**Interpretation**

The test shows a very high Chi-Square value of 262.573 and a p-value of <.001. We clearly Reject the Null Hypothesis (H0). This result demonstrates a very strong link between how well the curriculum prepares a student and the quality of work they are given. Students who felt "Fully Prepared" were entrusted with core technical tasks, while those who felt a

gap in their education were often relegated to menial or administrative duties. This highlights the need for curriculum updates to match industry standards.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:

### A) Findings

Based on the analysis of 100 undergraduate students from HNGU, the following key observations were made:

- ***Demographic & Logistical Findings:***
- **Internship Sources:** The university's formal placement support is low, with only 18% of students securing internships through campus placements. The majority (34%) rely on personal contacts.
- **Financial Strain:** Unpaid or low-paid internships are a dominant issue. 67% of students are either completely unpaid or receive insufficient stipends, while only 22% report a satisfactory stipend.
- **Commuting Hurdles:** 66% of students travel more than 10 km for their internships, and 46% face transportation challenges (irregularity or high cost).
- ***Workplace & Academic Findings:***
- **Skill Gap:** There is a direct correlation between academic preparedness and work quality. Students who felt "Fully Prepared" were given core technical roles, while those who felt a gap in theory vs. practice were often assigned menial tasks.
- **Mentorship Crisis:** A significant 44% of students rated their workplace mentorship as Poor or Hostile, indicating a lack of structured guidance in the industry.
- **Academic Pressure:** Balancing internships with college attendance is difficult for 62% of students, with many facing attendance shortages.
- ***Hypothesis Test Results:***
- **Stream Disparity:** There is a statistically significant link between the stream of study and stipends ($p < .001$). Professional streams (IT/ Commerce) are more likely to be paid than Arts/Science streams.
- **Location-Based Barriers:** The challenges faced are regionally dependent ($p < .001$). Rural students suffer from a lack of guidance, while Urban students face saturation and competition.

### B) Conclusion

The study concludes that while internships are a vital part of the undergraduate experience at HNGU, the current ecosystem is fragmented. The "Internship Gap" is not just about finding a job; it is about equity and quality.

Students from rural areas and non-

professional streams (Arts/Science) are systemically disadvantaged, facing higher financial burdens and fewer opportunities. Furthermore, the lack of curriculum alignment means that many students are entering the workforce unprepared, leading to low-quality "menial" internship experiences rather than genuine skill acquisition. Without intervention, internships remain a privilege for the well-connected rather than a standard academic opportunity for all.

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