

The Influence of Internship Experience, Soft Skills, and Hard Skills on Work Readiness

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills on the work readiness level of students at LP3I College Surabaya. This study is based on the urgent need for higher education graduates to be prepared for the challenges of the world of work, not limited to technical skills alone, work experience, and interpersonal skills are also very important factors. This research design is quantitative and uses an associative approach. The study involved 42 students as samples from the 2023–2025 cohort who had participated in an internship program. The study employed a saturated sampling technique for sample selection, and data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression techniques through the SPSS version 31 application. The findings show that, simultaneously, internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills have a positive and significant impact on work readiness. Partially, it was found that internship experience and interpersonal skills contributed positively to the work readiness of LP3I College Surabaya students significantly, while hard skills did not show a meaningful influence. These findings indicate that the employability of LP3I College Surabaya students is determined more by real-world internship experience and non-technical skills than by technical skills alone.

Keywords: Internship Experience; Skills; Work Readiness

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INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technology, which has grown rapidly during the Fourth Industrial Revolution, has had a substantial impact on various aspects of human life, including the employment sector. Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and big data analytics in digital transformation are technological applications that have transformed traditional working methods into more automated, efficient, and integrated processes. The consequences of these changes include the disappearance of various types of manual jobs replaced by machines and automated systems, while simultaneously creating new job opportunities that demand more complex and adaptive skills (Nofita, 2022). In this context, human resources (HR) are required not only to excel in technical proficiency but also to possess critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and high emotional intelligence. In other words, work readiness has become a fundamental requirement in preparing for the increasingly competitive and dynamic job market. Human Capital Theory, as proposed by Becker in Hasan et al, (2023) states that an individual's knowledge, skills, and experience constitute forms of human capital investment that can enhance economic productivity for both individuals and organizations. Education, training, and work

experience are strategic tools in developing high-quality human resources. However, the reality on the ground reveals a gap between the outcomes of higher education and industry demands. According to data released by the Badan Pusat Statistik (bps, 2024) individuals with higher education especially those holding diplomas or bachelor's degree account for the largest proportion of open unemployment in Indonesia. This highlights the fact that academic achievement by itself does not adequately equip graduates to navigate the demands of the job market.

In the modern professional environment, being job-ready goes beyond academic excellence or theoretical understanding it also requires Job-related technical skills, Non-technical competencies. Sukmawati (2024) explains that work readiness reflects the extent to which an individual is prepared to grow in terms of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to meet the demands and expectations of the world of work. Setiarini et al. (2022) add that a student's work readiness can be seen from their ability to immediately enter the workforce after completing their education without needing a lengthy transition period. Therefore, higher education institutions, including vocational colleges, are obliged to prepare individuals who are not only academically competent, but also have been carefully prepared to face the actual work environment. Previous studies have shown that internship experience, soft skills, and hard skills have a significant influence on the development of students' work readiness. In their research Setiarini et al. (2022) found that internship experiences and soft skills play an important role in improving work readiness, particularly by boosting self-confidence and understanding of workplace dynamics. Yanti et al. (2025), in their research on Islamic Banking students, concluded that technical abilities (hard skills) do not have a significant influence when standing alone. However, when combined with internship experience and interpersonal skills (soft skills), The combination of these three factors contributes positively to an individual's readiness to enter the workforce. This shows that combining various skills with direct experience in the world of work is a crucial aspect that should not be ignored.

LP3I College Surabaya, as a vocational education institution oriented toward the world of work, has strategic programs to improve the job readiness of its graduates. Internship programs, soft skills training, and hard skills reinforcement are part of a competency-based curriculum that is implemented systematically. However, the effectiveness of this approach still needs to be empirically tested to determine the extent to which each factor (internship experience, soft skills, and hard skills) contributes to students' job readiness. The lack of research focusing on these three variables within the context of vocational education at LP3I College Surabaya presents a

scientific gap that this study aims to address. Therefore, this study aims to analyze and test the effect of internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills on the level of work readiness of students at LP3I College Surabaya. This research will not only contribute theoretically in improving knowledge in the field of education management of vocational institutions and human resources, but also practically in formulating curriculum strategies and training programs that are relevant to industry needs

METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative approach with an associative descriptive method to evaluate the extent to which internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills influence the work readiness of students at LP3I College Surabaya. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for measuring the influence between variables through numerical data and statistical analysis (Sahir, 2022). The subjects in this study were selected from all final-year students at LP3I College Surabaya who had participated in the internship program. Because the population is relatively small, the sampling technique uses saturated sampling technique (Hikmawati, 2020), in this case 42 respondents are all sampled.

Data was collected through a closed questionnaire distributed using Likert scale measurements to respondents, to measure their perceptions of each research variable (Hardani, 2020). Previously, the questionnaire instrument had been tested regarding its validity and reliability. Interpretation of the data obtained using multiple linear regression analysis to test the partial and simultaneous effects between variables, involving classical assumption testing, including data normality testing, multicollinearity between variables, and residual heteroscedasticity. Hypothesis analysis was performed by applying the F-test and t-test using SPSS statistical software version 31.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Final year students at LP3I College Surabaya were the respondents in this study, with the criteria of having participated or undergone an internship program. Based on the data obtained, 42 respondents were selected as samples for this study. Respondents' characteristics were categorized based on gender, age, study program, internship duration, internship relevance, and their involvement in soft skill and hard skill development. Female respondents aged 21-23 years old constituted the majority of respondents. The respondents were divided into five programs and classes: Office Administration Automatization (OAA-S05)/June Intake, Office Administration Automatization (OAA-S06), Accounting Information System (AIS-S02), Visual Communication Design & Multimedia (VCDM-S02), and Application Software Engineering (ASE-03). On average,

respondents participated in internship programs for 3–6 months, in accordance with institutional and industry partner regulations. The majority of student respondents revealed that the location and type of internship work was very relevant to their field of study. The survey results show that most students felt that the internship program and on-campus learning contributed significantly to the development of technical skills including communication, teamwork, and time management. On the other hand, technical skills are also honed through technical tasks and the use of specialized software or tools relevant to their respective fields of study.

Validity Test

Validity testing was conducted by comparing the r-count with the r-table, using the formula $df = n - 2$. In this study, $df = 42 - 2 = 40$, and the r-table was 0.304. The research data were considered valid if the r-count exceeded the r-table, with a significance level of < 0.05 .

The results in Table 1 show that each indicator in the questionnaire for independent and dependent variables meets the validity requirements based on the test results. This fact can be seen from the r-count value of each statement item that exceeds the r-table value, and is supported by a significance value below 0.05.

Reliability Test

This study applied the Cronbach's alpha (α) method in the reliability test. If the α value is > 0.60 , the data can be considered reliable. Table 2 shows that the variables of internship experience (X1), interpersonal skills (X2), technical skills (X3), and work readiness (Y) have Cronbach's alpha (α) values above the reliability level set at 0.60. With these results, all variables in this study are proven to be reliable and can be used as a basis for further research.

Normality Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied as a method to test the normal distribution of data in this study. The test standard stipulates that when the significance is > 0.05 (Slamet & Aglis, 2020), this indicates that the data is normally distributed. In other words, a significance below 0.05 indicates that the data is not normally distributed. In Table 3, the data obtained a significant result: $0.200 > 0.05$ (α), indicating that, in the regression model, the research data meet the criteria for normality, namely being normally distributed.

Table 1. Validity Test Result

Variable	Item	Rcount	Rtable	Sig.	Conclusion
Internship EXperience (X1)	X1.1	0.477	0.304	0.001	Valid
	X1.2	0.750	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X1.3	0.672	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X1.4	0.705	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X1.5	0.509	0.304	<,001	Valid
Soft Skill (X2)	X2.1	0.804	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X2.2	0.517	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X2.3	0.767	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X2.4	0.777	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X2.5	0.614	0.304	<,001	Valid
Hard Skill (X3)	X3.1	0.614	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X3.2	0.501	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X3.3	0.575	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X3.4	0.573	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X3.5	0.588	0.304	<,001	Valid
	X3.6	0.730	0.304	<,001	Valid
Work Readiness (Y)	Y.1	0.604	0.304	<,001	Valid
	Y.2	0.702	0.304	<,001	Valid
	Y.3	0.676	0.304	<,001	Valid
	Y.4	0.644	0.304	<,001	Valid
	Y.5	0.593	0.304	<,001	Valid

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Table 2. Reability Test Result

No	Variabel	α Cronbach	α Kritis	Conclusion
1.	Internship Experience (X1)	0.605	0.60	Reliabel
2.	Soft Skill (X2)	0.745	0.60	Reliabel
3.	Hard Skill (X3)	0.622	0.60	Reliabel
4.	Work Readiness (Y)	0.642	0.60	Reliabel

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Table 3. Normality Test Result

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		42
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.10735597
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.099
	Positive	.079
	Negative	-.099
Test Statistic		.099
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		.200 ^d
a. Test distribution is Normal.		

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

Multicollinearity Test

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)		
Internship Experience	.482	2.074
Soft Skill	.541	1.849
Hard Skill	.731	1.368

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Symptoms of multicollinearity can be identified by observing the tolerance value and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value. If the tolerance is > 0.10 or the VIF is < 10 , it can be concluded that there are no symptoms of multicollinearity between the independent variables in the data used. The results in table 4 show that all variables meet the multicollinearity threshold, with tolerance > 0.10 and VIF < 10 . These findings indicate that in this study, the independent variables do not have a high level of correlation with each other.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The absence of heteroscedasticity, i.e., if the pattern is not clearly visible and the points are scattered above and below zero on the Y-axis, as shown in the figure below:

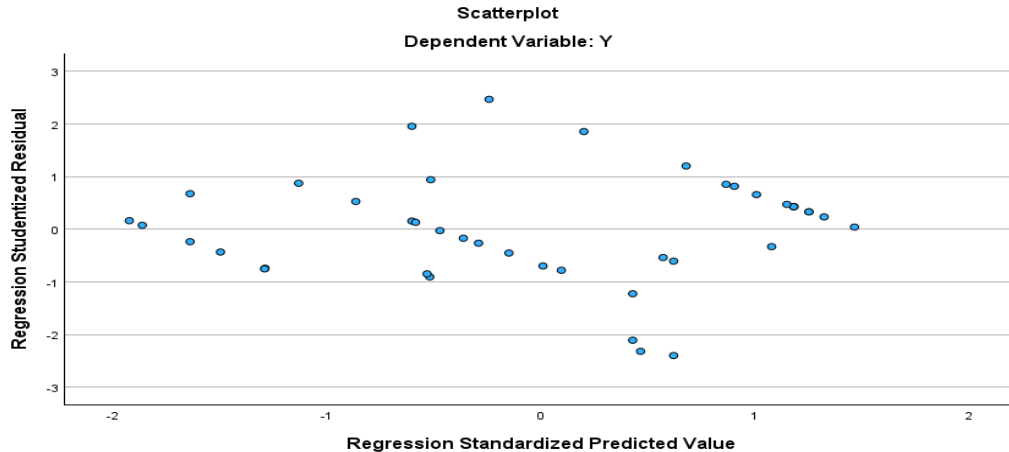


Figure 1. Scatter Plot

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Figure 1 shows a random distribution of points with no clear pattern. Therefore, this study found no evidence of heteroscedasticity.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

To examine the relationship and influence of several independent factors on one dependent factor, this study uses a multiple linear regression approach. The output of the analysis using multiple linear regression in this study involves independent variables in the

form of internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills, while the dependent variable is work readiness.

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Model	Coefficients^a		Beta	t	Sig.
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
	Coefficients	Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	2.553	2.408		1.060	.296
<i>Pengalaman Magang</i>	.371	.142	.361	2.615	.013
<i>Soft Skill</i>	.379	.125	.414	3.177	.003
<i>Hard Skill</i>	.107	.071	.169	1.511	.139

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Table 5 above shows the model formula applied in the analysis as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + e$$

$$Y = 2.553 + 0.371X_1 - 0.379X_2 + 0.107X_3 + e$$

The equation model can be explained briefly as follows:

1. The constant value (α) = 2.553 determines that if the independent variables including internship experience (X_1), soft skills (X_2), and hard skills (X_3) are at zero value or have no effect, then the value of the dependent variable, namely work readiness (Y) is estimated at 2.553 units.
2. The regression parameter for the internship experience variable (X_1) is 0.371, indicating that a 1-unit increase in internship experience will result in a 0.371-unit increase in work readiness, assuming that other variables remain constant. Conversely, if there is a decrease of 1 unit in internship experience, the level of work readiness is projected to decrease by 0.371 units.
3. For the soft skills variable (X_2), the regression parameter = 0.379. This indicates that if there is a 1-unit increase in soft skills, then a 0.379-unit increase in work readiness may occur if other variables are held constant.
4. For the technical skills variable (X_3), the regression parameter of 0.107 indicates that each time the value of that variable increases, technical skills increase by 1 unit, and work readiness is estimated to increase by 0.107 units, assuming other variables remain constant.

F Test (Simultaneous)

The F test is useful for analyzing hypotheses simultaneously, namely whether independent variables (internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills) simultaneously affect the dependent variable (work readiness) or not. The output of the F test shows:

Table 6. F Test Results (Simultaneous)

ANOVA ^a					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	93.843	3	31.281	23.643
	Residual	50.276	38	1.323	
	Total	144.119	41		

a. Dependent Variable: Work Readiness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Hard Skill, Soft Skill, Internship Experience

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Table 6 shows an Fcount value of 23.643 with a significance of <0.001. If the significance level is 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$), this result is considered significant because the significance level is recorded as < 0.05 . Thus, the variables of internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills in this regression model have a simultaneous influence and a significant effect on work readiness. To strengthen this conclusion, the Ftable value can be found using the formula:

$df1$ (regression) = number of independent variables = ($k=3$)

$df2$ (residual) = $n-k-1 = 42-3-1 = 38$

Therefore: $F_{table} = F(\alpha; df \text{ regression}; df \text{ residual})$

: $F_{table} = F(0.05;3;38)$

: $F_{table} = 2.84$

Given that: $F_{count} = 23.643 \geq F_{table} = 2.84$

Thus, this means that in this model, all independent variables, namely internship experience (X1), interpersonal skills (X2), and technical skills (X3), simultaneously contribute significantly to work readiness as the dependent variable (Y). This means that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

t-Test (Partial)

To examine the partial contribution of independent variables (internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills) to the dependent variable (work readiness), a t-test was conducted. The t-table value was obtained by applying the following formula:

$$df = n - k - 1 = 42 - 3 - 1 = 38$$

Significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ with two tails, so $\alpha/2 = 0.025$ is used

Based on the t distribution, the following is obtained:

Ttable ($df = 38$, $\alpha = 0.05$ two tails) = 2.02439

The findings of the t-test in this study can be seen in Table 7 below:

Table 7. t-Test Results (Partial)

Model	Coefficients ^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.553	2.408		1.060	.296
Internship Experience	.371	.142	.219	2.615	.013
Soft Skill	.397	.125	-.011	3.177	.003
Hard Skill	.107	.071	.655	1.511	.139

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Referring to the data in the table, the following description explains the findings:

1. The Internship Experience variable shows a tcount value of 2.615 > t table 2.024. This indicates that, partially, work readiness is significantly influenced by internship experience in a positive direction. This means that the initial hypothesis (H_0) is not supported by the data, while H_1 is accepted.
2. He Soft Skill variable shows a tcount value of 3.177. Since the tcount value of 3.177 is greater than the ttable value of 2.024, based on these findings, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. These results indicate that soft skills, when tested partially, show a significant relationship and make a positive contribution to work readiness.
3. The tcount value for the Hard Skill variable is 1.511. Since tcount 1.511 < ttable 2.024, this finding indicates that technical skills do not have a significant partial effect on work readiness in this study. Although the regression coefficient value ($B = 0.107$) is positive, the level of influence is not strong enough to be categorized as statistically significant. Therefore, H_0 can be accepted and H_1 is rejected as unproven.

Determination Coefficient Test (R^2)

To assess the extent to which the proportion of variation in the independent variables (internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills) can explain the relationship and its impact on the dependent variable, namely work readiness, it is necessary to test the

coefficient of determination. The standard value of the coefficient of determination is $0 < R^2 < 1$. The results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) are shown in the following table:

Table 8. Determination Coefficient Test (R^2)

<i>Model Summary</i>				
Model	<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
1	.807 ^a	.651	.624	1.150

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Based on Table 8 above, the coefficient of determination is 0.624, meaning that the influence of internship experience, soft skills, and hard skills on work readiness is 62.4%. Meanwhile, the remaining 37.6% is the influence of other factors outside the research variables.

The Influence of Internship Experience, Soft Skills, and Hard Skills on Work Readiness

Referring to the results of the F test, the Fcount value obtained is $23.643 \geq F_{table}$ of 2.84 with a significance value of $0.001 < 0.05$. Therefore, hypothesis H1 which states that internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills together have a significant influence on work readiness is accepted. This result indicates that the three independent variables together contribute to shaping work readiness. This is in line with the characteristics of vocational education that does not only rely on theory, but also strongly emphasizes the importance of practical experience (internship), mastery of technical abilities (hard skills), and interpersonal abilities (soft skills). When all three are developed in a balanced manner, the readiness of students to enter the world of work becomes stronger. The regression analysis model applied in this study also shows an R^2 (coefficient of determination) value of 0.624. In other words, 62.4% of work readiness can be explained by the three variables. In other words, internship experience, soft skills, and hard skills play an important role in supporting students' work readiness at LP3I College Surabaya.

The Effect of Internship Experience on Work Readiness

From the partial t test, it is known that the internship experience variable has a tcount of $2.615 > t_{table} = 2.024$ and the significance value is recorded at $0.013 < 0.05$. Thus, hypothesis H2 which states that internship experience partially has a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of LP3I College Surabaya students can be accepted. This shows that internship experience partially contributes positively and significantly to students'

work readiness. This finding supports the results of previous research by Yanti et al. (2025) and Setiarini et al. (2022) which revealed that internship practices have a positive impact on work readiness and professional development of vocational school students.

The Influence of Soft Skills on Work Readiness

The interpersonal skills variable recorded a tcount value of $3.177 > T_{table} 2.024$ and $Sig. = 0.003 < 0.05$. These results support the acceptance of hypothesis H3, namely that soft skills have a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of students at LP3I College Surabaya. This indicates that communication skills, teamwork, work ethics, adaptability, and individual responsibility are highly valued in today's workplace. These findings align with the results of research conducted by Alfiana et al. (2024), which emphasizes that soft skills are a dominant factor in work readiness, as well as with Alfiana et al. (2024), who state that interpersonal skills significantly influence work readiness.

The Influence of Hard Skills on Work Readiness

From the results of the partial t-analysis, the Tcount value obtained was $1.511 < T_{table} = 2.024$ and $Significance = 0.139 > 0.05$, so it can be concluded that H4: Hard skills do not have a significant partial effect on the work readiness of LP3I College Surabaya students. Although the direction of the relationship is positive, its influence is not statistically significant. This indicates that technical proficiency alone does not guarantee work readiness if it is not accompanied by real-world experience and good soft skills.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study on the contribution of internship experience, interpersonal skills, and technical skills to the readiness of LP3I College Surabaya students to enter the workforce show that internship experience and interpersonal skills have a positive and significant influence on students' readiness for work, while technical skills do not have a significant partial influence but still contribute to the regression model simultaneously. These results indicate that graduates' job readiness is more influenced by practical experience and interpersonal skills than by technical skills alone. Therefore, universities and vocational education institutions need to continue improving the quality of internship programs relevant to their fields of study and strengthen project-based learning and the development of soft skills in an integrated manner within the curriculum. As a recommendation, this study suggests that educational institutions establish more strategic collaborations with the industry to ensure the relevance of internship experiences. For students, it is important to actively develop communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills during their studies and internships. This study has limitations in terms of sample size and

scope of research objects, which only covers one institution. As a follow-up, future research should expand the scope of their research by involving different institutions and considering mediating variables such as work motivation or self-confidence, which can provide a more comprehensive picture of students' work readiness.

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