

# Internship Experiences in Relation to Employment Preparedness and Skills Development among Business Administration Graduates

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**Abstract:** In today's competitive job market, higher education institutions face increasing pressure to equip graduates with the skills and competencies needed for successful employment. This study explores the relationship between internship experiences and the employment preparedness and skills development of Business Administration graduates in the Philippines. Grounded in Experiential Learning Theory, Human Capital Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory, the research aims to determine how internship quality, relevance, and perceived value impact graduates' job readiness, professional awareness, and adaptability. The study involved graduates from various private and public higher education institutions in the Philippines. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational design, the study surveyed 120 BSBA graduates through researcher-made questionnaires. Findings revealed that internship experiences were perceived to be of very high quality and significantly influenced job readiness and professional awareness, but had no significant relationship with the application of theoretical knowledge, adaptability, or employability. While internships were effective in enhancing workplace readiness, they alone were insufficient for comprehensive skills development. The study recommends enhancing internship structures, integrating reflective learning, and supplementing practical experiences with targeted training to ensure graduates are better equipped for dynamic work environments. It is recommended that academic institutions strengthen partnership with industry stakeholders to co-design internship programs that are both skill-enriching and career-aligned.

**Keywords:** Business Administration, Competencies, Employability, Internship, Mentorship.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) underscored the significance of internships in bridging academic learning and industry practice, particularly within the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) programs. According to CHED Memorandum Order No. 104, Series of 2017, the Student Internship Program in the Philippines (SIPP) aims to provide students with practical experience to complement their formal education, ensuring they acquire relevant skills and attitudes in real-world settings. This experiential learning is vital for enhancing students' employability and readiness for the dynamic business environment. While CHED mandates a minimum of 300 internship hours for BSBA students, some institutions extend this requirement to 600 hours to offer more comprehensive industry exposure. For instance, students from the College of Business Administration at the University of Southeastern Philippines are required to complete 100 hours of industry research as part of their practicum course (Cba, 2022).

Internship refers to the structured and career-relevant work experience obtained by students prior to graduation from an academic program (Ahmad, 2020). Internships serve as critical transitional experiences for students, bridging the gap between academic learning and professional work environments. In the field of Business Administration, internships provide hands-on exposure, equipping graduates with practical skills and knowledge necessary for successful career entry (Yeong et al., 2024). Employers increasingly value internship experiences when assessing graduates' readiness for the workforce, as such programs foster the development of both technical and soft skills, improving employment preparedness (Ahmad, 2020).

Internships have been perceived to play an important role in providing work experience to the students along with their academic coursework (Jawabri, 2020). Students get to see firsthand how a workplace operates and how theoretical concepts are applied to actual issues. The internship experiences are perceived to be formed of a number of factors,

such as the supervisory support, working environment, level of tasks, and learning gained from the same (Jawabri, 2020). Furthermore, internships have traditionally been seen as a valuable way for university students to get preliminary job knowledge and experience, increasing their employability in a competitive labor market (Bawica, 2021).

Internships serve as platforms for skill acquisition and enhancement, focusing on both technical and transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving (Hergert, 2023). Studies demonstrate that well-structured internship programs, integrated into academic curricula, enhance students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge effectively in professional settings. For instance, findings from the study of Hergert (2023) reveal that graduates who underwent internships perceived them as critical for developing practical skills, positioning them for competitive roles in the job market.

Employment preparedness and skills development are crucial aspects of higher education, especially in professional fields like Business Administration. Internships have increasingly been recognized as a vital mechanism for bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application (Bawica, 2021). Employers value candidates with real-world experience, as internships equip students with the competencies needed to adapt to the complexities of the modern workplace. Research by Yeong et al. (2024) highlights that practical work exposure during internships significantly boosts graduates' employability by aligning their skills with industry requirement. Moreover, studies have shown that structured internship programs not only enhance technical and soft skills but also improve students' confidence and career clarity, leading to more successful job placements after graduation (Smith & Kolb, 2023).

Employment preparedness hinges not only on academic credentials but also on the practical skills and experiences that internships provide (Gray, 2022). Employers prioritize candidates who demonstrate workplace readiness through relevant experiences, as these candidates require less on-the-job training. This trend is supported by global hiring surveys, where candidates with targeted internship experience are more likely to secure employment, particularly in their desired industries (Randstad, 2024). Such evidence underscores the importance of aligning internship roles with students' career goals to maximize their utility in professional development. Moreover, recent studies indicate that students who engage in internships closely related to their field of study report higher levels of job satisfaction and career alignment post-graduation (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2023).

Employment preparedness also encompasses the ability to adapt to evolving and dynamic workplace environments (Homer, 2024). This involves developing soft skills such as cultural competency, critical thinking, and adaptability, which are increasingly valued in globalized and diverse economies. For instance, global internships have been found to foster significant growth in communication and problem-solving abilities, which are crucial for navigating ambiguous or fast-paced work scenarios (Homer, 2024). Furthermore, these experiences often provide students with expanded professional

networks, which enhance their career trajectory and readiness for leadership roles in competitive industries. Additionally, employers consistently emphasize the value of emotional intelligence and teamwork skills gained through internship experiences, as these competencies contribute to effective collaboration and long-term career success (Guerrero, 2020).

Additionally, internships contribute to long-term career growth by providing opportunities for students to network with professionals and gain mentorship. This exposure often results in enhanced self-confidence and better career decision-making skills (Lim, 2022). Employers, too, benefit from internship programs as they identify and cultivate potential talent, ensuring a smoother recruitment process for entry-level positions (Tandon, 2023). These dual benefits underscore the mutual value of internships for both students and organizations. Recent findings also highlight that student who complete internships are more likely to receive job offers before graduation, illustrating the strategic advantage internships provide in competitive job markets (National Survey of College Internships, 2021).

Skills development is essential to train for a career and personal development. Skills development refers to the process of acquiring, improving, and enhancing a wide range of skills and competencies (Chen et al. 2020). It involves the deliberate and continuous effort to build knowledge, expertise, and capabilities in specific areas to meet the demands of one's work or to pursue personal and professional growth (Mosaic, 2024). Skills development contributes to organizational success by improving overall employee performance, enhancing innovation and adaptability, increasing productivity and efficiency, promoting employee engagement and job satisfaction, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth (Mosaic, 2024). Organizations that prioritize skills development gain a competitive advantage by having a skilled and capable workforce.

Skill development is the process of improving specific skills to be more efficient and effective when you perform a task (Chen et al., 2020). Skills development through internships also includes the enhancement of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, which are essential for addressing real-world challenges. Internships often immerse students in environments requiring analytical approaches and innovative solutions (Jacob, 2024). For example, interns are exposed to diverse perspectives and are required to interpret data or tackle complex issues, which cultivates an ability to make informed decisions under varying circumstances (Herman, 2023). This focus on critical thinking equips them to proactively anticipate organizational needs and devise actionable solutions, fostering a mindset necessary for leadership and strategic roles.

The University of Washington's Certificate of International Studies in Business (CISB) program underscores the role of international internships and study abroad in preparing graduates for leadership roles in global business (Foster, 2024). This program combines practical experience, cross-cultural awareness, and global business acumen, which are crucial for navigating the complexities of modern work environments. Employers highly value these skills, as evidenced by a strong job placement rate for program

participants. Furthermore, participation in international academic programs has been linked to enhanced problem-solving and decision-making capabilities, which are essential for leadership in multicultural settings (Martel, 2022). Additionally, graduates with international internship experience demonstrate higher adaptability and resilience, qualities that are increasingly critical in volatile global markets (Smith, 2023).

In the Philippine context, studies on internships for Business Administration students highlight the transformative role these programs play in skill development and employment preparedness. A study by Pascua et al. (2022) revealed that internships in the Philippines significantly improve foundational skills like communication, punctuality, and response to supervision, which are crucial for entry-level employment. These experiences also foster professional traits such as proper office decorum and interpersonal skills, essential for a smooth transition into the workforce (Tutor et al., 2019). The research underscores that internships are a critical bridge between academic theories and real-world application, helping students align their skills with industry expectations.

Despite extensive research highlighting the benefits of internships in enhancing employment preparedness and skills development, significant gaps remain in understanding the nuanced dynamics of these relationships among Business Administration graduates. Much of the existing literature focuses on general internship outcomes without examining the interplay between specific internship experiences and the development of targeted professional competencies. Furthermore, regional and institutional differences in internship structures, mentorship quality, and industry engagement are often overlooked, leaving a gap in how contextual factors influence graduates' career readiness. This lack of detailed analysis limits the ability to design internships that are both universally beneficial and tailored to specific academic and professional contexts. Addressing this knowledge gap is crucial to optimizing internship programs and ensuring they meet evolving industry demands.

This study aims to explore the relationship between internship experiences and the employment preparedness and skills development of Business Administration graduates. By assessing these dimensions, the research seeks to provide valuable insights into how internships can be optimized to better serve the needs of graduates and employers alike. The findings will contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of internship programs, fostering a stronger link between education and employment outcomes in the field of Business Administration.

The rationale behind proposing this study lies in the growing recognition of internships as a crucial bridge between academic learning and workforce integration. While internship programs are widely implemented in Business Administration curricula, there remains a need to assess their effectiveness in equipping graduates with the necessary skills and competencies for employment. Many students face challenges in transitioning from academia to professional roles due to gaps in practical experience, industry alignment, and

job readiness. This study sought to address these issues by examining the relationship between internship experiences and employment preparedness, as well as their influence on skills development. By identifying strengths and areas for improvement in internship programs, the study aims to provide insights that will help educational institutions, policymakers, and employers enhance internship structures, ensuring that graduates are adequately prepared to meet industry demands. The findings of this study significantly benefit various stakeholders in the field of business education. For educational institutions, particularly those offering BSBA programs, the insights gained will aid in refining internship curricula to better align with industry standards, ensuring that students acquire relevant skills and competencies. Program coordinators and faculty members can utilize the results to enhance mentorship and supervision practices, thereby improving the overall quality of internship experiences. Additionally, policymakers, such as the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), can use the study's findings to update and strengthen guidelines on internship programs, ensuring they remain responsive to the evolving demands of the business environment.

Students and graduates will also benefit from the study by gaining a clearer understanding of how internship experiences influence their employment preparedness and skills development. This knowledge will enable them to maximize their learning opportunities during internships, making them more competitive in the job market. Employers, on the other hand, can leverage the insights to structure more effective internship programs that serve as pipelines for talent acquisition. By understanding the competencies and skills developed during internships, companies can better match internship roles with organizational needs, ultimately leading to a more skilled and adaptable workforce.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored into three theories which are the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) proposed by David Kolb (1984), Human Capital Theory (HCT) which was first articulated by Theodore Schultz (1961) and expanded by Gary Becker (1993), and Social Cognitive Theory by Albert Bandura (1986).

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) emphasizes learning as a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. The theory highlights four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). In the context of internships, students engage in concrete experiences by participating in real-world business activities. Reflective observation allows them to evaluate these experiences against academic concepts. They then conceptualize this knowledge into broader theories and apply it actively in problem-solving during their internships. This cyclical process enhances the application of theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios, which is a key aspect of the study's focus on bridging the gap between academics and professional readiness.

In addition to its core principles, Experiential Learning Theory emphasizes the value of unstructured, real-world experiences that challenge students to adapt and make decisions in unpredictable circumstances (Margolis, 2023). For example, during internships, students often encounter unexpected challenges requiring them to apply theoretical knowledge creatively (Varas, 2023). These experiences reinforce critical skills such as adaptability and problem-solving, which are difficult to replicate in traditional classroom settings. Research highlights that such engagement enhances confidence and equips learners to handle ambiguity, a skill vital for professional success in dynamic environments (Standford, 2024). Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) continues to be a robust framework for understanding how practical experiences, such as internships, contribute to student learning and professional development.

Recent studies have examined the application of Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) in the context of internship experiences to understand how real-world engagements facilitate professional skill development. For instance, Yusra and Sari (2025) found a strong correlation between internship experiences and job readiness among vocational students, highlighting the importance of practical exposure in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and industry demands. Similarly, Pianda et al. (2024) conducted a bibliometric review, asserting that well-structured internship programs enhance employability by fostering experiential learning. Additionally, Shethiya et al. (2025) emphasized how internships equip students with essential skills, such as problem-solving and teamwork, that are crucial for successful career transitions. These studies collectively support the view that experiential learning through internships plays a critical role in improving employment preparedness by integrating academic learning with real-world application.

In this study, Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was utilized to examine how internship experiences facilitate the transition from academic knowledge to practical application. ELT posits that learning occurs through a cyclical process of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. By participating in real-world business environments, Business Administration graduates engage in hands-on experiences that allow them to reflect on their actions, conceptualize their learnings, and apply new strategies in subsequent tasks. This reflective process is essential for developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, which are key components of employment preparedness. The study will explore how different aspects of the internship experience, such as task complexity and mentorship quality, influence the effectiveness of experiential learning.

Human Capital Theory posits that investments in education and training increase the productive capacity of individuals. Internships serve as an investment in human capital by equipping students with technical and soft skills, making them more employable and ready for professional roles (Becker, 1993). The study discusses how such experiences improve employment preparedness by aligning graduate competencies with industry requirements (Simao, 2024). This theory underscores the role of internships as a

mechanism for acquiring and honing skills, knowledge, and experience that contribute to career success, emphasizing the economic value of such educational investments.

Human Capital Theory further explains how internships contribute to the economic value of individuals by emphasizing the role of diverse skill development. Beyond technical competencies, internships help cultivate soft skills like communication, teamwork, and cultural intelligence, making graduates more competitive in the job market (Eubanks, 2024). Recent studies have shown that structured internship experiences significantly align graduates' capabilities with employer expectations, reducing the need for additional training while improving job readiness (Coll, 2024). This dual focus on technical and interpersonal development illustrates the theory's application in understanding the comprehensive benefits of internship programs. Human Capital Theory (HCT) remains pivotal in assessing how educational investments, such as internships, enhance individuals' economic value and employability.

Recent studies have applied Human Capital Theory (HCT) to analyze the relationship between education, skill development, and employability, particularly in the context of internships. For instance, Garcia and Nguyen (2022) examined the impact of internships on graduates' employability, emphasizing that internships serve as investments in human capital by equipping students with both technical and soft skills. Their research found that students with internship experience secured higher-paying jobs and advanced faster in their careers compared to those without such experience. Similarly, Shethiya et al. (2025) applied HCT to investigate how internships align academic learning with industry needs, revealing that structured internships enhance the human capital of students by improving both professional competencies and employability.

Additionally, research by Chen et al. (2020) aligned internship programs with industry requirements, arguing that internships help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, further enhancing the economic value of graduates. Additionally, Garcia and Nguyen (2022) utilized HCT to examine the relationship between internship experiences and post-graduation employment outcomes among Business Administration students. Their research demonstrated that internships significantly increased graduates' human capital by providing both technical skills and soft skills, such as leadership and communication, which are highly valued by employers. The study quantified the return on investment in internship programs, showing that students with internship experience secured higher starting salaries and advanced more quickly in their careers compared to their peers without such experience.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura, posits that learning occurs within a social context and is facilitated through observation, imitation, and modeling. This theory emphasizes the dynamic interplay between personal factors, behavioral patterns, and environmental influences, suggesting that individuals actively shape and are shaped by their surroundings (Nickerson, 2024). Central to SCT is the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to



one's belief in their capability to execute behaviors necessary to achieve specific goals. This belief system influences motivation, learning, and performance across various domains.

The application of Social Cognitive Theory is particularly pertinent to this study's examination of internship experiences and their impact on employment preparedness and skills development (Vinney, 2024). Internships provide a platform for observational learning, where students can model behaviors exhibited by experienced professionals, thereby enhancing their marketing competencies. The interactive nature of internships aligns with SCT's emphasis on the reciprocal relationship between personal factors and environmental influences, facilitating the practical application of theoretical knowledge (Brinkman & Hurst, 2023). Moreover, by engaging in real-world tasks and receiving feedback, interns can bolster their self-efficacy, which is crucial for successful transition into professional roles. Thus, SCT offers a valuable framework for understanding the mechanisms through which internship experiences translate into improved job readiness and professional growth.

Recent studies have applied Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) to investigate how cognitive factors such as self-efficacy and outcome expectations influence employability outcomes. For instance, Gunawan, Glendon, and Creed (2024) examined the relationship between perceived future employability and various career outcomes, finding that career self-efficacy and outcome expectations mediated the effects of perceived employability on career distress, effort, and aspirations. Similarly, Pianda et al. (2025) utilized SCCT to explore how internship experiences enhance vocational students' employability through the development of 21st-century competencies, highlighting the role of psychological capital in moderating these effects. These studies underscore the importance of cognitive factors in shaping career development and employability, providing valuable insights for educational and career counseling practices. Moreover, research by Bandura (2023) has explored how observational learning and self-efficacy contribute to skill acquisition in marketing contexts, highlighting the importance of social influences and personal beliefs in shaping professional capabilities. These studies underscore the relevance of SCT in examining how individuals acquire and apply marketing skills through social interactions and experiential learning.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) is relevant to studying internship experiences as it highlights how individuals develop skills through observation, self-efficacy, and social interactions. During internships, students learn by observing mentors and peers, which boosts their confidence and job readiness (Gunawan, 2024). SCT suggests that these experiences enhance both technical and soft skills, bridging the gap between academic knowledge and real-world application (Glendon, 2024). The theory emphasizes the role of feedback and social environments in shaping professional growth and adaptability.

The importance of the three theories—Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), Human Capital Theory (HCT), and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)—to the study lies in their

complementary explanations of how internship experiences shape employment preparedness and skills development. ELT emphasizes the role of hands-on experiences and reflection in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and real-world application. HCT highlights internships as valuable investments that enhance employability by developing both technical and soft skills, increasing graduates' human capital. SCT further enriches the study by explaining how social interactions, self-efficacy, and observational learning during internships influence students' confidence, job readiness, and career growth. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted impact of internships on graduates' professional development.

### III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of this study serves as a foundation for understanding the intricate relationship between internship experiences and their influence on employment preparedness and skills development among Business Administration graduates. In this framework, internship experiences function as the independent variable, while employment preparedness and skills development represent the dependent variables. By identifying how the quality, relevance, and duration of internships contribute to graduates' readiness for the workforce and enhancement of core competencies, the framework provides a structured basis for analyzing the effectiveness of experiential learning in bridging academic training with industry demands.

Internship Experiences refer to structured, supervised work engagements that integrate academic learning with practical application in a professional environment (Hora et al., 2020). These experiences are designed to provide students with hands-on exposure to their chosen fields, facilitating the development of industry-specific skills and competencies. Operationally, internship experiences can be measured by evaluating the duration of the internship, the relevance of assigned tasks to the student's academic discipline, the level of mentorship and supervision provided, and the opportunities for reflective learning and professional development (Stykes, 2020). Assessing these components offers a comprehensive understanding of the quality and impact of the internship on a student's educational and career trajectory.

Internship experiences are pivotal in bridging academic knowledge with practical applications, particularly for Business Administration graduates preparing for employment (Jolo, 2023). Studies reveal that internships enhance employability by providing students with hands-on experience, networking opportunities, and industry-specific skills. For instance, they allow students to develop critical competencies such as teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability, which are highly valued in professional settings. Internships also foster a deeper understanding of workplace norms and expectations, making students better equipped for their future roles (Jolo, 2023). Moreover, these experiences help graduates establish connections with industry professionals, a factor that often translates into increased job opportunities and career growth prospects.

The quality of internship is determined by factors such as learning outcomes, support systems, and assessment mechanisms (Knemeyer, 2022). High-quality internships are characterized by structured opportunities to develop job-related skills, clear alignment with academic goals, and access to professional mentorship. Effective programs focus on bridging theoretical knowledge with practical experience, enabling interns to gain industry-specific competencies and enhance their employability (Dakich, 2022). For example, a study highlighted that supervision quality, including regular feedback and guidance from mentors, significantly contributes to intern satisfaction and skill development (Knemeyer, 2022).

Additionally, well-designed internships often include collaborative engagement between educational institutions and host organizations (Dakich, 2022). This ensures that interns receive adequate support and training to address their career goals and industry needs. Assessment methods, such as reflective journals and performance appraisals, help evaluate the effectiveness of these experiences (Knemeyer, 2022). Research indicates that internships also influence career readiness by exposing students to workplace dynamics and fostering professional confidence, emphasizing their role as a vital component of higher education.

The perceived quality of an internship significantly influences graduates' self-perceived employability. A study by Rothman and Sisman (2020) found that positively evaluated internships contribute to reduced career-entry worries, thereby enhancing employability perceptions. This suggests that the subjective assessment of an internship experience—such as satisfaction with supervision, relevance of tasks, and learning opportunities—plays a critical role in shaping a graduate's confidence and outlook toward entering the workforce.

Furthermore, the relevance of internships to a graduate's field significantly influences the effectiveness of skill development and employment readiness (Malbuyo, 2024). Employers often prioritize candidates whose internships align closely with their industry, viewing these experiences as indicators of job readiness and adaptability. For Business Administration students, this alignment provides a direct application of theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges, reinforcing their ability to handle dynamic business environments. However, when internships are less relevant, graduates may need to emphasize transferable skills on their resumes to demonstrate value (Mondal, 2020). Overall, well-structured and relevant internship experiences serve as critical stepping stones in equipping graduates for successful transitions from academia to professional careers.

Aligning internship tasks with a student's academic discipline is crucial for effective skill application. Research indicates that when internships are closely related to the student's field of study, there is a notable increase in the application of theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios, leading to improved job readiness. This alignment not only reinforces classroom learning but also enhances students' motivation, engagement, and confidence in handling real-world professional responsibilities.

The perceived value of internships is instrumental in preparing Business Administration graduates for employment by enhancing their professional skills, practical knowledge, and career readiness (Kapareliotis et al., 2019). Internships act as a bridge between theoretical education and real-world application, offering students the opportunity to refine problem-solving skills, develop teamwork abilities, and adapt to workplace challenges. These experiences also help align academic knowledge with industry requirements, thereby reducing career-entry anxieties and fostering confidence in job readiness. A high-quality internship that aligns with a student's field significantly influences their employability perceptions, making them feel better equipped for future professional roles and enhancing their understanding of workplace (Edwards et al., 2024).

The intrinsic value students place on their internship experiences affects their professional growth. Studies suggest that internships offering meaningful, hands-on tasks enhance students' critical thinking and learning orientation, thereby increasing the perceived value of the experience. When students recognize their roles as purposeful and impactful, they are more likely to take initiative, seek feedback, and reflect on their performance—behaviors that are essential for continuous professional development.

Furthermore, internships provide invaluable networking opportunities and mentorship, aiding graduates in building professional relationships that support long-term career growth. These experiences also allow students to explore potential career paths, reflect on personal aspirations, and identify areas for improvement. Research suggests that internships foster cultural awareness, adaptability, and leadership skills, all of which are critical in navigating complex workplace environments (Lee, 2023). Such experiences not only supplement academic learning but also ensure that graduates enter the job market with a competitive edge, possessing both practical skills and professional (Tang et al., 2020). Ultimately, the perceived value of internships lies in their ability to prepare students holistically for the demands of their chosen fields.

Employment Preparedness refers to an individual's readiness and capability to effectively secure and perform in a job role, encompassing the requisite skills, knowledge, and attitudes aligned with industry standards and expectations (Howitt, 2025). Operationally, it can be assessed through measurable indicators such as the acquisition of industry-specific competencies, performance evaluations during practical engagements like internships, and feedback from employers regarding a graduate's readiness to enter the workforce (Carlson et al., 2024). These metrics provide tangible evidence of a graduate's preparedness for employment in their chosen field.

Job readiness refers to the preparedness of individuals to transition from academic settings into professional roles, marked by the ability to apply skills and knowledge effectively in workplace environments (Akhtar & Parker, 2024). Internships play a significant role in fostering job readiness by bridging the gap between academic theories and practical applications (Lee, 2023). For business administration

graduates, internships provide hands-on experiences that cultivate essential competencies such as teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability. They also allow interns to integrate theoretical knowledge into real-world contexts, enhancing their capability to navigate complex workplace dynamics (Lee, 2023). Furthermore, internships promote critical soft skills such as communication and collaboration, which are indispensable for thriving in competitive job markets.

The structured learning environment of internships also encourages self-reflection and personal growth, which are crucial for professional development. Studies reveal that internship experiences significantly enhance career readiness by improving graduates' confidence and ability to handle workplace challenges effectively (Karunaratne & Perera, 2019). Networking opportunities during internships connect students with industry professionals, offering mentorship and potential career advancement pathways (Edwards et al., 2024). These experiences are not only instrumental in developing technical and interpersonal skills but also in fostering a clearer understanding of career aspirations and goals. As a result, internships prepare graduates to be adaptable and skilled professionals ready to meet the demands of the workforce, aligning closely with the objectives of the research study on employment preparedness and skills development (Edwards et al., 2024).

Participation in internships has been linked to increased job readiness among graduates. Research by Davis (2020) indicates that students who engage in internships are better prepared for the job market, possessing enhanced problem-solving and communication skills.

Professional awareness, as developed through internships, plays a critical role in preparing business administration graduates for the complexities of the workforce (Future Business Journal, 2022). Internships provide real-world exposure that complements academic knowledge, allowing students to engage with professional practices, norms, and challenges. This exposure helps bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application, fostering skills like communication, teamwork, and critical thinking, which are essential in business environments (Future Business Journal, 2022).

For instance, studies have shown that internships significantly impact professional growth by providing hands-on experience and enhancing employability prospects. Interns often work closely with professionals, gaining insights into workplace dynamics and industry expectations, which in turn increases their confidence and readiness for full-time roles (Future Business Journal, 2022). Moreover, internships enhance professional awareness by helping students identify their strengths and areas for improvement in a controlled learning environment. This awareness enables them to align their skills with career goals effectively.

Internships serve as a bridge between academic learning and professional practice, fostering greater professional awareness. Hodson (2021) emphasizes that internships help students develop professional self-awareness and work values, essential for successful career entry.

The application of theoretical knowledge in internships is a critical aspect of bridging academic learning with workplace demands, particularly for business administration graduates (Benati et al., 2021). Internships provide a platform for students to translate abstract concepts into actionable skills, deepening their understanding and enabling them to tackle real-world problems (Benati et al., 2021). A study highlighted that students often integrate their academic foundations with hands-on tasks, thus strengthening their ability to navigate dynamic work environments. Such integration not only reinforces their theoretical learning but also enhances employability by equipping them with practical insights and industry-specific skills (Benati et al., 2021). Furthermore, the interaction between theoretical knowledge and practical experience during internships underscores the importance of experiential learning in education (Radigan et al., 2020). Internships serve as a testing ground where students refine their academic insights by applying them to professional challenges, which builds their confidence and adaptability.

The transition from classroom learning to practical application is facilitated through internships. Studies have shown that students who participate in internships can effectively apply theoretical concepts in real-world settings, enhancing their practical skills and employability.

Skills Development refers to the systematic process of acquiring and enhancing abilities, knowledge, and competencies that enable individuals to perform tasks effectively and adapt to evolving professional demands (Richfield, 2024). Operationally, it can be assessed through measurable indicators such as the completion of targeted training programs, proficiency evaluations, and the successful application of newly acquired skills in practical scenarios (Herrity, 2024). These metrics provide tangible evidence of an individual's progression and readiness to meet specific job requirements.

Adaptability is a pivotal skill cultivated during internships, especially for business administration graduates preparing for the complexities of modern employment landscapes (McKinsey, 2021). It refers to the ability to adjust to changing environments, challenges, and workplace dynamics, a crucial competency in the face of rapid technological advancements and shifting market demands. Internships provide an environment where students are exposed to real-world scenarios requiring immediate problem-solving, team collaboration, and flexibility (McKinsey, 2021). Such experiences allow them to refine their adaptive capacity by confronting uncertainties and learning to manage stress effectively, enhancing their readiness for diverse professional roles (Savickas, 2021). Moreover, adaptability as a competency aligns closely with career development theories, emphasizing the importance of resilience and a growth mindset in managing career transitions and challenges.

Exposure to diverse work environments during internships enhances students' adaptability. Research indicates that internships provide opportunities for students to develop flexibility and resilience, traits highly valued in dynamic job markets. These experiences allow students to navigate varying organizational cultures, adjust to different management styles,

and effectively respond to unforeseen challenges, thereby strengthening their capacity to thrive in complex professional settings.

Employability is a critical outcome for business administration graduates, shaped significantly by their internship experiences (Mainga et al., 2022). Internships bridge the gap between academic learning and the practical demands of the workplace, providing students with essential skills like communication, problem-solving, and teamwork (Mainga et al., 2022). For instance, employers increasingly value candidates with relevant industry experience gained during internships, as it demonstrates both job-specific skills and adaptability. A study highlights that internship offer a platform for graduates to enhance their readiness for dynamic workplace environments, improving their chances of being hired in competitive job markets. Moreover, employers prefer candidates whose internship experiences align closely with their fields of study or industry-specific roles, showcasing the importance of relevance and quality in internships for employability (Leedy & Ormrod, 2024).

The overall impact of internships on employability is well-documented. Bawica (2020) found that internship programs significantly enhance students' job prospects by providing practical experience and professional networking opportunities.

#### ➤ *Statement of the Problem*

This study examined the relationship between internship experiences, employment preparedness and skills development of Business Administration graduates. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What is the level of the respondents' internship experiences in terms of quality of internship, relevance to field, and perceived value of internship?
- What is the level of the respondents' employment preparedness in terms of job readiness, professional awareness, and application of theoretical knowledge?
- What is the level of the respondents' skill development in terms of adaptability and employability?
- Is there a significant relationship between respondents' internship experiences and their employment preparedness?
- Is there a significant relationship between respondents' internship experiences and skills development?

#### ➤ *Null Hypotheses*

- H1: There is no significant relationship between internship experiences and employment preparedness.
- H2: There is no significant relationship between internship experiences and skills development.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

### A. *Design*

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational design in obtaining the findings. Leedy and Ormrod (2017) describe the correlational design as descriptive quantitative research that examines relationships among variables. Descriptive-correlational research primarily describes relationships among variables rather than inferring cause-and-effect relationships.

This research focused on addressing how rather than what or why something occurs. It also explains how one phenomenon relates to another in situations where the researchers have no control over the independent variable (Lappe, 2000). On the other hand, correlational approaches frequently rely on statistical power to rule out the effects of independent variables, which results in more accurate estimates of connections among variables or in the production of a conservative test of hypotheses (Becker et al., 2016). This design was appropriate in this study as the researchers aimed to know if the internship experiences affect the graduates' employment preparedness and skills development.

### B. *Setting*

The study was conducted among graduates from various private and public higher education institutions in the Philippines offering Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) programs. By including a diverse range of institutions, the research aimed to capture a comprehensive understanding of internship experiences and their influence on employment preparedness and skills development among graduates. This broader setting allows for the exploration of regional and institutional differences in internship structures, mentorship quality, and industry engagement, providing a more holistic view of how internships impact students' career readiness nationwide.

### C. *Respondents*

The respondents of the study were the Business Administration graduates from the Academic Years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants. To ensure representation, the study included graduates from all major tracks of Business Administration (e.g., Marketing Management, Financial Management, Human Resource Management, and Business Economics). A total of 120 respondents are targeted to ensure sufficient data for statistical analysis. The following criteria for selecting the respondents of the study were: (1) they must have experienced internship program during their college days (2) they had at least 300-600 hours duty during their internship (3) they are a graduate of business administration in any of the colleges and universities in the Philippines (4) they are currently employed (5) they are graduates of academic year 2022-2023, 2023-2024; and (6) they voluntarily consented to participate in the study.

### D. *Instrument*

This study utilized the following research instrument in gathering data:



#### ➤ *Questionnaire on Internship Experience.*

This questionnaire is a researcher-made questionnaire and utilized a 4 point-Likert scale. The questionnaire consists of three constructs: quality of internship, relevance to field, and perceived value of internship. Each construct is composed of 10 statements. For reliability testing, a pilot test was conducted involving 30 Business Administration graduates from a university not included in the main study. The pilot results were analyzed to determine the internal consistency of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha. This questionnaire was used in determining the level of Internship Experience as perceived by business administration graduates.

#### ➤ *Questionnaire on Employment Preparedness.*

This questionnaire is a researcher-made questionnaire and utilized a 4 point-Likert scale. The questionnaire consists of three constructs: job readiness, professional awareness, and application of theoretical knowledge. Each construct was composed of 10 statements. For reliability testing, a pilot test was conducted involving 30 Business Administration graduates from a university not included in the main study. The pilot results were analyzed to determine the internal consistency of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha. This questionnaire was used in determining the graduate's perspective on Internship Experience towards Employment Preparedness.

#### ➤ *Questionnaire on Skills Development.*

This questionnaire is a researcher-made questionnaire and utilized a 4 point-Likert scale. The questionnaire consists of two constructs: adaptability and employability. Each construct is composed of 10 statements. For reliability testing, a pilot test was conducted involving 30 Business Administration graduates from a university not included in the main study.

The pilot results were analyzed to determine the internal consistency of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha. This questionnaire was used in determining the graduate's perspective on Internship Experience towards Skill Development.

In determining this, the following scale was used:

Responses	Continuum	Interpretation
4 – Strongly Agree	3.25 – 4.00	Very High (VH)
3 – Agree	2.50 – 3.24	High (H)
2 – Disagree	1.75 – 2.49	Low (L)
1 – Strongly Disagree	1.0 – 1.74	Very Low (VL)

#### *E. Data-Gathering Procedure*

Before the conduct of the study, permission was sought from the Dean of Misamis University Graduate School. After the letter of authorization was accepted, the researcher subsequently asked for approval from the respondents to perform a research study. Following the approval of the school heads, the researcher conducted the data gathering *via* Google Forms. The respondents were also given a consent letter to show respect and to protect their rights from answering the survey questionnaire. The link to the questionnaire was given to the respondents online. After the survey was completed, the gathered data was tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

#### *F. Ethical Considerations*

Before the conduct of the study, the four ethical considerations were considered. Respondents were not subject to harm; there was informed consent; there was no invasion of privacy and deception (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Anonymity and confidentiality were employed in this study to reduce the possibility of harming respondents and to ensure no information is shared. This study passed through the Misamis University Research Ethics Committee. The potential respondents are given information and a letter of permission to get their approval. The invasion of someone's privacy is the subject of the third ethical principle. Some questions may be too personal for the respondent to answer openly. If a question is deemed sensitive, the respondent has the choice of not answering it. Furthermore, this study is not sensitive, enhancing the respondents' willingness to respond. The fourth ethical principle refers to deceit, which occurs when respondents think an investigation is about something different. In this study, the survey clearly stated its objective, and both researchers will be present to answer questions from respondents.

#### *G. Data Analysis*

The following statistical tools were used in this study:

The mean and standard deviation was used to assess the level of internship experiences of the respondents, categorized under constructs such as the quality of the internship, relevance to the field, and the perceived value of the internship. Additionally, they evaluated graduates' perspectives on how their internship experiences influence their employment preparedness (job readiness, professional awareness, and application of theoretical knowledge) and skills development (adaptability and employability). These descriptive statistics summarize the central tendencies and variability of respondents' responses on the 4-point Likert scale, providing a quantitative overview of perceptions and experiences.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient measured the strength and direction of the relationship between internship experiences, employment preparedness and skills development. Furthermore, it tested hypotheses on whether significant relationships exist between these variables.

## **V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### *A. Level of the Respondents' Internship Experiences*

The results in Table 1 indicate that the respondents rated their internship experiences highly across all constructs. The Quality of Internship (WM = 3.65), Relevance to Field (WM = 3.55), and Perceived Value of Internship (WM = 3.56) all received Very High interpretations, with weighted means falling within the range of 3.25 to 4.00. The overall weighted mean of 3.59 also reflects a Very High rating, suggesting that, overall, the internship experiences were highly valued by the respondents. The standard deviations are relatively small (ranging from 0.1834 to 0.2855), indicating that the responses were consistent among the respondents. This demonstrates that, in general, the internships provided a significant benefit

and were well-regarded in terms of quality, relevance, and value to the field of study.

The findings in Table 1 reveal that respondents rated their internship experiences very positively across all constructs. The highest weighted mean of 3.65 was observed for the quality of internship, suggesting that respondents were highly satisfied with the structure, supervision, and overall implementation of the internship programs. This indicates that the internships were well-organized and effectively supported by the hosting institutions. The relevance to field construct received a weighted mean of 3.55, reflecting that respondent felt the internships were closely aligned with their academic field, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. Similarly, the perceived value of internship scored a weighted mean of 3.56, indicating that respondents found significant value in the experience for their personal and professional growth. The low standard deviations across all constructs (ranging from 0.1834 to 0.2855) further emphasize the consistency in respondents' views, suggesting that the internships had a universally positive impact on student preparedness and satisfaction. These results highlight the effectiveness of the internship programs in meeting student expectations and contributing to their professional development.

Recent studies from 2020 to 2025 have consistently highlighted the significance of internship experiences in shaping students' professional development. Zhao et al. (2022) found that factors such as service quality, supervisor support, task clarity, and perceived value significantly influence internship satisfaction among art students in Sichuan, China. Similarly, a study by Pianda et al. (2024) emphasized that well-structured internship programs enhance vocational students' employability, with student satisfaction and experiential learning being key contributors. Furthermore, research by Cai et al. (2023) demonstrated that internship satisfaction positively affects career identity behavior among fresh graduates, mediated by psychological contracts. These

findings align with the current study's results, underscoring the importance of quality, relevance, and perceived value in internship programs to foster student satisfaction and professional growth.

While many studies highlighted the positive impact of internships on student satisfaction and career readiness, recent research from 2020 to 2025 presents contrasting findings that underscore challenges within internship programs. Amer et al. (2024) discovered that hotel management students often experienced dissatisfaction due to long working hours, inadequate compensation, and lack of supervisor support, leading to diminished interest in pursuing careers in the hospitality industry. Similarly, a study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) revealed that students participating in online internships reported lower satisfaction levels, citing limited career development opportunities and reduced skill acquisition compared to their in-person counterparts (Gray, 2021). Furthermore, research by Adams and Jessup-Anger (2025) emphasized that a student's sense of belonging significantly influences internship satisfaction, suggesting that without a supportive environment, the benefits of internships may not be fully realized. These studies highlight the necessity for organizations to address structural and relational aspects of internship programs to enhance their effectiveness and ensure meaningful experiences for all.

The study shows that respondents were highly satisfied with the quality, relevance, and value of their internships, highlighting the importance of well-structured programs in enhancing academic learning and professional growth. These findings suggest that academic institutions and partner organizations should continue refining internships to align with students' fields, offer practical experiences, and maintain high standards. The consistent responses also indicate that current internship models effectively meet students' expectations, contributing to skill development and better career preparedness.

Table 1 Level of the Respondents' Internship Experiences

Constructs	WM	StDev	Interpretation
Quality of Internship	3.65	0.2855	Very High (VH)
Relevance to Field	3.55	0.2808	Very High (VH)
Perceived Value of Intenship	3.56	0.1834	Very High (VH)
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>0.0551</b>	<b>Very High (VH)</b>

Legend: 3.25-4.00 – Very High (VH)  
2.50-3.25 - High (H)

1.75-2.49 - Low (L)  
1.00-1.74 Very Low (VL)

#### B. Level of the Respondents Employment Preparedness

The results in Table 2 demonstrate that respondents felt very well-prepared for employment, with all constructs receiving a Very High rating. The constructs of Job Readiness (WM = 3.62), Professional Awareness (WM = 3.49), and Application of Theoretical Knowledge (WM = 3.64) all had weighted means within the Very High range of 3.25 to 4.00. The overall weighted mean of 3.58 also falls within this range, indicating a strong perception of readiness and awareness among the respondents. The relatively low standard deviations (ranging from 0.1691 to 0.2746) suggest that the respondents' views were consistent. These findings indicate that the

respondents believe they have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their professional endeavors, with a solid understanding of both theoretical and practical aspects of their field.

The findings from Table 2 show that the respondents exhibited a very high level of employment preparedness, with all three constructs—job readiness, professional awareness, and application of theoretical knowledge—receiving strong ratings. Job readiness scored a weighted mean of 3.62, indicating that respondents felt well-prepared for the workforce, with a relatively low standard deviation (0.1956),

suggesting uniformity in their perceptions of readiness. Professional awareness had a slightly lower score of 3.49 but still fell within the very high range, reflecting that respondent understood workplace expectations and conduct. The low standard deviation (0.1691) further indicates consistency in responses, suggesting that the training provided effectively fostered a shared sense of professional awareness. The highest weighted mean of 3.64 was found in the application of theoretical knowledge, signifying those respondents felt confident in applying their academic learning to real-world work settings. Although the standard deviation here was slightly higher (0.2746), the score still reflects a strong ability to bridge theory with practice. The overall weighted mean of 3.58, coupled with the low overall standard deviation (0.0814), confirms that respondents generally perceived themselves as very well-prepared for employment, with minimal variability in their views of their preparedness.

Recent literature from 2020 to 2025 underscores the pivotal role of internships in enhancing students' employment preparedness, aligning with the findings presented in Table 2. A study conducted at Politeknik Negeri Padang revealed a significant correlation between internship experiences and job readiness, with internships contributing to improved job knowledge, skills, attitudes, and workplace familiarity among students. Similarly, a bibliometric and systematic review by Pianda et al. (2024) highlighted that well-structured internship programs positively impact vocational students' employability by fostering experiential learning and aligning academic curricula with industry demands. Furthermore, research by Adams and Jessup-Anger (2025) emphasized the importance of relational aspects within internships, such as a sense of belonging, in promoting internship satisfaction and, consequently, career readiness. These studies collectively affirm that quality internship experiences are instrumental in preparing students for successful transitions into the workforce.

While numerous studies highlight the positive impact of internships on employment preparedness, recent research from 2020 to 2025 presents contrasting perspectives that question the effectiveness of internships in equipping students for the workforce. Shethiya et al. (2025) found that despite the potential benefits of internships, students often face challenges such as financial constraints, lack of guidance, and limited availability of quality placements, which hinder their career preparedness. Similarly, Putri and Sulistiobudi (2024) emphasized that resilience plays a significant role in work readiness among internship students, suggesting that without adequate support to build resilience, internships alone may not suffice in preparing students for employment. Additionally, a study by Strada Education Network revealed disparities in internship participation, particularly among first-generation and minority students, indicating that systemic barriers can limit the effectiveness of internships in promoting equitable employment readiness. These findings suggest that while internships have the potential to enhance employment preparedness, their effectiveness is contingent upon addressing underlying challenges and ensuring equitable access and support for all students.

The results from Table 2, which show a very high level of employment preparedness among respondents in terms of job readiness, professional awareness, and the application of theoretical knowledge, imply that the educational and internship experiences provided to students are effectively bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world employment demands. This strong preparedness suggests that students are leaving their academic programs equipped not only with knowledge but also with practical skills and professional competencies essential for entering the workforce. The findings further imply that institutions should continue to strengthen experiential learning opportunities, such as internships and career development programs, to maintain and enhance graduate employability. Moreover, the consistency in responses reflects a shared confidence among students, which may lead to smoother transitions into professional roles and greater workforce contribution.

Table 2 Level of the Respondents' Employment Preparedness

Constructs	WM	StDev	Interpretation
Job Readiness	3.62	0.1956	Very High
Professional Awareness	3.49	0.1691	Very High
Application of Theoretical Knowledge	3.64	0.2746	Very High
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.58</b>	<b>0.0814</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Legend: 3.25-4.00 – Very High (VH)  
2.50-3.25 - High (H)

1.75-2.49 - Low (L)  
1.00-1.74 Very Low (VL)

### C. Level of the Respondents Skill Development

Table 3 presented the respondents' assessment of their level of skill development in terms of adaptability and employability. Both constructs received "Very High" ratings, with weighted means of 3.63 for adaptability and 3.61 for employability, suggesting that students feel highly capable of adjusting to new environments and are confident in their readiness for employment. The overall weighted mean of 3.62, also interpreted as "Very High," indicates a strong consensus that the experiences provide, likely including internships and academic training are effective in cultivating essential

workplace skills. Despite the relatively moderate individual standard deviations (0.2998 and 0.2766), the remarkably low overall standard deviation of 0.0141 reflects a highly consistent and positive perception across respondents. This implies that the program or intervention supporting skill development is both impactful and uniformly effective among respondents.

The findings indicate that respondents perceived their level of skill development to be very high, particularly in the areas of adaptability (WM = 3.63) and employability (WM =

3.61). These results suggest that the training and internship programs effectively equipped students with essential soft

skills needed to thrive in dynamic and evolving work environments. The results for adaptability (WM = 3.63) show that respondents felt highly capable of adjusting to changing work environments and challenges, reflecting the effectiveness of the training and internship programs in developing this crucial soft skill. The high weighted mean in adaptability suggests that the internships provided valuable experiences in helping students navigate dynamic workplace conditions. For employability (WM = 3.61), respondents similarly reported feeling confident in their ability to secure and maintain employment, further underscoring the practical benefits of the internship in preparing students for their careers. Both constructs received very high ratings, indicating that the respondents recognized significant improvement in their preparedness for the workforce. The relatively low standard deviations for both constructs (0.2766 and 0.2998, respectively) suggest that there was some variation in individual responses, but the overall standard deviation of 0.0141 is notably low, reflecting a high level of consensus and reinforcing the reliability of these positive assessments across the group.

Recent studies from 2020 to 2025 reinforce the findings of Table 3, highlighting the significant role of internships in enhancing students' adaptability and employability skills. For instance, Ameliah and Jatnika (2024) conducted a study revealing that 76.6% of college students with internship experience exhibited high levels of career adaptability, indicating that internships effectively prepare students for dynamic work environments. Similarly, Muzamil and Shiraz (2022) found a significant positive correlation between internship experiences and the development of employability skills among university students, emphasizing the importance of practical exposure in academic programs. Furthermore, Shethiya et al. (2025) highlighted that internship bridge the gap between academic learning and professional practice, equipping students with essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, which are crucial for successful career transitions. These studies

collectively affirm that well-structured internship programs are instrumental in fostering adaptability and employability among students, aligning with the high ratings.

While many studies underscore the positive impact of internships on students' skill development, recent research from 2020 to 2025 presents contrasting perspectives that question the effectiveness of internships in enhancing adaptability and employability. For instance, Amer et al. (2025) found that hotel management students often experienced dissatisfaction due to long working hours, inadequate compensation, and lack of supervisor support, leading to diminished interest in pursuing careers in the hospitality industry. Similarly, a study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) revealed that students participating in online internships reported lower satisfaction levels, citing limited career development opportunities and reduced skill acquisition compared to their in-person counterparts. Furthermore, research by Adams and Jessup-Anger (2025) emphasized that a student's sense of belonging significantly influences internship satisfaction, suggesting that without a supportive environment, the benefits of internships may not be fully realized. These findings highlight the necessity for organizations to address structural and relational aspects of internship programs to enhance their effectiveness and ensure meaningful experiences for all participants.

This implies that the internship or academic program under evaluation is highly effective in equipping students with the essential soft skills needed in today's dynamic workforce. These findings suggest that students are gaining the confidence and flexibility to adjust to various workplace challenges and are developing competencies that enhance their marketability and job readiness. The consistently high ratings also point to a well-structured and supportive environment that fosters real-world learning and practical skill application. With an overall standard deviation, the data further implies strong agreement among respondents, indicating that the program's impact on skill development is both widespread and uniform, an important marker of its success and sustainability.

Table 3 Level of the Respondents' Skill Development

Constructs	WM	StDev	Interpretation
Adaptability	3.63	0.2998	Very High
Employability	3.61	0.2766	Very High
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>0.0141</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Legend: 3.25-4.00 – Very High (VH)  
2.50-3.25 - High (H)

1.75-2.49 - Low (L)  
1.00-1.74 Very Low (VL)

#### D. Significant Relationship Between Respondents' Internship Experiences and Employment Preparedness

Table 4 illustrates the correlation between internship experiences and employment preparedness, revealing both significant and non-significant relationships across various constructs. The Quality of Internship and Perceived Value of Internship both show a highly significant relationship with Job Readiness ( $r = 0.637$  and  $r = 0.651$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ), and with Professional Awareness ( $r = 0.375$  and  $r = 0.320$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis in these areas.

This implies that higher quality and perceived value of internships are strongly linked to better job preparedness and professional awareness. However, Relevance to Field shows no significant relationship with any of the three employment preparedness indicators, as all p-values are above 0.05, suggesting that alignment with the academic field alone may not directly influence preparedness. Furthermore, none of the internship constructs—including quality, relevance, and perceived value—show a significant relationship with the Application of Theoretical Knowledge, indicating that



practical application of academic concepts may require more targeted or structured integration beyond internship experiences.

The findings from Table 4 reveal that the quality of internship has a highly significant positive relationship with job readiness ( $r = 0.637$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ) and professional awareness ( $r = 0.375$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ), suggesting that well-structured and meaningful internships greatly contribute to respondents' confidence in job roles and understanding of professional behavior. However, no significant relationship was found between internship experiences and the application of theoretical knowledge ( $r = 0.042$ ,  $p = 0.828$ ), implying that internships do not directly enhance the ability to apply academic learning in the workplace. Similarly, Relevance to Field showed no significant correlation with any employment preparedness dimension, indicating that alignment with academic disciplines alone may not be as impactful as the quality and perceived value of the internship. The Perceived Value of Internship had a significant positive correlation with job readiness ( $r = 0.651$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ) and professional awareness ( $r = 0.320$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ), highlighting the importance of students recognizing the value of their internship experiences in preparing for the workforce, although it did not significantly correlate with the application of theoretical knowledge ( $r = 0.105$ ,  $p = 0.252$ ). Recent studies from 2020 to 2025 reinforce the findings of Table 4, highlighting the significant relationship between internship experiences and employment preparedness. For instance, Yusra and Sari (2025) conducted a study at Politeknik Negeri Padang, revealing a strong correlation (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.773$ ) between internship experiences and job readiness among vocational students, emphasizing the role of internships in enhancing job knowledge, skills, and workplace familiarity. Similarly, Pianda et al. (2024) performed a bibliometric and systematic review, identifying that well-structured internship programs positively impact vocational students' employability by fostering experiential learning and aligning academic curricula with industry demands. Furthermore, Malbuyo et al. (2024) assessed the impact of internship experiences on skills development and career readiness among criminology graduates, finding that internships significantly improved participants' competencies and preparedness for professional roles. These studies collectively affirm that quality internship experiences are instrumental in preparing students for successful transitions into the workforce, aligning with the significant relationships.

The findings from Table 4 reveal a noteworthy gap in the Application of Theoretical Knowledge, where no significant relationship was found between any internship construct and this specific dimension of employment preparedness. This result can be interpreted through the lens of Experiential

Learning Theory (ELT) by David Kolb, which posits that effective learning involves a cyclical process of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. While the internship experience provides the necessary concrete and reflective stages, the lack of significant correlation suggests that the cycle may be incomplete—perhaps due to inadequate opportunities for abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. Additionally, Human Capital Theory (HCT) supports the notion that education and practical experience should enhance productivity and skills. However, the lack of significant results implies that the internship programs may fall short in providing structured opportunities for students to explicitly connect and apply academic concepts in real-world contexts. This disconnect highlights a potential weakness in the practical design of internships, suggesting the need for stronger mentorship, structured tasks aligned with academic content, and reflective learning mechanisms to fully leverage the application of theoretical knowledge in workplace scenarios. Furthermore, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) by Albert Bandura emphasizes that learning is shaped through observation, imitation, and the development of self-efficacy in a social environment. The absence of a significant relationship may suggest limited opportunities within internships for students to observe skilled role models, receive constructive feedback, and build confidence in applying what they have learned. Without these social learning elements—such as guided modeling and reinforcement—interns may struggle to translate classroom theories into confident, practical action. Thus, enhancing the social and interactive dimensions of internships could be key to reinforcing theoretical knowledge through observation, social engagement, and increased self-belief.

The results in Table 4 indicate a significant positive relationship between the quality and perceived value of internship experiences and respondents' employment preparedness, particularly in terms of job readiness and professional awareness. This implies that well-structured, meaningful internships greatly enhance students' preparedness to enter the workforce by helping them develop relevant competencies and a deeper understanding of professional environments. However, the absence of a significant relationship between relevance to field and all preparedness constructs, as well as between any internship construct and the application of theoretical knowledge, suggests that simply aligning internships with academic disciplines may not be enough to ensure holistic preparedness. These findings imply that internship programs must go beyond relevance and incorporate active mentoring, reflective learning, and opportunities to apply academic concepts practically to maximize their developmental impact.

Table 4 Significant Relationship Between Respondents' Internship Experiences and Employment Preparedness

Constructs	Job Readiness	Professional Awareness	Application of Theoretical Knowledge
Quality of Internship	r=0.637 p=0.00** Reject Ho	r=0.375 p=0.00** Reject Ho	r=0.042 p=0.650 Accept Ho
Relevance to Field	r=0.170 p=0.06 Accept Ho	r=-0.077 p=0.405 Accept Ho	r=0.020 p=0.828 Accept Ho
Perceived Value of Internship	r=0.651 p=0.00** Reject Ho	r=0.320 p=0.00** Reject Ho	r=0.105 p=0.252 Accept Ho

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between respondents' internship experiences and employment preparedness

Legend: 0.00-0.01\*\*Highly Significant, 0.02-0.05\*Significant, above 0.05 Not Significant

#### E. Significant Relationship Between Respondents' Internship Experiences and Skill Development

Table 5 reveal that there are no significant relationships between the respondents' internship experiences and their skill development, as indicated by the correlation coefficients and p-values. For Quality of Internship, the correlations with Adaptability ( $r = 0.044$ ,  $p = 0.631$ ) and Employability ( $r = 0.054$ ,  $p = 0.668$ ) were both very low and not statistically significant, suggesting that the quality of the internship did not have a meaningful impact on these skill development areas. Similarly, the Relevance to Field construct showed no significant relationships with either Adaptability ( $r = -0.115$ ,  $p = 0.210$ ) or Employability ( $r = -0.057$ ,  $p = 0.534$ ), further indicating that the alignment of the internship with the field of study did not influence skill development. Lastly, Perceived Value of Internship also had no significant correlation with either adaptability ( $r = -0.007$ ,  $p = 0.939$ ) or employability ( $r = -0.057$ ,  $p = 0.538$ ), suggesting that even if respondents found their internships valuable, it did not translate into improved adaptability or employability skills. Overall, these findings indicate that respondents' internships, regardless of quality, field relevance, or perceived value, did not significantly enhance their adaptability or employability skills.

Table 5 presents the correlation between respondents' internship experiences and their skill development, specifically focusing on adaptability and employability. The results reveal that all correlation coefficients (r-values) are very low and the corresponding p-values are all above 0.05, indicating that none of the relationships are statistically significant. As a result, the null hypothesis is accepted for all constructs, meaning there is no significant relationship between the quality, relevance, or perceived value of internships and the development of adaptability or employability skills among the respondents. This suggests that, in this study, internship experiences did not play a

measurable role in enhancing these particular skills, and implies that other factors, such as prior experience, personality traits, institutional training, or extracurricular engagement, may have a greater influence on these aspects of skill development.

Recent studies from 2020 to 2025 support the findings of Table 5, indicating that internship experiences do not always significantly enhance students' adaptability and employability

skills. For instance, Shethiya et al. (2025) found that while internships can bridge the gap between academic learning and professional practice, their effectiveness in developing essential skills is often hindered by challenges such as financial constraints, lack of guidance, and limited availability of quality placements. Similarly, Adams and Jessup-Anger (2025) emphasized that a student's sense of belonging significantly influences internship satisfaction, suggesting that without a supportive environment, the benefits of internships may not be fully realized. Furthermore, the OECD (2025) reported that short-term internships, typically lasting one to two weeks, may offer limited capacity for substantial skill development, serving more as exposure rather than comprehensive training. These findings suggest that while internships have the potential to enhance adaptability and employability, their effectiveness is contingent upon addressing underlying challenges and ensuring equitable access and support for all students.

Recent studies from 2020 to 2025 challenge the findings of Table 5, which indicated no significant relationship between internship experiences and skill development. For instance, Pianda et al. (2025) conducted a study revealing that internship programs at vocational schools provide valuable work experience and equip students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to face challenges in the world of work. Similarly, Shaheen et al. (2022) found that internships are a great opportunity for university students to engage in job-relevant activities and enhance their chances of employability, emphasizing the importance of practical exposure in academic programs. Furthermore, research by Malbuyo et al. (2024) assessed the impact of internship experiences on skills development and career readiness among criminology graduates, finding that internships significantly improved participants' competencies and preparedness for professional roles. These studies collectively affirm that quality internship experiences are instrumental in fostering adaptability and employability among students, contradicting the non-significant relationships.

The findings of no significant relationship between internship experiences and the development of adaptability and employability can be analyzed using Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), Human Capital Theory (HCT), and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). According to ELT, meaningful learning arises from active engagement in concrete

experiences followed by reflection and application. However, the absence of significant results suggests that the internship programs may not have provided sufficient opportunities for reflective observation and active experimentation—essential stages in Kolb's cycle. From the perspective of HCT, internships are expected to serve as investments that enhance skills and economic value. The lack of measurable impact on adaptability and employability implies that the current structure of internships may be failing to optimize returns on such human capital investments. Lastly, SCT emphasizes learning through social modeling, feedback, and self-efficacy. The findings suggest that internships may have lacked adequate role models, mentorship, or supportive feedback mechanisms to effectively foster professional behaviors and confidence in new skills. Altogether, the non-significant results point to a need for more structured, intentional, and socially interactive internship environments that truly harness the experiential, economic, and social learning potentials these theories advocate.

The findings in Table 5, which show no significant relationship between internship experiences and the development of adaptability and employability skills, imply that internships alone may not be sufficient to foster these critical competencies among students. Despite the structured exposure to real-world environments, the lack of significant impact suggests that the quality, structure, or support mechanisms within the internship programs may be inadequate for skill enhancement. This outcome highlights the need for institutions and employers to re-evaluate internship design—ensuring that experiences are not only task-oriented but also intentionally geared toward skill-building through mentorship, reflective activities, and performance feedback. It also suggests that additional strategies outside of internships, such as targeted training, workshops, or co-curricular programs, may be necessary to effectively develop students' adaptability and employability.

Table 5 Significant Relationship Between Respondents' Internship Experiences and Skill Development

Constructs	Adaptability	Employability
Quality of Internship	r=0.044 p=0.631 Accept Ho	r=0.054 p=0.668 Accept Ho
Relevance to Field	r= -0.115 p=0.210 Accept Ho	r=0.057 p=0.534 Accept Ho
Perceived Value of Internship	r=-0.007 p=0.939 Accept Ho	r=-0.057 p=0.538 Accept Ho

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between respondents' internship experiences and employment preparedness

Legend: 0.00-0.01\*\*Highly Significant, 0.02-0.05\*Significant, above 0.05 Not Significant

## VI. FINDINGS

- The findings showed that respondents viewed their internship experiences as excellent, highly relevant to their field, and crucial to their professional growth, highlighting the effectiveness of well-designed, immersive internship programs.
- These findings suggest that the internship programs, alongside academic preparation, were successful in equipping students with the knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes necessary for a smooth and effective entry into the labor market.
- The findings show that both the academic curriculum and internship experiences significantly enhanced students' transferable skills, including problem-solving, communication, and teamwork. They also fostered personal growth and adaptability, preparing students for the demands of a dynamic work environment.
- The findings revealed that internship quality and perceived value were strongly linked to job readiness and professional awareness, while relevance to the academic field and application of theoretical knowledge showed no significant effect. This suggests that the structure,

mentorship, and overall experience of the internship play a greater role in career preparedness than field alignment alone.

- No significant relationship was found between internship experience and development of adaptability or employability. This suggests internships alone may not be enough to build these skills.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The following conclusion are based on the findings presented:

- In conclusion, the internship experiences were highly beneficial, offering excellent quality, strong alignment with students' academic fields, and significant contributions to their professional growth. This underscores the importance of well-structured and career-focused internship programs in bridging academic learning with real-world practice and supporting a smooth transition into the workforce.
- In conclusion, the integration of internship programs with academic preparation effectively equipped students with the necessary skills and attitudes for workforce entry. The consistent responses highlight the strong role of internships

in fostering career readiness and ensuring a smooth transition into professional life.

- The results highlight that both the academic curriculum and internship experiences played a significant role in developing essential transferable skills such as problem-solving, communication, and teamwork. These competencies are crucial in today's dynamic job market, underscoring the importance of comprehensive educational programs that prepare students for the evolving demands of the workforce.
- In conclusion, the quality, mentorship, and perceived value of internships significantly enhance job readiness and professional awareness, more so than mere alignment with a student's academic field. These findings stress the importance of well-structured internships with clear goals and practical relevance in effectively preparing students for their careers.
- The findings indicate that internship experiences alone do not significantly contribute to the development of adaptability or employability skills. Therefore, to enhance overall employability and adaptability, a holistic approach that incorporates various experiences and opportunities beyond internships is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are made based on the conclusions presented:

- Academic institutions and organizations focus on creating well-structured, immersive, and career-focused internship programs that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience. These programs should include strong mentorship and real-world exposure to better prepare students for a seamless transition into the workforce. Regular assessment and improvement of these internships will help ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness in enhancing career readiness.
- Academic institutions continue to integrate internship programs with academic preparation to ensure students gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for a successful transition into the workforce. Consistent and well-structured internships should be prioritized to strengthen career readiness and provide students with a uniform and valuable experience.
- Academic institutions enhance their programs to focus not only on technical skills but also on fostering transferable skills such as problem-solving, communication, and teamwork. Incorporating personal growth and workplace adaptability into the curriculum will better equip students for the demands of today's dynamic job market.
- Academic institutions internship programs should be designed with clear goals, strong mentorship, and practical experiences, regardless of their direct alignment with students' majors. This approach will better enhance job readiness and professional awareness, ensuring that students gain meaningful, career-focused experiences.

- Academic institutions are recommended to adopt a holistic approach to enhance student employability and adaptability by integrating internships with additional training, personal development, and extracurricular activities. This comprehensive strategy will more effectively prepare students with the skills needed for the workforce.
- Future research should explore the specific factors within internship programs that most effectively contribute to the development of the graduates.

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