

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Over the past decade, the global hospitality industry has undergone a significant transformation, driven by shifts in consumer behavior, technological advancements, and the post-pandemic recovery process (Zade & Sethi, 2024). The global economy has gradually recovered, and demand for travel, accommodation, and food and beverage (F&B) services has returned to pre-pandemic levels in many locations (Yu & Song, 2024). This recovery has occurred amid evolving guest expectations; now, more than value-added, personalization, hygiene standards, and digital integration are considered crucial (Sheoran, 2025). To remain competitive, F&B businesses are embracing technologies such as contactless service, online reservations, and data-driven customer relationship management (Sarin et al., 2023, p. 25). At the same time, the labor shortage has become an international concern (Kwok, 2022). Consequently, industry players have made workforce development and hands-on training a top priority (Haapala et al., 2023). Therefore, internships and experiential learning have become crucial for preparing skilled workers who can adapt to rapidly changing work environments (Upadhyay & Malik, 2024). In this regard, hospitality educational institutions must adapt their curricula to industry needs by providing practical training and real-world experiences (Baluyut, 2025). This will ensure that their students possess the technical skills and service-oriented perspectives needed in a highly competitive global market.

In Indonesia, the hospitality industry, particularly the hotel and food and beverage sectors, continues to demonstrate resilience and significant growth potential (Salam et al., 2026). According to many employers, fresh graduates lack a balance between academic knowledge and practical skills, particularly in teamwork, adaptability, customer service, and communication (Abidin, 2021). Therefore, internships are crucial in filling this gap, as they give students the opportunity to experience a real-world work environment, understand workplace

culture, and acquire skills that cannot be achieved through classroom education alone (Syafudin & Purwanto, 2025).

Tangerang's competitive F&B market encourages innovation in menus, service delivery, and marketing strategies (Rachman & Hapsari, 2024). This allows interns to observe and participate firsthand in business adaptations. Students can gain practical experience in food service operations, customer interaction, cashiering, inventory management, and basic supervision through organized internship programs (Osorno & Ferrater-Gimena, 2025). This experience is highly beneficial for enhancing students' employability, as it provides them with an understanding of the operational landscape and challenges of the hospitality industry (Pantaruk et al., 2025).

For hospitality students, the internship opportunity at Libro, the food and beverage service provider at Multimedia Nusantara University (UMN) canteen, is both strategically relevant and pedagogically beneficial. Planned rotations across various outlets, such as Libro Café (three months), Libro Crepes (one and a half months), and U-Mart (one and a half months), provide an overview of various operational formats integrated within a single system. Libro Café offers a relaxed dining and beverage preparation experience with emphasis on customer engagement and service sequence. Libro Crepes helps students learn efficiency, consistency, and time management with a focus on quick-service operations and product standardization. Meanwhile, U-Mart helps students understand more than just traditional food and beverage by incorporating elements such as retail operations, point-of-sale management, and inventory control. This rotational approach allows students to learn a comprehensive set of skills, encompassing basic business operations and customer service. Furthermore, because it is located on campus, Libro offers a semi-controlled learning environment where students can learn professional standards while still interacting with and being guided by instructors. Therefore, Libro's internship program not only aligns with industry requirements but also serves as a bridge between academic learning and professional practice, providing students with the skills necessary for employment in the hospitality industry.

1.2 Purpose

The main goal of the internship program is to provide students with a firsthand look at the real working world in the hospitality sector. This program acts as a link between the application of the academic knowledge gained during the previous four semesters in a professional context. The writer hopes to improve her practical knowledge, develop resilience, and get ready for a future in hotel operations by participating in the internship.

1.3 Period and Procedures

In the sixth semester of the Diploma in Hotel Operations program at Multimedia Nusantara University, the writer was required to participate in an internship program as part of the academic curriculum. This program aims to improve students' professional skills through direct work experience in a real industrial environment. In this case, the writer carried out a six-month internship program, which began on February 2, 2026, to August 2, 2026. During this period, the writer was placed in several operational units at Libro, namely Libro Cafe for three months, Libro Crepes for one and half months, and U-Mart for one and half months. This rotation was designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of various operational aspects in the food and beverage industry.

Before starting the internship program, the writer had fulfilled all academic requirements set by the university, including active student status and completing the required number of credits. Furthermore, the writer also attended an internship briefing organized by the university to understand the professional, administrative, and work ethics aspects of the internship. After fulfilling all these requirements, the writer began the internship application process by sending an application via email to Libro on January 13, 2026.

As a follow-up to the application, the writer was given the opportunity to participate in a selection process in the form of an interview held on January 30, 2026. At this stage, the writer was required to submit supporting documents in the form of a Curriculum Vitae (CV) for the company's consideration. After going

through the selection process, the writer was accepted to undertake an internship program at Libro.