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The Effect of Internship Quality, Professional Competence, and Career Orientation on The Work Readiness of Internship Participants at State-Owned Enterprises in Surabaya

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Abstract:

This study examines how internship quality, professional competence, and career orientation shape the work readiness of interns within State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Surabaya. The emergence of a competency gap and high rates of educated unemployment serve as the underlying urgency for this study, necessitating mature work readiness through quality internship experiences, professional competence mastery, and directed career orientation. This study is categorized as associative research using a quantitative approach. Adopting a quantitative-associative approach, the study utilized the Cochran formula to determine a representative sample of 196 participants, identified through purposive sampling Statistical evaluations were performed using a multiple linear regression model via SPSS version 26. The research findings confirm that internship quality, professional competence, and career orientation simultaneously exert a significant positive influence on work readiness. Furthermore, partial analysis reveals that each of these three factors contributes significantly and positively to the development of work readiness among SOEs interns in Surabaya. The coefficient of determination (R2) value of 50.4% indicates that the variation in work readiness can be explained by these three variables, while the remaining 49.6% is explained by other factors outside this research model. The implication of this study is that the management of SOEs in Surabaya needs to prioritize improving the quality of mentoring, honing technical competencies, and strengthening the career direction of interns as primary strategies for producing a job-ready workforce.

Keywords: Career Orientation; Internship Quality; Professional Competence; Work Readiness

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1. Introduction

The transformation of the global labor market in the era of Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0 has intensified the demand for highly adaptive human resources, where human capital is positioned as a strategic determinant of organizational competitiveness (Ozyilmaz, 2020). Technological integration through Artificial Intelligence and big data has shifted labor needs, requiring graduates to demonstrate not only academic knowledge but also practical capabilities in adaptation and innovation (Bousrih et al., 2022). In this context, work readiness has emerged as a fundamental asset, representing an individual's potential to operate productively by merging technical mastery with professional attitudes (Yang et al., 2024). In integrating conceptual knowledge with real-world application, internships are extensively recognized as highly effective pedagogical instruments within the higher education system (Narain & Dwivedi, 2023). This learning model is supported by the national Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy through key programs like MSIB and MAGENTA, along with independent internship options, all aimed at improving students' industry exposure to develop competitive, ready-to-use labor amidst current market dynamics. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that the success of these programs is heavily dictated by internship quality, which facilitates the development of professional competence and is further optimized by the individual's career orientation (Herawati & Tjahjono, 2020; Sakapurnama & Hasan, 2023; Sulistiawan & Kamaruzzaman, 2020).

However, Indonesia continues to face a structural mismatch between higher education outputs and labor market expectations. Statistical data from the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS, 2025) report that 7,465,599 individuals were categorized as openly unemployed, including 842,378 university graduates. The misalignment between theoretical academic instruction and practical industrial requirements serves as a primary driver of high educated unemployment, where numerous university graduates encounter significant obstacles in securing their first jobs due to a perceived lack of genuine work readiness to face real-world challenges (Nisa et al., 2025; Tiron-Tudor et al., 2025). Despite ideal objectives, field realities indicate that many internships fail to provide significant value due to the dominance of menial administrative tasks, which deprives participants of the opportunity to test their technical skills in actual workplace challenges (Agustin et al., 2024). While prior studies have examined internship quality, competence, and career orientation individually, there is a critical research gap in integrating these variables within a single empirical framework, particularly within the specific ecosystem of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Surabaya. Most existing literature remains fragmented and fails to explain how these three variables synergistically interact to determine work readiness. This study addresses this void by examining these dynamics within Surabaya's SOEs, which provide a unique context due to their structured operational systems and rigorous professional standards that are often distinct from the private sector.

This study aims to overcome the aforementioned limitations by exploring the concurrent and partial roles of internship quality, professional competence, and career orientation in shaping the work readiness of SOEs interns in Surabaya. Specifically, this research seeks to evaluate how structured workplace learning and internal career-regulation mechanisms interact to determine the employability of final-year students and fresh graduates. By developing an integrative model, this investigation provides a measurable assessment of readiness levels within a strategic SOEs ecosystem.

This research offers significant theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it extends human capital theory and social cognitive career theory by demonstrating the synergy between external experiential investment and internal psychological preparedness. Practically, the novel insights gained from this specific Surabaya-based SOEs context serve as practical guidance for academic organizations and SOEs executives to refine internship designs. These findings ultimately bolster graduate employability by ensuring that internship programs are not merely passive observations but are strategic interventions that foster high-level professional readiness.

2. Literature Review

a. Human Capital Theory

Human resources are widely recognized as a fundamental asset that determines national and organizational progress. In organizational contexts, human resources have shifted beyond the traditional view of labor as merely a factor of production and are increasingly treated as a strategic pillar for competitive performance (Burhanudin, 2021). This view aligns with Human Capital Theory, pioneered by Becker (1964), which argues that investment in individuals enhances their cognitive capacity and improves performance in knowledge-based tasks (Galiakberova, 2019). The theory further emphasizes that knowledge, skills, and experience constitute forms of capital that increase productivity and contribute to economic growth (Ozyilmaz, 2020). In line with this perspective, human

capital encompasses the totality of human capabilities that can be optimized to create strategic value and support organizational goals (Bouaziz & Smaoui Hachicha, 2018).

From this standpoint, human capital is positioned as a physical means of production, such as factories and machinery, whose value can be enhanced. Through investment in education and training, individuals develop into skilled workers who generate professional outputs and provide returns that can exceed the initial investment costs (Auerbach & Green, 2024). Investment in practical development initiatives allows individuals to build the necessary technical and soft skills to ensure a seamless and effective transition from academia into the professional workforce. Without sufficient human capital accumulation, university graduates are more likely to face difficulty adapting to complex operational standards in industry. In summary, Human Capital Theory positions individuals as strategic assets whose economic value and productivity can be continuously improved through sustained investment in education, training, and applied workplace learning. This accumulation becomes a crucial prerequisite for bridging the academic-to-industry transition and strengthening work readiness.

b. Social Cognitive Career Theory

Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994) formulated the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) by adapting Bandura's social cognitive principles to a specialized framework for career development contexts. Rooted in Bandura's perspective, SCCT assumes that individuals' career behaviors are shaped through dynamic interactions among environmental factors, personal cognition, and behavioral patterns (Wang et al., 2022). In this framework, Brown & Lent (2019) emphasize that career readiness and decision-making processes are primarily driven by cognitive drivers such as self-efficacy, personal interests, and outcome expectations. SCCT is particularly relevant in explaining students' transition into the labor market because it emphasizes self-regulatory mechanisms in career development. Individuals actively develop interests, make career choices, and pursue performance outcomes based on their perceived capabilities and environmental support. Rahayu & Abivian (2020) argue that SCCT provides an effective framework for understanding how students formulate mature career decisions. Similarly, Clark et al. (2024) further suggest that evaluating career planning necessitates a focus on self-efficacy, expected outcomes, and personal career objectives. By fusing these elements, students are better equipped to navigate professional challenges and enhance their overall preparedness for the workforce.

Within the SCCT framework, the variables of this study can be conceptually integrated into three main pillars. First, professional competence is closely related to self-efficacy, as students' confidence in completing complex tasks, particularly in structured SOEs environments drives higher work readiness. Second, career orientation reflects outcome expectations and career goals, where expectations regarding career stability and prestige encourage proactive preparation during internship periods. Third, internship quality represents contextual support, as a supportive and relevant internship environment reinforces students' self-efficacy and competence development. Overall, SCCT suggests that work readiness emerges from the interaction between perceived competence, structured career goals, and supportive environmental conditions. This perspective is supported by empirical findings indicating that mature career planning combined with meaningful internship experiences significantly enhances students' readiness to enter the workforce (Maliki & Rini, 2024; Sulastri & Ruzain, 2025).

c. Internship Quality

Internships are structured experiential learning programs designed to provide students with practical exposure and competency development under professional supervision (Gupta et al., 2026). An internship is a training method conducted within a work environment, primarily focusing on technical skill development and aiming to optimize individual productivity (Sakapurnama & Hasan, 2023). In Indonesia, the implementation of internships is formally regulated by the Ministry of Manpower Regulation No. 6 of 2020, which defines an internship as an integrated training system that combines institutional learning with direct on-the-job practice to develop specific competencies under the guidance of mentors or competent professionals within an organization's functional activities.However, beyond formal implementation, the actual impact of an internship is primarily dictated by its inherent quality. Internship quality refers to the extent to which internship experiences are relevant, structured, and provide added value for students' professional development (Santosa et al., 2024). Grohmann and Kauffeld argue that internship quality represents program success, as reflected in participants' subjective responses, the mastery of new competencies, behavioral changes, and tangible contributions to organizational achievements (Layyeta et al., 2023). Internship quality is the extent to which an internship experience provides relevant learning, professional

mentorship, and supervisory support that directly enhances a student's employability (Sakapurnama & Hasan, 2023).

High-quality internship programs do not occur by coincidence but result from well-designed instructional planning (Haojie et al., 2025). Especially in large-scale organizations such as state-owned enterprises (SOEs), structured characteristics are essential to ensure measurable competency development. These characteristics include clearly defined learning objectives, competent mentors who provide regular feedback, involvement in substantial real projects, exposure to standard operating procedures and professional ethics, and transparent performance evaluation mechanisms. To measure internship quality, prior studies classify it into three primary dimensions (Layyeta et al., 2023; Santosa et al., 2024). First, task and learning design, which emphasizes skill variety, task identity, instructional clarity, and autonomy in completing assignments. Second, organizational support, which includes constructive feedback, social support from mentors and colleagues, and the perceived significance of assigned tasks. Third, program integration, which refers to person–job fit and the availability of learning opportunities that align internship activities with students' competencies and career interests.

Overall, internship quality represents the effectiveness and value-added nature of structured workplace training, reflected in task relevance, supervisory support, and its positive impact on students' knowledge, confidence, and work capability. Therefore, higher internship quality is expected to contribute significantly to interns' work readiness.

d. Professional Competence

Professional competence is defined as the essential mastery of knowledge and skills required to attain professional excellence, which fundamentally establishes an individual's worth within the competitive job market (Setiastuti et al., 2022). In line with this view, professional competence, as defined by Noe (as cited in Tarigan & Setiawan, 2020) characterizes professional competence as a synergy of skills, knowledge, and personal attitudes that an individual must possess to execute specialized professional responsibilities. In accordance with Fachrunnisa et al., (as cited in Herawati & Tjahjono, 2020), professional competence represents an integrated blend of technical skills, knowledge, and behavioral attitudes that empower individuals to fulfill their professional responsibilities efficiently. In contemporary employment environments, competence is no longer considered merely an added advantage but has become a fundamental requirement. It encompasses technical proficiency and interpersonal attributes, both of which are cultivated by confronting authentic organizational demands (Davila Laguna et al., 2025). Therefore, professional competence can be conceptualized as the integrated capacity of knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, professional attitude, and motivation that collectively determine an individual's effectiveness and competitiveness in professional settings.

The growth of professional competence is a multidimensional process shaped by a diverse array of determinants. According to Zwell (as cited in Setiastuti et al., 2022) competence is shaped by personal beliefs and values, technical and interpersonal skills, accumulated experience, personality characteristics, motivation, emotional regulation, and intellectual abilities. These factors interact dynamically to influence how individuals acquire and apply professional capabilities in workplace contexts.In terms of measurement, professional competence is commonly categorized into three primary dimensions (Edison, as cited in Setiastuti et al., 2022). The first dimension is knowledge, referring to the mastery of theoretical understanding and the ability to apply academic concepts to solve practical problems. The second dimension is skill, encompassing both hard skills such as technical proficiency and operational ability, as well as soft skills, including communication, teamwork, leadership, and adaptability. The third dimension is attitude, which reflects professional ethics, discipline, integrity, and the ability to adapt to organizational culture. These three dimensions collectively determine the level of professional competence possessed by internship participants and serve as essential predictors of work readiness.

e. Career Orientation

Career orientation conceptually refers to an individual's conviction to identify and mature their personal preparation before entering the professional world (Sulistiawan & Kamaruzzaman, 2020). According to Chang et al. (2023), career orientation is defined as a multidimensional construct encompassing career planning, exploration, and decision-making processes that influence an individual's readiness for professional transition. Similarly, career orientation reflects intrinsic motivation, career exploration behavior, and adaptability in facing workplace challenges (Tentama & Heryasa, 2022). In higher education contexts, career orientation represents the stage at which students are able to explore career options based on their interests and develop a clear and directed vision regarding their future profession (Chui et al., 2020). It indicates the extent to which students have engaged in career planning, established clear goals, and formed structured expectations regarding post-graduation employment (Ayuni & Nio,

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2025). Integrating these perspectives, career orientation can be conceptualized as a multidimensional construct reflecting individuals' direction, intrinsic motivation, career planning, exploration, and decision-making processes aimed at strengthening an individual's readiness to transition to the professional world post-graduation.

Rahayu (2021) asserts that career orientation is shaped by a combination of personal (internal) drivers and situational (external) influences. Internal factors include personal attributes such as interests, talents, abilities, self-concept, and intrinsic motivation, which shape clarity of career direction. External factors involve social and environmental influences, including family expectations, peer groups, educational experiences, and socio-economic considerations such as job prospects and financial stability. These interacting factors determine the maturity of students' career orientation before entering the workforce. Contemporary career psychology frequently assesses career orientation by looking at career adaptability, employing the CAAS (Career Adapt-Abilities Scale) as the primary assessment tool originally devised by Savickas and Porfeli (Syabily et al., 2024). This framework consists of four primary dimensions. The first is career concern, referring to awareness and proactive attention toward future career development. The second is career control, which reflects autonomy and responsibility in making career decisions. The third is career curiosity, indicating the willingness to explore personal characteristics and occupational environments. The fourth is career confidence, representing self-efficacy in overcoming career-related challenges and achieving career goals. Collectively, these dimensions reflect the degree to which individuals are psychologically and strategically prepared to transition into professional employment, thereby contributing to higher work readiness.

f. Work Readiness

Wibowo, (as cited in Rahayu et al., 2025) characterizes work readiness as a person's ability to successfully execute professional duties, underpinned by a fusion of expertise, specialized skills, and behavioral traits that meet industry standards. Muspawi & Lestari (2020) conceptualize work readiness as a holistic condition involving physical capability, mental stability, and accumulated experience that collectively enable effective job performance. Similarly, the definition of work readiness as the ability to successfully transition into new work environments through sufficient knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Priyanto et al., 2023). In higher education contexts, work readiness reflects students' capability to enter the workforce immediately after graduation with minimal adjustment time, supported by cognitive maturity, emotional stability, and learning experiences aligned with industry demands (Kurniawan et al., 2020). It also refers to observable workplace behaviors necessary for achieving effective performance, which result from the integration of intellectual capacity and social–behavioral skills (Peersia et al., 2024). Thus, work readiness can be understood as a multidimensional capability integrating competence mastery and psychological preparedness to ensure a smooth transition into professional employment.

Several factors influence work readiness. According to Kirani & Chusairi (2022) these factors can be categorized into three groups. First, internal factors, including intelligence, creativity, and intrinsic motivation, which function as foundational drivers of career direction and personal ambition. Second, external factors, such as social support, access to job information, and encouragement from family, peers, and educators, which help individuals formulate realistic career targets. Third, educational factors, encompassing academic achievement, disciplinary knowledge, and practical learning experiences that equip individuals with relevant competencies for specific occupational roles. In terms of measurement, work readiness consists of three primary indicators (Winkel, as cited in Alhadi et al., 2022). The first is knowledge, referring to intellectual understanding and the capacity to evaluate and address professional challenges. The second is skill, representing the capability to integrate ideas, technical ability, and creativity to produce value-added outputs for organizations. The third is attitude and values, which reflect professional ethics, decisiveness, responsibility, and adaptability in uncertain work environments. These dimensions collectively represent the level of readiness possessed by internship participants in entering professional employment.

Research Hypothesis

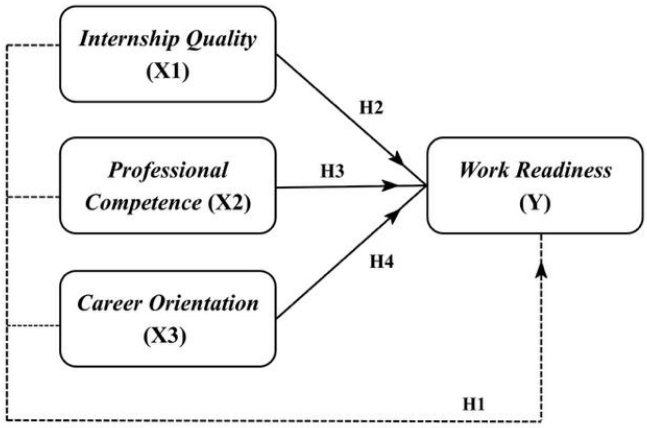
Based on the theories presented above, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Internship quality (X1), professional competence (X2), and career orientation (X3) simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on work readiness (Y) of internship participants at SOEs in Surabaya.

H2: Internship quality (X1) partially has a positive and significant effect on work readiness (Y) of internship participants at SOEs in Surabaya.

H3: Professional competence (X2) partially has a positive and significant effect on work readiness (Y) of internship participants at SOEs in Surabaya.
H4: Career orientation (X3) partially has a positive and significant effect on work readiness (Y) of internship participants at SOEs in Surabaya.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



Source: Author's Processed Data, 2026

3. Method

This study applies an associative method through a quantitative approach. According to Syaipudin (2025), a quantitative approach is defined as research that utilizes statistical calculations to test hypotheses and measure validity. Within this approach, the associative type focuses on examining the causal relationships between two or more variables. Given the research problem which concerns the influence of internship quality, professional competence, and career orientation on work readiness, the associative method is highly appropriate as it prioritizes hypothesis testing through inferential statistical analysis. In this study, work readiness (Y) serves as the dependent variable, while internship quality (X1), professional competence (X2), and career orientation (X3) are examined as the three independent variables that influence it. To ensure consistency in data collection, this study utilized a five-point Likert measurement system, anchored by 'strongly disagree' (1) and 'strongly agree' (5) for all items. The use of the Likert scale enabled the transformation of respondents' perceptions into quantitative data suitable for statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2023).

The designated population for this inquiry involves interns at various Surabaya-based State-Owned Enterprises, including those currently active in their programs and those who have already concluded their tenure. Due to the absence of an integrated database and the dynamic nature of internship participation, the exact population of this study was unknown. To establish the necessary sample size for an unknown population, this study applied Cochran's formula with a 95% confidence threshold and a 7% margin of error. Based on this computation, a minimum threshold of 196 participants was set for the research. A purposive sampling method was employed within a non-probability sampling to select the participants. The inclusion criteria were: (1) final-year undergraduate students (semester VII or above) or fresh graduates, (2) Currently or previously participated in an internship program at an SOEs located in Surabaya, and (3) Completed a minimum internship duration of three months.

Primary data were collected via structured questionnaires administered to eligible respondents. Secondary data were obtained from academic literature, scientific journals, official reports, and relevant digital sources to support the theoretical framework. Statistical processing was performed utilizing SPSS version 26, starting with descriptive analysis before proceeding to measurement and hypothesis testing. The validity of the instrument was confirmed via Pearson correlation (with a 0.05 significance level), and reliability was established using Cronbach's Alpha, with 0.60 serving as the benchmark for acceptable consistency.

The integrity of the regression model was established by satisfying BLUE criteria through a series of assumption tests. Normality was confirmed via the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, while multicollinearity was diagnosed by examining VIF and Tolerance metrics, heteroscedasticity with the Glejser test, and autocorrelation through the Durbin–Watson method. Multiple linear regression analysis was utilized to test the research hypotheses,

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specifically assessing the simultaneous and partial contributions of each predictor to work readiness. The model is expressed by the following formula:

$$Y = \alpha + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + e$$

Where:
Y = Work Readiness
α = Constant
b1 = Regression coefficients of internship quality
b2 = Regression coefficients of professional competence
b3 = Regression coefficients of career orientation
X1 = Internship Quality
X2 = Professional Competence
X3 = Career Orientation
e = Error term

The research hypotheses were verified through a combination of F-test (simultaneous) and t-test (partial) significance testing, supplemented by the R^2 value to determine the proportion of variance explained by the predictors.

4. Findings and discussion

Findings

a. Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 196 respondents who met the research criteria. The demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Category	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	131	67%
	Male	65	33%
Academic Status	Final-Year Student	173	88%
	Fresh Graduate	23	12%
Internship Duration	3-6 Months	190	97%
	More than 6 Months	6	3%
Internship Program	Regular / Independent	134	68%
	MAGENTA	39	20%
	MSIB	23	12%

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents were female (67%), while male respondents accounted for 33%. Most participants were final-year students (88%), indicating that the sample primarily consisted of individuals who were approaching graduation and transitioning into the labor market. Only 12% were fresh graduates.

Regarding internship duration, 97% of respondents completed internships lasting between three and six months, ensuring sufficient exposure to professional working environments. A small proportion (3%) had internship durations exceeding six months. In terms of internship programs, the majority of respondents participated in regular or independent internship schemes (68%), followed by the MAGENTA SOEs program (20%) and the MSIB program (12%). This distribution reflects diverse internship pathways within SOEs while maintaining comparable professional exposure.

b. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Descriptive techniques were employed to evaluate the respondents' evaluative feedback on the study's key variables, including Internship Quality (X1), Professional Competence (X2), Career Orientation (X3), and Work Readiness (Y). Overall, the responses showed a strong tendency toward agreement and strong agreement across all variables, indicating positive evaluations of internship experiences and readiness for employment.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Number of Items	Mean
Intenship Quality (X1)	6	4.27
Professional Competence (X2)	7	4.37
Career Orientation (X3)	7	4.49
Work Readiness (Y)	6	4.34

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

As shown in Table 2, all variables obtained mean scores above 4.00, indicating a high level of agreement among respondents.

For Internship Quality, most respondents reported active involvement in meaningful tasks, clear supervision, consistent feedback, and work assignments aligned with their interests and competencies. Regarding Professional Competence, respondents demonstrated strong ability to apply academic knowledge in practical settings, adapt to new information, master technical tools, collaborate effectively in teams, manage time efficiently, and maintain professional ethics and discipline. In terms of Career Orientation, respondents exhibited high awareness of future career planning, independent decision-making, personal responsibility, active self-exploration, and confidence in pursuing professional goals. Furthermore, Work Readiness scores indicated strong procedural understanding, effective problem-solving skills, technical capability, adaptability to workplace dynamics, and confidence in making professional decisions.

c. Instrument testing

1. Validity Test

Validity test was carried out to substantiate the instrument's accuracy. In this study, validity was assessed using a 5% (0.05) significance threshold.

Table 3. Validity Test Results

Variable	Item	r count	r table	Remark
Internship Quality	X1.1	0.653	0.1178	Valid
	X1.2	0.636	0.1178	Valid
	X1.3	0.657	0.1178	Valid
	X1.4	0.615	0.1178	Valid
	X1.5	0.511	0.1178	Valid
	X1.6	0.624	0.1178	Valid
Professional Competence	X2.1	0.601	0.1178	Valid
	X2.2	0.574	0.1178	Valid
	X2.3	0.483	0.1178	Valid
	X2.4	0.468	0.1178	Valid
	X2.5	0.651	0.1178	Valid
	X2.6	0.463	0.1178	Valid
	X2.7	0.580	0.1178	Valid
Career Orientation	X3.1	0.580	0.1178	Valid
	X3.2	0.551	0.1178	Valid
	X3.3	0.482	0.1178	Valid
	X3.4	0.540	0.1178	Valid
	X3.5	0.616	0.1178	Valid
	X3.6	0.515	0.1178	Valid
	X3.7	0.597	0.1178	Valid
Work Readiness	Y.1	0.591	0.1178	Valid
	Y.2	0.629	0.1178	Valid
	Y.3	0.666	0.1178	Valid
	Y.4	0.554	0.1178	Valid
	Y.5	0.606	0.1178	Valid
	Y.6	0.614	0.1178	Valid

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

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As shown in Table 3, all items had r-count values exceeding the r-table threshold, indicating that all measurement instruments were valid and suitable for further analysis.

2. Reliability Test

Reliability testing was conducted to assess the consistency of the research instrument, utilizing Cronbach's Alpha as the primary measurement parameter. If the Cronbach'ss test is achieving a coefficient value greater than 0.60. If the Cronbach's Alpha value meets the > 0.60, the research instrument is considered consistent and reliable.

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Threshold	Remark
Internship Quality (X1)	0.671	0.60	Reliable
Professional Competence (X2)	0.606	0.60	Reliable
Career Orientation (X3)	0.620	0.60	Reliable
Work Readiness (Y)	0.662	0.60	Reliable

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on the data presented in the table above, it is evident that all research variables consistently yield Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.60. Consequently, each construct fulfills the reliability criteria necessary for the subsequent stages of data analysis.

d. Classical Assumption Tests

1. Normality Test

Normality test was assessed via the One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov method, with a significance value above 0.05 indicating that the data are distributed normally. Once the normality assumption is met, the data are considered suitable for subsequent parametric statistical analysis. The results of the normality test in this study are presented below:

Table 5. Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
			Unstandardized Residual
N			196
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean		1.7030
	Std. Deviation		1.6927
Most Extreme Difference	Absolute		.125
	Positive		.068
	Negative		-.125
Test Statistic			.125
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)[c]			.425
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)[d]	Sig.		.182
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.122
		Upper Bound	.100
a. Test distribution is Normal			

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

The results confirm that the data distribution aligns with the requirements for normality in this regression analysis.

2. Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity test aims to maintain the integrity of the regression coefficients, were performed using Tolerance and VIF values. The criteria for a robust model require VIF values to be under 10 and Tolerance to be above 0.10, indicating that no redundant relationships exist among the independent variables.

Table 6. Multicollinearity Test Results

Coefficients[a]			
		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Internship_Quality_X1	.897	1.114
	Professional_Competence_X2	.613	1.632
	Career_Orientation_X3	.668	1.498
a. Dependent Variable: Work_Readiness_Y			

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

The results showed that no multicollinearity was detected, as evidenced by Tolerance levels surpassing 0.10 and VIF scores remaining well below the 10.0 threshold.

3. Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity testing was conducted to detect non-constant variance among residuals, the Glejser method was applied. Compliance with the homoscedasticity assumption is attained provided that the significance level for each predictor, when regressed against absolute residuals, surpasses a = 0.05.

Table 7. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Coefficients[a]						
		Unstandardize Coefficients		Standardize Coefficients		
Model		*B*	*Std. Error*	*Beta*	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.060	.047		1.274	.204
	Internship_Quality_X1	.033	.001	.002	.028	.978
	Professional_Competence_X2	.005	.002	.264	.043	.365
	Career_Orientation_X3	.004	.002	.033	.014	.898
a. Dependent Variable: Work_Readiness_Y						

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

All significance values were above 0.05, confirming that the model met the homoscedasticity assumption.

4. Autocorrelation Test

The autocorrelation test was conducted to ensure that the regression model is free from interdependencies among residuals across the time-series data. Autocorrelation was assessed using the Durbin–Watson statistic.

Table 8. Autocorrelation Test Results

Model Summary[b]			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Durbin-Watson
0.710	0.504	0.496	1.865

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

The Durbin–Watson value of 1.865 fell within the acceptable range (dU < d < 4 − dU), confirming the absence of autocorrelation within the regression framework.

e. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to examine the influence of Internship Quality (X1), Professional Competence (X2), and Career Orientation (X3) on Work Readiness (Y) of interns at State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Surabaya.

Table 9. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Coefficients[a]					
	Unstandardize Coefficients		Standardize Coefficients		
Model				t	Sig.

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		B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*		
1	(Constant)	1.735	1.895		.916	.361
	Internship_Quality_X1	.160	.048	.180	3.352	.001
	Professional_Competence_X2	.509	.062	.537	8.274	.000
	Career_Orientation_X3	.146	.061	.149	2.387	.018

a. Dependent Variable: Work_Readiness_Y

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

The regression model is expressed as follows:
Y = 1.735 + 0.160X1 + 0.509X2 + 0.146X3 + e
Results of the regression test demonstrate that each predictor variable contributes positively toward Work Readiness. Among the predictors, Professional Competence (X2) demonstrated the strongest contribution based on the standardized beta coefficient.

f. Hypothesis Testing

1. F-test Silmutaneous

The simultaneous F-test is utilized to verify the model's goodness of fit by evaluating if the explanatory variables provide a joint and statistically meaningful contribution to the variance of the dependent variable. This test also determines the feasibility of the constructed regression model.

Table 10. F-test Results (Simultaneous)

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	566.974	3	188.991	64.948	.000[b]
	Residual	558.699	192	2.910		
	Total	1125.673	195			

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

The simultaneous F-test results yielded a calculated F-count of 64.948, which exceeds the F-table value of 3.04 (df k=3, n-k-1=192). With a significance value of 0.000 falling below the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis (H0) is overruled, thereby confirming the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H1). Consequently, it is concluded that Internship Quality (X1), Professional Competence (X2), and Career Orientation (X3) simultaneously and significantly influence the Work Readiness (Y) of interns at State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Surabaya.

2. T-test Partial

The partial t-test is employed to determine the extent to which each explanatory variable uniquely contributes to the dependent variable.

Table 11. T-test Results

Coefficients[a]						
		Unstandardize Coefficients		Standardize Coefficients		
Model		*B*	*Std. Error*	*Beta*	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.735	1.895		.916	.361
	Internship_Quality_X1	.160	.048	.180	3.352	.001
	Professional_Competence_X2	.509	.062	.537	8.274	.000
	Career_Orientation_X3	.146	.061	.149	2.387	.018

a. Dependent Variable: Work_Readiness_Y

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on the t-test results with a t-table value of 1.653 (df=192; a=0.05), it was found that every predictor variable yielded the calculated t-count above the required threshold, specifically Internship Quality (3.352),

Professional Competence (8.274), and Career Orientation (2.387). These results necessitate the dismissal of H0 in favor of all alternative hypotheses (H2, H3, H4), proving that each variable partially exerts a positive and significant influence on Work Readiness (Y).

g. Coefficient of Determination

The Coefficient of Determination (R^2) value was utilized to gauge the magnitude of contribution made by the predictor variables toward explaining in the criterion variable.

Table 12. Coefficient of Determination Results

Model Summary[b]				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.710[a]	.504	.496	1.70584

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Finally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.504, meaning that 50.4% of the variance in Work Readiness is explained by Internship Quality, Professional Competence, and Career Orientation, while the remaining 49.6% is influenced by other factors outside the model.

Discussion

The statistical results of this study demonstrate that students' work readiness is the result of a synergistic interaction between external and internal factors. Based on the simultaneous F-test, the calculated F-count is 64.948, which is greater than the F-table value (2.65) with a significance level of 0.000; thus, the first hypothesis (H1) is accepted. This indicates that Internship Quality (X1), Professional Competence (X2), and Career Orientation (X3) collectively exert a positive and significant impact on the work readiness of interns at State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Surabaya. These findings confirm that attaining work readiness among soon-to-be graduates and new degree holders involves more than just one primary driver, as it results from a combination of external learning experiences and internal career-development resources. Therefore, the combined effect found in this study suggests that work readiness is optimized when external workplace learning (internship quality) reinforces competency formation and is guided by purposeful career orientation. In practical terms, SOEs internship programs can strengthen graduate readiness most effectively when they simultaneously ensure program quality, support competence growth, and encourage career planning behavior.

Partially, internship quality (X1) is proven to contribute positively and significantly to work readiness, as evidenced by the calculated t-count of 3.352 surpassing the t-table value (1.653).This result aligns with the study by Santosa et al. (2024), which states that high-quality internships characterized by high skill variety and task identity directly enhance participants' technical and interpersonal skills. In a structured SOE environment, the provision of adequate feedback from supervisors plays a crucial role in increasing students' self-efficacy. Such optimal internship experiences serve as the primary mechanism for bridging academic theory with real-world industrial dynamics (Siregar et al., 2024).

Among the three factors examined, professional competence (X2) emerged as the strongest predictor of work readiness in this study. This is evidenced by the calculated t-count of 8.274, the highest among all variables. This suggests that competence, particularly the integration of knowledge, technical ability, and professional attitude—is central to how prepared students feel and perform when facing workplace demands (Fachrunnisa et al. as cited in Herawati & Tjahjono, 2020). Students who possess technological mastery and in-depth knowledge in their fields tend to have higher confidence in adapting to operational environments that demand high accuracy. The dominance of this variable reinforces that proficient technical capability is the most vital foundation for interns to fulfill professional responsibilities accurately and independently.

Finally, career orientation (X3) complements students' work readiness with a significant positive influence, based on the calculated t-count of 2.387. This result is supported by the findings of Chang et al. (2023), which reveal that individuals with mature career orientations possess higher levels of career adaptability and readiness. A clear career orientation helps students specifically identify the self-development needs required to meet labor market demands. Overall, while all three variables are significant, the strengthening of professional competence remains the main pillar, supported by quality internship experiences and clear career direction, in producing adaptive and job-ready graduates.

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5. Conclusion and recommendation

Conclusions

This study examined the effect of Internship Quality, Professional Competence, and Career Orientation on the Work Readiness of internship participants in State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Surabaya. The findings demonstrate that these three predictors simultaneously exert a positive and significant role in determining work readiness, confirming that work readiness is shaped by the interaction of experiential, competency-based, and motivational factors. Partially, Internship Quality significantly enhances work readiness by providing structured learning experiences, meaningful task engagement, and professional supervision. Professional Competence was identified as the most dominant predictor, indicating that mastery of knowledge, technical skills, and professional attitudes plays a central role in preparing students for the transition to the workplace. Additionally, Career Orientation significantly contributes to work readiness, suggesting that clarity of career goals, self-directed decision-making, and proactive career planning strengthen students' confidence and adaptability. Theoretically, this study contributes to the integration of Human Capital Theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory by demonstrating that work readiness emerges from the synergy between external experiential investment (internship quality) and internal career-regulation mechanisms (professional competence and career orientation). Practically, the findings highlight the importance of designing structured internship systems that not only provide exposure to real work environments but also foster competence development and strategic career planning.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be proposed for academic institutions, industry practitioners, and future researchers. Students are encouraged to proactively refine their technical and interpersonal skills while clarifying their career orientation early on to enhance their overall work readiness. Simultaneously, companies and SOEs should improve internship quality by providing relevant task variety, intensive mentorship, and regular feedback to build interns' confidence and foster meaningful professional contributions. Furthermore, universities must strengthen strategic industry partnerships to ensure curricular alignment and provide comprehensive career counseling services. Since external variables account for 49.6% of the observed variance, subsequent inquiries should expand their scope to various industries and integrate additional predictors such as work motivation and self-efficacy.

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