

The Effect of Competency and Internship Experience on Students' Work Readiness In Halal Industry

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Competence;
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Work Readiness;
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This study aims to analyze the partial and simultaneous effects of competency and internship experience on the work readiness in halal industry. The study population comprised final-semester Management students who had completed the mandatory Internship Course. Using purposive sampling, a sample of 73 respondents was selected. Data were collected through structured questionnaires utilizing a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using IBM SPSS. The findings demonstrate that competency significantly and positively affects work readiness ($\beta = 0.426, p = 0.000$). Similarly, internship experience exerts a positive and significant influence on work readiness ($\beta = 0.345, p = 0.000$). The Adjusted (R^2) of 0.886 indicates that 88.6% of the variance in student work readiness can be explained simultaneously by competency and internship experience, while the remaining 11.4% is governed by unexamined external factors. Conclusion: Both individual competency and practical internship experience are critical determinants of student work readiness in halal industry.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapidly shifting landscape of the global workforce—driven by technological advancement, automation, and industrial restructuring—has redefined the requirements of graduate employability (Tomlinson & Holmes, 2017). Academic credentials alone no longer guarantee successful entry into the professional realm; work readiness has become an important benchmark for graduates because it reflects their capacity to respond to professional demands and contribute constructively to society (Jackson, 2016; Tomlinson & Holmes, 2017). According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) report released in

May 2025, Indonesia's Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) stood at 4.76%, representing approximately 7.28 million unemployed individuals (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2025). A notable proportion of this demographic includes tertiary education graduates, highlighting a persistent structural mismatch between university outputs and dynamic market demands.

This condition is not only an economic issue but also a social concern because limited employment opportunities can restrict individuals' capacity to participate productively in community life and contribute to collective welfare. In this context, higher education has a broader responsibility: preparing graduates with theoretical knowledge, functional competencies, adaptability, and social awareness so that their professional capabilities can also become resources for social contribution. Social philanthropy provides a relevant perspective because philanthropic action is not limited to financial giving; it may also take the form of time, knowledge, skills, voluntary service, and community empowerment directed toward improving social welfare (Latifah & Romadi, 2025; Achmad, 2024).

Conceptually, work readiness reflects an individual's possession of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal attributes required to operate effectively within the workplace. Makki et al. (2016) assert that work readiness extends beyond subject-matter expertise to encompass soft skills, organizational awareness, and adaptive capabilities. Jackson (2016) further emphasizes that employability is an integrative construct formed through the synergy of academic knowledge, practical exposure, and personal resilience. Similarly, Muspawi (2020) highlights the alignment of physical, cognitive, and emotional capabilities in responding to professional challenges. These perspectives indicate that work readiness has both an economic and a social dimension. Graduates who possess adequate personal, organizational, and social intelligence are not only better prepared to obtain and maintain employment but also have greater capacity to interact responsibly with colleagues, communities, and other stakeholders. Such capacity is relevant to social philanthropy, particularly when philanthropy is understood as voluntary social contribution through knowledge, skills, time, and community-oriented action. Thus, competency and internship experience can be viewed as educational foundations that strengthen students' ability to contribute professionally and socially after graduation.

Competency represents a fundamental personal trait encompassing knowledge, technical skills, self-concept, core attributes, and intrinsic motivation required for effective job performance (De Vos et al., 2020; Sanghi, 2016). Highly competent students demonstrate superior problem-solving abilities, self-efficacy, and adaptability. From a social philanthropy perspective, these competencies can also function as forms of human capital that enable graduates to contribute beyond their formal employment, for example through voluntary activities, knowledge sharing, mentoring, social entrepreneurship, and community empowerment. Complementing competency, internship programs serve as experiential learning platforms that expose students to organizational culture, operational workflows, professional communication networks, and real social conditions (Anjum,

2020; Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Internships therefore provide opportunities for students to contextualize theoretical concepts within practical situations while developing responsibility, empathy, collaboration, and awareness of stakeholders—attributes that can support future social and philanthropic engagement.

While the independent relationships between competency, internship experience, and work readiness have been explored in previous literature (Adelia et al., 2025; Agustina & Turangan, 2025), empirical gaps remain. Most existing studies examine these variables in isolation or within heterogeneous student populations where internship structures vary significantly (Knight & Mantz, 2018). Limited research comprehensively investigates the joint interaction of standardized competencies and structured internships specifically among final-year Management students preparing for immediate labor market entry. Furthermore, empirical models integrating Sanghi's (2016) multidimensional competency model, Anjum's (2020) experiential learning framework, and Makki et al.'s (2016) work readiness criteria remain underdeveloped within regional higher education contexts. From the perspective of social philanthropy, this gap is important because higher education can prepare graduates not only to participate in the labor market but also to use their knowledge and professional capabilities for broader community benefit. Previous studies on social philanthropy emphasize education, skills development, and community empowerment as forms of contribution that can strengthen social welfare (Achmad, 2024; Padli & Sahroni, 2026).

To address these empirical and context-specific gaps, this study investigates the impact of competency and internship experience on the work readiness of final-semester Management students at the PGRI Dewantara Institute of Technology and Business, Jombang. The findings aim to advance theoretical understanding of graduate employability and provide actionable insights for academic curriculum design. More broadly, the study positions work readiness as a capability that may support graduates' participation in professional, community, and social activities, including social philanthropy. Social philanthropy is not treated as an independent variable or measured directly in this study; rather, it is used as a contextual perspective to explain the broader social value of developing competent and work-ready graduates.

H1: Competency has a positive and significant effect on student work readiness.

H2: Internship experience has a positive and significant effect on student work readiness.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study applied a quantitative, causal-associative design to examine directional relationships among the target variables (Sugiyono, 2023). The research was conducted at the PGRI Dewantara Institute of Technology and Business, Jombang, from June to August 2026. The target population consisted of final-semester Management students who had completed the mandatory Internship Course.

A non-probability purposive sampling technique was employed based on two criteria: (1) active enrollment in the final semester of the Management Study Program,

and (2) successful completion of an industrial internship program. A sample of $N = 73$ respondents met these criteria. Data were gathered using a standardized primary questionnaire structured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree")

This study aims to analyze the influence of competency and internship experience on students' work readiness. Competency and internship experience serve as independent variables, while work readiness is the dependent variable. Competency reflects students' abilities acquired during the learning process, while internship experience provides practical experience that allows students to apply their knowledge and skills in a real-world work environment. The relationship between the variables in this study is presented in Figure 1.

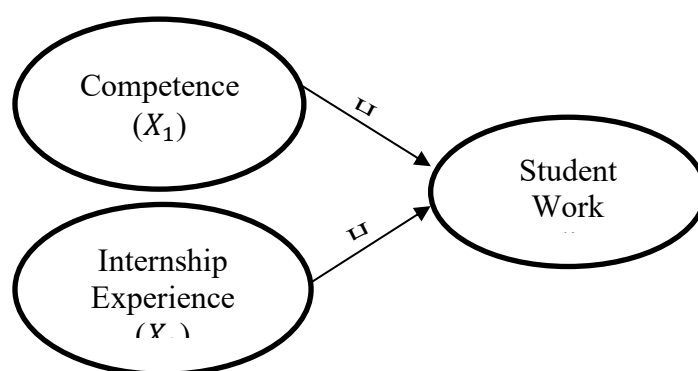


Figure 1. Research Framework

Hypothesis

Based on the established research framework, the hypothesis in this study is as follows.

H1: Competence has a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of final semester students of the Management Study Program at the PGRI Dewantara Jombang Institute of Technology and Business.

H2: Internship experience has a positive and significant influence on the work readiness of final semester students of the Management Study Program at the PGRI Dewantara Jombang Institute of Technology and Business.

Competence is a basic characteristic possessed by an individual that is related to the ability to perform work effectively (De Vos et al., 2020; Sanghi, 2016). In this study, competence is measured based on five dimensions: skills, knowledge, self-concept, traits, and motivation (Sanghi, 2016). Each dimension is described in the research indicators according to the instruments used in this study.

Internship experience is a learning process through experiential learning-based work experience that provides students with the opportunity to apply the theory learned during lectures to the workplace (Anjum, 2020; Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Internship experience variables are measured through several dimensions, including the suitability

of the internship field, implementation of tasks during the internship, quality of guidance from the field supervisor, development of practical competencies, and understanding of work culture (Anjum, 2020).

Work readiness is a condition that indicates the extent to which a person has the ability to enter the world of work effectively (Makki et al., 2016). This study uses the dimensions of work readiness developed by Makki et al. (2016). The instrument is adapted to the research focus to avoid overlapping measurements with competency variables. Therefore, work readiness is measured through three main dimensions: personal characteristics, organizational intelligence, and social intelligence (Makki et al., 2016). The inclusion of social intelligence is particularly relevant to the broader social philanthropy perspective of this article because effective social contribution requires individuals to communicate, collaborate, understand others, and respond appropriately to community needs. Nevertheless, social philanthropy is not measured as a research variable in this study; it serves as a contextual implication of how work-ready graduates may contribute to social welfare.

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS software. Prior to hypothesis testing, the research instrument was first tested for validity and reliability. Next, classical assumption tests were conducted, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. Hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis supported by partial t-tests, simultaneous t-tests (F-tests), and coefficients of determination (R^2) to determine the effect of competency and internship experience on student work readiness

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Normality Test Results
Table 1 One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residues
N		73
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Means	0.0000000
	Standard Deviation	2.36431405
The Most Extreme Difference	Absolute	0.076
	Positive	0.076
	Negative	-.057
Test Statistics		0.076
Asymptomatic. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}

- a. The test distribution is Normal.
- b. Calculated from data.
- c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
- d. This is the lower limit of true significance.

The normality test was conducted using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) method to determine whether the residual data in the regression model was normally distributed. Based on the test results, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.200, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level. Thus, the residuals in the regression model were normally distributed, thus meeting the normality assumption. This indicates that the regression model is suitable for further analysis.

Multicollinearity Test Results

Table 2 Coefficient ^a

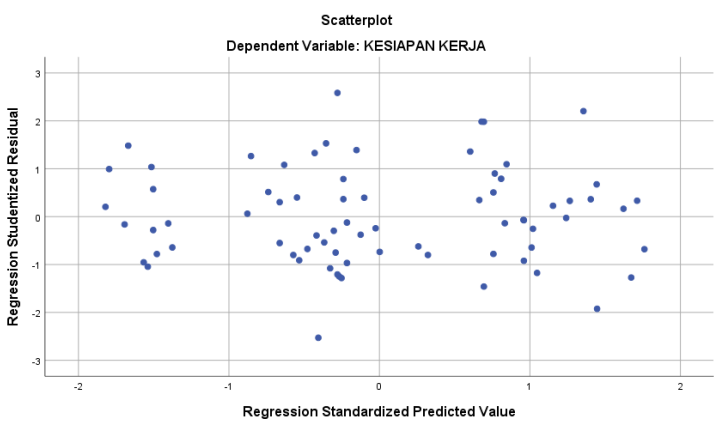
Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1 COMPETENCE	.226	4,421
INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE	.226	4,421

A. Dependent Variable: WORK READINESS

The multicollinearity test aims to determine whether there is a strong correlation between the independent variables in the regression model. The test results show that the competency and internship experience variables each have a tolerance value of 0.226 and a variance inflation factor (VIF) of 4.421. The tolerance value is greater than 0.10 and the VIF value is less than 10, so it can be concluded that the regression model does not experience multicollinearity. Thus, the two independent variables can be used together in the regression model without causing problems with high correlation.

Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Table 3 Scatter Diagram



Heteroscedasticity test was performed using the scatterplot method to determine whether there are unequal residual variances in the regression model. The scatterplot results show that the residual points are randomly distributed above and below zero on the Y-axis and do not form a specific pattern, such as a wavy, conical, or wide pattern. The random distribution of the points indicates that the residual variance is constant. Thus, it can be

concluded that the regression model does not experience symptoms of heteroscedasticity, so that one of the classical assumptions in regression analysis has been fulfilled and the regression model is suitable for use in further hypothesis testing.

Autocorrelation Test Results
Table 4 Summary of Model ^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Squared	Standard Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.943 ^a	0.889	0.886	2,398	1,970

A. Predictors: (Constant), INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE, COMPETENCE

B. Dependent Variable: WORK READINESS

The autocorrelation test was conducted using Durbin-Watson (DW) to determine whether there is a correlation between the residuals in the regression model. The test results show a Durbin-Watson value of 1.970. With a sample size of 73 (N = 73) and 2 independent variables (k = 2), the dU value is 1.6768 and 4 – dU is 2.3232. Since 1.6768 < 1.970 < 2.3232, the Durbin-Watson value is between the upper limit and 4 – dU. Thus, it can be concluded that the regression model does not experience autocorrelation, so the autocorrelation assumption has been met and the model is suitable for further analysis.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis and T-Test
Table 5 Coefficient ^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Signature.
	B	Standard Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.318	1,395		0.228	0.821
COMPETENCE	0.426	0.066	0.540	6,465	0,000
INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE	0.345	0.067	0.432	5,176	0,000

A. Dependent Variable: WORK READINESS

Based on the results of multiple linear regression analysis, the following regression equation was obtained:

$$Y = 0.318 + 0.426X_1 + 0.345X_2 + e$$

This equation shows a constant value of 0.318, which means that if the competency and internship experience variables are zero, then the work readiness score will be 0.318. The regression coefficient of the competency variable is 0.426, which indicates that every increase in one unit of competency will increase work readiness by 0.426, assuming other variables remain constant. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient of the internship experience variable is 0.345, which means that every increase in one unit of internship experience will increase work readiness by 0.345, assuming other variables remain constant. A positive coefficient value indicates that both variables have a positive relationship with student work readiness.

The partial test results show that the competency variable obtained a calculated t-value of 6.465 with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that competency has a positive and significant influence on students' work readiness. Thus, Hypothesis 1 (H1) is accepted. Furthermore, the internship experience variable obtained a calculated t-value of 5.176 with a significance value of 0.000, which is also less than 0.05. These results indicate that internship experience has a positive and significant influence on student work readiness. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is accepted.

Test of the Coefficient of Determination / R²

Table 6 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Squared	Standard Error of Estimate
1	0.943 ^a	0.889	0.886	2,398

A. Predictors: (Constant), INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE, COMPETENCE

The test results show an R Square value of 0.889 and an Adjusted R Square of 0.886. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.886 indicates that the competency and internship experience variables together are able to explain 88.6% of the variation in work readiness, while the remaining 11.4% is explained by other variables outside the research model that were not tested. The high coefficient of determination value indicates that the research model has an excellent ability to explain variations in student work readiness.

Discussion

Competence Has a Positive and Significant Influence on Work Readiness

The partial test results showed a t-value of 6.465 with a significance level of 0.000 (<0.05) for the competency variable, while the regression coefficient of 0.426 confirmed a positive relationship. Based on this, the first hypothesis (H1), which states that competency has a positive and significant influence on student work readiness, is accepted. These findings confirm a clear pattern: the higher the competencies students

possess, the higher their readiness to enter the workforce. Competencies, which encompass knowledge, skills, self-concept, traits, and motivation, provide students with the tools necessary to complete tasks, adapt to the work environment, and face job demands professionally.

Students with well-developed competencies tend to be more confident in making decisions, able to work independently and in teams, and better prepared to face various challenges in the workplace—qualities that are not always developed solely through mastery of classroom theory. These results are consistent with modern competency theory by Sanghi (2016) and De Vos et al. (2020), which views competencies as fundamental individual characteristics directly related to effective career performance and sustainability. From the perspective of social philanthropy, these competencies can also broaden the ways graduates contribute to society. Knowledge and professional skills may be shared through mentoring, voluntary service, educational activities, social entrepreneurship, or community empowerment. In this sense, developing competency creates not only employability value but also social value because individuals can mobilize their capabilities to address community needs and support collective welfare.

These findings also reinforce those of Agustina and Turangan (2025) and Ainunisa and Mukhyi (2025), both of which indicate that competency has a positive and significant impact on students' work readiness. The consistency of these results across various research contexts and subjects strengthens the argument that competency is not merely a supporting factor, but a key determinant of graduates' readiness to face the competitive world of work. The implications of these findings therefore extend beyond employment outcomes. Universities can develop competency through classroom learning, skills training, competency certification, community-based projects, and voluntary activities that allow students to apply their abilities to real social needs. Such educational practices are compatible with the broader orientation of social philanthropy, in which contributions may involve knowledge, time, skills, and empowerment rather than financial assistance alone (Latifah & Romadi, 2025; Padli & Sahroni, 2026). Strengthening student competency can consequently help institutions prepare graduates who are professionally capable while also having the capacity to participate in sustainable social contribution.

Internship Experience Has a Positive and Significant Influence on Job Readiness

The partial test results for the internship experience variable showed a t-value of 5.176 with a significance level of 0.000 (<0.05), while the regression coefficient of 0.345 confirmed a positive influence on student work readiness. Based on these results, the second hypothesis (H2), which states that internship experience has a positive and significant influence on student work readiness, is accepted. These findings illustrate how internship experiences serve as a bridge for students to apply the theories learned during their studies to practical work. During internships, students not only learn about work

culture and professional communication, but also how to solve problems, take responsibility for their work, and work in teams.

Exposure to real organizational and social situations can strengthen students' awareness that professional activities affect colleagues, customers, communities, and other stakeholders. This experience provides students with a more comprehensive understanding of real-world conditions, which in turn builds confidence and prepares them for the workforce after graduation. It may also strengthen the practical foundation for social philanthropy because students learn to use their time, knowledge, and skills responsibly in response to real needs. Therefore, internship experience can be understood not only as preparation for employment but also as a potential learning space for social responsibility and community-oriented action.

These results reinforce the views of Kolb and Kolb (2017) and Anjum (2020) that internship programs are experiential learning processes that provide real-world work experience, thereby improving the knowledge, skills, and work attitudes needed in the workplace. In other words, the quality of internship experience obtained by students is directly proportional to their level of preparedness to face job demands—the deeper the experience, the more mature their preparedness.

Consistency in these findings is also seen in studies by Triyani (2025) and Adelia et al. (2025), both of which showed that internship experience has a positive influence on students' work readiness. In both studies, practical experience during internships was shown to increase adaptability, strengthen technical competencies, and prepare graduates for the real work environment a pattern consistent with the results of this study. These findings demonstrate that internship programs are not merely a curriculum formality, but a crucial element in preparing students for the workforce and for responsible participation in society. Therefore, universities need to continuously improve the quality of internship programs, including by expanding collaboration with businesses and industry, ensuring that internship placements align with students' field of study competencies, and creating opportunities for students to reflect on the social impact of their work.

Collaboration between higher education, industry, and community organizations could also provide a pathway for students to translate professional competencies into social contributions, including educational assistance, mentoring, volunteering, and community empowerment. Such integration is consistent with the view that contemporary philanthropy should move beyond short-term assistance toward forms of empowerment that strengthen community capacity (Achmad, 2024; Padli & Sahroni, 2026).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that competency and internship experience significantly enhance the work readiness of final-semester Management students at the PGRI Dewantara Institute of Technology and Business, Jombang, both partially and simultaneously. Academic knowledge and practical experience work together to prepare graduates for professional success. Strengthening core competencies alongside well-managed internship placements provides a clear pathway to improving graduate employability in competitive job markets. From a broader social philanthropy perspective, the development of competent and work-ready graduates also has potential social value: graduates can contribute their knowledge, skills, time, and professional networks to community empowerment and other forms of voluntary social contribution. This perspective does not change the empirical model of the study, because social philanthropy was not directly measured; instead, it highlights the broader societal relevance of strengthening graduate capabilities.

Although this study offers meaningful insights into graduate employability, several inherent limitations must be acknowledged. First, the empirical scope was geographically restricted to a sample of 73 Management students at a single institution, which limits the direct generalizability of the findings to larger populations, public universities, or different academic disciplines. Second, the data collection relied exclusively on self-reported questionnaires, introducing the potential for self-assessment or social desirability biases from respondents. Finally, the empirical framework focused solely on competency and internship experience as primary predictors, leaving 11.4% of the variance in student work readiness unexplained and governed by unexamined external factors.

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