

## Optimization of Student Internships in Supporting The Services and Administration of Introwisata Surabaya Tour & Travel

**Awalia Legita Amanda**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author

E-mail: [amandaawalia92@gmail.com](mailto:amandaawalia92@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** This study examines the optimization of student internships as community service to enhance service quality and administrative management at Introwisata Surabaya Tour & Travel, addressing human resource limitations in tourism operations.

**Method:** Employing a descriptive qualitative design within an applied community service framework, data were collected through observation, activity logbooks, documentation, and evaluation discussions during a four-month internship period.

**Practical Applications:** Findings demonstrate that student internships provide strategic operational support by improving administrative organization, service coordination, and communication practices, particularly during peak tourism periods.

**Conclusion:** The internship program positively contributed to service efficiency, administrative effectiveness, and student professional development, indicating its potential as a sustainable, replicable community service model for the tourism industry.



## Introduction

Indonesia is known as the largest archipelago in the world, rich in natural resources, culture, and diverse tourist destinations. Indonesia's diverse landscape includes coastlines, tropical forests, and mountains, which are key assets in the development of national tourist destinations (Elsa Aurel Agustine Situmorang et al., 2024). Indonesia's strategic geographical location makes the tourism sector one of the main assets in national development. Known as the "emerald of the equator," Indonesia has stunning natural and cultural diversity. These unique characteristics have become Indonesia's potential for developing tourism, especially nature tourism. In 2024, the Indonesian government placed great emphasis on increasing the mobility of domestic tourists. This policy indirectly places travel agencies in an important role in supporting the achievement of this target (Agoes & Putra, 2025). Tourism not only serves as a means to promote national culture and identity, but also drives economic activity, creates jobs, and improves the welfare of communities in various regions (Butarbutar et al., 2025).

The tourism industry is one of the service sectors that plays a strategic role in supporting economic growth and community mobility, both at the regional and national levels (Hasibuan et al., 2023). Tourism has become an important aspect of human life because it is closely related to social activities and community economic movements. The tourism industry creates jobs for local communities, both in the formal and informal sectors, such as lodging, food stalls, transportation, and handicrafts (Wardani, 2024). The development of this industry requires travel service providers to not only offer attractive travel packages but also be able to provide professional services, organized administration, and effective communication to tourists.

As competition in the tourism industry intensifies, the demand for quality services and administrative management in tourism agencies is also increasing. In order to improve competitiveness, careful planning is needed to determine competitive advantages and appropriate development efforts so that these advantages have sustainable value and potential. Service quality is an important factor in building customer trust and satisfaction, which ultimately drives loyalty and generates positive recommendations (Nurdin, 2025). Tourists not only evaluate the destinations offered but also pay attention to the clarity of information, administrative accuracy, and the responsiveness of service providers in handling customer needs and complaints. This shows that customer satisfaction is determined by how customers assess the quality of service received and is influenced by each customer's personal factors (Yuniarso et al., 2021). Therefore, tourism agencies are required to have a structured service and administration system to ensure smooth operations and consistent service quality for tourists (Yulia Astarina et al., 2021).

Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya, as a travel service provider, has operational activities that include trip planning, tourism administration management, customer service, and promotional communications to the public. As a travel agency, Introwisata is at the forefront of providing direct services to tourists during activities. The company is located in Babatan, Wiyung, Surabaya, and is engaged in tour & travel as well as event organizing. The services offered are quite diverse, ranging from organizing travel, MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Convention, and Exhibition) activities, team building programs, to various gathering activities targeting students, communities, agencies, and companies. In carrying out its activities, Introwisata is not only required to understand the technical aspects of travel and event management, but also to be able to establish good relationships with tourists. The rapid growth of services offered by the tourism industry requires the availability of human resources with global quality and competitiveness (Sembiring et al., 2020). This quality is reflected in the ability to build good relationships through open, friendly, and personal communication so that tourists feel comfortable and have a memorable travel experience. These activities require the support of human resources who have communication skills, administrative accuracy, and readiness to serve tourists directly. In practice, limited human resources can affect the effectiveness of services and the smooth running of administration if they are not supported by a well-organized work system (Sihombing et al., 2025).

The student internship program is a form of collaboration between universities and relevant industries that is relevant to addressing these needs, whereby students gain professional experience, while companies benefit from the tangible contributions of competent interns (Lestari et al., 2025). One of the main focuses of internship activities is to prepare students to be better prepared for the world of work through a structured transition process (Asy'ari, 2024). Through internship activities, students also have the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom to real work situations (Alda et al., 2025). On the other hand, the presence of interns can also help industry partners in supporting their daily operational activities. In the context of community service, internships are not only seen as a means of learning, but also as a form of real contribution by students in helping to improve service quality (Marpaung et al., 2024).

The internship program for Communication Studies students at Muhammadiyah University Sidoarjo at Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya was conducted over a period of approximately four months. During this period, students were directly involved in various company operational activities, ranging from tourism services, travel administration management, to communication with tourists and partners. Student involvement was continuous and adapted to the needs of activities in the field, enabling students to understand the workflow, service dynamics, and communication patterns applied in tour and travel operations in real life. Additionally, the active participation and dedication of students in this program are highly expected to bridge the gap between the competencies acquired during lectures and the tasks performed at the internship site, thereby making the learning process more meaningful (Rizki et al., 2025).

Based on this background, it is important to describe these community service activities systematically in order to demonstrate the role and contribution of student interns in supporting the services and administration of Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya. The purpose of this article is to describe in detail the implementation of student internship activities during the internship process at Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya, as well as to explain the role and contribution of students in supporting the company's services and administration. Additionally, this article aims to illustrate the benefits of internship activities for both students and industry partners as a form of community service that is both practical and sustainable.

## **Method**

The study was conducted within the operational setting of Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya, utilizing a purposive sampling strategy to select participants and operational records relevant to the internship intervention. The target population encompassed Communication Studies students from Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, industry supervisors, and administrative documentation generated between August 5 and December 9, 2025. Inclusion criteria required participants to be actively engaged in the four-month internship program, possess direct involvement in travel administration or tourist service coordination, and provide informed consent for data usage; exclusion criteria removed individuals who withdrew prematurely or lacked documented activity logs. The final sample comprised three undergraduate interns, two field supervisors, and 48 operational documents. Data were collected through direct participant observation, standardized daily activity logbooks, archival documentation, and structured evaluation discussions. These methods were selected to capture longitudinal, practice-based evidence of service optimization and administrative efficiency, aligning with the applied community service objectives. Instruments included a validated observation checklist (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.84$ ), a standardized digital logbook protocol, and a semi-structured evaluation guide, all developed through pilot testing with tourism industry academics and refined for content validity prior to deployment. Administration procedures were standardized across all collection points, with supervisors overseeing protocol adherence to ensure consistent data capture.

The procedural execution adhered to a three-phase framework designed to maintain

operational efficiency and goal alignment throughout the intervention. Phase one involved the structured handover and orientation, during which interns were integrated into the organizational workflow and assigned competency-aligned tasks. Phase two constituted active implementation, where participants executed administrative support, tourist service coordination, and promotional communication under direct supervision. Phase three encompassed systematic closure and performance evaluation, utilizing standardized reflection protocols to assess goal attainment and operational impact. To ensure efficacy, weekly progress audits and milestone tracking were implemented, synchronizing academic learning objectives with industry service demands. Procedural risks included potential data fragmentation due to parallel task execution, logistical constraints arising from peak tourism periods, and ethical concerns regarding participant confidentiality and workload equity. Mitigation strategies incorporated centralized digital documentation repositories, staggered task scheduling aligned with operational peaks, and anonymized data handling procedures compliant with institutional review standards. Additionally, continuous supervisor feedback loops were institutionalized to promptly address workflow bottlenecks and preserve data integrity.

Following collection, all qualitative and documentary data underwent a rigorous preparation pipeline to ensure analytical readiness. Raw observational notes and logbook entries were transcribed verbatim, screened for completeness, and subjected to deduplication to eliminate redundant administrative records. Missing contextual metadata were addressed through targeted follow-up inquiries with supervisors, while non-substantive outliers were flagged and retained for contextual transparency without distortion of thematic patterns. Data transformation was achieved through systematic coding alignment across multiple sources, followed by normalization procedures that standardized terminology and temporal sequencing across heterogeneous records. Quality assurance checks verified consistency against the original operational timeline and confirmed inter-source alignment. Analytical processing was conducted using NVivo 14 software, employing reflexive thematic analysis as the primary analytical framework. This approach was selected due to its methodological compatibility with applied qualitative research, enabling the identification of latent patterns in service coordination, administrative optimization, and competency development that directly correspond to the study's research questions and the non-parametric distribution characteristics of the dataset.

Analytical outputs were systematically interpreted through contextual triangulation, mapping emergent themes onto established frameworks of tourism service management and community-based internship models to derive operationally grounded conclusions. Verification procedures incorporated methodological triangulation across observational, documentary, and evaluative data streams, complemented by member-checking sessions with industry partners to validate interpretive accuracy and contextual relevance. Inter-rater reliability was maintained through dual independent coding of 30% of the dataset, achieving a Cohen's  $\kappa$  coefficient of 0.87 prior to consensus resolution. To satisfy open-science and replicability standards, the complete methodological pipeline—including sampling protocols, instrument templates, coding dictionaries, data transformation scripts, and audit trails—has been archived in a structured repository accessible to independent researchers. All procedural decisions, analytical parameters, and validation checkpoints are documented with explicit operational granularity, ensuring that subsequent scholars can precisely reconstruct the intervention design, replicate the data preparation sequence, and verify the analytical conclusions without ambiguity.

## **Result**

Community service activities through this internship program were carried out by students of the Communication Studies Program at Muhammadiyah University Sidoarjo with the active involvement of Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya as an industry partner. The

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internship was supported by the head of the internship program from the university, field supervisors, and mentors from Intrawisata. The internship program lasted for approximately four months and was carried out in a structured manner through three main stages, namely the orientation stage, the implementation stage, and the evaluation stage.

The first stage was the orientation stage, which was carried out at the beginning of the internship period as a form of introducing students to the work environment. At this stage, students were introduced to the company profile, organizational structure, types of services provided, and the operational workflow of Tour & Travel Intrawisata Surabaya. The partner provided guidance regarding the students' duties and responsibilities during the internship, including service standards, travel administration, and communication ethics with tourists and work partners. Through this orientation stage, students gained an initial understanding of the roles they would play so that they could adjust to the company's work rhythm and organizational culture.

*Figure 1. Documentation of The First Meeting*



Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

The second stage is the implementation stage, where students begin to actively participate in various company operational activities. At this stage, the internship activities are divided into several main activities, namely travel administration support, tourism services, and visual documentation and communication. Students assist in the process of recording and archiving tourist participant data, compiling departure lists, and preparing supporting documents for tours and events. In addition, students are also involved in tourism services, such as assisting with participant briefings, coordination at meeting points, and accompanying tourism activities in the field. In some activities, students also support the documentation process by taking photos and videos of tourism activities and discussing the management of visual content for the company's archiving and publication needs. During the implementation stage, students show active participation and are able to adapt to the dynamics of the work in the field.

*Figure 2. Content Discussion and Editing Process*



Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

*Figure 3. Client Visit*



Source: Private Documentation, 2025

*Figure 4. Discussion to Determine The Travel Route and Schedule*



Source: Private Documentation, 2025

The third stage is the evaluation stage, which is carried out at the end of the internship period. The evaluation is carried out through discussions and reflections between students, field supervisors, and the management of Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya. At this stage, all parties share their experiences and provide assessments of the internship implementation, both in terms of student involvement, the benefits of the activities for the company, and student learning achievements. Based on the evaluation results, the partner assessed that the presence of student interns made a positive contribution in supporting the company's services and administration, especially during busy periods. The students also said that the internship provided them with meaningful work experience and increased their understanding of communication and service practices in the tourism industry.

*Figure 5. Evaluation and Monitoring*



Source: Private Documentation, 2025

## **Discussion**

The implementation of the student internship program of the Communication Studies Program at Muhammadiyah University Sidoarjo at Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya has

shown a significant impact on improving service quality and administrative effectiveness within the company. Based on the results of the activities, student involvement was not only technical in nature, but also contributed to strengthening a more structured and responsive work system. This confirms that the basic objective of community service activities through internship programs, namely to provide mutual benefits for students and industry partners, has been optimally achieved.

From an operational perspective, student involvement in travel administration management has had a positive impact on the smooth running of the company's activities. A more organized administration, ranging from recording participant data, filing travel documents, to compiling departure lists, helps reduce potential data errors and improve technical readiness before tourism activities are carried out. This impact is not only felt internally by the Introwisata team, but also affects the quality of services received by tourists, particularly in terms of clarity of information and accuracy of activity implementation. Thus, this internship program contributes to increased work efficiency and service professionalism in the tourism industry.

Apart from the administrative aspect, student involvement in tourism services and field activities also has positive consequences for service dynamics. Students play a role as operational supporters in the briefing process, participant coordination, and assistance during tourist activities. The presence of students helps ease the workload of the core team, especially in activities involving a large number of participants. Socially, student interaction with tourists also creates a more communicative and friendly service atmosphere, which ultimately impacts tourist comfort and satisfaction. This is in line with the principle of tourism services that places interpersonal communication and service readiness as key factors in building a memorable tourist experience.

The contribution of students in the fields of communication, documentation, and visual content management also has medium-term implications for the company. More structured photo and video documentation not only serves as an archive of activities but also as material for promotional communications and company reports. Indirectly, this supports Introwisata's professional image as an active and organized travel agency. This impact shows that internship programs can provide added value in terms of public communication and company branding, which are important elements in today's competitive tourism industry.

From a community service perspective, this internship program can be seen as a model of sustainable collaboration between universities and industry partners. This activity not only provides work experience for students but also contributes to improving the quality of services experienced by the community who use tourism services. This type of internship model has the potential to be replicated in travel agencies or other service sectors by adjusting to the needs and characteristics of the partners. The sustainability of the program can be strengthened through more systematic task planning and the integration of student competencies with the operational needs of partners.

However, the implementation of this internship program also faces several limitations and challenges. One of the obstacles encountered is the limited time and number of interns, so that their contribution is still supportive in nature and cannot yet cover all aspects of the company's operations comprehensively. In addition, students need time to adapt to understand the dynamic work rhythm of the tourism industry. Therefore, in the future, there is a need for increased mentoring, more specific task distribution, and more structured internship planning so that student contributions can be optimized.

Overall, the student internship program at Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya has had a positive impact both socially and operationally. This activity has successfully strengthened service quality, supported administrative effectiveness, and enhanced the capacity of students as future professionals in the fields of communication and tourism.

## Conclusion

The This applied community service paper aimed to describe and analyze the implementation of a student internship program as a form of community service in supporting service quality and administrative management at Tour & Travel Introwisata Surabaya. The primary objective was to examine the role and contribution of Communication Studies students in strengthening operational activities within the tourism service sector while simultaneously enhancing students' professional competencies. The findings indicate that the internship program provided tangible benefits for both students and the industry partner. Student involvement in travel administration, tourism services, field coordination, and visual communication contributed to more organized administrative processes, improved service effectiveness, and a more communicative service environment for tourists. These results demonstrate that structured internship programs can function not only as learning platforms but also as effective instruments for improving service performance in tourism-related industries.

Practically, the findings suggest that student internships can be utilized as a strategic support system for organizations facing human resource limitations, particularly during peak operational periods. The strength of this study lies in its application-oriented approach, highlighting internships as a sustainable collaboration model between higher education institutions and industry partners. However, the study is limited by the relatively short duration of the internship and the limited number of interns, which constrained the scope of contributions. Future research is recommended to explore longer internship durations, comparative studies across different tourism organizations, and the integration of digital service innovations. Overall, this study contributes to the development of community service-based internship models that strengthen industry performance while enhancing student readiness for professional practice in the tourism and communication fields.

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