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## IMPROVING THE INTERNSHIPS QUALITY IN SUPPORTING VOCATIONAL COLLEGE STUDENTS' JOB SEARCH SUCCESS

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**Abstract:** Internships prepare students to enter the industry, business world, and world of work (IDUKA). Internships encourage improved job prospects, higher wages, and reduced skill mismatches. The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of internship quality on students' career adaptability and students' job search success also to formulate strategic recommendations for improving the quality of apprenticeship programs. The population of this study is all alumni of Politeknik Ketenagakerjaan, Politeknik APP Jakarta and Politeknik STMI Jakarta who are recorded as already working. A total of 99 respondents were selected by purposive sampling then analyzed using SEM-PLS and the Analytic Hierarchical Process (AHP). The results of the study found that there is a positive and significant influence between internship quality on career adaptability, career adaptability on job search success, internship quality on job search success and internship quality on job search success through career adaptability. The most important alternative strategy for improving internship quality is setting up an internship mentoring program. Universities and companies must develop an internship curriculum for each internship position before setting up an internship mentoring programme.

**Keywords:** Internship Quality, Career Adaptability, Job Search Success, Vocational Education

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## INTRODUCTION

Internships prepare students to enter the industry, the business world, and the world of work. The internship is an important part of vocational higher education. It provides students opportunities to learn new skills such as discipline, responsibility, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, and so on (Directorate General of Higher Education Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). The implementation of internships for vocational higher education takes at least one semester. Internships can improve job prospects, higher wages, and reduce skill mismatches (Passaretta and Triventi, 2015). The National Labor Force Survey (SAKERNAS) reported by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in the time span of February 2021 to August 2022 shows that the average unemployment rate for diploma/academy graduates (6.33%) is relatively lower than general senior high school (8.53%) and vocational senior high school graduates (10.74%). The results indicate better employment opportunities for graduates of vocational higher education (diploma). Companies tend to be attracted to higher education graduates who adopt a practice-oriented approach because these graduates have acquired job-specific skills that can be applied directly in the workplace (Backes-Gellner and Geel, 2014). The SAKERNAS results are also supported by The Global Talent Competitiveness Index (2021) survey that was conducted by Insead, Portulans Institute, and Accenture, which states that Indonesia is one of the countries that shows the highest increase in competitiveness dimensions in almost all pillars. The vocational and technical skills (VT-Skills) section show the highest score increase. However, despite the increase, Indonesia's competitiveness compared to other countries is still at the bottom of the list, so there is a need to improve the quality of human resources through vocational higher education programs.

Understanding the role of internship quality in job search success is crucial for colleges and students (Arthur & Koomson, 2023). An internship provides students with hands-on experience in their chosen field, which enhances their knowledge, skills, and expertise (Furco, 1996). This, in turn, increases their employability and job prospects. This study can help employers in industries develop a pool of skilled and qualified talent for future hiring needs by providing students with me-

aningful and relevant internship experiences (Nurmatov & Huitzil, 2023). The government is also one of the stakeholders who will experience the benefits. The government can use this to develop policies and programs that encourage industries to provide high-quality internships to students. This, in turn, can help reduce unemployment rates and enhance the country's overall economic growth.

Three vocational colleges categorized as non-service bonding government official colleges located in Jakarta (Politeknik Ketenagakerjaan, Politeknik APP, and Politeknik STMI) provided different data on the job placements of their graduates. According to the tracer study report, Politeknik Ketenagakerjaan (Politeknaker) recorded the highest percentage of graduates (91%) who have already started working. In comparison, Politeknik APP and Politeknik STMI recorded lower percentages of 70.6% and 86.96%, respectively. The specific problem of this research is the need to understand the role of internship quality in job search success for non-service bonding government official college students in Jakarta. Despite the positive impact of internships on job prospects and skill development, the job placement rates for graduates are not at an optimal level yet, and there is a need to improve the quality of human resources through vocational higher education programs.

Previous research on internships has mainly focused on the quantitative aspects, such as the number of internships and time spent working. However, there is a lack of research on the role of qualitative aspects of internships (job characteristics) in individuals' job search success (Gamboa et al., 2020; Brooks et al., 1995). Pan et al. (2018) studied the relationship between internship quality and job search outcomes, as measured by the Job Characteristics Model theory. The study's results showed a positive and significant effect of internship quality on career adaptability and job search success. The variables of internship quality, career adaptability, and job search success have been discussed in the prior research (Pan et al., 2018). However, the detailed research directly discusses the quality of internships and other variables, namely proactive personality, that affect the success of students' job searches in China.

Meanwhile, no research has been found in Indonesia that discusses the role of internship quality in students' job search success through career

adaptability. Accordingly, it is necessary to study the role of internships more deeply and comprehensively from a qualitative aspect in job search success by encouraging students' career adaptability. Besides that, the research will help to fill the gap in the existing literature and provide insights for colleges, students, employers, and the government to develop policies and programs that can improve job placement rates for graduates, reduce unemployment rates, and enhance the overall economic growth of the country.

The benefits of this research include developing a pool of skilled and qualified talent for future hiring needs, increased employability and job prospects for students, and improved quality of human resources through vocational higher education programs. This study aims to analyze the influence of internship quality on students' career adaptability, to analyze the influence of career adaptability on students' job search success, to analyze the influence of internship quality on students' job search success, to analyze the influence of internship quality on students' job search success through career adaptability, and formulate strategic recommendations for improving the quality of apprenticeship programs.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Internship Quality

Internships are structured and career-relevant work experiences students obtain before graduation from an academic program (Taylor, 1988). According to Renganathan et al. (2012), an internship is a chance for students to incorporate their on-the-job work experience and knowledge into their university education by being in a supervised and planned real-world professional work environment. Internships are also considered a workplace learning activity where students experience work tasks in a work environment without assuming the whole identity of a worker (Gamboa et al., 2020).

According to van Vianen et al. (2012), the quality of the internship is, in fact, more important for students who plan to start working in the near future, and this is due to the recognition of the students' experience so far as a major contribution to their technical-professional preparation. From the student's perspective, their professional performance will more directly depend on the quality of the (learning) knowledge the student acquires during

the internship, representing their professional practice when starting work. (Billett, 2005; Gamboa et al., 2020)

### Career Adaptability

According to Savickas and Porfeli (2012), career adaptability is a psychosocial construct that demonstrates an individual's/employee's resourcefulness in coping with current and future tasks, transitions, and traumas encountered in their job role, both small and large in scope, which can alter the employee's social integration. It includes adapting to the transitional processes during their life journey, from child to adolescent, school to work, and from one job to another.

Based on Savickas and Porfeli's (2012) career construction theory, the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale consists of (a) concern, refers to an individual's concern about future career orientation; (b) control related to individual management of situations such as stress, change, problems and other challenges that come in life; (c) curiosity; refers to individual curiosity related to careers and exploration of the suitability between self and the roles and situations needed in the future careers; and (d) confidence; which shows confidence in solving any problems or challenges that arise, exploring all possibilities that can be taken and providing efforts to solutions in dealing with these obstacles.

### Job Search Success

Job search is considered a significant step in a student's transition into work. It requires a special investment in time, effort, and physical and mental energy to overcome a series of challenges in the job search process, such as preparing the necessary documents in the initial administrative stage, attending job interviews, and choosing the right job later (Guan et al., 2013; Wanberg et al., 2010). The dimensions of job search success include the number of job interviews, job offers, employment status, job-individual fit perceptions, and job-organization fit perceptions (Saks, 2006).

## HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Based on the results of the research of Pan et al. (2018), the quality of internships as measured using the Job Characteristics Model theory with indicators of skill variety, task identity, task sig-

nificance, job autonomy, and job feedback significantly has a positive and significant effect on career adaptability, which is calculated based on four aspects of career adaptability consisting of career concern, career control, career curiosity, and career confidence with six question items in each dimension (Hou et al., 2012). Research by Ocampo et al. (2020) provides direct evidence supporting the positive and sustained effects of internship participation on career adaptability. This positive effect underscores the role of internship experience in developing career adaptability.

**H1:** Internship quality has a positive and significant effect on career adaptability.

Zhao and Liden (2011) mentioned in their research that internships were associated with outcomes at all stages of the school-to-work transition. It happened because it was found that students who participated in internships often received job offers from the companies where they interned. In addition, research related to internships and job search success from Gault et al. (2000) mentioned that students who participated in internships obtained their first job in a shorter time after graduation earned higher salaries, and had higher levels of overall job satisfaction compared to those who did not participate in internships.

**H2:** Career adaptability has a positive and significant effect on job search success.

Guan et al. (2013) also studied the relationship between career adaptability and job search success among university graduates in China. The study indicated that the four dimensions of career adaptability were the strongest predictors of job search self-efficacy, which ultimately has implications for student job search outcomes. Similarly, Mittal (2020) found a positive relationship between career adaptability and job search success.

**H3:** Internship quality has a positive and significant effect on job search success.

According to Brooks et al. (1995), internship quality can increase self-efficacy during job search, thereby increasing job search success. Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to perform tasks related to career decision-making, and it is one of the factors that play an essential role in career adaptability.

**H4:** Internship quality has a positive and significant effect on job search success through career adaptability.

## METHOD

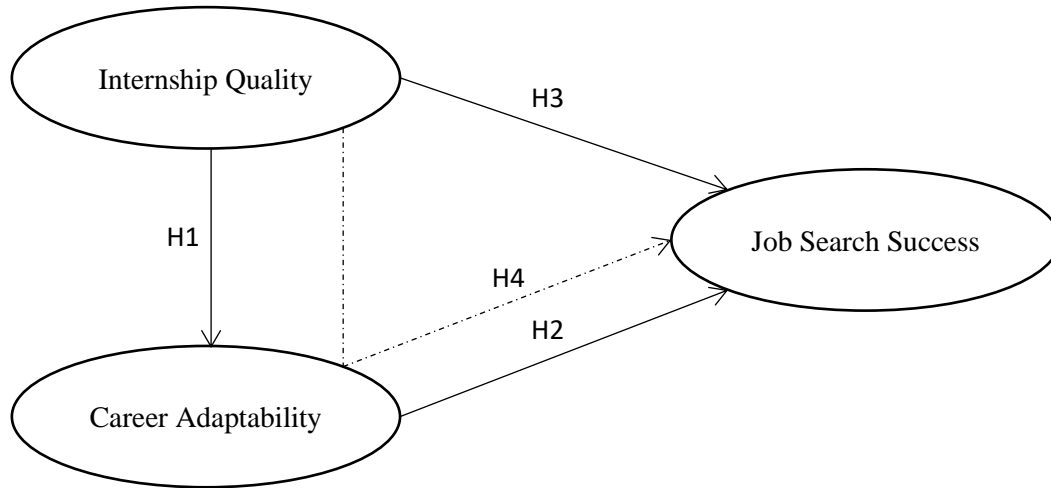
This study uses a quantitative approach. The data used in this study are primary and secondary. Primary data was obtained through a survey by distributing questionnaires to graduates who have worked and interviews with four experts with a background of two academics and two company practitioners. Secondary data were obtained from literature and supporting references in journals and related research reports. The population of this study is all alumni of Polteknaker, Politeknik APP Jakarta, and Politeknik STMI Jakarta, who are recorded as already working, totaling 632. The research was centered in the Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi (JABODETABEK) areas, where most alumni work. The implementation of the study started from July 2022 to March 2023. The determination of sample size using the Slovin formula with an error of 10% shows that the minimum sample size is 87 respondents. However, it was adjusted by the researcher to 99 respondents. The sampling method used was purposive sampling with the criteria of determining student respondents who have graduated and are working. Finally, 99 respondents were collected, with a composition of 68 respondents from Polteknaker, 21 from Politeknik APP Jakarta and ten from Politeknik STMI Jakarta.

SEM-PLS analysis was chosen to examine the effect of internship quality on student career adaptability, the effect of internship quality on student job search success, and the effect of career adaptability on student job search success. SEM-PLS is based on a relatively small sample size and does not require multiple normal assumptions (Jaya and Sumertajaya, 2008). The Analytic Hierarchical Process (AHP) was used to formulate strategic recommendations for improving the quality of student internship programs.

The research model was developed using exogenous and endogenous latent variables. The endogenous latent variables of students' career adaptability and job search success were formed by the exogenous latent variables of internship quality: skill variety, task identity, task significance, job autonomy, and job feedback. The internship

quality variable was developed from (Hackman and Oldham's, 1974) job characteristics model theory, the career adaptability variable was referred from (Savickas and Porfeli's, 2012) research and the student job search success variable using Saks

(2006) research foundation. These three variables are latent variables that cannot be measured directly. Details, latent variables, and manifest variables (statement indicators for each variable) are presented in Table 1.



Source: Processed Data (2023)

Figure 1. Research Framework

Table 1. Latent dan Manifest Variables

Latent Variables	Manifest Variables (Attributes)	Code
Internship Quality (X) (Hackman and Oldham, 1974)	1. <i>Skill Variety</i>	
	- During my internship, I was required to use more than one skill to complete my work.	X <sub>1</sub>
	- I was given the opportunity to do more challenging types of work.	X <sub>2</sub>
	2. <i>Task Identity</i>	
	- I was involved in every work process (from start to finish) in accordance with my field of work.	X <sub>3</sub>
	- I was given the opportunity to finish the work I started	X <sub>4</sub>
	- I was given clear information and planning regarding the tasks I had to do.	X <sub>5</sub>
	3. <i>Task Significance</i>	
	- I was given tasks that can increase and improve my skills/expertise	X <sub>6</sub>
	- The work I did was important and could provide benefits to our coworkers and the company.	X <sub>7</sub>
	4. <i>Autonomy</i>	
- I have the freedom and independence to accomplish my tasks at work	X <sub>8</sub>	
- In carrying out my work, I have the freedom to determine the procedures and implementation schedule.	X <sub>9</sub>	
5. <i>Job Feedback</i>		
- I get information about my performance regularly, both from coworkers and superiors.	X <sub>10</sub>	
- Every job I have done, I always get feedback and evaluation from my superiors.	X <sub>11</sub>	

Latent Variables	Manifest Variables (Attributes)	Code
Career Adaptability (Y1) (Savickas and Porfelli, 2012)	1. <i>Concern</i>	
	- I thought about what my future would be like	Y <sub>1.1</sub>
	- I realize that my current choices will determine my future	Y <sub>1.2</sub>
	- I prepare for my future	Y <sub>1.3</sub>
	- I care about my choice of education and the major I should take	Y <sub>1.4</sub>
	- I plan the steps to achieve my goals	Y <sub>1.5</sub>
	- I care about my career	Y <sub>1.6</sub>
	2. <i>Control</i>	
	- I am always optimistic about achieving my career goals	Y <sub>1.7</sub>
	- I make my own decisions about my career	Y <sub>1.8</sub>
	- I take responsibility for my decisions and actions	Y <sub>1.9</sub>
	- I stick to my beliefs about my career	Y <sub>1.10</sub>
	- I believe in myself in my career	Y <sub>1.11</sub>
	- I do what is good for me	Y <sub>1.12</sub>
	3. <i>Curiosity</i>	
	- I like to explore new things	Y <sub>1.13</sub>
	- I always look for opportunities to grow as an individual	Y <sub>1.14</sub>
	- I always look for alternatives before making a choice	Y <sub>1.15</sub>
	- I enjoy observing different ways of doing things	Y <sub>1.16</sub>
	- I dig deeper into questions I have about my career	Y <sub>1.17</sub>
- I am always curious about new career opportunities that I can take.	Y <sub>1.18</sub>	
4. <i>Confidence</i>		
- I perform tasks efficiently	Y <sub>1.19</sub>	
- I consider things before doing something	Y <sub>1.20</sub>	
- I enjoy learning certain skills	Y <sub>1.21</sub>	
- I always optimize my abilities at work	Y <sub>1.22</sub>	
- I am able to overcome obstacles in my career	Y <sub>1.23</sub>	
- I am able to solve problems that arise in my work	Y <sub>1.24</sub>	
Job Search Success (Y2) (Saks, 2006)	1. <i>Number of Job Offers</i>	
	- I have been offered more than one job from different companies	Y <sub>2.1</sub>
	2. <i>Number of Job Interviews</i>	
	- I have been invited to interview at more than one company.	Y <sub>2.2</sub>
	3. <i>Employment Status</i>	
	- Did you receive a job offer from the company?	Y <sub>2.3</sub>
	4. <i>Person Job Fit Perceptions</i>	
	- My knowledge, skills, and expertise align with the job requirements.	Y <sub>2.4</sub>
	- My job is in line with my needs	Y <sub>2.5</sub>
	- My current job allows me to do the type of work I want to do	Y <sub>2.6</sub>
5. <i>Person Organization Fit Perceptions</i>		
- The values in the company are in accordance with my values	Y <sub>2.7</sub>	
- My personality is in accordance with the image of the company/organization	Y <sub>2.8</sub>	
- The current company/organization has met my needs	Y <sub>2.9</sub>	

Source: Processed Data (2023)

## RESULTS

### Respondent Characteristics

Descriptive analysis is used to provide information about the general description of the characteristics of respondents. This research collected as many as 99 respondents, consisting of Politeknaker alumni, Politeknik APP Jakarta, and Politeknik STMI Jakarta, who were recorded as already working. Based on the questionnaires distributed, information was obtained that 36 Respondents were male (36.36%), and 62 respondents were female (63.64%). In terms of age, 38 respondents (38.38%) are in the age range of 21-22 years old, 50 respondents are in the age range of 23-24 years old (50.51%), and the remaining 11 respondents are over 25 years old (11.11%). Many alumni are over 23 years old because there is no age limit when registering for college at the Politeknaker, as long as they still have a high school / vocational high school certificate.

According to the origin of the vocational college, 68 alumni came from Politeknaker (68.69%), 21 alumni came from Politeknik APP Jakarta (21.21%), and the remaining ten students graduated from Politeknik STMI Jakarta (10.1%). Based on the distribution of alumni major, 49 respondents came from Human Resource Management (49.49%), eight respondents came from Industrial Relations (8.08%), 11 respondents came from Occupational Safety and Health (11.11%), ten respondents came from the Electronics Industry Management major (10.1%), two respondents came from the Electronics Industry Marketing Management major (2.02%), nine respondents came from the ASEAN and China Region International Trade major (9.09%), six respondents came from the Automotive Industry Information Systems major (6.06%) and four respondents came from the Polymer Chemical Engineering major (4.05%) of which 39 respondents were class of 2017 (39.39%), 40 respondents belonged to the class of 2018 (40.4%) and the remaining 20 respondents were students of the class of 2019 (20.21%).

When viewed from the time working, information is obtained that as many as 40 respondents (40.4%) are fairly new to work with a work period of less than six months. The number of respondents who have worked between 6 months and one year is 18 graduates (18.18%). Respondents with a working period of more than one year reached

41 graduates (41.42%). In the discussion about income, it can be concluded that more than 50% of respondents earned a salary above the range of UMP and UMK Jabodetabek in 2023. In more detail, eight respondents (8.08%) have a monthly salary above IDR 7,500,000. 46 respondents, or 46.46%, earn a monthly income between IDR 5,000,001 and IDR 7,500,000. while 37 respondents (37.38%) reported that their monthly income was in the range of IDR 3,000,001 and IDR 5,000,000. However, eight respondents (8.08%) still earned less than IDR 3,000,000.

### Evaluation of the Measurement Model

The outer model is evaluated based on testing the validity and reliability of each latent variable. Validity testing refers to the loading value ( $\lambda$ ). When the value is above 0.5, it is declared valid. Another alternative that can be used is the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value, which must be above 0.5. In reliability testing, the emphasis focuses on composite reliability, which measures internal consistency, where the value must be above 0.6 to show consistency (Ghozali, 2011). In order to obtain the best structural equation model, it is necessary to respecify the model by removing manifest variables whose values are below 0.7. Some manifest variables removed from the model include: X1, X2, X4, X6, X7, X8, X9, X10, Y1.1, Y1.2, Y1.3, Y1.4, Y1.5, Y1.8, Y1.12, Y1.13, Y1.14, Y1.15, Y1.16, Y1.17, Y1.18, Y1.20 and Y2.4. In addition, the purpose of model respecification through dropping manifest variables is to increase the AVE value from the original value of 0.39 for the exogenous latent variable internship quality and 0.45 for the endogenous latent variable career adaptability to 0.67 and 0.63, respectively. In the end, the AVE value of the three latent variables is above 0.5, which indicates that it has passed the validity test. In a reliability test based on composite reliability value and Cronbach's Alpha value, the results are above 0.6, meaning that all manifest variables are consistent and can be used to measure latent constructs.

### Structural Model Evaluation

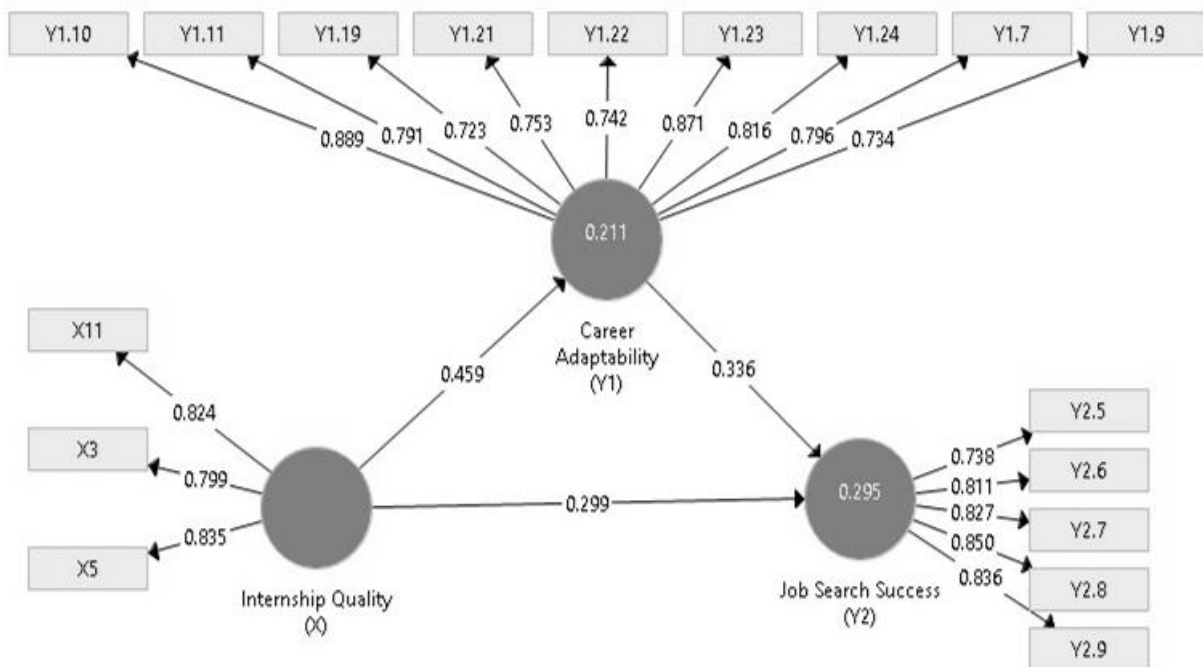
The inner model is evaluated based on the R-square (R<sup>2</sup>) value for the latent variables of career adaptability and job search success. The R-square R<sub>1</sub><sup>2</sup> value of the career adaptability var-

iable is 0.21, which means that the diversity of career adaptability that the diversity of internship quality can explain is 21%, while other variables outside the model explain the remaining 79%. Furthermore, the R-square  $R_2^2$  value of the job search success variable is 0.3, which means that the diversity of career adaptability can explain the diversity of job search success, and the diversity of internship quality is 30%. In contrast, the remaining 70% is explained by other variables outside the model. An  $R^2$  value of less than 0.33 indicates a weak model, while if the  $R^2$  value is in the range of 0.33 to 0.67, it can indicate that the model is moderate, and if the value is above 0.67, it is said to be strong (Chin and Marcoulides, 1998). Eval-

uation of the goodness of the model also needs to consider the predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) value obtained from the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 (Q^2) &= 1 - (1 - R_1^2) (1 - R_2^2) \\
 &= 1 - (1 - 0.21) (1 - 0.3) = 0.45
 \end{aligned}$$

The  $Q^2$  calculation result is 0.45 or 45%, which means that the model can explain the phenomenon of student job search success associated with career adaptability variables and internship quality. In other words, the model has predictive relevance and can be used for hypothesis testing. Details of the structural equation model are shown in Figure 2.



Source: Processed Data (2023)

Figure 2. Structural Equation Model

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

Effect between Variables	Path Coefficient	T-statistic	Decision Making
H1: Internship Quality (X) → Career Adaptability (Y <sub>1</sub> )	0.46	5.89*	Accepted
H2: Carrer Adaptability (Y1) → Job Search Success (Y <sub>2</sub> )	0.34	3.81*	Accepted
H3: Internship Quality (X) → Job Search Success (Y <sub>2</sub> )	0.29	3.23*	Accepted
H4: Internship Quality (X) → Job Search Success (Y <sub>2</sub> ) through Career Adaptability	0.15	3.43*	Accepted

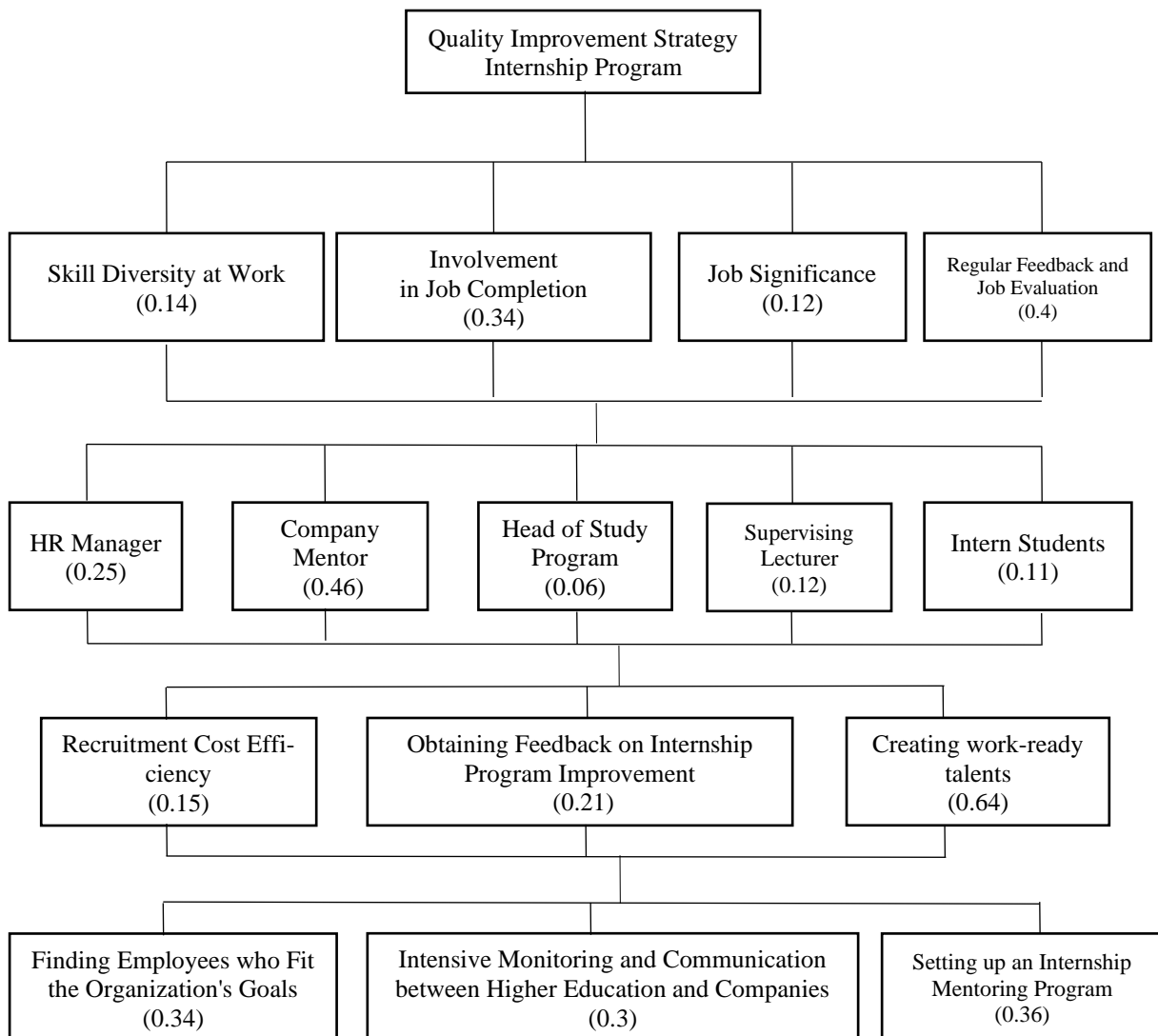


Table 2 shows that the overall influence between variables has a value above 1.96, which means that there is a significant influence between the internship quality on career adaptability, career adaptability on job search success, internship quality on job search success, and internship quality on job search success through career adaptability at a significance level of 5%. The path coefficient produces a positive value, which can be concluded that the better the internship quality, the more students' career adaptability will increase. Then, the more students' career adaptability increases, the higher the level of job search success, and the bet-

ter internship quality experienced by students, the greater the job search success.

**Analytic Hierarchical Process**

Analytic Hierarchical Process (AHP) analysis was used to determine the most effective strategies for improving the quality of internship programs and involved four experts, consisting of two academics and two practitioners. The AHP analysis was processed using Super Decisions version 3.2 software. The combination of hierarchical analysis based on the vertical assessment of four experts is presented in Figure 2.



Source: Processed Data (2023)

**Figure 2. Hierarchy Structure of AHP**

## DISCUSSION

**Internship Quality and Career Adaptability.** The results of the analysis show that there is a positive and significant influence between internship quality and career adaptability. It is in line with the research of Pan et al. (2018). Likewise, research from Ocampo et al. (2020) provides direct evidence supporting the positive and sustained effects of internship participation on career adaptability. This positive effect underscores the role of internship experience in developing career adaptability. Based on the magnitude of the path coefficient, it shows that the quality of the internship has the highest path coefficient. It can be concluded that internship quality is the most influential factor in improving students' career adaptability. The quality of the internship is formed by involvement in every work process (from start to finish) in accordance with the field of work (X3), the delivery of clear information and planning related to the tasks to be done (X5), and the provision of feedback and supervisor evaluation for each job completed (X11). The largest loading value in forming the latent variable of internship quality is the delivery of clear information and planning related to the tasks to be done (X5). It is important for companies that accept internships to prepare an internship curriculum that refers to the type or name of job positions in the industry (Bawica, 2021). The internship curriculum is outlined in the form of a guidebook so that interns get clear information and planning related to their duties and obligations.

### **Career Adaptability and Job Search Success**

Career adaptability has a positive and significant influence on job search success. It means that the more students' career adaptability increases, the higher the job search success. Career adaptability is formed by an optimistic attitude toward achieving career goals (Y1.7), a sense of responsibility for decisions and actions (Y1.9), sticking to beliefs about careers (Y1.10), self-confidence in undergoing a career (Y1.11), the ability to do tasks efficiently (Y1.19), a sense of pleasure in learning new skills (Y1.21), the ability to optimize skills at work (Y1.22), the ability to overcome obstacles in a career (Y1.23) and the ability to solve problems at work (Y1.24). The highest loading value that forms the latent variable of career adaptability indicates an individual's ability to overcome obsta-

cles in a career (Y1.23), which is part of the confidence dimension. Confidence is developed from students' sense of achievement and motivation to utilize their knowledge and skills during the internship. (Busby and Gibson, 2010; Ocampo et al., 2020; Zopiatis and Constanti, 2012). These results follow the research of (Savickas and Porfeli, 2012), which states that confidence fuels the readiness to explore options, make decisions, and engage in proactive behavior. Individuals with higher levels of confidence are likely to be more adaptable in their careers as they believe in their capabilities to tackle new and challenging tasks or change career pathways if required.

### **Internship Quality and Job Search Success (Direct and Indirect Effect)**

The exogenous latent variable of internship quality has a positive and significant effect on the endogenous latent variable of job search success. It means that the quality of the internship program will open up opportunities for students to find work more easily. Likewise, for indirect effects, internship quality has a positive and significant influence on job search success through career adaptability. According to Wanberg et al. (2010), in the job search process, students experience a transition from the campus world to the world of work. These transitional activities require students to sacrifice time, energy, and effort to overcome challenges such as collecting information on job vacancies, understanding their strengths and weaknesses, preparing the required work requirements documents, and actively participating in career-themed workshops until finally finding a suitable job. By experiencing a quality internship program, students can cut down on the stages and challenges of the job search process. This happens because students who take part in internships often receive job offers from the companies where they intern (Anjum, 2020). For companies, it is also an advantage. The company gets ready-to-use talents who have proven their quality and performance and saves expenses allocated for employee recruitment-selection activities (Muehlemann & Wolter, 2014). Job search success is formed by the suitability of the current job to the needs (Y2.5), the fact that the current job allows the type of work desired (Y2.6), the values in the company are in accordance with the personal values (Y2.7), the suitability of indi-

vidual personalities with the image of the company/organization (Y2.8) and the fact that the current company or organization can meet the needs (Y2.9). The highest loading value that forms the latent variable of job search success is the compatibility of individual personality with the company or organization's image (Y2.8).

### **Strategy to Improve the Internship Quality**

The most decisive actor in improving the quality of the internships is the company mentor. Company mentors are in charge of providing direction regarding company policies, guiding internship students in fulfilling learning outcomes at the internship site, assessing performance, providing suggestions for solving problems at work, and discussing the progress of internship students with internship supervisors. Company mentors offer career guidance and psychosocial support for internship students to accelerate the process of adapting to the internship site's norms, strategies, and work approaches. Company mentors are essential in clarifying communication and reducing uncertainty and ambiguity (Jeske and Linehan, 2020). The following priorities in a row are the HR manager, supervising lecturer, internship student, and head of the study program.

Regular feedback and job evaluation are the most prioritized factors in improving the quality of internships. Internship students, both from company mentors and supervisors, require appropriate feedback and regular job evaluations because feedback is considered an important element in improving and maintaining the performance, quality of the internship program, and professional learning of internship students. In addition, appropriate feedback is also provided to assess the progress that internship students have made (Anjum, 2020). Other priorities of the factor elements are job completion, diversity of skills, and job significance.

The biggest objective to be achieved in improving the quality of internships is to create work-ready talents. It is in line with the objectives of apprenticeship at Higher Education Providers of Vocational Higher Education, namely preparing students to be able to internalize professional attitudes and work culture according to what is needed by the industry, gain knowledge, general skills, and specific skills related to work expertise, and be introduced to the work environment that pro-

vides benefits in preparation for entering the world of work and careers. A quality apprenticeship program is designed to prepare human resources who can establish expertise and skills in their fields, are ready to work, and are able to compete globally. The second and third objectives to be achieved are obtaining feedback on apprenticeship program improvement and recruitment cost efficiency.

The most important alternative strategy is to prepare an internship mentoring program. Based on discussions with experts, it is recommended that every company that opens an internship program prepare an internship curriculum for each position before preparing an internship mentoring program. The internship curriculum contains a plan of tasks and work that students will carry out for at least six months of the internship period. Tasks are specific to each individual, so the contribution of each internship student is highly emphasized. An effective internship mentoring program is to set a regular meeting time (recommended every two weeks) between the internship mentor and the student to discuss the progress of the project/task being worked on, motivate, and provide feedback. The internship mentoring program can be scheduled in an informal setting, such as over lunch, or in a more formal setting.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

The study results obtained the main factors prioritized in improving the quality of internships, which are feedback and periodic job evaluations, with the most instrumental actor being the internship mentor. Internship students, both from company mentors and internship supervisors, require appropriate feedback and regular job evaluations because feedback is considered an important element in improving and maintaining the performance, quality of the internship program, and professional learning of internship students. The most decisive alternative strategy for improving the quality of internships is setting up an internship mentoring program. Universities and companies must develop an internship curriculum for each internship position before setting up an internship mentoring program. The internship curriculum contains a plan of tasks and work that students will carry out for at least six months of the internship period. Tasks are specific per individual so that the contribution of each internship student is highly empha-

sized.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendation for further research is to focus on the similarity of the study program of the respondents who are the object of research, for example, specifically for study programs with social science clumps. Then, it can be developed for further research to add self-efficacy variables. Self-efficacy is considered to have a prominent role in the job search process and its outcomes.

A limitation of this study is the disproportionate number of respondents from Politeknaker, Politeknik APP Jakarta, and Politeknik STMI Jakarta. In addition, the number of respondents collected is still relatively small (not within the sample size range of 100 - 200 respondents). Due to the status of respondents who are alumni of the three vocational colleges, it is difficult to reach and has a high non-response rate.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on SEM-PLS, it was found that internship quality has a positive and significant effect on career adaptability. The main actor in improving the quality of internships is the company mentor. Career adaptability has a positive and significant effect on job search success. Then, internship quality has a positive and significant effect on job search success, and internship quality has a positive and significant effect on job search success through career adaptability. The most important alternative strategy for improving the quality of internships is to create an internship mentoring program. An effective internship mentoring program is setting regular meetings (recommended every two weeks) between mentors and students to discuss the progress of the project or assignment being worked on, motivate them, and provide feedback.

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