

# Academic Weekly Digest

## School of Hospitality & Tourism Management



### The perils of hospitality internship

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In this study, [Dr Xu](#) and colleagues tested a theoretical model using a longitudinal design with Generation Z interns in the hospitality industry, to investigate the predictors of perceived person–job fit and how such a fit causes changes in interns’ job motivation over time.

# The perils of hospitality internship: A growth curve approach to job motivation change

Dr Tracy Xu

A positive internship experience can stimulate interns to join the hospitality and tourism industry after their graduation. However, these very initiatives that are cultivated by hospitality/tourism schools, and operators could backfire when there is a mismatch between the job position and the intern, or when there are hazardous working conditions. This study investigates how perceived person-job fit predicts the change in job motivation through conducting latent growth curve modelling. Using a multi-wave longitudinal design, the authors found that perceived negative social status and perceived overqualification negatively lead to perceived person-job fit. Also, abusive co-worker treatment is particularly detrimental, as interns suffering from highly abusive co-worker treatment perceive lower person-job fit, especially when they possess higher perceived overqualification and/or when they view the hospitality work more unfavourably in regard to its social status.



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The dark side of  
internship  
advocates for  
better  
interventions to  
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and motivations.  
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This study contributes to the practice of education and organizations in hospitality and tourism management by advocating for better interventions to improve interns’ work experience and motivations. It is important for the industry to improve the social status and overcome the negative impact of hiring overqualified interns. Managers also need to communicate with their interns the importance of collegiate interpersonal treatment and take swift actions to solve problems should they occur.

## Further Reading:

Xu, S., (CJ) Lin, Z., He, M. and Wong, I.A. (2022). The perils of hospitality internship: a growth curve approach to job motivation change. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*  
Link: [bit.ly/3VhCDTg](https://bit.ly/3VhCDTg)