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Prasanna S,

Chairman of Institute of Legal Education

No. 08, Arul Nagar, Seera Thoppu,

Maudhanda Kurichi, Srirangam,

Tiruchirappalli – 620102

Phone : +91 94896 71437 – info@iledu.in / Chairman@iledu.in



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THE DOUBLE EDGED SWORD OF LEGAL INTERNSHIP

AUTHOR – NIVEDITA SHARMA & HARSHITA BHARGAVA, STUDENTS AT NARSEE MONJEE INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES INDORE

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INTRODUCTION

Legal internships offer a complicated web of opportunities and difficulties that are sometimes referred to as a "double-edged sword." On the one hand, these internships provide priceless experiences that can greatly expand an intern's comprehension of the legal field. They also present networking and practical skill possibilities that are critical for career progression. They provide an essential link between professional activity and academic education, enabling interns to put their theoretical knowledge to use in practical situations.

However, these expectations are usually not met by the realities of legal internships. Numerous interns work in settings characterized by intense rivalry, little mentorship, and occasionally abusive circumstances. The discrepancy between interns' expectations and experiences might cause disillusionment, which can affect their motivation and job satisfaction in the legal industry. The systemic problems, such as those involving equity and exploitation, that are inherent in the design of legal internships are called into question by this phenomenon.

Examining internships' dual nature—recognizing their ability to both promote professional progress and perpetuate inequities—becomes essential as the legal profession struggles with these issues. The revolving dichotomy is how the workings of legal internships can both empower and disenfranchise future attorneys.

The rise of legal internships in Modern Education

With the evolution of legal education and practice, legal internships have become an almost essential component of a law student's resume. Law firms' expectations as well as law students' own have fueled the transition from a strictly academic to a more experiential approach to learning. To better equip students for the reality of the legal profession, law schools are increasingly emphasizing practical training through clinical programs, externships, and internships. Internships serve as a kind of training ground where students can practice applying their theoretical knowledge to real-world situations while being supervised by attorneys in practice. An internship is frequently a law student's first genuine introduction to the

legal field, and it greatly influences their conception of what it means to practice law. Interns obtain invaluable knowledge about the daily workings of law firms, government agencies, and non-profit organisations through tasks including document drafting and court hearing attendance. Their legal knowledge is strengthened by this real-world experience, which also gives them an advantage over other candidates in the employment market. Internships allow students to develop contacts with mentors and potential employers in a field where connections are frequently just as important as qualifications. These professional networks can have a big impact on students' future career prospects.

Legal Internships as a Pathway to Career Advancement

Since legal internships can result in full-time work, they are a popular option for recent law graduates. Internships are seen by employers as a trial time to evaluate a candidate's abilities, work ethic, and cultural fit with the company. An intern's performance throughout their internship can raise the likelihood that they will be offered a job once they graduate. Internships are often used by legal departments and companies as their main source of new hires; many full-time positions are filled by previous interns.

In a competitive legal market, the abilities acquired during an internship, such as legal research, drafting, and client engagement, might increase the marketability of recent law graduates. Students can also specialize in particular legal fields through internships, such as criminal defence, business law, or intellectual property.

Additionally, internships help close the knowledge gap between legal education and professional practice by letting students use what they've learnt in authentic situations. This shift from academic knowledge to real-world application is crucial since the legal profession frequently calls for pressure-filled work environments, intricate procedural navigation, and legal knowledge.

The Darker Side: Exploitation and Inequality in Legal Internships

While there are many advantages to legal internships, there are also a lot of disadvantages. The frequency of unpaid internships, which disproportionately impacts students from lower-income families, is one of the key problems. A barrier to entry into the field is created by this financial load in addition to living and educational costs. Unpaid internships contribute to structural injustices in the legal profession as well as economic inequity. Since they build more relationships and experience working unpaid, students who can afford to do so frequently have an advantage over those

who cannot. This increases their chances of finding a job after graduation. As a result, a stratified structure is created in which only those with financial resources can make full use of the opportunities presented by internships. Furthermore, because their work is so demanding, especially for those who are still learning the ropes, interns frequently experience significant levels of stress and burnout.

The Disillusionment Factor: Expectations vs. Reality

A significant obstacle faced by numerous law interns is the mismatch between their anticipated and actual internship experiences. Law students frequently go into internships with great expectations about learning a lot about the legal field, getting to know mentors well, and getting a clear idea of what kind of job they want to do in the future. But in practice, things are frequently very different. With little prospects for actual legal work, many interns wind up doing basic jobs like photocopying, filing, or running errands. When expectations and reality diverge, interns may become disillusioned, feeling underappreciated and maybe second-guessing their choice to become lawyers.

Interns' disappointment is a reflection of larger systemic issues within the legal profession as well as personal issues. The emphasis on billable hours, the hierarchical structure of law firms, and the competitive constraints of the labour market can create a climate at work that is not always welcoming to new employees. When interns discover that the legal field is not as glamorous or rewarding as they had anticipated, it can often result in low job satisfaction, motivation, and even early career burnout.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The legal internship system, which was created to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical experience, frequently fails to meet the expectations of both interns and mentors. On the one hand, interns enter

these positions intending to receive hands-on experience, learn the complexities of legal practice, and acquire critical professional skills. They are excited to work closely with senior advocates and judges, expecting mentorship that will help shape their future careers. Nonetheless, many law students express feelings of disenchantment as their internships proceed. Instead of doing significant work, they are frequently assigned uninteresting jobs such as filing documents, sitting silently in court, or completing tedious legal studies. The absence of real learning, along with minimal connection with their mentors, leaves many interns feeling disappointed, undervalued, and sceptical of the value of their internship opportunity.

On the other hand, senior advocates and judges who hire interns frequently express unhappiness with the interns' quality and preparation. Many legal practitioners believe that interns lack legal expertise, attention to detail, and knowledge of court procedures. They may also believe that students are more concerned with checking off the box of completing an internship for academic credit than with being truly committed to the learning process. This misalignment of expectations results in a situation in which neither party—intern or mentor—believes they are obtaining value from the internship experience.

The disparity between expectations and reality, for both interns and mentors, reveals a larger problem inside the legal internship system. Given the demands of academia and the competitive nature of the legal profession, internships should be tailored to give relevant educational opportunities. However, the current structure frequently results in disappointment, dissatisfaction, and a sense of squandered chances for both sides. Addressing this issue necessitates a thorough evaluation of how internships are structured, how expectations are established, and how mentor-intern communication may be enhanced to produce a mutually beneficial experience.

HYPOTHESIS

1. Legal internships provide significant opportunities for career advancement by enhancing practical skills, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing employment in the competitive legal market.
2. A law graduate's success will depend on their motivation, education, initiative, and mentorship, with mentorship potentially being less influential than the other factors.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper is combination of both doctrinal and non-doctrinal research methodologies to thoroughly examine the drawbacks and advantages of legal internships when we conducted the study for our paper, *The Double-Edged Sword of Legal Internship*. By combining these two methods, we were able to compile a well-rounded perspective and bolster our study with insights from primary and secondary sources.

Doctrinal Research

The doctrinal technique, often known as library-based research, is largely concerned with the investigation and analysis of existing legal concepts, case laws, statutes, and scholarly literature. We conducted an exhaustive literature review to gather secondary data, looking at previously published articles, research papers, and journals. This research is built on previously established knowledge about legal internships, professional development, and mentorship in the legal industry. By analysing these authoritative sources, we discovered trends, reoccurring issues, and ongoing disputes that contributed to our theoretical understanding of internships as an important component of legal education.

Non-Doctrinal Research

Through the non-doctrinal, or empirical, study technique, we were able to interact directly with real-world experiences and move beyond theory. Using this approach, primary data was gathered in order to investigate the usefulness

of legal internships for both aspiring attorneys and students. In order to do this, we created and launched distinct Google Forms aimed towards two important demographics: attorneys and law students. While the forms for lawyers and advocates gathered information on the performance, difficulties, and development of interns under their tutelage, the forms for law students concentrated on their expectations, experiences, and learning outcomes during their internships. These surveys' replies gave important first-hand information and a thorough picture of how interns and their mentors view internships. The main information sheds light on the realities of internships, including the type of work assigned and working hours.

Data Integration

By combining doctrinal and non-doctrinal methodologies, we guaranteed that our study was thorough and founded in both theoretical and practical viewpoints. The doctrinal research provided us with a solid academic framework, whereas the non-doctrinal research enabled us to evaluate those beliefs against real-world experiences. This dual approach allowed us to produce a sophisticated analysis that recognised the various implications internships have on the legal community. Finally, our technique not only validated the findings using existing literature, but it also supplemented them with new insights gleaned directly from the experiences of current law students and legal practitioners. This comprehensive approach enabled us to investigate legal internships through both theoretical and empirical lenses, leading to a better understanding of their dual character.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. (Ummar Jamal, 2024) This article "Unpaid Legal Interns: Victims of a Regulatory Void in India" discusses the challenges faced by unpaid legal interns in India, highlighting issues such as financial strain, limited access to opportunities, and exploitation. It critiques the lack of regulations governing internships and emphasizes the need for legislative intervention to protect interns' rights and ensure fair compensation. The article argues that the current system perpetuates socio-economic disparities within the legal profession.
2. (Shashank Pandey and Bhakti Avasthy, 2021) The article "The menace of unpaid legal internships: A statistical analysis" highlights the problem of unpaid legal internships in India, emphasizing that many law students face exploitation due to a lack of payment for their work. Although some firms do provide compensation, unpaid internships remain common, leading to economic disparities, especially for students from lower-income backgrounds. The piece advocates for the Bar Council of India to implement standards regulating internships, including minimum wage requirements, to ensure fair treatment of interns and encourage employers to hire them.
3. (Ramanuj Mukherjee, 2018) Under the article "9 Biggest Challenges and How to Overcome Them" which discusses significant challenges faced by law students during internships, including being underestimated by supervisors and the pressure to perform at a high level. It offers insights into how interns can prove their value and secure meaningful work assignments.
4. (Maxwell D. Rosenthal, 2015) This book serves as a comprehensive guide for students seeking to secure and maximize their legal internships. It incorporates principles from various disciplines, including human resources and organizational psychology, to help students navigate their internship experiences effectively. Some of the key features stated for better understanding are like: Extensive research-based

- strategies, Practical advice on relationship-building and professional development, Endorsed by legal professionals across various sectors, etc.
5. (Lorraine Galvis, Esq., 2020) Under the article “How Virtual Internships Can Transform Your Legal Practice During COVID-19” states that COVID-19 has disrupted summer internships, with many firms canceling or rescinding offers. Remote work has become the new normal, and businesses, especially small law firms, can adapt by offering remote internships. Solo practitioners, who manage multiple roles, can benefit from interns to ease their workload, while students gain valuable experience and school credit. This arrangement offers an affordable solution for firms and practical support for students during the pandemic.
 6. (Patel, S. (2020) Several scholars propose reforms to the legal internship system. Scholars like Patel (2020) advocate for standardized regulations that mandate fair compensation and transparent hiring processes for legal internships. It is argued that regulatory bodies like the Bar Council or other law associations should implement policies that enforce fair pay for interns and ensure mentorship programs that support students’ professional and mental well-being.
 7. (Taylor, M., & Francis, K., 2020) This study investigates the mental health challenges law interns face, focusing on stress and burnout due to overwork. Taylor and Francis highlight how long hours, demanding workloads, and high expectations in legal environments lead to anxiety and burnout. The authors also address the lack of mental health support for interns and offer recommendations for law firms and educational institutions to improve well-being through workload balance and mental health resources.
 8. (Fong, 2017) “The Hidden Costs of Unpaid Legal Internships: A Barrier to Diversity in the Profession” explains the financial burdens associated with internships, especially in large cities, noting that this creates a structural disadvantage for economically disadvantaged students. The practice of unpaid internships has been heavily criticized for perpetuating inequality in access to professional opportunities.
 9. (Devereux, T., & Ewing, B., 2018) The inequality of internship opportunities has been explored by Devereux and Ewing (2018) under “Internships and Inequality: The Structural Barriers to Legal Experience”, who discuss how students from elite law schools are often prioritized in prestigious firms, while those from less prominent institutions struggle to find meaningful internships. This systemic bias creates a significant divide in career prospects, further reinforcing class and educational disparities.
 10. (Curcio, E., 2014) The issue of unpaid internships has attracted significant scholarly attention. Curcio (2014) discusses in “Exploitation or Experience? The Ethics of Unpaid Legal Internships” how unpaid internships exploit students’ labor while reinforcing socioeconomic inequality, as only those from affluent backgrounds can afford to take on internships without pay.
 11. (Collins, S., 2002) The value of internships in bridging the gap between theory and practice is well established. A study in “Learning by Doing: The Role of Internships in Legal Education.” Journal of Legal Education discusses how internships enable law students to integrate classroom learning with practical experience, helping them develop critical skills such as legal writing, research, client counselling, and

advocacy.

12. (Caroline Maughan and Julian Webb, 1995) As stated under the book "Legal Internships: A Guide for Law Students" is a valuable resource for law students, offering practical advice on navigating internships. It provides insights from educators, legal professionals, and experienced interns, covering employer expectations, strategies for maximizing learning, and tips for transitioning to a job candidate. With a focus on professional growth and personal development, this guide helps students make the most of their legal internship experiences.

DATA ANALYSIS

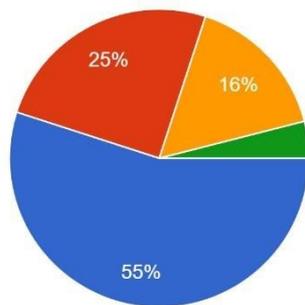
Hypothesis I- Legal internships provide significant opportunities for career advancement by enhancing practical skills, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing employment in the competitive legal market.

declared that the internship made them change their career path; this therefore asserts that practical exposure might motivate students to explore various areas within the legal field.

However, 16 of 100 reported not knowing what they wanted to do or achieve as yet, indicating that although interning can be fruitful, it is still not enough for all. Furthermore, 4 of 100 reported that they are more confused on matters of career choice, indicating that for a tiny subset, internships may trigger new confusion or problems. Overall, it suggests that although legal internships enhance career planning and exploration per se, their effectiveness is highly dependent on the circumstances of individual students.

Did the internship experience give you clarity about your future legal career path?

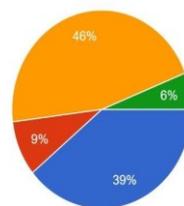
100 responses



- Yes, it helped me in planning my career goals
- Yes, but it made me reconsider my career path
- No, it did not clarify my career goals
- No, it confused me even more

What kind of tasks were you primarily assigned during your internships?

100 responses



- Mostly legal research
- Administrative tasks
- Both legal tasks & administrative tasks
- Not given substantial work

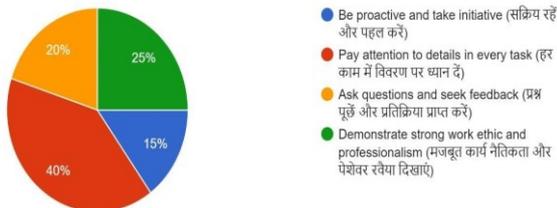
The survey findings align with the hypothesis that *legal internships provide significant opportunities for career advancement by enhancing practical skills, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing employment in the competitive legal market.* More specifically, 55 out of 100 respondents agreed that the internships helped them in planning their goals. This affirms the argument that these experiences provide essential clarity and direction. Besides, 25 out of 100 respondents

The survey findings further support the hypothesis that *legal internships provide significant opportunities for career advancement by enhancing practical skills, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing employment in the competitive legal market.*

From the survey, 46 of the 100 stated to be assigned both legal and administrative tasks, thus proving that internships provide experience in a well-balanced nature of both practical legal work as well as organizational duties. Moreover, 39 out of 100 respondents stated they mostly worked on conducting legal research, which falls along the competencies in critical thinking skills that need to be learned for the practice of law.

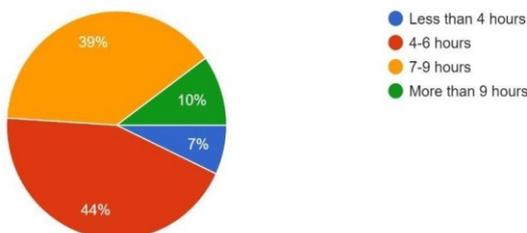
But 9 out of 100 told them that they were given clerical/administrative work in their main experience which may mean not all internships can give the same exposure to legal work. Furthermore, 6 out of 100 reported that they were not given work they could consider meaningful, which may lead to the conclusion that some interns would not have the opportunity for practical experience on the job.

What advice would you give to future interns to succeed and stand out during their internship with you? (आप भविष्य के इंटरन को सफलता और उनकी इंटरनशिप के दौरान अलग दिखने के लिए क्या सलाह देंगे?)
20 responses



Such findings thus recommend that, though legal internships are generally conceived as a good thing, the nature and quality of work done may vary, and, accordingly may differ in terms of contribution toward a career advancement process.

On average, how many hours did you work each day during your internship?
100 responses



The survey findings further align with the

hypothesis that *legal internships provide significant opportunities for career advancement by enhancing practical skills, thereby increasing the likelihood of securing employment in the competitive legal market.* Secondly, these internships ensure that the interns become futures by exposing them to the work hours expected in the profession.

Among the respondents, 44 out of 100 reported spending 4–6 hours in a day, and 39 out of 100 said they work for 7–9 hours. This indicates most internships accurately depict real working scenarios. This experience equips interns to deal with the common characteristics of time management and long working hours in the legal field.

However, 10 out of 100 reported working for more than 9 hours a day. This could suggest that some internship experiences are labour-intensive. At the same time, 7 out of 100 respondents declared working fewer than 4 hours and thus not all interns are equally professional.

Thus, these results go beyond merely adding to the fieldwork skills; they arm the intern with a very good understanding of what working hours in the legal profession generally are like, thus preparing the body and mind for the demands ahead in their later professional life.

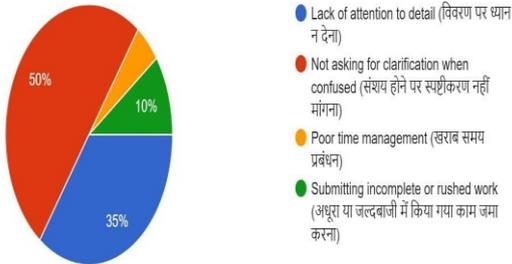
Hypothesis II – A law graduate's success will depend on their motivation, education, initiative, and mentorship, with mentorship potentially being less influential than the other factors.

The responses align with the hypothesis that *a law graduate's success will depend on their motivation, education, initiative, and mentorship, with mentorship potentially being less influential than the other factors.* Quality now. Qualities that respondents deemed interns should develop to further succeed and gain more attention.

Out of 20 respondents, 8 advised paying

What is the most common mistake you observe interns making? (आप सबसे सामान्य गलती कौन सी देखते हैं जो इंटरन करते हैं?)

20 responses



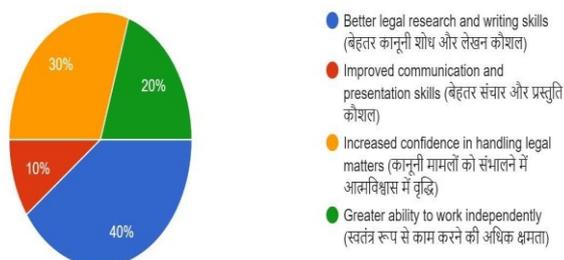
attention to detail with every task, making emphasis on precision and diligence-qualifications that depict a driven and dedicated intern. Similarly, 5 respondents advised showing strong work ethics and professionalism and underlined the factor that personal discipline and responsibility play a very major role in success.

Besides, 4 respondents urged one to question and seek feedback for further education through continuous learning and self-improvement. Finally, 3 respondents encouraged proactivity in taking the initiative, which supports the idea that success is inspired by the impetus of the individual, thus requiring direct action taken.

Based on this, it seems that while mentorship is involved, the intern should primarily cultivate motivation, professionalism, and initiative to be successful, thereby justifying the notion that personal effort and self-directed learning serve as the driving forces behind career growth in law.

What type of growth or improvement would you like to see from your interns during their time with you? (आप इंटरन से उनके कार्यकाल के दौरान किस प्रकार की प्रगति या सुधार देखना चाहेंगे?)

20 responses



The responses align with the hypothesis that a law graduate's success will depend on their

motivation, education, initiative, and mentorship, with mentorship potentially being less influential than the other factors. The type of growth that legal professionals, including advocates and lawyers, look forward to in their interns emphasizes self-improvement and all the essential skills required to gain success in a legal career.

Among 20 respondents, 8 cited better research and writing skills as an area of growth that will help to increase their proficiency in these areas to greatly enhance a person's success in this legal field. Finally, 6 respondents stated that more confidence in legal matters is an important area of growth, illustrating how motivation and personal initiative lead to professional success.

In addition, 4 respondents expressed that independence should be a reason in designing an intern to drift away from interaction and must be independent, and that is also a necessity for career development. Lastly, 2 respondents underscored improved communication and presentation skills, which are also very necessary for effective interpersonal and professional networking interactions.

These findings suggest that while mentorship may be part of the equation, growth expected from interns relates more to personal motivation, education, and initiative. Legal professionals place value on interns who take steps to actively develop their core skills and who demonstrate necessary independence and confidence for long-term success in their profession.

The responses align with the hypothesis that a law graduate's success will depend on their motivation, education, initiative, and mentorship, with mentorship potentially being less influential than the other factors. Common errors are areas where interns have to take initiative, pay attention, and be professionals.

Of 20 participants, 10 mentioned not asking for clarification if confused as a mistake, so mostly

interns do not gather up the courage to ask, thus failing to learn. This once again reinforces the fact that the motive to succeed depends on individual initiative and motivation.

Additionally, 7 respondents complained about the lack of attention to details because it indicates that precision and fullness are fundamental expectations in legal work. Similarly, 2 respondents claimed submitting incomplete or rush works further emphasizes the importance of diligence and high-quality output.

Lastly, 1 respondent pointed out poor time management as a mistake by saying that the interns lacked proper organizational skills in handling the tasks to ensure timely completion.

motivation and a proactive attitude toward self-improvement are important there.

In addition, 4 respondents identified the quality of legal research and writing, further emphasizing the importance of education and skill development of legal duties. Another 3 respondents pointed out professionalism and work ethic, which reflects that discipline and responsibility are core attributes that legal professionals value.

It is even indicated that performance assessment in an intern depends on his or her own motivation, interest in learning, and self-initiative towards acquiring core skills. In doing so, it follows up the hypothesis that one's efforts and education are more important than that which determines success by mentoring.

FINDINGS

In analysing the data from our legal internship survey, we discovered both the benefits and drawbacks of these experiences. While legal internships are usually regarded as a critical step towards a legal career, they provide a complex reality for students, providing benefits while also reflecting unmet expectations.

Professional Development and Skill Development

The results of the survey confirm that internships boost a person's practical skills, and it makes the chances of hiring them more probable. However, only 25% stated their intent to change their life course completely due to interning, whereas more than half, 55%, said that internships made them influence their career goals. A staggering minority of 16% stated that they are still pretty vague about what they want to do professionally, and 4% complained that things were somehow worse after internships. It appears, therefore that, whereas internships are commonly said to promote increased professional clarity, there is nothing less than a cure-all for it.

Task Variety and Work Exposure

One variation in our research was the difference

What metrics or factors do you use to evaluate an intern's performance? (आप इंटरन के प्रदर्शन का मूल्यांकन करने के लिए किन मापदंडों का उपयोग करते हैं?)

20 responses



They pointed out that the most common errors for trainees tend to be connected with lack of initiative, care, or professionalism. Success depends on concrete personal effort and their willingness to learn and improve. Generally, the outcome seems to reiterate that, more than mentoring, attitude, education, and initiative determine what kind of lawyer a legal graduate will be.

The responses align with the hypothesis that a law graduate's success will depend on their motivation, education, initiative, and mentorship, with mentorship potentially being less influential than the other factors. Legal practitioners gauge the performance of interns against character traits that depict personal initiative, motivation, and professionalism.

Out of 20 people interviewed, 10 voted that willingness and readiness to learn and accept feedback were the key factors in evaluating an intern's performance. This demonstrates that

in tasks assigned to interns. 46% of respondents stated that there was a balanced approach to legal and administrative duties, which would imply that the learning experiences were indeed balanced. Unfortunately, 6% of interns said they received absolutely no substantial work assignments, and 9% said they received only administrative tasks, although these are the tasks that seem least likely to build most of the legal skills in demand. The unequal assignment distribution among internships emphasizes the importance of a need to look for placements that suit one's learning objectives.

Work Hours and Professional Preparedness

Probably, the most important feature of legal internships is preparing students for the extent of working hours, like in the case of such a profession. More than half of the respondents, namely, 10%, worked for more than 4 hours and less than 9 hours a day, respectively. However, of course, the 7% of interns who worked for less than four hours a day may have lost all-important experience as a result of professional obligations and therefore prove that not all internships are equal when it comes to mimicking the demands of the legal profession.

Motivation and Personal Growth

Our findings also suggest that personal motivation can be the predominant factor of success in internships. A noteworthy number of interviewees stressed attentiveness strong work ethics and self-motivation as such factors that matter. Some of the mistakes cited were not asking questions or working too fast, reminding one of the importance that interns must act more proactively to establish opportunities for their development and learning. Evaluations by the mentors revealed that the performance of interns was mainly determined by their ability to accept criticism, act professionally, and handle work efficiently.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of our data on legal internships reveals the dual character of these experiences,

which offer enormous potential for advancement while often contributing to disenchantment. Legal internships are commonly recognised as an important stage in a law student's career, as they provide practical experience, improve skills, and shape future career paths. However, as the findings show, these internships might fall short of expectations, both for the intern and the mentor, creating a double-edged sword.

On one hand, a majority of interns (55%) acknowledged that internships helped them define and solidify their career goals, with many gaining valuable insights into the legal profession. This practical exposure is key to enhancing employability in an increasingly competitive legal market. However, a significant portion (25%) of respondents reconsidered their career paths as a result of their internships, illustrating that while these experiences can provide clarity, they can also prompt introspection and redirection. Moreover, 16% of interns expressed lingering uncertainty about their future, with a small but noteworthy 4% feeling more confused after their internships. This reveals the complexity of internships—not every experience leads to a clear outcome, and for some, the exposure can raise new questions and challenges.

One important factor that significantly shapes an internship experience is the range of responsibilities that are assigned. Six percent of interns claimed to have had little to no meaningful

legal work, whereas 46 percent said they were exposed to both administrative and legal work and had a thorough learning experience. This difference highlights how internship responsibilities are distributed unevenly, with some students thriving while others find it difficult to engage in meaningful work. It calls for more organized and intentional internship programs that provide meaningful legal work across the board, while also highlighting the necessity for students to be proactive in seeking opportunities that correspond with their

professional aspirations.

In terms of preparedness for the professional world, internships mirror the demands of the legal field, particularly in terms of working hours. A significant portion of interns worked between 4-9 hours a day, reflecting the realistic work conditions of legal professionals. However, 7% worked fewer than four hours per day, which might have deprived them of fully engaging with the workload expected in real-world legal practice. Conversely, some reported working beyond 9 hours, which, while preparing them for the rigors of the profession, may have also led to burnout. These varying levels of engagement indicate that not all internships are created equal in providing the full spectrum of professional experience.

Finally, personal motivation, discipline, and initiative appear as essential elements in determining the success of an internship. According to our findings, interns who actively sought input, paid attention to detail, and took responsibility for their responsibilities were more likely to succeed and receive praise from their mentors. Mistakes like forgetting to seek for clarification or rushing through tasks highlighted the value of initiative and diligence. Performance evaluations were frequently based on not only the quality of legal work, but also professionalism, time management, and a willingness to learn.

Ultimately, legal internships provide excellent learning opportunities while also exposing the difficulties associated with moving from theoretical understanding to practical implementation. An intern's journey is extremely personal, shaped by both external structures (such as tasks and supervision) and internal incentives. As future programs are designed, it is critical to strike a balance between offering substantive legal experience and allowing interns to grow, make errors, and improve their professional goals. Legal internships, while not without obstacles, continue to constitute an important—if not always perfect—bridge between law school and the real world.

SUGGESTIONS

To address the challenges posed by legal internships, both from the perspective of interns and legal professionals, the following suggestions are proposed:

1. **Paid Internships:** To ensure that students from a variety of financial backgrounds can participate, minimize disparities, and enhance job satisfaction, law firms should give priority to giving paid internships.
2. **Structured Mentorship Programs:** Organizations ought to set up official mentorship programs to guarantee that interns get direction and valuable experiences beyond standard assignments, assisting in the development of their professional and social abilities.
3. **Balanced Workloads:** To develop practical skills, prevent fatigue, and boost overall career motivation, internships should include a balanced mix of substantive legal work and administrative responsibilities.

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