

Internship experience, satisfaction and competencies among Chinese university students

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Abstract

The study evaluated the internship experience, satisfaction, and competencies among Chinese university students. Furthermore, it described the profile of respondents in terms of sex, year level, internship duration and major; determined the respondents' internship experience in terms of clear goals, work support, university support and generic abilities; identified the respondents' internship satisfaction as to interview process, internship experience, and work environment; assessed the respondents' internship competencies in terms of basic competencies, personal competencies, social competencies, management competencies and specific competencies; tested the differences in responses when grouped according to profile; tested the relationship among internship experience, satisfaction, and competencies; and proposed an enhanced career development program for student interns. The descriptive method was used in this study. Researchers, in contrast to experimental investigations, observed and quantified variables without controlling or manipulating them. For the study, the researcher selected 425 college students in University S. The reliability of the surveys employed the Likert scale and was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The gathered data was analyzed using a one-way ANOVA, t-test, and a quantitative descriptive study technique. According to the study's findings, most respondents were females, in their Senior year majoring in Liberal arts with 2-4 months of internship duration experience. Additionally, the results indicated a significant and positive relationship between internship satisfaction and development of different competencies. The factors that contributed to high levels of satisfaction include the significance and depth of different support systems and competencies, the level of guidance and assistance, chances of acquiring knowledge and progressing professionally, and the overall work atmosphere. Recommendations for future research were proposed to facilitate the exploration of additional challenges and obstacles related to the internship experience, satisfaction, and competencies among Chinese university students.

Keywords: internship experience, internship satisfaction, internship competencies

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1. Introduction

On the job training experience is a crucial moment for university students around the world, as it establishes an avenue for interaction between academics' knowledge and real-world applications in professional environments. In China, where higher education and employment requirements are constantly evolving, it is important to comprehend the changing environment of internship experiences, the corresponding degrees of satisfaction, and the expertise developed by university students. Therefore, this awareness is essential. This study aims to explore different facets of internships among Chinese university students, with the objective of establishing an intricate relationship among internship experience, satisfaction, and the enhancement of competencies.

According to Hora et al. (2020) in an era where colleges and universities are eager to demonstrate the job marketability of their graduates, internships are advocated as essential 'high impact' initiatives. Nevertheless, there is a lack of understanding of how students actually see internships, which hinders the incorporation of their perspectives in discussions on employment prospects and the development of initiatives towards job marketability. The key objective of an internship is to introduce participants to real-world work settings, allowing them to hone and put into practice their academic knowledge and skills. This practical application reinforces the conceptual comprehension acquired in classroom settings.

As stated by Luk and Chan in 2020, internship experience has become an important part of engineering education in universities worldwide because of the widely recognized merits they offer in developing future engineers. The present review of engineering internship programs in colleges and universities primarily depends on surveys created by internship organizers, which are rarely confirmed. The exploratory factor analysis yielded four distinct factors: precise objectives, job assistance, school backing, and general competencies. Seyitoğlu (2019) investigated the correlation between internship experience and individuals' perspectives on their potential careers. In summary, the research findings indicate that students' internship experience may be categorized into three main parameters: perks, challenges, and career perspective. Internships may provide opportunities for developing and improving professional competence. It encompasses interpersonal relationships, teamwork, collaborative problem-solving techniques, and technical skills relevant to the job at hand. Furthermore, they determined that the extent of the advantages and difficulties observed was the primary determinant of students' career decisions.

Pambajeng et al. (2024) examined the influence of internship experience, career motivation, and interpersonal skills on students' job market preparedness. The study population consisted of students enrolled in the Management Study Program, Faculty of Business, Law, and Social Sciences, Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo. The results of their study demonstrated strong validity, confirming the viability of this approach. Through data analysis, it can be inferred that there is a substantial and favorable correlation, either individually or collectively, between internship experience, job motivation, and interpersonal competencies in determining students' aptitude to join the labor force. Griffin and Coelho (2019) claimed that one frequently mentioned approach to providing students with essential employability skills is to offer internship experiences. The employability capacities of university graduates continue to be the subject of continuing discourse and contention. Multiple studies emphasize the concerns stated by both governments and businesses over the capacity of higher education to yield graduates who are prepared for job markets. Furthermore, during the internship year, interns are urged to seek out and resolve problems on their own or while sharing information. They are expected to interact productively with their colleagues, supervisors, and various stakeholders.

Meanwhile, Kukreti et al. (2024) suggested that a satisfactory internship may prove favorable for both the

learner and the company that hires them. Students can effectively apply their skills while the firm gains from acquiring dedicated personnel. This could lead to successful professional development among students. Their study aimed to determine whether there was a notable correlation between Internship Satisfaction and Career Development in students pursuing a degree in hospitality management. The study revealed a substantial correlation between internship satisfaction and career development. Mensah et al. (2020) investigated the impact of organizational, supervisor, and co-worker support on the overall internship satisfaction of individuals participating in apprenticeships. The study's findings revealed a statistically significant correlation between the assistance provided by the organization, supervisors, and co-workers and the level of satisfaction experienced by students during their internships. Their study offers unique insights into the relationship between job-based social assistance and internship satisfaction, which may be relevant for leaders who oversee job placement programs in colleges and universities.

Chen and Dai (2021) introduced a method for assessing the quality of talent cultivation in modern internship programs at high vocational education schools. Their findings indicated that aligning talent cultivation objectives with employer requirements, establishing an internship system based on the principles of student growth and development, and providing ample internship project resources, support, and management will significantly enhance the quality of cultivated talent. Conversely, if students' satisfaction for employment is not fully stimulated, the internship implementation environment is unfavorable, or there is frequent turnover of tutors in enterprises, it will negatively impact the effectiveness of internship initiatives. In a study conducted by Chen, Shen, and Gosling (2018), they pointed out that satisfaction with university, business, and personal successes is expected to have a beneficial effect on students' employability. Participation in a satisfying internship may boost an applicant's curriculum vitae, making the intern a more persuasive candidate for future employment. It offers tangible evidence of interns' abilities and achievements in real-life tasks. Internship satisfaction constitutes the overall feeling of fulfillment and contentment experienced by interns during and after their internship.

On the other hand, internship competencies establish outlined objectives and norms for interns to comply with every step of their internships. Interns may track their development and discover areas of growth, thereby encouraging a sense of achievement. For internships to resurface as a substantially viable type of academic instruction would call for a reconsideration of their intended use, structure, and application (Sides & Mrvica, 2017). These competencies design a methodical and targeted education that integrates interns' endeavors with the long-term goals of the companies hosting them. Praja et al. (2023) emphasized that the primary objective of an internship is to prepare students to enter a professional workforce by engaging them with practical job experiences. Internship activities allow students to assess their competencies. Internship-competent students develop multiple skill sets, including strong interpersonal skills, collaboration, skilled problem-solving, effective use of time, and the ability to adapt to different circumstances. These skills are refined through the challenges faced during internships, enabling students to establish an adequate foundation for their potential careers.

Noe, Hollenbeck and Gerhart (2015) stated that skills pertain to an individual's level of performance on a specific task or ability to carry out a job effectively which can be divided into both technical and behavioral components. Interns are often given certain goals, wherein they may utilize and improve their technical abilities in their chosen field of study or intended purpose. Various internship programs incorporate mandatory courses or workshops designed to enhance their technical abilities. As the demand for competent workers intensifies in China's volatile employment market, understanding the aspects that give rise to a pleasant internship experience has become critical. Internships have become essential opportunities for students to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical experience in the constantly shifting context of higher education and workforce trends. In the framework of Chinese universities, where educational structures swiftly adapt to satisfy the needs of an expanding economy, it makes sense to explore the relationship between internship experience, satisfaction, and competencies.

The lack of range in study samples, such as the special emphasis on students from specific year level and major and internship duration, may have an impact on the capacity to apply the findings to a broader population.

Internships may be regarded and constructed differently across several fields of study, which may lead to conflicting findings that are challenging to reconcile. There may have been observed gaps or issues regarding insufficient research exists on the internship experiences, satisfaction and competencies of underrepresented student groups. Acquiring insights into distinct obstacles and encounters could enhance the development of internship programs that are more inclusive. The conceptual structures utilized in research on internship experiences among Chinese university students may frequently be insufficiently established or not explicitly employed. Future studies may be improved by including theoretical frameworks such as social learning theory and organizational socialization. This may deepen the understanding of how internships contribute to students' professional development. Universities may employ the findings of this study to influence future research initiatives and academic discussions regarding internship experiences, student satisfaction and developing effective competencies. This may help improve the quality of their internship programs by developing stronger interactions with commercial partners, thus enhancing their preparation for future career paths.

Objectives of the study - The purpose of this study was to determine internship experience, satisfaction, and competencies among Chinese university students in order to propose an intervention program for student career development. Specifically, this study determined the respondents' internship experience in terms of clear goals, work support, university support and generic abilities; identified the respondents' internship satisfaction as to interview process, internship experience, and work environment; assessed the respondents' internship competencies in terms of basic competencies, personal competencies, social competencies, management competencies and specific competencies; tested the relationship among internship experience, satisfaction, and competencies; and proposed an enhanced career development program for student interns.

2. Methods

Research Design - The descriptive method was used in this study. According to Nassaji (2015), descriptive research is a type of research used to describe a phenomenon or an individual or group of people and their characteristics. This is a research strategy that describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon under study. The emphasis of this descriptive technique is about the study rather than on the causes of its activities. To investigate one or more variables, descriptive study designs may employ various research approaches. Researchers, in contrast to experimental investigations, observed and quantified variables without controlling or manipulating them. A survey approach was utilized to investigate the internship experience, satisfaction and competencies among Chinese university students.

Participants - For the study, the researcher selected 425 college students in University S. The number of respondents was based on the list given by the participating school. The quantitative research method was utilized in gathering data for the study. Using the Raosoft sample size calculator, a sample size of 425 was included from a total of 500 students. The confidence level of this study was 95% and the margin of error was 5%. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the students to be surveyed.

Instrument - This study utilized a quantitative research approach to collect data. The researcher prepared an online survey using google form. The survey showed four parts. The first part identified the respondents' profile, such as sex, year level and internship duration and major. The second part pertained to the respondents' internship experience, the third section evaluated the respondents' internship satisfaction, and the fourth section explored the respondents' internship competencies. In Part I, respondents were asked to provide demographic information about themselves. This included their sex, year level and internship duration and major. Part II focused on determining the respondents' internship experience in terms of clear goals, work support, university support, and generic abilities wherein respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on a scale ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). The questionnaire was adapted from the study written by Luk and Chan (2020).

In Part III, respondents determined their level of agreement regarding their internship satisfaction in terms of

interview process, work experience, and work environment, using the rating scale measuring their level of agreement on a scale ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). The questionnaire was derived from the study conducted by Ko (2008). In Part IV, participants gauged their level of internship competencies in terms of basic, personal, social, management, and specific competencies by identifying their level of agreement using the same scale. This questionnaire was based on a study authored by Ferreras-Garcia et al. (2022). The contents of the instrument that were used in this study underwent rigorous verification and validation processes to ensure its reliability. The instrument was first examined and validated by a panel of experts in the field to ensure that it adequately measures the intended constructs. Reliability test of the questionnaires is indicated below:

Table 1

Reliability Test Result

Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Remarks
Clear Goals	0.899	Good
Work Support	0.923	Excellent
University Support	0.894	Good
Generic Abilities	0.901	Excellent
Interview Process	0.931	Excellent
Work Experience	0.924	Excellent
Work Environment	0.943	Excellent
Basic Competencies	0.890	Good
Personal Competencies	0.908	Excellent
Social Competencies	0.905	Excellent
Management Competencies	0.909	Excellent
Specific Competencies	0.904	Excellent

George and Mallery (2003) provide the following rules of thumb: “_ > .9 – Excellent, _ > .8 – Good, _ > .7 – Acceptable, _ > .6 – Questionable, _ > .5 – Poor, and _ < .5 – Unacceptable”

The table showed that all sections of the instrument exhibited good to excellent levels of reliability. These results indicated that the instrument consistently measured the intended constructs and can be relied upon to provide accurate and consistent data. The Cronbach's alpha values suggested that the items in each section are interrelated and contributed to measuring the variables effectively. Thus, the reliability of the instrument strengthened the credibility and legitimacy of the research findings.

Data Gathering Procedure - The first step before proceeding with actual testing was to seek an approval and a letter of consent to conduct research in University S. After obtaining approval, the researcher retrieved the request letter and communicated with the administrators of the different schools. She also shared the link of the Google form to be answered by the students. The administration and retrieval were online using the Google forms. The questionnaires were distributed to 425 respondents. The student respondents were given enough time to answer the questions. The data gathering procedure in this study involved the collection of data from the respondents using a validated survey questionnaire with rating scales. After gathering the data, the researcher collected the responses, checked for missing responses and input the data into SPSS software for tallying and applying statistical treatment to be used for the study.

Data Analysis - Quantitative data analysis was used in this study to interpret the data. This approach employed numerical data, making it applicable to other domains through analysis methods like regression models or probability distributions. Weighted mean and rank were calculated to determine the internship experience, satisfaction and competencies among Chinese University Students. Pearson's r was used to test the significant relationships among variables internship experience, satisfaction and competencies. All statistical analyses and data processing were conducted using SPSS version 26, a widely used statistical software package.

Ethical Considerations - To safeguard the privacy of respondents, the researcher refrained from disclosing any individual identities. The researcher ensured confidentiality on personal interactions with the participants, respected their privacy and obtained consent before accessing any sensitive information. The analysis was

conducted in a manner that will prioritize the well-being of the participants and ensured that their data was accurately represented in the study. The researchers abstained from expressing personal viewpoints and solely present information and findings derived from the collected data. Respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and be informed that the survey will solely serve the purpose of this study. Furthermore, the study underwent a rigorous ethics review process and was granted approval.

3. Results & discussion

Table 2

Summary Table on Internship Experience

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Clear Goals	3.39	Agree	3
Work Support	3.43	Agree	2
University Support	3.29	Agree	4
Generic Abilities	3.49	Agree	1
Composite Mean	3.40	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2 presented the summarized results of the internship experience. According to the data, the respondents agreed with all the indicators, as evidenced by the composite mean of 3.40. Item 4, generic abilities, had the highest rank, with a weighted mean of 3.49. This was followed by Item 2, work support with a weighted mean of 3.43; Item 1, clear goals, with 3.39 as its weighted mean; and on the last rank, Item 3, university support with a weighted mean of 3.29. The success of an internship is determined by multiple significant factors that greatly contribute to the development of interns as professionals. A rigorous onboarding procedure that incorporates orientation and fundamental instruction facilitates interns to adapt to the firm and comprehend their responsibilities. Setting explicit and attainable objectives from the beginning aids interns in comprehending their responsibilities and facilitates concentrated learning and performance. The availability of supervisors and mentors, who can provide career guidance, share industry knowledge, and offer opportunities for professional development, is essential.

Conversely, having the skill to collaborate well in a team is crucial in most internships, as it guarantees the seamless and efficient execution of projects. Providing constructive criticism to interns assists them in comprehending their strengths and identifying areas in which they may improve, thereby directing their professional growth. These criteria ensure that interns acquire significant expertise and abilities to aid in their eventual professional success. This finding echoed the research conducted by Kurniawan (2023), which suggested that present job prospects prioritize a person's competence. Therefore, colleges and universities should develop curricula that focus on building competencies to produce competent graduates who can meet job requirements and reduce unemployment rates. Their findings, which considered indicators such as the rapid pace at which alumni secure jobs based on their skills, job description, position, or task load, their capacity to carry out work, and the benefits of configured courses in classes, suggested that Management Study Program graduates are highly relevant to employment needs. The characteristics that contribute to ease of securing employment include work expertise/internship, administrative expertise, interpersonal abilities, teamwork, ability to manage projects, and proficiency certifications.

Table 3

Summary Table on Internship Satisfaction

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Interview Process	3.45	Agree	2
Work Experience	3.48	Agree	1
Work Environment	3.30	Agree	3
Composite Mean	3.41	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 summarized the results of internship satisfaction. The second indicator, work experience, had a

weighted mean of 3.48, ranking first among the three factors. Ranking second was item 1, the interview process, with a weighted mean of 3.45, and the least ranking item was item 3, work environment. The composite mean of 3.41 indicated an overall agreement among the respondents with the cited indicators.

Internship satisfaction is closely related to the interview process, work experience, and the work environment. The interview process establishes a foundation by ensuring that expectations are in line and evaluating compatibility, which imparts practical abilities and a clear understanding of one's professional path. The work atmosphere guarantees comfort, involvement, and a feeling of belonging. Interns who are content with their experience frequently become ambassadors for the organization, expressing good opinions about their time there to their peers and possible future interns. Establishing a fulfilling internship experience is a mutually beneficial arrangement that fosters development, creativity, and success for every stakeholder.

To support, Chen et al. (2018) pointed out that the main objective shared by most hospitality internship programs is to enhance the employability of students. An effective internship curriculum should focus on developing both technical and behavioral skills to prepare students to become well-rounded professionals who are ready to seek prospective employment opportunities. Ensuring internship satisfaction is necessary to achieve the positive benefits of internship experiences for both interns and businesses. Internships provide opportunities for interns to boost their learning, professional growth, and personal wellbeing. In addition, companies benefit from internships through increased productivity, improved retention rates, and a more solid brand.

Table 4

Summary Table on Internship Competencies

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Basic Competencies	3.26	Agree	5
Personal Competencies	3.39	Agree	1
Social Competencies	3.32	Agree	3
Management Competencies	3.36	Agree	2
Specific Competencies	3.29	Agree	4
Composite Mean	3.32	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

Table 4 presented the summarized results in terms of internship competencies. The composite mean of 3.32 indicated an overall agreement among respondents. The highest-ranking factors were in order: on the top highest spot was item 2, personal competencies, with a weighted mean of 3.39; Item 4, management competencies, took the second highest rank with a weighted mean of 3.36; and finally, on the third highest spot was item 3, social competencies, with a weighted mean of 3.32. All factors indicated an overall agreement among the respondents. Gaining and strengthening skills and abilities during an internship will be crucial for professional progress while preparing for a career. These skills are vital for progressing professionally and may significantly boost an intern's odds of finding employment and thriving in their chosen industry. Interns who acquire essential skills can make more valuable contributions to their assigned teams and companies, resulting in increased productivity and improved outcomes. Proficient interns experience a seamless transition to full-time positions, necessitating reduced training time and money. This is supported by Lutfia and Rahadi (2020), who stated that the primary objective of an internship is to develop students with enhanced skills and knowledge to successfully enter the global job market. This was achieved through the implementation of internship programs. Internship programs provide students with the opportunity to gain valuable insight into their existing talent. During this period of major shifts, students must be prepared to foresee and enhance their aptitude. Universities should provide new educational chances to help students develop exceptional and pertinent mindsets, expertise, and talents (Farida et al., 2022).

Table 5 displayed the association between Internship Experience and Internship Satisfaction. The computed r-values indicated a moderate direct correlation and the resulted p-values were less than the alpha level except on internship experience vs. Work experience. This meant that there were significant relationships existed and revealed that the better the experience, the more that they are satisfied. Results indicated that there was a high

significance when it comes to clear goals, and university support and when it comes to work support and generic abilities, there were no significant difference in terms of work experience. A favorable internship experience usually leads to a greater sense of contentment, whereas adverse circumstances may give rise to discontentment. The complexities of this connection are shaped by several aspects, such as the nature of work assignments, guidance from mentors, opportunities for learning and growth, prevailing organizational culture, and individual development. Interns who perceive that their work has a significant impact on the organization are more inclined to feel appreciated and content.

Table 5*Relationship between Internship Experience and Internship Satisfaction*

Clear Goals	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Interview Process	.258**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Experience	.173**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Environment	.171**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Support			
Interview Process	.268**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Experience	0.063	0.195	Not Significant
Work Environment	.201**	0.000	Highly Significant
University Support			
Interview Process	.369**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Experience	.154**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Environment	.203**	0.000	Highly Significant
Generic Abilities			
Interview Process	.199**	0.000	Highly Significant
Work Experience	0.025	0.608	Not Significant
Work Environment	.234**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at $p\text{-value} < 0.01$

Interns can increase their satisfaction by taking advantage of the possibilities for interaction with professionals inside the firm, as this can provide them with useful contacts as well as knowledge into their field of interest. However, internships without these components may result in discontent. Thus, it is crucial for both interns and businesses to make an effort to establish and choose internship opportunities that promote a favorable and rewarding experience to optimize satisfaction and professional growth. To support, Sekiguchi et al. (2023) argued that businesses frequently opt for applicants with hands-on experience since it reduces time and resources that would otherwise be spent on training at work. Internship experience enhances an applicant's proficiency and elevates their worth to potential employers. Jobseekers frequently rely on indirect or unreliable information to evaluate the appeal of potential employers. However, internship experience offers a more realistic and precise assessment, which can impact the attraction of an organization.

Table 6 showed the association between Internship Experience and Internship Competencies. The computed r-values indicated a moderate direct correlation and the resulted p-values were less than the alpha level. This meant that there was significant relationship that existed and revealed that the better the experience, the more competent they are on their internship. Internship experience is vital for developing an extensive array of skills that are necessary to achieve success in a profession. Internships in different places of employment facilitate the development of cultural competency among interns, enabling them to comprehend and value various perspectives and approaches to work. Internships not only equip students with the necessary skills for their future professions, but also enhance their appeal to prospective employers. Therefore, a meticulously organized and encouraging internship experience is extremely valuable for the development of skills and abilities.

This was echoed by a study conducted by Ferdiana and Amirya's (2024) investigation of the discrepancy between the advantages and the lack of interest among accounting students in obtaining tax brevet certification. This study investigates the influence of career motivation, economic motivation, quality motivation, student perspective, and internship experience on the decision of accounting students to pursue tax brevet certification. The results suggested that two factors, financial intent and internship experience, have a major effect on the desire of accounting students to pursue tax brevet certification. These findings are anticipated to provide

guidance to stakeholders in colleges and universities in their support of internship opportunities and taxation brevet certification, ultimately leading to the improvement of students' skills.

Table 6
Relationship between Internship Experience and Internship Competencies

Clear Goals	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Basic Competencies	.172**	0.000	Highly Significant
Personal Competencies	.195**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Competencies	.327**	0.000	Highly Significant
Management Competencies	.255**	0.000	Highly Significant
Specific Competencies	.131**	0.002	Highly Significant
Work Support			
Basic Competencies	.283**	0.000	Highly Significant
Personal Competencies	.262**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Competencies	.290**	0.000	Highly Significant
Management Competencies	.258**	0.000	Highly Significant
Specific Competencies	.242**	0.000	Highly Significant
University Support			
Basic Competencies	.317**	0.000	Highly Significant
Personal Competencies	.188**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Competencies	.332**	0.000	Highly Significant
Management Competencies	.317**	0.000	Highly Significant
Specific Competencies	.201**	0.000	Highly Significant
Generic Abilities			
Basic Competencies	.171**	0.000	Highly Significant
Personal Competencies	.275**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Competencies	.209**	0.000	Highly Significant
Management Competencies	.293**	0.000	Highly Significant
Specific Competencies	.184**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 7 presented the association between internship satisfaction and internship competencies. The computed r-values indicated a moderate direct correlation and the resulted p-values were less than the alpha level. This meant that there was significant relationship that existed and implied that the more that they are satisfied, the more competent they are on their internship. Interns that experience a significant amount of satisfaction with their internships are more likely to be highly involved and inspired. This, in turn, motivates them to fully utilize and benefit from the learning opportunities available to them. Interns who are satisfied are more inclined to actively pursue jobs and initiatives that improve their abilities.

Table 7
Relationship between Internship Satisfaction and Internship Competencies

Interview Process	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Basic Competencies	.256**	0.000	Highly Significant
Personal Competencies	.228**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Competencies	.360**	0.000	Highly Significant
Management Competencies	.303**	0.000	Highly Significant
Specific Competencies	.166**	0.001	Highly Significant
Work Experience			
Basic Competencies	.208**	0.022	Highly Significant
Personal Competencies	.111*	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Competencies	.174**	0.000	Highly Significant
Management Competencies	.166**	0.001	Highly Significant
Specific Competencies	.137**	0.005	Highly Significant
Work Environment			
Basic Competencies	.218**	0.000	Highly Significant
Personal Competencies	.181**	0.000	Highly Significant
Social Competencies	.165**	0.001	Highly Significant
Management Competencies	.192**	0.000	Highly Significant
Specific Competencies	.192**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Satisfaction encourages an optimistic outlook towards change, allowing interns to become more adaptive

and resilient in dynamic work situations. Good experience helps interns make better judgments by pushing them to critically assess material and consider different points of view. Delivering a pleasant and satisfying internship experience is critical for maximizing the benefits between the intern and the company that hosts them, leading to better preparedness and more capable future workers. According to Hammer and Lewis (2023), experts have reached broad agreement on particular abilities that need to be developed through higher education for long-term growth. Based on their research, the findings support the perspective of specialists: educational programs should be developed to effectively empower individuals to engage responsibly and self-motivated in addressing the demands of sustainable development. The students themselves recognize the need for competency-oriented education and understand that it is not just about acquiring or providing knowledge.

Table 8*Proposed Enhanced Internship Program for Chinese University Students*

Key Result Areas	Strategies	Program/ Project	Success Indicators	Persons involved
I. Internship Experience 1.1 University Support	1. Integrate internship programs into the academic curricula. 2. Engage faculty/teachers in the internship process to offer academic supervision and guidance. Faculty members may have a vital part in ensuring that internships align with and contribute to students' academic and career goals.	1. Implement a thorough onboarding procedure and clearly define all the specific duties, responsibilities, and academic goals expected from the internship. 2. Conduct comprehensive orientation workshops to acquaint interns with the organization's culture, policies, and processes. This facilitates the swift integration of the interns and enables them to make useful contributions.	1. 90% of students to become fully equipped to start their internship experience. 2. 90% of students to have a full understanding of what is expected of them before, during and after the internship. 3. 90% of students are motivated to attend the workshop to prepare them for their internship.	University Administrators/ Faculty and Students
II. Internship Satisfaction 2.1 Work Environment	1. Establish a process for ongoing input and assessment. Periodic evaluations and performance assessments assist interns in understanding their growth and identifying areas where they may improve their skills. 2. Promote the involvement of interns in self-evaluation techniques that focus on their experiences and personal development throughout the internship.	1. Self-assessment tools that will allow interns to readily access in a specified period to assess and evaluate their progress. 2. On site visitation by Intern supervisors to collect feedback from interns and internship hosts 3. Execute regular assessments of the efficacy of internship programs are executed by utilizing surveys and by obtaining comments from both interns and host organizations. Employ these data to implement ongoing modifications to the internship program.	1.90% of students are able to access the self-assessment tools to record their internship progress 2. 90% of students are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses in their designated fields; 3. 90% of students are able to engage and provide their feedback during the internship	Students and Internship supervisors
III. Internship Competencies 3.1 Basic Competencies	1. Encourage interns to keep reflective journals in which they can track what they do every day, challenges they encounter, solutions executed, and lessons learned. 2. Help interns identify their own competencies and what they have learned from the internship.	1. Provide interns a notebook or journal prior to the internship wherein they can record their daily progress 2. Create an accessible application that interns can access to record their progress during the internship	1. 90% of students are able to express themselves and identify their progress and shortcomings. 2. 90% of students are eager to key in their progress for intern supervisors to assess.	Students, Intern Supervisors, and hosting company

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Most of the respondents agreed on the indicators of internship experience in terms of work support, university support and generic abilities. Most of the respondents were satisfied with their internship in terms of

interview process, work experience and work environment. Most of the respondents agreed on all the indicators of internship competencies in terms of basic, personal, social, management specific competencies. There were highly significant relationships on responses among internship experience, satisfaction and competencies. This implies that increased support may result in improved internship experience and more favorable student satisfaction and competencies. An internship program for Chinese university students was proposed.

University officials may incorporate internship initiatives into their academic curricula to enable students to effectively implement theoretical knowledge in practical situations. This may be conducted through research, project-based initiatives, and alliances with businesses. University administrators may direct students under the guidance and support of faculty mentors for the duration of internships. Consistent evaluations and introspective discussions may facilitate the timely resolution of challenges and ensure that students attain their academic objectives. University administrators may foster and sustain solid collaborations with a wide spectrum of businesses to offer students outstanding internship opportunities. It is imperative that universities proactively gather feedback from employers to continually enhance the suitability and foundation of their internship programs. Internship coordinators and supervisors may initiate extensive orientation and instruction sessions to facilitate interns' understanding of their designated duties and responsibilities. A thorough and clear set of instructions should be given to students to ensure that their goals and objectives are set prior to the internship. University internship coordinators may develop systems for tracking and monitoring internship programs to guarantee adherence to educational and professional benchmarks. Utilize input from interns, institutions, and employers to consistently enhance these programs. The proposed internship program may be implemented and evaluated for its effectiveness. Future research may broaden the audience beyond Chinese university students and incorporate comparative assessments that involve individuals from diverse cultural and academic backgrounds. They may also explore other variables that may influence or affect student internship such as availability of career services, internship placement programs and improving collaborations with businesses. Recommendations for the proposed internship program may be tested for implementation.

5. References

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