

COLLEGE'S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AS A FORM OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND ITS EFFECT TOWARDS STUDENTS' SKILL

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ABSTRACT

The available future jobs have become one of the main concerns especially for fresh graduate. This may be the case at times that there is still high unemployment in Indonesia which has dynamic geography, variety labour force, and diverse economy. As a form of experiential learning in higher education, internship program is held to meet the needs of a developing world. This article will focus on how the internship program can be beneficial to help the students in preparing to be ready to compete in labour market. In order to answer research question, the researcher used descriptive qualitative approach with data collection technique in the form of literature review. Considering the available future jobs have become one of the main concerns especially for fresh graduate, university should pay more attention on how their internship program can be more effective to help the intern to train their skill which cannot be learnt in classroom environment.

Keyword: Internship, Experiential Learning, Students' Skill

INTRODUCTION

In a recent year, the available future jobs have become one of the main concerns especially for fresh graduate. As stated by (Jagannathan & Geronimo, 2021) the disruptiveness of technology development on jobs and labour force has increase anxiousness about comprehensive job losses because of automatization and loss of potential comparative advantage based on labour costs. This may be the case at times that there is still high unemployment in Indonesia which has dynamic geography, variety labour force, and diverse economy. In addition, unfortunately the graduates' skills are still far for the labour force

based on numerous firms that stay concern on the quality of institutions (Lindsay et al., 2015). Based on the finding above, it leads the idea that mostly, graduates desperately need to be more trained in order to enhance their work-readiness skill.

With the aim of preparing human resources for the labour market, apart from public education in primary and secondary school, The Ministry of Education also provides vocational and higher education to train work-readiness skills to students. Universities must assist learners to be productive individuals and figureheads of their communities on a local, national, and global scale, capable of applying their knowledge to real-world problems. Throughout the course of a degree program, students need gain "21st century competencies" in addition to fundamental discipline knowledge in their chosen career. As a form of experiential learning in higher education, internship program is held to meet the needs of a developing world by conjoining with community partners, figuring out problems with innovative results, and linking class concepts to real-world practice (Washor, 2015). Internships are thought to have an influence on the educational institution, students, and employers. Several studies undertaken by different academics have demonstrated that internship experience boosts students' marketability, and students who have had similar experiences also earn better earnings. Such students are said to obtain job offers sooner than others, have more professional preparedness, and have improved critical thinking skills (Gault et al., 2000). These students also have strong soft skills in management, communication, and self-discipline, making them attractive prospects. During the internship, interns interact with a range of individuals in a variety of settings, which helps them to get along better with others and integrate theoretical concepts gained in the classroom with real work.

Internship programs should be beneficial to meet the needs of growing competitive job market. Based on the result of the study conducted by (Fenster & Parks, 2008), it revealed that students highly examine the impacts of internship program toward their learning outcomes. It is similar with the study conducted by (Anjum, 2020) who stated that internship is a great source of practical experience and teamwork training for building personal and professional relationships. Employers has well understood the contribution from education, as they believe through this internship, it would present them with extra human resources in

this cultivating economy. (Washor, 2015) defines internship as a form of experiential learning that combines knowledge and theories taught in class with the practical implementation and skills development in a professional environment.

Experiential learning is a comprehensive paradigm premised on the idea that a personal experiences, education, and profession all have a role in students' ability to learn and comprehend new information (Fry et al., 2009; Kolb, 1984). The notion of experiential education combines the work of numerous famous twentieth-century researchers known for their views of human learning and development (Kolb, 1984). For decades, the application of experiential learning has expanded the teaching and learning environment outside the classroom.

Regarding to the direct experience, according to social constructivism, Vygotsky in (P.-C. Han, 2019) stated that all knowledge arises as a result of social interaction and language usage, and is thus a shared experience rather than an individual one. Knowledge is also the consequence of various social processes and relationships, rather just simply seeing the environment. Furthermore, constructivist theory practitioners believe that imbalance helps learning, in the sense that conflicts between the learner's present knowledge and experiences generate an imbalance, prompting the learner to question his or her own views and subsequently test out new ideas. Supervisors should also challenge students to conduct open-ended inquiries, seeking to address problems in realistic and meaningful circumstances. This task allows the student to investigate and generate either supporting or opposing options. That is why, the researcher wants to find out how college's internship program affects students' skill for their work-readiness. According to (Schulz, 2008), work-readiness requires both, hard skill (academic and technical) and soft skill (personality traits and habits).

Basically, technical skills are the same as hard-skills since it can be defined as the skills that are relevant to certain themes and are often acquired via formal classroom instruction. Meanwhile, generic skills are non-technical skills that are strongly linked to employability. Generic skills may be applied across a wide range of academic domains, occupations, and life circumstances, and are related with soft skills, which our graduates continue to lack and require significant improvement to satisfy employers' expectations

(Hairi et al., 2011). Furthermore, all soft skills listed in the Intel Elite Planned soft skills training, such as communication, creative and analytical thinking, collaboration, programmed and project planning, and decision-making process and problem-solving, are vital in the workplace. Hard skill is the basis for the development of educational curriculum, jobs' profiling, and most desire technical function for industry, while enhancing the quality of soft skill can directly contribute the college students' future careers. However, (Washor, 2015) emphasized in his study that employee's recruiter expects college graduates has already had essential hard skill and soft skill to be ready in the workplace or industry.

Since the aim of this study is to find out what skills that students perceived through college's internship program, the researcher refers to the study conducted by (Patacsil & Tablatin, 2017) under the title "Exploring the Importance of Soft and Hard Skills as Perceived by IT Internship Students and Industry: A Gap Analysis". According to this study, soft skills are just as important as hard skills for students, especially in companies that involving customer services. Soft skill including communication for customer-oriented is acknowledged as a must-have skill by industry. However, the lowest-level technical are also key skills that they should attain before entering labour market. On the other hands, there are different findings on the study conducted by (Losekoot et al., 2018). In their study, they suggested that in hospitality industry, soft skills are more important than technical skills because those are the skills that applicable in any industry. Rather than hard skills, even if students continue to another industry, soft skills may still be valuable for their future careers.

The findings of this paper should be beneficial for the educators in developing the curriculum and the internship program, in order to prepare students to be ready to compete in labour market. In addition, although numerous studies on exploring students' skill have been conducted, a study considering experiential learning in internship program has not been cleared yet. According to the previous studies referred by the researcher, those studies only focused on one subject and involved narrow participants. Therefore, this current study aims to reveal what skills that students perceived through internship program and describe what skills that students need before entering the labour market. Besides, this current study involves students in higher education level since they have the ability to understand something more complex.

METHOD

This study is a literature review, which is an investigation and summarize some empirical literature that is appropriate and relevant to the topic. A literature review is a more or less methodical method of gathering and analyzing prior research (Baumeister & Leary, 1997; Tranfield et al., 2003). The literature used is in the form of books, reports, and/or scientific articles from international and national journals by doing a keywords search such as: internship, experiential learning, and students' skills. This study was conducted based on related theory that supported by several experts. The highlighted variables' explanations are based on Washor (2015), Kolb (1984), and Vygotsky.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students' skill is defined as the ability that students have to use one's knowledge effectively in performance. According to (Nambiar et al., 2019), skills are attained competence where its development system is not separate from education system. In general, students' skill can be divided into hard skill and soft skill. To succeed in a certain professional role, both hard and soft skills are definitely essential. Hard skills are technical capabilities that may be learned in order to do a certain task. It incorporates subject matter expertise in specialized professional talents such as arithmetic, coding, and engineering, and it involves the ability to execute anything by employing more of the left-logical side of the brain. As a result, it is true that hard skills may be learned via practice and training in a certain area. Soft skills, on the other hand, require more use of the right side of the brain and may also be classified as employability abilities. Schools do not adequately prepare students for these skills. As a consequence, it's self-taught and has grown via trial and error. Communication, problem-solving, creative thinking, and leadership are examples of soft skills. Jobs that need more soft skills than hard skills include sales and marketing, as well as managerial positions.

Students must demonstrate their skills and knowledge which will enable them to deal better with the demands of today's workplace. Based on the aim of the study, this study was

conducted to explore internship program and its effect towards students' skills. The researcher collected data by conducting a literature review and the result is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. result of Literature Review

No.	Result	Library Resources
1	Graduates of FCDs who have completed internships appear to be the most safe-guarded against unemployment. The impacts of work-related activities grow with time, as graduates engage in work-based training, gain experience, and learn new job and occupational skills.	(Silva et al., 2018)
2	Internship experience provides more full-opportunities for undergraduates. Even average-performing interns were much more likely than non-interns to obtain full-time job offers, while high-performing interns were more capable of earning beginning salary. Good intern performance leads to an increase in the internship program's perceived value by employers.	(Gault et al., 2010)
3	Field-related voluntary work experience had favorable impact on the duration of job-search and labour market outcomes	(Weiss et al., 2014)
4	Internship experience in a related industry has a significant, beneficial impact on career possibilities. Job applicants with internship experience earned while pursuing a college education have a 14 percent greater interview rate than someone without internship experience.	(Nunley et al., 2016)
5	Graduates who did a company internship have a decreased probability of becoming unemployed in their first year of work, implying a smoother switchover to	(Margaryan et al., 2020)

- the labor market.
- 6 Internships in study programs have been shown to improve graduates' employability considerably. Work-based learning may be an effective technique for connecting theory and practice and improving graduate employability. (Silva et al., 2016)
 - 7 Employing businesses place a high value on internship experience and it can help students acquire jobs whether they stay with the internship firm or not. (Rigsby & Addy, 2013)
 - 8 Candidates with internship experience have a 12.6 percent better chance of getting contacted to a job interview on average. (Baert et al., 2021)
 - 9 The internship program plays an important function or makes a significant contribution to students' ability to strengthen their soft and hard abilities. Increasing student competency through the use of internships can lead to professional standards and provide experience for future employment. (Lutfia & Rahadi, 2020)
 - 10 Internship programs have an influence on students' career development and talents, altering their personal growth, capabilities, and competencies. (Anjum, 2020)
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According to the table above, eventually, students' "real world" job experience will provide them with an opportunity to strengthen their personal and employable abilities. Internship allows students to acquire skills which they cannot get in the classroom environment (Calvo, 2011; Cheong et al., 2014; Stansbie et al., 2016). A lot of research have been undertaken to look at the influence of internships in colleges. Employer surveys in the United Kingdom, for example, support the notion that job experience while pursuing a higher degree is useful for finding work after graduation (Vivian et al., 2018). Besides, (Róbert et al., 2012) also examined the impact of work experience on post-graduate

occupational outcomes and found that study-related work experience shortens the time of job searches and enhances employment prospects. It is similar with the study conducted by (Brennan et al., 2002) that discover particularly study-related work experience has a beneficial impact on career outcomes and entrance earnings.

An internship gives students with real-world experiences in a social learning setting. It is clear fact that both hard and soft skills are equally significant criteria, particularly in terms of employability. A corporate management team, for example, would surely compare your hard skills to the job you're applying for and assess if you're suited to the job (L. Han, 2011). There are five aspects of student performance, namely basic knowledge, communication skills, practical learning skills, leading qualities, and attitude and discipline. Each category is composed of soft skills and expertise that help define students who have worked in management (Chiu et al., 2016).

CONCLUSION

In summary, it is undeniable fact that internship program can significantly affect students' skill, both their hard skill and soft skill. An internship gives students with real-world experiences in a social learning setting. Hard and soft skills are equally significant criteria, particularly in terms of employability. There are five aspects of student performance, namely basic knowledge, communication skills, practical learning skills, leading qualities, and attitude and discipline.

Considering the available future jobs have become one of the main concerns especially for fresh graduate, university should pay more attention on how their internship program can be more effective to help the intern to train their skill which cannot be learnt in classroom environment. In the end, more exposure to the experiential learning through internship program perhaps will lead the students to increase their capability so they would not lose their confidence while seeking a future job.

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