
Issues and Perspectives in Business and Social Sciences

Internship programme and work readiness among vocational students

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Abstract

This study investigates how internship experiences influence job readiness perceptions among Business Administration students at Politeknik Negeri Padang, aiming to enhance vocational education and human resource quality in a global context. The literature review examines employment readiness and internship impacts on skill development and industry exposure, emphasising the role of internships in improving students' preparedness for work. This research uses descriptive and associative methods to explore the relationship between internship programmes and work readiness. Surveys were employed for data collection, with analysis techniques including validity testing, Spearman's rank correlation, and hypothesis testing. The study, which surveyed 115 Business Administration students, found strong agreement that internships enhance job knowledge, skills, attitudes, and workplace familiarity. Statistical analysis reveals a significant relationship (Spearman's rho = 0.773) between internships and work readiness ($R^2 = 59.7\%$), underscoring the importance of internship programmes for student workforce preparation and advocating continued implementation at Politeknik Negeri Padang.

Keywords:

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1. Introduction

In today's world, expanding information, business, and culture has far-reaching implications. Changes in the global economic system underline the significance of producing competitive and high-quality human resources, both in terms of quantity and skill. Unemployment in Indonesia is increasing due to a significant number of job seekers with insufficient qualifications, while the number of job vacancies remains limited. This restriction underscores the critical necessity to increase the quality of human resources in order to strengthen Indonesia's position in an increasingly competitive global economy.

In response to the challenges of globalisation, continuous improvement in the quality of human resources is crucial. Work readiness, defined as an individual's capability to perform job tasks effectively, is a key factor in navigating the rapidly changing dynamics of the work environment. Vocational education, especially through internship programmes, is considered a strategic approach that prepares students with the qualities demanded by the industrial sector.

Business Administration Department, Politeknik Negeri Padang (Padang State Polytechnic) has integrated an internship programme as a vital component of its curriculum. The primary objective is to complement the knowledge and skills acquired during coursework with direct

industry experience. Through these practices, students can apply theoretical knowledge in a real work environment, deepen their understanding, and hone the practical skills needed for success in the professional world.

Internship programmes go beyond gaining work experience; it aims to comprehensively prepare students for the challenges of globalisation and the fourth industrial revolution. This aim aligns with Politeknik Negeri Padang's mission to produce graduates who are not only technically competent but also emotionally and socially prepared to contribute effectively in a dynamic work environment. In this context, research on the relationship between internship programme and students' work readiness is highly relevant. Understanding students' perceptions of internship programmes and the impact on their work readiness is a crucial step in identifying effective educational efforts to prepare the younger generation for the demands of globalisation. Therefore, this article aims to investigate the perceptions of Business Administration students regarding their internship programme and how this experience influences their work readiness. The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for educational institutions and industries to enhance the quality of human resources ready to compete in this era of globalisation.

Research on the relationship between internship programme and students' work readiness in the Business Administration Department is significantly relevant. Besides providing deeper insights into students' work readiness, this research can offer valuable input for curriculum development and vocational education programme enhancement. Students who have participated in internship programme are expected to possess strong experiential knowledge and skills to enter the workforce upon graduation. Furthermore, internship programmes serve as a means to build networks and support useful relationships in the industrial world. Through direct interactions with professionals in the field, students can broaden their understanding of industry demands and expectations, thereby better preparing themselves for future career challenges.

Politeknik Negeri Padang, as a vocational education institution, plays a crucial role in preparing its graduates for success in the workforce. Through the internship programme, Politeknik Negeri Padang provides valuable opportunities for students to experience real work environments, develop skills, and adapt to industry demands. In conclusion, internship programmes are essential to vocational education that prepare students to be competent and competitive workers in today's globalised world. The internship programme is meant to improve the job preparedness of Business Administration students at Politeknik Negeri Padang by providing them with practical skills and direct industrial exposure. These benefits are essential in dealing with the working world's ongoing changes and dynamics. Thus, this research investigates the association between internship experience and work readiness among the third-year students of the Business Administration Department Politeknik Negeri Padang.

2. Work readiness

Employment readiness involves the mastery of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personality traits that enable an individual to feel comfortable with their tasks, derive satisfaction, and ultimately achieve success (Pool & Sewell, 2007). According to Slamento (2010) and Suyanto et al (2019), readiness is a comprehensive condition that prepares an individual to provide appropriate responses or answers to various situations. This readiness is necessary to achieve success in employment and ensure a smooth transition into the workforce. Psychologically, readiness is the level of maturity or advantage in facing specific activities (Chaplin, 2006). Hamalik (2011) states that readiness encompasses the ability to initiate a series of movements related to mental and physical readiness, while according to Rosara et al. (2018), readiness is a level or state that must be achieved in the individual's developmental process across various

aspects of growth. Anoraga (2006) defines work as a human need that evolves and changes over time, often unnoticed by individuals. Caballero and Walker (2010) assert that employment readiness reflects the extent to which an individual possesses skills and attitudes supportive of success in the workplace. Based on the Learning Theory of Career Counselling (LTCC) introduced by Krumboltz in Tsiapis (2008), the career development of individuals, particularly transitioning from education to employment, is influenced by four main factors: genetic factors, environmental factors, learning factors, and skills in task confrontation.

According to Nurhaniah (2013), factors influencing employment readiness can be categorised into internal and external factors. Internal factors originating from individuals, including: (a) Abilities or competencies, where each individual possesses varying levels of intelligence, which plays a crucial role in determining readiness to enter the workforce; (b) Talent, which is a quality enabling individuals to develop in the future, hence crucial to identify students' talents early to prepare them accordingly for career fields; (c) Interests, which are a combination of feelings, hopes, and other mental tendencies influencing career choices and work readiness; (d) Motivation, which is the energy within individuals driving them towards specific goals, significantly impacting their readiness to enter the workforce adequately prepared; (e) Attitudes, which represent individuals' readiness to act towards a job or career, influenced by positive attitudes towards work; (f) Knowledge of the working world, including understanding of requirements, qualifications, and other aspects of the job market; (g) Work experience, gained from industrial or internship programmes during campus or off-campus activities.

On the other hand, external factors influencing employment readiness encompass societal conditions, family environment, school, and individual surroundings. According to Agus (2006), Slamento (2010), and Nawawi (2021), characteristics of students ready for the workforce include the following: (1) having logical and objective considerations, utilising reasoning and others' experiences in decision-making; (2) possessing the ability and willingness to collaborate with others, as teamwork is essential in the workforce; (3) being able to control emotions and oneself, crucial for completing tasks effectively; (4) having critical attitudes to correct mistakes and generate new ideas or initiatives; (5) demonstrating the courage to accept individual responsibilities, indicating physical and mental maturity; (6) adapting to the environment, particularly the work environment, acquired through industrial work experience; (7) having ambitions to progress and follow developments in their field of expertise, driving them towards better achievements by staying updated with industry trends.

According to Slamento (2010), students' work readiness indicators encompass physical, mental, and emotional conditions, including needs, motives, goals, skills, and knowledge. Conversely, according to Agus (2006), indicators of students' work readiness involve having logical and objective considerations, the ability to coordinate or collaborate with others, self-control, criticism attitudes, willingness to accept responsibilities, adaptability to the environment, and ambition to progress by keeping up with developments. From the comparison of theories regarding indicators of work readiness, this study chooses to utilise the indicators proposed by Agus (2006) as they can reflect diverse indicators of work readiness according to various opinions available.

3. Internship programme

According to Chaplin (2006) in Stevani and Yulhendri (2014), experience refers to knowledge or skills acquired from practice or activities outside formal learning. Experience pertains to the knowledge or skills an individual possesses as a result of previous actions or work performed. This experience encompasses mastery and skills relevant to one's field of work. Suyanto et al. (2019) categorise experience into two types: direct experience gained through active participation and vicarious experience acquired through observation, images, graphics, words, or

symbols. Pradini (2017) explains that industrial work practice, *locally known as prakerin (praktik kerja industri)*, is a vocational education programme conducted by schools in collaboration with businesses or organisations. Students undertake this practice to apply the theories learned in school and prepare them for the world of work.

The internship programme, *which is known as Praktik Kerja Lapangan (PKL)*, is one of the programmes within the National Vocational Education and Training Strategy (Peraturan Menteri Koordinator Bidang Pembangunan Manusia Dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia 2022, r 6). PKL is a programme that connects vocational education with industry to produce graduates ready for employment or entrepreneurship as per market demands. According to the Director's Regulation of Politeknik Negeri Padang No. 45971PL.91DU2018, PKL is a programme where students participate in activities in industry, companies, or government agencies according to their expertise. The minimum duration of PKL is two months, as per the policy of the study programme or department. Nurcahyono and Yanto (2015), as cited in Yantu et al (2023), explain that PKL is a professional skills education programme that integrates education in schools with the mastery of work skills through direct activities in the workplace. PKL helps individuals acquire skills and knowledge relevant to employment.

Industrial work practice aims to provide participants with direct experience in the real business or industrial world. According to Nawawi (2021), this training aims to prepare and develop structurally and functionally skilled workers with good loyalty, dedication, and discipline. The place of implementation of industrial work practice serves a dual function as a workplace and a learning environment for participants. The objectives of internship programmes include: (1) fostering professionalism necessary for students to compete in their respective fields of work; (2) producing graduates with knowledge, skills, and work ethics suitable for job market requirements; (3) equipping graduates with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that aid in their continuous self-development; (4) providing an understanding and appreciation of work experience as an integral part of the educational process; and (5) enhancing the efficiency of education delivery by utilizing educational resources available in the world of work (Nawawi, 2021).

According to Rosara et al. (2018), internship programmes provide several important indicators for participants. First, internship programmes help participants develop practical work knowledge, as they must understand and be accountable for assigned tasks. Second, internship programmes also play a role in enhancing participants' work skills, such as operating equipment and tools relevant to their expertise. Additionally, participants are encouraged to develop adaptability to the work environment, enabling them to adjust and handle tasks like actual workers. Moreover, internship programmes cultivate positive work attitudes in participants, helping them complete tasks effectively and with dedication. Finally, through internship programmes, participants gain deeper insights into the work environment, including the characteristics of colleagues and the work culture at the place of practice. Thus, internship programmes not only provide direct experience in the workplace but also shapes various aspects of work readiness essential for entering the professional world.

3.1 Work readiness and internship programmes

Students' high work enthusiasm is reflected in their experiences during internship. The importance of internship programmes is not only to provide direct field experience but also to prepare students to be more ready to face the real world of work. This argument aligns with Lee et al.'s (2012) perspective (as cited in Kusnaeni & Martono, 2016), stating that the importance of work experience is reflected in students' participation in internship programmes. Additionally, internship programmes help build good work habits, skills, and attitudes in students, which are essential preparations for entering the workforce in their respective fields. According to Tarawe

and Ghafar (2013) and Kusnaeni and Martono (2016), a good internship programme will equip students to meet job requirements. Stevani and Yulhendri (2014) also showed that industrial internship programmes have a positive impact on students' skills, thereby enhancing their readiness to enter the workforce.

Furthermore, the findings of Kusnaeni and Martono (2016) and Rosara et al. (2018) also indicate that internship programmes have a positive and significant influence on students' work readiness. Moreover, research by Suyanto et al. (2019) and Yantu et al. (2023) asserts that work interest, motivation, and internship experience significantly contribute to students' work readiness. Thus, internship programmes in vocational colleges, such as in the Business Administration Department of Politeknik Negeri Padang, plays a crucial role in enhancing students' work readiness to enter the workforce in their respective fields of expertise.

4. Methodologies

This research employed a quantitative methodological approach to investigate the relationship between internship experience and students' work readiness. The quantitative method is a research approach based on positivist philosophy, used to investigate specific populations or samples, involving data collection using research instruments and quantitative/statistical data analysis, with the aim of testing predetermined hypotheses (Sugiyono, 2020).

This study adopted a descriptive and associative approach in terms of explanatory level. The descriptive approach was used to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate depiction of the facts and characteristics of a specific population or area. Meanwhile, the associative approach aims to identify relationships between two or more variables (Syahza, 2021).

4.1 Research instruments and data

A quantitative approach was adopted in this study. Primary data were gathered from two main sources: survey questionnaires and interview sessions. Interviews were used as social interaction to obtain responses aligned with the research objectives, and questionnaires were distributed to respondents to gather data related to internship experiences and students' work readiness. The questionnaire used the Likert scale for all variables to gauge respondents' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of social phenomena. This Likert Scale comprised five points, with each point representing the level of respondents' agreement towards the statements or questions posed.

The questionnaire also included questions about respondent characteristics that were useful for understanding the research subjects. Several observed characteristics included sex and respondent class. The questionnaire in this research consisted of 35 statements, comprising 15 statements for independent variables and 20 statements for dependent variables.

The measurements for internship programme (independent variable) were adopted from the measures developed by Nawawi (2021). Five indicators were included: work knowledge (X1), work skill (X2), adaptable attitude (X3), work attitude (X4), and understanding the work environment (X5). Examples of the questionnaire item are: the internship programme gives me knowledge and experience that I didn't obtain in college (X1.1); the internship programme helps me feel prepared to enter the workforce (X2.4); the internship programme has helped me develop self-control (X3.3); the internship programme helped me to maintain a positive work attitude (X4.2); and the environment in which I do internship help me learn to work (X5.1).

For the work readiness (dependent variable), the questionnaire developed by Pool and Sewell (2007) was utilised. Seven indicators were included: having logical and objective considerations (Y1), criticism attitudes (Y2), self-control (Y3), adaptability to the environment (Y4), willingness

to accept responsibility (Y5), ability to coordinate or collaborate with others (Y6), and ambition to progress (Y7). Examples of the questionnaire item are: when I select a job, I first analyse it and measure the skills I have (Y1.1); I check and examine the results of the work that I have done (Y2.1); in a pressing circumstance, I strive to remain cool and do the task properly and accurately (Y3.3); I adapt easily to new environments (Y4.1); when I do my work, I always do my best (Y5.2); I can work in a team (Y6.1); and I continuously strive to be better than before (Y7.1).

Validity testing evaluates the accuracy of data concerning the research object with the expressive power expected by the researcher, whereas a questionnaire is considered valid if it can reveal the aspects intended to be measured. The validity of each instrument item is calculated using the product-moment correlation with a predefined formula. Subsequently, reliability testing is conducted to measure the consistency and stability of data, using Cronbach's Alpha formula that considers the number of items and the total variance of items. A pilot study was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Before the questionnaire was distributed to the actual respondents, it was first tested on a sample of 30 samples in a pilot study. Based on this pilot study, all questionnaire items were considered valid ($p \leq 0.01$), and the instrument's reliability criteria were met satisfied level with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.876 and 0.888 for the independent and dependent variables. Validity and reliability tests on the actual data were also found to be satisfactory, with product-moment correlation at $p \leq 0.01$ and Cronbach's Alpha of 0.928 and 0.941 ($\alpha > 0.7$) for variables internship programme and work readiness, respectively.

4.2 Population and sample

Population in the context of research refers to the entire objects that are the focus of the study, which have specific qualitative characteristics. According to Sugiyono (2020) and Margono (in Hardani et al., 2020), the population includes various objects or subjects such as humans, objects, animals, plants, phenomena, test scores, or events that serve as data sources in research. In this study, the designated population is all third-year students of the Business Administration Department at Politeknik Negeri Padang.

As described by Husein and Purnomo (in Hardani et al., 2020), sample is a small part of the population members taken to represent the population in general. The sampling technique is a method to determine the appropriate sample according to the sample size to be used in the research. The sampling method to be used in this study is probability sampling, which provides an equal chance for each population member to be selected as a sample.

In this research, to determine the sample size from the population of third-year Business Administration students totalling 139, the Isaac and Michael Table (Sugiyono, 2020) was utilised. This table provides guidance for determining a representative sample size from a specific population with the desired error rate, in this case using a 1% error rate. Based on this table, for a population size of 139 individuals, the required sample size is 115 samples.

Questionnaires were distributed to 139 Business Administration Department Politeknik Negeri Padang students. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Form from February 28, 2023, to June 10, 2023. Respondents comprise 22.6% male and 77.4% female.

5. Results

In the data analysis phase, this study first employed Spearman's rank correlation technique to identify the relationship between the internship practice variable and students' work readiness. This technique was chosen because the research data is ordinal. Spearman's rank correlation provides various tests to measure relationships, such as rank correlation coefficient. The

correlation results were interpreted according to the coefficient values indicating the strength of the relationship, referring to de Vaus's (2002) interpretation providing descriptions of relationship strength based on correlation coefficient values.

5.1 Descriptive analysis

The descriptive statistics for internship programme are summarised in Table 1 from the data collected. The average responses for the job knowledge indicators (items X1.1, X1.2, and X1.3) were 4.53 with a standard deviation of 0.61, indicating that the responses ranged from agree to strongly agree. This result indicates that students agree that internship experiences train them to complete tasks on time and with a sense of responsibility. This finding is supported by interview data obtained from 7 informants, who stated that they gained job-related knowledge during their internships. Informant 3 expressed that:

"Based on the experience I gained during the internship, my knowledge related to the job increased to some extent. Especially in my placement area during the internship, which was in the administrative field, I learned how to manage letters properly."

This is also supported by the statement from Informant 6:

"Based on my internship experience at the bank, I learned quite a bit about job knowledge in the bank, including customer service procedures at the front office and in the administration department, and I also learned about bad debt procedures. So yes, I agree that internships increase knowledge to complete tasks."

Table 1: Means and standard deviation of responses – internship programme

| No | Indicators | Items | Means | Standard Deviation |
|----|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| 1 | Work knowledge | X1.1, X1.2, X1.3 | 4.53 | 0.61 |
| 2 | Work skill | X2.1, X2.2, X2.3, X2.4 | 4.46 | 0.62 |
| 3 | Adaptable attitude | X2.1, X2.2, X2.3, X2.4 | 4.46 | 0.63 |
| 4 | Work attitude | X4.1, X4.2 | 4.33 | 0.65 |
| 5 | Understanding the work environment. | X5.1, X5.2, X5.3 | 4.41 | 0.61 |

With an average response of 4.46 and a standard deviation of 0.62, indicating a range from agree to strongly agree, students agree that internships provide job skills relevant to their expertise. During internships, informants could apply skills learned on campus, such as typing letters quickly, managing letters according to the system, and implementing excellent service learned on campus.

Respondents generally agree that internships help them develop an easy adaptability attitude in terms of work discipline, professionalism, and self-control; based on the adaptability attitude indicators (items X3.1, X3.2, X3.3; mean = 4.46), the responses falling within the agree to strongly agree range. Interview data reinforce this finding. Informants stated that internships allow them to grow and adapt, including timely arrivals and departures, overcoming laziness, and interacting well with office environments and employees. All of these contribute to the informants' ability to communicate and build relationships effectively. According to Informant 7, adapting is a necessity in carrying out internships, as stated in the interview:

"It's difficult to chat or ask questions that we don't understand, so adapting to people in the office is a must."

Respondents agree that through internships, they develop good work attitudes, such as completing tasks with enthusiasm and a positive attitude. This is reflected in the average response of 4.33 for the work attitude indicators (Items X4.1 and X4.2), indicating a range from agree to strongly agree. This finding is also supported by the interview data related to the development of good and positive work attitudes during their internships.

For the workplace environment familiarity indicators (items X5.1, X5.2, and X5.3), the average response is 4.41, also falling within the agree to strongly agree range. Thus, it can be concluded that respondents agree that internships provide them with opportunities to understand the work environment. This conclusion is consistent with the responses from all informants who stated that internships help them understand the work atmosphere they will face after graduation.

Overall, the average scores for internship experience range from 4.33 to 4.53, indicating agreement to strong agreement. This result is further supported by qualitative data collected in the interviews. Therefore, it can be concluded that respondents agree that internships provide valuable work experience to students in terms of job knowledge, job skills, adaptability attitude, work attitude, and understanding of the work environment.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of work readiness, measured using seven indicators. Respondents were found to agree and strongly agree that they consider everything carefully and objectively and assess their abilities before taking action based on the score of logical and objective considerations (mean = 4.18). This finding is supported by interviews with all informants, who stated that they make careful considerations and assess their abilities before carrying out tasks, both to avoid mistakes and to learn more by asking employees who assign tasks or have more profound knowledge, so they can learn and successfully complete tasks. Informant 5 explained that all tasks assigned were carefully considered:

"After considering, if it matches my abilities, the results will be better. I also don't want to rush in doing the work."

Table 2: Means and standard deviation – work readiness

| Indicators | Items | Means | Standard Deviation |
|--|------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Having logical and objective considerations | Y1.1, Y1.2, Y1.3 | 4.18 | 0.8 |
| Criticism attitudes | Y2.1, Y2.2, Y2.3 | 4.42 | 0.6 |
| Self-control | Y3.1, Y3.2, Y3.3, Y3.4 | 4.31 | 0.7 |
| Adaptability to the environment | Y4.1, Y4.2 | 4.23 | 0.7 |
| Willingness to accept responsibilities | Y5.1, Y5.2, Y5.3 | 4.44 | 0.6 |
| Ability to coordinate or collaborate with others | Y6.1, Y6.2, Y6.3 | 4.45 | 0.6 |
| Ambition to progress | Y7.1, Y7.2 | 4.48 | 0.6 |

Meanwhile, informant 7 stated that they did not really consider the tasks assigned to them because, according to the informant, they were not brave enough to refuse the task and preferred to just accept it. The statement from informant 7 is as follows:

"To be honest, during my internship, I didn't really consider the tasks given to me. I just accepted the work given, and if I didn't understand, I would just ask."

Respondents agree that they possess good critical attitudes towards their work. This result is reflected in the average responses on the critical attitude indicators (items Y2.1, Y2.2, and Y2.3), which averaged 4.42 with a standard deviation of 0.6, indicating a range from agree to strongly agree. This finding is supported by conclusions drawn from the qualitative interview data, where informants stated that as students, they must have a critical attitude towards work, such as examining work results, maintaining discipline, and being careful at work to avoid mistakes, as a form of responsibility, and self-evaluation to improve work readiness.

Respondents also agree that they have the ability to control themselves or their emotions, such as being patient when facing problems, approaching problems with a cool head, staying calm, and focusing more on finding solutions or ways out of problems rather than expressing excessive emotions. This result is reinforced by their responses to the self-control indicator (mean=4.31). This finding aligns with statements from several informants, who stated that the ability to control oneself when facing problems is part of professionalism at work. The relevant statement from informant 6:

"Being in customer service requires patience and emotional control because if not, things can get chaotic, especially when dealing with customers who speak angrily. So, I restrain myself."

Meanwhile, informant 7 stated that they can control themselves and their emotions, even if they feel annoyed internally, as stated below:

"I can manage my emotions and myself when working. I can't act on my own even if I get annoyed. I can control myself during my internship."

The indicator of adaptability to the work environment had an average response of 4.23 with a standard deviation of 0.7, indicating a range from agree to strongly agree. This indicates that respondents agree that they can adapt to the work environment, including adapting to new environments and trying to get to know people in the work environment. This finding is also consistent with the qualitative interview data, where informants expressed that they could adapt to the work environment, approach people, and get to know individuals in the internship workplace to build good relationships, although it takes time to adapt.

The responsibility indicator shows that respondents agree that the tasks assigned are responsibilities that must be fulfilled (mean=4.44). This result is supported by the qualitative interview data, which stated that they must have the courage to accept responsibility because being assigned a task means being trusted to complete it well and responsibly.

The indicator of ability to work collaboratively with others had an average response of 4.45 with a standard deviation of 0.6, indicating a range from agree to strongly agree. This result shows that respondents agree that they can work collaboratively with others, communicate well, listen to others' opinions, and have empathy and sympathy for others. This finding is also reinforced by the qualitative interview data, which indicates that respondents can work together with others to complete tasks quickly and exchange ideas for optimal results.

Regarding ambition for advancement, respondents exhibited that they always strive to improve and continue learning to enhance their abilities (mean=4.48). The seven informants interviewed also stated they have ambitions for advancement, strive to improve, broaden their horizons, and improve their skills.

The average responses on work readiness indicate a range from agree to strongly agree, with the highest value being 4.48 and the lowest being 4.23. From interview data, it can be concluded that respondents agree that work readiness is essential for students to prepare them for the actual working world. The qualities include logical and objective considerations, critical attitudes, self-control abilities, adaptability to the work environment, courage to take responsibility, ability to work collaboratively with others, and having ambitions for advancement. This readiness indicator can be felt or acquired when students have entered the working world. By undergoing internships, students can directly experience and understand the expectations in the workplace.

5.2 Statistical analyses

Two inferential analyses were conducted, namely correlation analysis and correlation analysis. The following subsections elaborate on the results.

5.2.1 Correlation analysis

Spearman rank correlation analysis was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the internship experience and work readiness. Hardani et al. (2020) state that Spearman rank correlation provides various tests to measure relationships, such as rank order correlation coefficients, coordination coefficients, and agreement for variables measured at the ordinal level.

The results of the Spearman rank correlation analysis using IBM SPSS version 26) obtained validity values for each variable as shown in Table 3. The Spearman rank correlation analysis resulted in a rho value of 0.773, indicating that the relationship between internship experience and work readiness is very strong.

Table 3 Spearman's rho correlation coefficient

| | | Work Readiness |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Internship experience | Correlation Coefficient | 0.773** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 |
| | N | 115 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.2.2 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Based on Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient of 0.773, the R^2 value was calculated to assess the proportion of variance in work readiness explained by internship programme. The resulting R^2 value of 0.597 suggests that internship experience accounts for 59.7% of the variability in work readiness. The remaining 40.3% is attributed to other factors not examined in this study.

6. Discussion and conclusions

This study examined the influence of internship experience on work readiness among students majoring in Business Administration at Politeknik Negeri Padang. Overall, respondents agree that internship programs contribute positively to developing students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and understanding of the work environment and, at the same time, acquiring relevant knowledge for the workforce. Internship programmes also allow them to apply skills learned on campus in real work environments, such as fast typing and effective document management. They also developed adaptability, enabling them to grasp workplace dynamics directly.

The results show that internships significantly impact various aspects of students' work readiness, particularly in terms of logical and objective consideration, critical thinking, self-control, and adaptability to the work environment. These findings demonstrate that internships help students develop attitudes and skills necessary for success in the workforce. Furthermore, internship programmes also affect students' ability to take responsibility, collaborate with others, and improve their ambitions for advancement. Students acknowledge that internship experiences provide positive encouragement in developing the personalities and attitudes required in the workforce.

The relationship between internship experience and work readiness is very strong, indicating that internships contribute significantly to student work readiness by 59.7%. The remaining 40.3% is influenced by other variables not considered in this study, such as interest in entering

the workforce, work motivation, self-efficacy, and family environment. This correlation confirms that internships significantly contribute to students' readiness to enter the actual workforce. The internship programme at Politeknik Negeri Padang is evidently useful and should be continuously conducted. Internship programmes played a significant role in preparing students to enter the real workforce.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that students welcome the implementation of internships as they are considered to provide valuable work experience. Students demonstrate positive perceptions towards internship programmes and recognise the importance of work readiness. Future studies that delve into talent development in education should examine the influence of other factors on work readiness, such as career interest, motivation, self-efficacy, and family environment. These studies enable a better understanding of the elements that contribute to student work readiness and provide recommendations for holistic human resource development.

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