

Research Paper

The Impact of Having Completed Internships on Undergraduate Students' Perceptions of the Japanese Tourism and Hospitality Industry

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Abstract: Internships are commonly promoted as beneficial to students, educators, and employers, but the impact internships have on students' perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry are often not considered. It is imperative that students' perceptions are investigated as by gaining a better understanding of them, more positive attitudes to the industry can be fostered. Using a questionnaire, this study investigated the perceptions of undergraduate students (n=77) enrolled at a university in Japan and found statistically significant differences based on internship participation. Twelve follow-up interviews with students who had completed internships were then conducted in order to explore the factors influencing those perceptions. By providing some insight into current students' perceptions of the industry, it is hoped that stakeholders will be able to better understand current students' attitudes and the impact that internships have on them, especially in the context of Japan.

Keywords: Student perceptions, student attitudes, tourism and hospitality education, internships, experiential learning.

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Introduction

The tourism and hospitality industry is one of the world's largest, most diverse, and fastest growing industries (WTO, 2016). At the same time, tourism and hospitality businesses continue to encounter difficulties in attracting and retaining high quality employees (Baum, 2006; Deloitte, 2013; Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000). A wide range of factors contribute to this problem, ranging from negative attitudes towards the industry, perceptions of relatively low pay, unsociable working hours, menial work,

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and limited opportunities for career progression (Getz, 1994; Barron & Maxwell, 1993), play a major role (Richardson, 2010). However, perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry do vary according to factors such as gender (Chuang & Dellman-Jenkins, 2010), previous related work experience (Damonte & Vaden, 1987), place of origin (Bury & Oka, 2017), and age (Jenkins, 2001).

The tourism and hospitality industry needs capable, educated, and well-trained employees and leaders (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000), and having a skilled, enthusiastic, and committed workforce is vital to the success of businesses in the hospitality industry (Stansbie & Nash, 2016). The students currently enrolled in tourism and hospitality courses are the future employees and leaders of the industry, and as such, it is important to examine their attitudes, as identifying factors that can be utilized as tools to develop and enhance positive attitudes during undergraduate courses will likely lead to greater attraction and retention of graduates in the industry. Despite this importance, when compared to the number of studies published on the attitudes of employees in the tourism and hospitality industry, relatively few studies have looked into the perceptions of students (Brown, Arendt, & Bosselman, 2014; Richardson, 2009; Roney & Öztin, 2007), especially in the context of Japan.

It has been claimed that the work-based learning experienced during internships plays a significant role in tourism and hospitality students' attitudes towards pursuing a career in the industry upon graduation (Richardson, 2009). Thus, it is vital to study the impact of participating in internships within the industry has on students. However, while the educational value of internships in terms of skills and competencies (Baum, 2006), career development (Blair & Millea, 2004; Busby & Gibson, 2010; Coco, 2000), personal development (Petrillose & Montgomery, 1998), and academic development (Little & Harvey, 2006) have been investigated along with factors affecting students' satisfaction with internships (Wong & Wong, 2009), students' reactions to the industry having completed an internship have been relatively under-reported.

In response, hypothesis (1) will be tested:

- (1) H0: Students who have completed internships in the tourism and hospitality industry will not have more positive perceptions of that industry than students who have not completed internships.
H1: Students who have completed internships in the tourism and hospitality industry will have more positive perceptions of that industry than students who have not completed internships.

Damonte and Vaden (1987) contended that the factor having the greatest influence on potential tourism and hospitality employees' perceptions of the industry is work experience, with practical experience strongly impacting on their future

direction (Kim, McCleary, & Kaufman, 2013). Thus, hypotheses (2) and (3) will be investigated.

- (2) H0: Students who have work experience in the tourism and hospitality industry other than internships and have completed an internship will not have more positive perceptions of that industry than students who have work experience in the industry but have not completed an internship.
H1: Students who have work experience in the tourism and hospitality industry other than internships and have completed an internship will have more positive perceptions of that industry than students who have work experience in the industry but have not completed an internship.
- (3) H0: Students who do not have work experience in the tourism and hospitality industry other than internships but have completed an internship will not have more positive perceptions of that industry than students who do not have work experience in the industry and have not completed an internship.
H1: Students who do not have work experience in the tourism and hospitality industry other than internships but have completed an internship will have more positive perceptions of that industry than students who do not have work experience in the industry and have not completed an internship.

Literature Review

There has been heightened interest in the popularity and perceived significance of internship programmes (Yui & Law, 2012), and at present, the majority of tourism and hospitality programmes throughout the world incorporate internships or experiential learning components (Szambowski, Szambowski & Samenfink, 2002; Xie, 2004). These components are often seen as an important part of the learning experience for undergraduate students (Busby & Gibson, 2010; Lin, Kim, Qiu, & Ren, 2017), and they are commonly used to support and diversify student learning (Zopiatis, 2007).

Participating in internships can provide students with many academic, practical, and social benefits. The real-life experiences that internships provide significantly aid the creation of knowledge through the development of episodic memories (Konstantaki, 2009), which can trigger the future recall of information (Shepherd, 2001). Internships also enable students to frame their future research and university assignments within a practical context, making learning more relevant to the individual, thus strengthening associations (Sökmen, 1997). Also, participating in internships can improve the learning of job skills, which may later translate into enhanced academic skills and the development of good personal working habits, such as time management, self-discipline (Knouse, Tanner, & Harris, 2000), and problem solving (Raymond & McNabb, 1993).

Internships also provide the chance to improve employment and professional growth opportunities by networking with potential employers (Collins, 2002). Furthermore, students can learn new concepts, gain experience, be exposed to management activities, and develop the competencies and skills demanded by the industry (Walo, 2001). Internships in particular can optimize the benefits gained through work experience as students can gain access to locations and contexts that other individuals cannot (Xie, 2004). There is also some evidence that students who had completed an internship before graduation not only demonstrated increased industry-specific skills, but also displayed less anxiety and better general skills in the workplace (Wildes & Mount, 1997).

As a result of participating in internships, students can develop a greater sense of self-awareness, which facilitates changes in their attitudes, values, and beliefs (Bullock, Gould, Hejmadi & Lock, 2009). Experiencing authentic work situations allows students to form realistic expectations about their careers (Ayres, 2006), due to a better understanding and knowledge of the tasks and practices performed by industry professionals. Thus, internships help students decide whether they are suited to the tourism and hospitality industry (Singh & Dutta, 2010), have a significant effect on future career choices (Barron & Maxwell, 1993) and benefit all stakeholders (Stansbie, Nash, & Jack, 2013). The impact that experiential learning has on the development of students' understanding of their chosen fields is especially pertinent in tourism-based courses (Bauer, 2003; Oka, 2017).

Despite the importance and emphasis attached to internships (Ko, 2007; Lee, 2007) and the evidence that they create value for students, employers, and educators, there are drawbacks and limitations (Cook, Parker, & Pettijohn, 2004; Fenwick, 2003). The provision of experiential learning opportunities does not guarantee a meaningful learning experience and many students report having negative internship experiences (Tse, 2010). Although many researchers believe internships generally help consolidate aspirations to enter the industry, it has been posited that negative internship experiences actually deter students from pursuing a career in the industry (Boud, Solomon, & Symes, 2001; Busby, 2005; Fox, 2001; Lam & Ching, 2007). Jenkins (2001) indicated that as students progress through undergraduate tourism and hospitality programmes, exposure to the subject and participating in work experience can negatively affect their perceptions of the industry, leading them to be less interested in the field as a first-choice career, and making it unlikely to attract the most talented graduates.

Method

Data for this study were collected in two stages. During the first stage a 40-item questionnaire (see Appendix) was distributed to Year 2, 3, and 4 students in the Tourism and Business Management Department at a private university in the Kanto

region of Japan. The questionnaires were distributed to all of the students ($n=81$) in six classes. The classes were all semi-compulsory subjects with class sizes ranging from 8 to 16. The respondents completed the questionnaires voluntarily and a total of 77 questionnaires were returned.

Five items were used to establish respondents' demographics and 35 Likert scale items were used to assess perceptions of the industry. Of the Likert scale items, 33 were judged to be able to indicate either positive or negative perceptions, while two were judged to indicate perceptions that were neither positive nor negative. The items were initially developed by the authors before being tested by a panel of four experts. All of the items achieved a relevance rating of I-CVI = 1.0 according to Martuza's (1977) Content Validity Index, which Lynn (1986) classifies as appropriate for a panel of less than or equal to five.

A Welch's unpaired t-test was conducted on each of the Likert scale items to determine levels of statistical significance between the variables outlined in the hypotheses. In order for H1 to be accepted for the three hypotheses, it was judged that more than 50% of the 33 positive and negative items would need to produce statistically significant results, and that the majority of those results would need to be positive. The effect sizes of the results that were found to be statistically significant were then calculated using Hedge's g -test. This test was selected as it has been argued to provide more accurate results for smaller sample sizes (Grissom & Kim, 2005; McGrath & Meyer, 2006). Although the benchmarks are not arbitrary (Thompson, 2007), the effect sizes were interpreted as small ($g = 0.2$), medium ($g = 0.5$), and large ($g = 0.8$) based on Cohen's (1988) suggestions.

In the second stage, semi-structured interviews with six male and six female students were conducted. The participants included three second-year students, eight third-year students, and one fourth-year student. It was believed that a total of 12 interviews was sufficient to achieve an acceptable level of saturation of themes at a single institution. The participants were selected using a convenience sampling method. While this method allows general data and trends to be obtained, it can lead to sampling bias. As the interviews were conducted retrospectively, it was possible to limit the potential common method variance by investigating data with temporal and psychological separation (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Illustrative comments from the interviews have been presented to support the findings.

All data were collected anonymously and the purpose of the research was explained to all participants. It was clearly stated that their contribution was voluntary. The qualitative data gathered in both stages were analyzed using the grounded theory approach, drawing on the framework of open coding outlined by Birks and Mills (2011).

Results

Demographics and Work Experience

Table 1. Respondents’ demographics and work experience

	2nd grade			3rd grade			4th grade			Total			Work experience other than internship		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Yes	No	Total
Completed internship															
Yes	8	4	12	6	3	9	2	2	4	16	9	25	8	17	25
No	15	13	28	9	8	17	4	3	7	28	24	52	19	33	52
Total	23	17	40	15	11	26	6	5	11	44	33	77	27	50	77

Table 1 indicates that respondents tended to be male (57.1%) and in their second year of study (51.9%). The majority of respondents (67.5%) had not completed internships. Of the 25 respondents that had completed internships, 16 were male and 9 female.

In response to the first item asked in the participant interviews (“*Why did you decide to do an internship?*”), a range of reasons were offered, including:

“I thought it might give me some idea for choosing a job in the future.”

(Participant 5)

“I thought it would be interesting to join the internship programme.”

(Participant 4)

“I wanted to try something new, something that I’d never done before.”

(Participant 8)

“I thought it would help me gain social experience. It is different from part-time work. I can do lots of different jobs, not just one.” (Participant 1)

In response to the second item (“*Did doing your internship change your opinion of the tourism and hospitality industry?*”), only one participant answered ‘No.’ Comments accompanying ‘Yes’ responses included:

“I found that working in the industry is harder than I thought. The customers demand a lot and I was asked many questions.” (Participant 1)

“I thought that the hotel was stricter and harder than I thought. It wasn’t as friendly as I had imagined.” (Participant 3)

“The workload at a hotel was more than I expected.” (Participant 6)

“It changed my view 180 degrees.” (Participant 10)

When asked “*What did you learn about the tourism and hospitality industry by doing your internship?*” the participants indicated a range of learning. These included:

“That the industry isn’t just about check in or serving, there are many jobs I didn’t think about before, like ground keeping.” (Participant 2)

“I learned that there is a big difference between business hotels and resort hotels. I work in a business hotel and the resort hotel where I did my internship is a lot more relaxed.” (Participant 3)

“I also learned which job was best and worst for me. I don’t want to work in a restaurant because I could see other people enjoying their food, but I couldn’t eat any. I found that stressful.” (Participant 12)

“I found that it’s necessary to be flexible.” (Participant 5)

“The importance of teamwork and the amount of work one has to be responsible for.” (Participant 9)

Students who had work experience (part-time or full-time) in the tourism and hospitality industry, other than an internship, stated that they had worked in a range of jobs including in kitchens, bars, reception, housekeeping, and cleaning.

Overall Responses

The data in Table 2 indicate that overall, participants believed that working in the tourism and hospitality industry is interesting (6), that new things can be learned (10), and that it is pleasurable (13). This is supported by interview comments such as:

“We can do lots of things, not just one thing all the time.” (Participant 4)

“It’s very attractive to be able to work for people and see people smile when we do something for them. I think it’s interesting to keep on learning how to be of service.” (Participant 7)

“I can experience lots of different kind of tasks.” (Participant 11)

However, one participant stated that the jobs were not *“as interesting as I had thought.”* (Participant 3).

Table 2. Overall responses to Likert scale items

Item Group 1

Item	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Mean	3.69	2.62	3.36	3.48	3.71	3.70	3.38	3.66	3.32
S.D.	0.63	0.77	0.70	0.75	0.64	0.74	0.76	0.59	0.87

Item Group 2

Item	15	16	17	18
Mean	3.68	3.45	3.61	3.42
S.D.	0.61	0.59	0.61	0.74

Table 2. (con't)

Item Group 3

Item	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Mean	2.86	2.06	3.03	3.12	3.44	3.21	2.81
S.D.	0.57	0.74	0.64	0.66	0.71	0.49	0.68

Item Group 4

Item	26	27	28	29	30	31
Mean	3.52	3.55	2.82	3.12	2.73	3.64
S.D.	0.73	0.64	0.70	0.82	0.77	0.70

Item Group 4

Item	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
Mean	3.61	3.39	3.52	2.22	2.48	3.51	2.96	2.62	3.03
S.D.	0.74	0.93	0.92	0.92	1.10	0.57	0.95	0.79	0.68

Despite the positive responses described above, students also indicated that working in the tourism and hospitality industry is stressful (8), involves working long hours (9), and is not sufficiently well paid (22, 23). This is corroborated by interview comments, such as:

“I think that the hours are too [unpredictable]...In the future I want a family, so it would be bad for me.” (Participant 3)

“The salary is low, too. The work is rewarding, but hard.” (Participant 1)

“The workers have to work long hours and sometimes the customers have selfish opinions.” (Participant 2)

“It is stressful for the body, but not for the brain. I was tired physically every day, but I didn’t feel mentally stressed or tired.” (Participant 9)

“There is a lot of stress, but maybe, it cannot be helped. People in the tourism industry have to work hard in order to give customers satisfaction.” (Participant 10)

“I think a lot of stress is involved, but the workers do not show their stress on their faces.” (Participant 12)

The data in Table 2 also indicate that the participants believed jobs in the tourism and hospitality industry are skilled (7) and that workers are motivated (29), but generally not well- educated (28). The respondents also indicated that university degrees are not important for workers (30), but are for managers (31). This finding is supported by comments such as:

“I don’t think it’s necessary [for workers] to have qualifications before entering

the industry. If they need qualifications, they may try to take them after they get a job." (Participant 4)

"To become managers, what's most important is to have credibility [gained through qualifications]." (Participant 5)

"[Managers] need to manage many people so they need different skills from other people." (Participant 6)

"Managers have to give orders and manage hotels. Sometimes they need to apologize and having a good way of speaking and being able to use polite, formal language is good." (Participant 1)

It was indicated that working in the tourism and hospitality industry is a respected, beneficial and important vocation (16, 17) and family would be proud if the students gained employment in this industry (15). However, it was also indicated that workers are not particularly valued in society (18) and that conditions are generally less than acceptable (19). This is supported by comments, such as:

"For the people within the tourism industry hotels are very important, so the workers are respected. For general people, they expect hotel workers and service to be of high standard, but don't really respect them." (Participant 2)

"I'm not sure, but I don't think they are respected in general." (Participant 6)

"They receive a low salary. They should get more. Also, customers can adopt a bad attitude towards the workers." (Participant 6)

"I don't think they are valued. I got an impression that the workers serve the people who get respect in society." (Participant 11)

The results further indicate that the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that there is a high risk of work accidents (21), but that the working environment is generally clean (20), although much more so in areas that customers had access to. This is reflected in comments, such as:

"The staff areas were not as clean as customer areas, but they were not dirty. The staff break room was dirty though, I think I saw a cockroach." (Participant 7)

"The areas where customers are, such as reception are very clean, but areas with just staff are not clean. I thought the kitchen was dirty." (Participant 2)

"There were no lights in the back yard, so it was very dark there when people went there for a break. But, there was also another workers' room for breaks inside, so people only went to the backyard to smoke." (Participant 3)

"There is room for improvement." (Participant 5)

It was indicated that there is good spirit among workers (26), reflected in comments such as:

"They helped each other and I felt very welcome. There were lots of fun and

interesting topics spoken about in the private staff areas." (Participant 10)
"Everyone was very friendly and helpful. I'm shy, but I felt relaxed." (Participant 3)
"They had good teamwork." (Participant 6)
"About 70% of the workers were very motivated and they all had a good relationship with each other... The other workers that weren't motivated didn't have a good relationship. They didn't really smile and only gave a basic level of service, too." (Participant 12)

It was further indicated that managers and workers generally have good relationships (27). This is seen in comments such as:

"The manager did the same jobs as the other workers, which was good. He didn't just give orders, but worked with us." (Participant 1)
"It was good. There were no real levels, everyone was equal." (Participant 5)
"I didn't see any difference in power. In other words, I couldn't tell the difference between managers and workers." (Participant 8)
"They had a good relationship. I really want to work at such a workplace." (Participant 6)

The respondents highlighted that the advantages of working in the industry outweigh the disadvantages (32) and that they would like to work in the industry after graduation (34). Furthermore, the results show that the students believed that their character fits with the tourism and hospitality industry (14) and that they would be able to use their skills and abilities in this industry (12). However, despite being happy that they chose to study tourism (33), the students indicated that they would not accept any job in the tourism and hospitality industry (35), would not recommend working in this industry to their friends (37), plan to work in other industries (39), and neither agree nor disagree that they would like to work in the tourism and hospitality industry throughout their working lives (40).

In terms of career opportunities, the results indicate that while respondents feel promotion opportunities are generally good (24), they also believe that it is difficult to secure stable employment (11) and career paths are not always clear (25). The participants indicated that they would be willing to work in jobs that were not highly paid (38), and would work in the industry even if they could not become a manager (36).

Completion of internships

Seventeen of the 33 items on the questionnaire that were interpreted to represent positive or negative perceptions produced statistically significant results at the 0.05 level or better, as presented in Table 3. This suggests that completing an internship has a strong impact on students' perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry. Furthermore, as 14 of those items generated effect sizes greater than $g = 0.8$, and the

remaining five items generated effect sizes greater than $g = 0.5$, it can be implied that the results have either a medium or large effect size based on Cohen's (1988) suggestions.

The participants who had completed internships displayed more positive perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry on 11 items, stating that the industry is interesting (6), pleasurable (13), and that new things can be learned every day (10). They further shared that their family would be proud if they secured employment in the industry (15), that the advantages of working in the industry outweigh the disadvantages (32), that they are happy to have chosen to study tourism and hospitality (33), that they can use their skills in the industry (12) and that their character fits with the industry (14). It was also revealed that there is good team spirit among workers (26), good relationships between workers and managers (27), and that there was a low risk of work accidents (21).

Table 3. Impact of completing an internship on perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry.

Item	Completed internship (N=25)		Not completed internship (N=52)		<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Hedge's <i>g</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
6	3.96	0.68	3.56	0.57	0.0150	2.5429	40	0.66
8	3.88	0.60	3.12	0.61	< 0.0001	5.1764	48	1.25
9	3.96	0.73	3.25	0.65	0.0002	4.1379	42	1.05
10	4.16	0.55	3.50	0.57	< 0.0001	4.8725	49	1.17
12	3.96	0.45	3.10	0.71	< 0.0001	6.4470	69	1.35
13	3.96	0.54	3.52	0.57	0.0019	3.2876	49	0.78
14	3.88	0.60	3.06	0.86	< 0.0001	4.8468	64	1.04
15	4.00	0.58	3.52	0.57	0.0013	3.4195	46	0.84
18	4.08	0.57	3.10	0.60	< 0.0001	6.9437	49	1.66
19	2.64	0.70	2.96	0.48	0.0465	2.0643	35	0.57
21	2.68	0.63	3.19	0.59	0.0015	3.3947	44	0.85
23	3.88	0.60	3.23	0.67	< 0.0001	4.2829	52	1.00
25	2.40	0.71	3.00	0.59	0.0007	3.6611	40	0.95
26	3.92	0.70	3.33	0.67	0.0010	3.5114	45	0.87
27	4.12	0.60	3.27	0.44	< 0.0001	6.3140	36	0.71
30	2.20	0.65	2.98	0.69	< 0.0001	4.8322	50	1.15
31	3.96	0.68	3.48	0.66	0.0053	2.9281	46	0.72
32	4.08	0.64	3.38	0.68	< 0.0001	4.4029	50	1.05
33	4.04	0.54	3.08	0.92	< 0.0001	5.7432	71	1.17
36	1.76	0.66	2.83	1.10	< 0.0001	5.3042	71	1.09
38	2.52	0.96	3.17	0.87	0.0064	2.8665	43	0.72

However, the respondents who had completed internships also revealed more negative perceptions in relation to six items, stating that jobs in the industry are stressful (8), the hours are too long (9), that workers are not valued (18), and that the pay should be higher (23). It was further revealed that working conditions in the industry are generally not good (19) and that career paths are not clear (25).

The other items that generated statistically significant results indicate that participants who had completed internships felt university degrees were not important for workers in non-managerial positions in the industry (30), but were important for managers (31). However, these items were interpreted as neither positive nor negative.

More than 50% of the items produced statistically significant results, and as more positive perceptions were indicated than negative perceptions by participants who had completed internships, hypothesis (1) H1 can be accepted.

Work Experience

Gained work experience

Table 4. Impact of internship completion with work experience on perceptions of the Tourism and Hospitality industry.

	Work experience and completed internship (N=8)		Work experience but not completed internship (N=19)					
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Hedge's <i>g</i>
7	2.13	0.64	2.79	0.85	0.0411	2.2095	17	0.83
8	3.88	0.64	3.11	0.57	0.0133	2.9463	11	1.30
9	4.13	0.83	3.21	0.63	0.0184	2.8125	10	1.33
10	4.13	0.35	3.37	0.60	0.0005	4.1060	21	1.40
12	4.00	0.53	3.11	0.74	0.0024	3.5199	18	1.29
13	4.13	0.64	3.42	0.61	0.0205	2.6686	12	1.15
16	3.75	0.46	3.26	0.65	0.0394	2.2207	18	0.81
19	2.38	0.52	2.95	0.40	0.0197	2.7740	10	1.30
21	2.50	0.76	3.26	0.65	0.0310	2.4731	11	1.11
23	3.88	0.64	3.11	0.74	0.0157	2.7220	15	1.08
25	2.25	0.71	3.00	0.67	0.0256	2.5480	12	1.10
27	4.25	0.46	3.26	0.45	0.0002	5.1393	12	2.19
30	2.00	0.53	3.05	0.78	0.0007	4.0525	19	1.46
31	4.25	0.46	3.32	0.75	0.0006	4.0125	21	1.36
32	4.25	0.46	3.21	0.85	0.0004	4.00957	23	1.37
33	4.13	0.64	2.89	0.94	0.0008	3.9670	19	1.43

Fourteen of the 33 items on the questionnaire that were interpreted to represent positive or negative perceptions produced statistically significant results at the 0.05 level or better, as presented in Table 4. All of those items generated effect sizes greater than $g = 0.8$, thus, it can be stated that the results have a large effect size based on Cohen's (1988) suggestions.

The participants who had work experience other than internships and had also completed internships provided more positive perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry on nine items, stating that jobs in the industry are skilled (7), that they can use their skills in the industry (12), that new things can be learned every day (10), that they will get pleasure from working in the industry (13), and that working in the industry is a respected vocation (16). They further indicated that the advantages of working in the industry outweigh the disadvantages (32), that they are happy they have chosen to study tourism and hospitality (33), that there are good relationships between workers and managers (27), and that there was a low risk of work accidents (21).

However, the respondents who had completed internships also indicated more negative perceptions in relation to five items, stating that jobs in the industry are stressful (8), that the hours are too long (9), and that the pay should be higher (23). It was further indicated that working conditions in the industry are generally not good (19) and that career paths are not clear (25).

The other items that generated statistically significant results indicate that participants who had completed internships felt university degrees were not important for workers in non-managerial positions in the industry (30), but were important for managers (31).

Although there were more positive results indicated by the respondents who had work experience in the industry and had completed internships, however since less than 50% of the items produced statistically significant results, hypothesis (2) H1 must be rejected.

Have not gained work experience

Fifteen of the 33 items on the questionnaire that were interpreted to represent positive or negative perceptions produced statistically significant results at the 0.05 level or better, as presented in Table 5. Of those items, 14 generated effect sizes greater than $g = 0.8$, and one generated an effect size greater than $g = 0.5$.

The participants who did not have work experience other than an internship but had completed internships indicated more positive perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry on ten items, stating that new things can be learned every day in the industry (10) and that they can use their skills in the industry (12). They further indicated that the advantages of working in the industry outweigh the disadvantages (32), that they would work in the industry even if they do not think they will

become a manager (36), that they are happy they have chosen to study tourism and hospitality (33), that they can use their skills in the industry (12) and that their character fits with the industry (14). The findings also show that there is good team spirit among workers (26), good relationships between workers and managers (27), and that there was a low risk of work accidents (21).

However, the respondents who had completed internships also indicated more negative perceptions in relation to five items, stating that jobs in the industry are stressful (8), that the hours are too long (9), that workers are not valued (18), and that the pay should be higher (23). It was further indicated that career paths are not clear (25).

Respondents in this category also indicated that university degrees were not important for workers in non-managerial positions in the industry (30).

Despite the more positive results by the respondents who did not have work experience in the industry but had completed internships, as less than 50% of the items produced statistically significant results, hypothesis (3) H1 must be rejected.

Table 5. Impact of internship completion and no work experience on the perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry.

	No work experience but completed internship (N=17)		No work experience and not completed internship (N=33)					
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Hedge's <i>g</i>
8	3.88	0.60	3.12	0.65	0.0002	4.1229	34	1.20
9	3.88	0.70	3.27	0.67	0.0058	2.9615	31	0.90
10	4.18	0.64	3.58	0.56	0.0028	3.2734	28	1.02
12	3.94	0.43	3.09	0.72	< 0.0001	5.2131	46	1.33
14	4.00	0.61	2.91	0.88	< 0.0001	5.1182	43	1.36
15	4.00	0.61	3.42	0.56	0.0027	3.2736	30	1.00
18	4.12	0.70	3.06	0.61	< 0.0001	5.2934	28	1.65
21	2.76	0.56	3.15	0.57	0.0270	2.3186	32	0.69
23	3.88	0.60	3.30	0.64	0.0033	3.1647	34	0.93
25	2.47	0.72	3.00	0.56	0.0135	2.6501	26	0.86
26	3.94	0.75	3.33	0.74	0.0100	2.7367	32	0.86
27	4.06	0.66	3.27	0.45	0.0002	4.4329	23	1.49
30	2.29	0.69	2.94	0.66	0.0031	3.2021	31	0.97
32	4.00	0.71	3.48	0.57	0.0146	2.6165	26	0.84
33	4.00	0.50	3.18	0.92	0.0002	4.0820	47	1.02
36	1.59	0.62	2.88	1.11	< 0.0001	5.2687	47	1.32

Discussion

Overall, the participants indicated positive attitudes to the tourism and hospitality industry in relation to 19 of the 35 Likert scale items on the questionnaire. As this represents over half of the items (54.29%), it can be stated that, generally, the students perceive the industry positively. However, it is slightly disconcerting that negative opinions were indicated in relation to 12 of the items, a total of 34.29%.

The overarching theme of the responses suggests that students feel that they would enjoy working in the tourism and hospitality industry, could have good relationships with colleagues and managers, and could learn new things. Furthermore, despite the working conditions and pay being perceived as disadvantages of working in the industry, results imply that students believed that the positives outweighed the negatives and that they would be willing to work in jobs even if they were not highly paid.

Emotions play a prominent role in prompting behavioral responses, affecting decision-making, enhancing memory, and facilitating interpersonal interactions (Kemp & Kopp, 2011), with positive emotions contributing to optimal functioning (Louro et al., 2005). Positive emotions have been shown to foster subjective well-being and improve an individual's attention span and cognition functioning (Fredrickson, 2001). Thus, while limited research has investigated the role of emotions in an educational setting (Jaramillo & Spector, 2004), students experiencing positive emotions during internships could aid the development of able and efficient employees in the future.

In relation to the effect completing internships had on the different student types, hypothesis (1) H1 can be accepted. In this particular context, it can thus be asserted that the students who had completed internships had more statistically significant positive perceptions of the industry than those who had not. From these findings, it can be stated that completing an internship appears to have had an overall positive effect on participants' perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry.

Completing internships did not have a statistically significant overall effect on students who had work experience in the industry other than internships. This may be attributed to previous work experience diminishing the effect completing an internship had on student perceptions. Furthermore, the experiences gained during internships may not have been positive enough to change the negative perceptions that may have been previously held.

While the results presented in this article do have important implications, their limitations must be acknowledged. Due to the perceptions of only a fairly small cohort of students that all attend the same university being investigated, the overall general effect size of the findings should not be overstated. A wide range of factors including, but not limited to, the institution's specific culture, admission standards, and curricula all generate a climate of influence that impact on the perspectives of

the student. It is therefore suggested that in order to gain a better understanding of a wider range of tourism and hospitality students in Japan, further research be undertaken at other educational institutes.

Furthermore, due to the scale and scope of this article, it is not possible to provide recommendations for educators and employers based on the findings. Additionally, it would also be beneficial to establish students' perceptions of the tourism and hospitality industry prior to their internships in order to investigate whether any significant differences in perceptions and attitudes could be identified.

Conclusion

This paper has provided an overview of students' perceptions of, and reactions to, the tourism and hospitality industry in Japan and investigated differences in perceptions between students who have completed internships and those who have not. It was found that students indicate an overall positive attitude towards the industry and that completing internships had a significant positive effect. These positive perceptions must be encouraged as they may contribute to changing the tendency of tourism employers recruiting non-tourism graduates identified by Dale and Robinson (2001) and tourism graduates not entering the industry (Blomme, van Rheede, & Tromp, 2009).

The findings presented in this article have relevance to the context of internships in tourism and hospitality education in Japan, and they have important implications for educators, students, and employers. By providing some insight into current students' perceptions of the industry having completed internships, it is hoped that all stakeholders will be able to better understand current students' attitudes, and thus the impact that internships have on their perceptions of the industry.

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Appendix

Tourism and Hospitality Industry Perceptions Questionnaire

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Current year of study: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th Other
3. Have you done an internship within the Tourism and Hospitality industry?
Yes No
4. Do you have work experience (part-time or full-time) in the Tourism and Hospitality industry other than an internship?
Yes No
If Yes, what job did you do? (You can circle more than one answer)
Administration Cleaning Kitchen/Bar Reception Other
5. Do you intend to work in the Tourism and Hospitality industry after you graduate?
Yes No
If Yes, which job?
Administration Cleaning Kitchen/Bar Reception Other

Having completed your internship, how much do you agree with the following statements? (1 = disagree completely, 5 = agree completely.)

Section 1

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Jobs in the Tourism and Hospitality industry are interesting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Jobs in the Tourism and Hospitality industry are low skilled. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Jobs in the Tourism and Hospitality industry are stressful. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Working hours are too long. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. New things can be learned each day. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. It is difficult to secure stable employment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I will be able to use my skills and abilities in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I will get pleasure from working in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. My character fits with the Tourism and Hospitality industry. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Section 2

- 15. My family will be proud if I secure employment in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. 1 2 3 4 5
- 16. The Tourism and Hospitality industry is a respected vocation. 1 2 3 4 5
- 17. Working in the Tourism and Hospitality industry is a beneficial and important job. 1 2 3 4 5
- 18. Workers in the Tourism and Hospitality industry are not valued in society. 1 2 3 4 5

Section 3

- 19. Working conditions are generally good. 1 2 3 4 5
- 20. The working environment is not very clean. 1 2 3 4 5
- 21. There is a high risk of work accidents. 1 2 3 4 5
- 22. Pay for most jobs in the Tourism and Hospitality industry is low. 1 2 3 4 5
- 23. Pay in the Tourism and Hospitality industry should be higher. 1 2 3 4 5
- 24. Promotion opportunities are generally good. 1 2 3 4 5
- 25. There are clear career paths. 1 2 3 4 5

Section 4

- 26. There is good team spirit among workers. 1 2 3 4 5
- 27. Managers and workers have good relationships. 1 2 3 4 5
- 28. Workers are generally well educated. 1 2 3 4 5
- 29. Most workers are motivated. 1 2 3 4 5
- 30. University degrees are important for workers in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. 1 2 3 4 5
- 31. University degrees are important for managers in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. 1 2 3 4 5

Section 5

- 32. Advantages of working in the Tourism and Hospitality industry outweigh disadvantages. 1 2 3 4 5
- 33. I am happy I have chosen to study tourism and hospitality. 1 2 3 4 5
- 34. I would like to work in the Tourism and Hospitality industry after graduation. 1 2 3 4 5
- 35. I would do any job in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. 1 2 3 4 5

36. I will only work in the Tourism and Hospitality industry if I think I can become a manager.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I would recommend working in the Tourism and Hospitality industry to my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I would only work in highly paid jobs.	1	2	3	4	5
39. I do not plan to work in any other industry.	1	2	3	4	5
40. I would like to work in the Tourism and Hospitality industry for all of my working life.	1	2	3	4	5

