

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR LEGAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS



Open Access, Refereed Journal Multi-Disciplinary  
Peer Reviewed

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# **A CRITICAL LOOK INTO THE TIMELINE OF INTERNSHIP IN A LAW STUDENT'S CAREER**

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## **Abstract:**

Timing is everything the best moment to start Intern. Internships improve the quality of the law student's career by providing practical experience in the legal field. This abstract outline a typical internship timeline to the law students to build up their career. Internship not only improve your representations, legal research, writing and client-facing skills, but also foster networking and professional development. when law students often participate in internships that lead them directly to employment in a Law firm or Associate. The internship method is essential to transform theoretical knowledge into practical application and ensure that law students are well prepared for their future professional careers to succeed in the field. This assignment goals are to understand the various aspects of correct timeline for student's internship.

## **Introduction:**

The value of internship in legal sector is multifaceted, and emerging profession in the real-world, Unlike the classroom setting. Internship enable individual to apply their technical skill in a dynamic way with high pressure environmental, thus accelerate the student professional growth and understanding the needs of Law in the society. Internship journey as a law student is a crucial step in bridging the gap between academic learning and practical application of the laws properly. As, it provides invaluable exposure to the legal field, allowing students to develop the skills, build professional networks, and gain insight into various legal careers. Crafting a clear and structured timeline is essential to ensure a smooth and well-prepared transition into an internship role. This time is the key milestones and strategies for all the law students to help them prepare, secure, in their internships. The internship program also attempts to expose the students to see how law actually works in practical.

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## **Review of Literature:**

The researcher utilized the information provided by Jill O. Jasperson in his work titled, "How to Integrate Student Internships into Legal Studies Research and Curriculum": A Case Study, Published in Universal Journal of Educational Research, 2019." which helped the researcher to gather general information about the topic and to understand in a best way about that internship. In which the author speak that internship is real world experience to learn practically in real meanwhile he said that internship was became a legal clinic paper for the student in their academic.

And then the researcher gathers some points from the Shubhi Agarwal, "Internships: A Prerequisite for Law Students" published in Law Of Journal, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2016, in her work the author deals with the importances of internships and the opportunities for the interns in BCI, Law Firms, and also, she talks about the stipends to the interns.

Thereafter the researcher referred to the Article Sandy Brown and Haris Khan, "The In-House Legal Internship Program Handbook", published in the Minority Corporate Counsel Association, Inc. (MCCA).2010, he stated elaborately about the responsibilities for the interns, researching legal issues impacting business strategy, drafting transactional documents, attending client meetings were discussed in it.

At last, the researcher searched the Article Caroline P. D'Abate "Making the Most of an Internship: An Empirical Study of Internship Satisfaction" Academy of Management Learning & Education,(2009), he states that the characteristics of the job particular, learning opportunities, in internship, making a key developmental experience, internships, as satisfying as possible, Since the author haven't addressed the right time to enter in the internship I could like to research on it in this research.

## **Research Problem:**

1. Does early (first-year) internship experience enhance a law student's overall legal skills, or is it less effective due to limited academic background?
2. How do internships during the second or third year of law school impact students' career choices, particularly in terms of specialization in the field?
3. What impact does internship timing have on a law student's job prospects and career after their graduation?

4. Are students who engage in internships later in their academic career (final year) more likely to transition smoothly into full-time employment, or do they miss out on critical skill development opportunities in their earlier?

### **Objectives:**

The goal of this research is to evaluate all aspects of internships in legal careers, as well as their existing situation in India legal field and to define a proper time line for entering as an intern in to career at right time. therefore, the primary objective of the research is as follow

- a) It aims to teach the students with professional skills, essential aspects of professional ethics and social responsibility issues and management of challenging situations in practical and professional life.
- b) Internship Encourage students to observe trials in civil and criminal courts.
- c) Internship is a training being imparted for the law students to know the court proceeding in the courts before a student enrolled as an advocate.
- d) Internship students will acquire good work habits and also increase a student's sense of responsibility.

### **Significance of the Study:**

This study is important for law students because it helps them to make the right decision about their career regarding internships. Nowadays, there is no one who can tell students which year they should do an internship and what are the benefits of an internship. Therefore, by reading this research paper, law students can get an idea about which year they should do an internship progressing through internships at the right time fosters confidence in professional settings. This gives insight effect on ensuring law students enter internships when they have the right foundational knowledge can improve their ability to contribute practice and develop professionally skills. This study briefly explains whether an internship is too early or too late, which is beneficial for law students as it provides immense insight to those who are researching the idea of becoming an intern.

### **Hypothesis:**

Law students, who begin internships too early, before acquiring legal knowledge and skill, will experience lower practical skills, development and career readiness compared to those who start internships at a more advanced stage of their studies.

### **Research Methodology:**

The researcher used the qualitative mode of research to understand and examine the internship timeline in law student career and subsequently the researcher used the doctrinal approach to collect the relevant data, such as, a) Primary data: Journals and b) Secondary data: News, Articles and reports.

### **Internship Timeline for Career:**

Internship plays a major role in our society. As it teaches us the practical knowledge and develop the skills from the real world rather than theoretical classes. Timing is everything to start an internship. In India the law university and college have two streams which is 5 years law and 3 years law course. In which the ideal time to start in Engaging in internships too early may lead to insufficient preparedness, while entering too late may limit exposure and opportunities for skill development. This assignment explores the timeline for starting internships at the right time, balancing the theoretical foundation with practical experience in the law field.

For those aspiring to become professionals, the value of an internship in the legal field is a unique opportunity to acquire practical skills and improve practical knowledge. Joining an internship too early can lead to a lack of focus on studies. Conversely, postponing an internship until later in one's education or professional training may limit opportunities to learn about court procedures. At the time of internship students have generally acquired a basic understanding of provision and legal proceeding. one of the primary benefits of beginning internship early is the competitive edged gained by nowadays. This early joining allows students to accumulate the knowledge in the practical difficulties faced by the advocates. Joining an internship in the legal field at the right time can significantly enhance a law student's future. The ideal approach is to begin early in law school to build a strong foundation and gradually take on more specialized roles as your progress. Internships provide an invaluable opportunity to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world practice, offering hands-on experience in drafting legal documents, conducting case research, and understanding courtroom procedures. Early exposure helps students explore various areas of law, such as corporate, criminal, or human rights, and identify their interests. By starting internships at the right time and being proactive in learning, will make the law students not only acquire essential skills but also develop a clearer vision for their careers, laying a solid foundation for future

success. Students should Bear it in mind, internships are beneficial, but they're not the sole means to gain experience. Voluntary work, relevant studies, and participation in student associations can also contribute to honing your skills and building your resume. Colleges should implement a system of evaluation for internships, where students can provide feedback on their experiences, and employers can assess the students' performance. This feedback loop ensures that students receive constructive criticism and that law colleges continuously improve the quality of their internship programs. It also helps track students' professional development over time.

First year internship the student has Limited Knowledge Base as they may lack in the foundational knowledge to fully understand the legal concepts and contribute. Early internships can become observation-focused rather than skill-building experiences. They will Miss the Academic Priorities Diving into internships too soon may divert attention from academic studies, which are essential for building a strong theoretical foundation. Entering an internship prematurely can lead to a lack of confidence, especially if students are not yet well-versed in professional etiquette, legal analysis, or communication skills. Low Confidence Levels Without sufficient classroom preparation, students may feel overwhelmed and disengaged during early internships. Internships allow students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world situations, enhancing their understanding of legal principles. Though they are not well versed in subject and laws, but they can understand Courtroom experience which helps them to understand the practical aspects of presenting cases, arguing before judges, and observing the nuances of legal proceedings if they intern earlier<sup>3</sup>. By the second or third year, students typically have sufficient academic grounding in core legal subjects (e.g., contracts, torts, civil law, criminal law), enabling them to understand and apply legal concepts during internships easily. The second or third year, students have a clearer understanding of their strengths and interests in different areas of law, allowing them to make more informed decisions about specialization or practice areas during internships<sup>4</sup>. Students who wait until their final year may miss out on the chance to explore different practice areas or develop key skills over time. Late starters may struggle to acquire and refine practical skills in a short timeframe, potentially leaving them less prepared for employment. Delayed internships can limit opportunities to

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<sup>3</sup> Law Internships: Why Do They Matter, [https://lawbhoomi.com/law-internships-why-do-they-matter/#Importance\\_of\\_Legal\\_Internships](https://lawbhoomi.com/law-internships-why-do-they-matter/#Importance_of_Legal_Internships), last visit Sep.3, 2025, 06.32 PM

<sup>4</sup>Richa Kachhwaha, All about Internships: The Basics (Part I) published on 18 Nov 2013 9:59 AM, <https://www.livelaw.in/all-about-internships-ern%20in.year%20onwards%20is%20considered%20ideal> Last visit on Sep 03.2025 at 07.46 PM

build relationships with professionals who can assist in job placements or mentorship<sup>5</sup>.

**Rule 25 BCI. Minimum Period of Internship:** (a) Each registered student shall have completed minimum of 12 weeks internship for Three Year Course stream and 20 weeks in case of Five Year Course stream during the entire period of legal studies under NGO, Trial and Appellate Advocates, Judiciary, Legal Regulatory authorities, Legislatures and Parliament, Other Legal Functionaries, Market Institutions, Law Firms, Companies, Local Self Government and other such bodies as the University shall stipulate, where law is practiced either in action or in dispute resolution or in management. Provided that internship in any year cannot be for a continuous period of more than Four Weeks and all students shall at least gone through once in the entire academic period with Trial and Appellate Advocates.<sup>6</sup>

The first year of law school can be overwhelming due to the new environment, curriculum, and study responsibilities. Students are only getting used to the law school curriculum. By the second or third year, law students typically have a greater understanding of legal topics, making it easier to understand and contribute significantly during internships.<sup>7</sup> Second and third year of the Bachelor's degree in Law (3-year course), or fourth and final year of the five-year course in Law. Starting too early may result in inadequate preparation, while starting too late can limit exposure and skill-building opportunities. so, with the right planning and self-awareness, student care, secure internship at the right time that provide valuable learning experience, professional connection and a clear pathway to success in the. Journey. No universal or one. One size fit all. Answer to this is timing dilemma, As the best for undertaking and internship varies greatly from person to person based on their unique. Skill. Circumstance on aspiration. Some students may find immense value in early internship; others may benefit more from waiting until they have developed in the academic technical skill and knowledge later in their academic end. So, the decision is ultimately contingent on an individual knowledge and willingness.

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<sup>5</sup>Gabriel Kuris, Plan for Law School During Each Year of College, Sep. 16, 2024, at 4:22 p.m, <https://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/law-admissions-lowdown/articles/plan-for-law-school-during-each-year-of-college>, last visit on Sep 03.2025 at 8.10 PM

<sup>6</sup> <https://vmslaw.edu.in/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/INTERNSHIP-BCI-RULE-25.pdf>, last visit on Sep.03.2025 at 08.55 PM

<sup>7</sup> Nimisha Nayak, The Importance of Internship for Law Students, published in top rankers, June 25, 2024, <https://www.toprankers.com/the-importance-of-internship-for-law-students?srsId=AfmBOopRmVTKsnmWkBT61YzXIaiwqfhuWxo8AGmNiT4GfImP42qGcG11> , last visit on Sep.03.2025 at 9.17 PM

### **Suggestions:**

- a) The law school During the first two years, recommend all the students to participate in moots (or debates), These competitions really enhance their research skills and help boost confidence as well.
- b) The Law schools and career advisors should guide students in planning their internship timelines to ensure they are well-equipped to enter the legal field successfully.
- c) The Law colleges should establish a structured and well-coordinated internship program that aligns with the academic curriculum. Internships could be recommended during specific semesters to student to gain knowledge.
- d) Internship programs can be offered during the summer or winter breaks, or during specific "internship semesters" for the students.
- e) Law colleges should consider the academic load when planning internships, ensuring that students can balance work experience with academic performance separately.

### **Conclusion:**

It is neither too late nor too early to join as an intern in the legal field. Internships at any stage of your law education can provide valuable learning experiences in law students life, it helps them to build practical skills, and expand your professional network. Interns will gain deeper insights into the subject and develop essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication, and drafting petitions everything. This experience not only enhances their academic understanding but also prepares them for the challenges of a legal career. Internships are a stepping stone to mastering the subject and shaping the intern's future in the legal profession. Approach each opportunity with enthusiasm and curiosity to maximize learning and growth. Therefore, internships are an indispensable step for any aspiring legal professional, offering a robust platform to acquire knowledge, refine skills, and build confidence in their journey toward becoming a competent Advocate.