

Beyond the Desk: A Study on the Implementation of the Student Internship Program of BS Accountancy and BS Business Administration Programs

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Abstract:

The study assessed the Saint Paul School of Professional Studies student internship program in Palo, Leyte, specifically for the Bachelor of Science in Accountancy and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration programs. It reiterated the importance of the internship in bridging the gap between theory and practice required to improve graduates' employability. Using an analysis of secondary data from exit surveys and interviews administered by the school, the study examined the profiles of host training establishments (HTEs) and interns, levels of implementation of the internship program, and intern satisfaction. The findings showed inconsistency in HTEs, with the most discrepancies in the perception of requirements and training plans. Communication and problem-solving were identified as important 21st-century skills. The key finding was that there was no correlation between the program's implementation level and intern satisfaction, indicating that more structured programs do not guarantee improved self-efficacy. This strongly supports the need for industries to cooperate with institutions to enhance internship experience and develop programs that meet the rapidly changing demands of industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Education is considered the foundation of national development, through which the skills and productivity level of the workforce are enhanced. According to Hanushek and Woessmann (2007), human resources are a nation's most valuable asset for ensuring development, so education plays an important role in preparing students to join the labor force.

In the Philippines, higher education institutions (HEIs) primarily aim to produce graduates in different professions and promote a knowledge-driven economy (Dunning, 2002; Andrews & Higson, 2008). This is done primarily through education, where students explore new interests, lifestyles, and career paths. However, HEIs face various challenges in producing graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills required by a globalized society (Sllezer et al., 2004; Possa, 2006). Some of the challenges include the changing nature of work settings, technology-driven processes, and the diverse needs of employers.

HEIs have implemented the internship program, also known as On-the-Job Training (OJT), to respond to these challenges. This program allows students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world professional settings, including government and non-government organizations, commercial and industrial services, and agencies. In addition, the students can improve their talents by being exposed to the professional requirements and qualifications of the workforce. The internship program is crucial to a student's education because it closes the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

For an internship program to be successful, there must be a strong collaboration between academic institutions and partner industries. This dynamic is often referred to as “academe-industry partnership”. This partnership exposes students to real-world conditions, employment opportunities, and industry-specific insights. According to Language (2013), this equips students as they transition into the job market. In the context of the global economy, a productive relationship between the academe and industry is imperative. The failure to acknowledge each other’s roles and responsibilities leads to a mismatch between the supply of skilled workforce and the job market demand.

As Watson and David (2000) stated, nation-building requires harmony between academic training and industry requirements, as educational institutions significantly contribute to a nation’s social, cultural, and economic well-being. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) emphasizes the need to close the gap between what is taught in schools and what is demanded by the industry. This call arose due to the alarming fact that graduates entering the job market often face a reality mismatch and experience a degree of unpreparedness due to disparities in perceptions between graduates and employers. As such, the academe and industry must enhance their collaborative efforts to create a workforce better aligned with the demands of the modern job market.

This study aims to evaluate the internship program of Saint Paul School of Professional Studies (SPSPS), located in the municipality of Palo, province of Leyte. It will delve into the most in-demand 21st-century skills as perceived by host training establishments (HTEs) and evaluate the self-efficacy of the student interns in relation to these skills.

2. METHODS

The study utilized secondary data from the exit survey and interviews conducted by the Saint Paul School of Professional Studies Student Internship Program. This approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of participant experiences and outcomes, leveraging existing data to explore trends and insights pertinent to internship effectiveness. The exit survey, designed to capture critical feedback from interns upon completing their programs, provided valuable quantitative and qualitative information informing the research findings.

Table 1. Degree Program of the Interns (n = 66)

<i>Degree Program</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
BS Accountancy	53	80.303	80.303	80.303
BS Business Administration	13	19.697	19.697	100.000
Total	66	100.000		

Source: Author’s Calculation

This will be used to evaluate the implementation and satisfaction of the internship program using quantitative methods. Specifically, the researcher will utilize the descriptive research framework to explain by systematically describing a condition, problematic situation, phenomenon or event, service or program, describing data about the conditions of a community or society, or describing attitudes toward an issue (Kumar, 2011). Meanwhile, according to Creswell (2003), quantitative research collects data to quantify and subject information for statistical analysis to support or counter alternate knowledge.

Furthermore, the researcher will employ correlational research design to determine whether there is a significant relationship between HTE profile and the level of implementation of the internship program, between the profile of the student interns and their level of satisfaction regarding the internship program, and between the level of implementation of the internship program and the student interns’ level of satisfaction. Gravetter and Forzano (2022) state that a correlational research method should be employed if a researcher aims to measure the strength (and direction) of the relationship between two or more variables without establishing cause and effect.

All recorded data from the gathering will be encoded, cleaned, and analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) program or Jeffrey's Amazing Statistical Packages (JASP).

3. ANALYSES

3.1. The Student Interns

The student interns who participated in this study were asked to indicate their degree program at Saint Paul School of Professional Studies (SPSPS).

As Table 1 shows, 80.3% of the student interns are taking BS Accountancy, while 19.7% are taking BS Business Administration. This finding is in accordance with SPSPS's enrollment figures, wherein most students are enrolled in its flagship program, BS Accountancy.

Table 2. Classification of Assigned Industry of the Interns (n = 66)

<i>Classification of Assigned Industry</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Banking and Financial Services	16	24.242	24.242	24.242
Others	4	6.061	6.061	30.303
Government Agencies	20	30.303	30.303	60.606
Healthcare	11	16.667	16.667	77.273
Real Estate	1	1.515	1.515	78.788
Manufacturing	3	4.545	4.545	83.333
Business Process Outsourcing	2	3.030	3.030	86.364
Accounting Firms	7	10.606	10.606	96.970
Consulting Firms	1	1.515	1.515	98.485
Telecommunication	1	1.515	1.515	100.000
Total	66	100.000		

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 2 shows that 30.3% of the student interns were assigned to government agencies, 24.2% to banking and financial services institutions, 16.7% to healthcare companies, and only 1.5% to real estate and telecommunication companies. This aligns with the results in Table 1, which shows that almost half of the HTEs are government agencies, and many are involved in banking and financing services.

Table 3. Nature of Assigned Work/Tasks of the Interns (n = 66)

<i>Nature of Assigned Work/Tasks</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Administrative/Clerical (Data entry, scheduling, filing, managing communications, and other office tasks)	35	53.030	53.030	53.030
Financial/Accounting (Budgeting, financial analysis, auditing, bookkeeping, and tax preparation)	15	22.727	22.727	75.758
Legal/Regulatory (Legal research, compliance, contract review, and litigation support)	1	1.515	1.515	77.273

Table 3. Nature of Assigned Work/Tasks of the Interns (n = 66)

<i>Nature of Assigned Work/Tasks</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Customer Service/Support (Addressing customer inquiries, resolving issues, providing technical support, and maintaining client relations)	6	9.091	9.091	86.364
Human Resources/Personnel (Recruitment, employee relations, benefits administration, and training and development)	2	3.030	3.030	89.394
Sales/Marketing (Sales pitches, market research, client relations, advertising, and promotions)	4	6.061	6.061	95.455
Creative/Design (Graphic design, writing, content creation, advertising, and multimedia production)	2	3.030	3.030	98.485
Managerial/Supervisory (Project management, team leadership, strategic planning, and decision-making)	1	1.515	1.515	100.000
Total	66	100.000		

Source: Author's Calculations

As depicted in Table 3, 53.0% of the student interns are assigned administrative/clerical tasks, such as data entry, scheduling, filing, managing communications, and other office tasks. Around 22.7% of the interns are assigned financial/accounting tasks, such as budgeting, financial analysis, auditing, bookkeeping, and tax preparation. Only 1.5% are assigned managerial/supervisory tasks, such as project management, team leadership, strategic planning, and decision-making, and 1.5% are assigned legal/regulatory work, such as legal research, compliance, contract review, and litigation support. On the other hand, 9.1% are in customer service/support. This includes addressing customer inquiries, resolving issues, providing technical support, and maintaining client relations. Moreover, 3.0% are assigned to human resources/personnel in which they are assigned to recruitment, employee relations, benefits administration, and training and development, and 3.0% are assigned to creative/design such as graphic design, writing, content creation, advertising, and multimedia production. Lastly, 6.1% of the student interns are assigned to sales/marketing, focusing on sales pitches, market research, client relations, advertising, and promotions.

The above findings are in accordance with the results of the study by Pepurah (2021), which found that at least 70% of the present jobs of accounting majors involve finance and auditing. This means that student interns are given tasks that hone the skills they can use for their future careers.

3.2. The Host Training Establishments

The host training establishments (HTEs) were asked to identify their classification based on the nature of their offered services.

Table 4. Classification of Industry (n = 15)

<i>Classification of Industry</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Banking and Financial Services	2	13.333	13.333	13.333
Others	4	26.667	26.667	40.000
Government Agencies	7	46.667	46.667	86.667
Consulting Firms	1	6.667	6.667	93.333
Healthcare	1	6.667	6.667	100.000
Total	15	100.000		

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 4 shows that 46.7% of the host training establishments are government agencies, while only 6.7% are healthcare and consulting firms. This aligns with the findings of Plaza and Sual (2017), which stated that most student interns in the Philippines are usually assigned to government agencies, while some are assigned to private institutions and non-government organizations. This finding is also consistent with the study by Geron (2016), which found that at least 64% of the institutions that hosted BS Accountancy interns from Cagayan State University are government agencies.

Table 5. Years in Operation of Host Training Establishment (n = 15)

<i>No. of Years</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Less than 25 years	3	20.0
26 – 50 years	4	26.7
51 – 75 years	4	26.7
76 – 100 years	1	6.7
More than 100 years	3	20.0
Total	15	100.00

Source: Author's Calculation

As depicted in Table 2, 26.7% of the host training establishments have been in operation for 26 – 50 years, and 26.7% have also been in operation for 51 - 75 years. Only 6.7% have been operating for 76 - 100 years. These findings affirm the previous results that showed student interns being mostly assigned to government agencies that have been in existence for more than 25 years.

Table 6. Years in Operation of Host Training Establishment (n = 15)

<i>No. of Years</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Less than 25 years	5	33.3
6 – 10 years	9	60.0
More than 10 years	1	6.7
Total	15	100.00

Source: Author's Calculation

Table 6 presents key statistics regarding the years various host training establishments have hosted interns. It is observed that 60.0% of the host training establishments have been hosting interns for 6 - 10 years, while only 6.7% have been hosting interns for more than 10 years.

3.3. The Level of Implementation of the Student Internship Program

This discussion provides an in-depth analysis of the level of implementation of the student internship program as perceived by both the student interns and the host training establishments.

3.3.1. As Perceived by the Student Interns

The student interns were asked to evaluate the level of implementation of the SPSPS internship programs in terms of requirements, obligations and requirements, and training plans.

Table 7. Level of Implementation in terms of Requirements

<i>Requirements</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
There is a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the host training establishment for the interest and safety of the interns.	4.000	0.329	Strongly Agree
An evaluation was done on the qualifications of the interns' subjects taken and passed, enrollment, pre-requisites, and parental consent.	4.000	0.637	Strongly Agree
There was a formal endorsement of the interns to host training establishment.	4.000	0.583	Strongly Agree
The school executes an internship plan and is representative of the host training establishment and the interns.	4.000	0.504	Strongly Agree
An evaluation is performed by the host training establishments and the school every after the internship period.	3.500	0.587	Strongly Agree
There was a pre-deployment orientation of the roles and responsibilities of the school, host training establishment, and the interns.	4.000	0.661	Strongly Agree
The company issues a Certificate of Completion at the end of the internship period.	4.000	0.422	Strongly Agree
A notarized parent's waiver is accomplished before the official deployment of the interns.	4.000	0.624	Strongly Agree

Source: Author's Calculations

The data presented in Table 7 provides a quantitative assessment of various requirements necessary to implement internship programs effectively. The consistent median scores across most requirements suggest a strong agreement of the interns on implementing these requirements in the internship program of SPSPS, with all but one requirement (post-internship evaluation, median = 3.5) receiving a median score of 4 (median = 4.0). Meanwhile, a lower standard deviation in the Memorandum of Agreement (sd = 0.329) indicates a high level of agreement among interns about the effectiveness of the implementation of the said requirements. On the other hand, a higher standard deviation in pre-deployment orientation (sd = 0.661) suggests that there may be differing opinions on how such orientations should be conducted or their overall impact on the internship experience.

Table 8. Level of Implementation in terms of Obligation and Responsibilities

<i>Obligation and Responsibilities</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Preparation and/or discussion of activities, tasks, and duties that the interns must undertake was done.	4.000	0.528	Strongly Agree
Orientation was done detailing the parties' specifics and procedures, roles, and responsibilities.	4.000	0.613	Strongly Agree
A faculty coordinator is in charge of monitoring and evaluating the interns' performance.	3.000	0.502	Agree
The partner host training establishment designates a supervisor.	4.000	0.503	Strongly Agree
There is clear coordination between the OJT coordinator, interns, and the host training establishment.	3.000	0.656	Agree
Provides monitoring and evaluation reports or other information on the student intern's performance.	3.000	0.591	Agree

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 8 presents a quantitative assessment of the obligations and responsibilities associated with internship programs. The consistent median scores of 4 (median = 4) for preparation of activities, orientation, and designated supervisors suggest a strong agreement among interns on implementing the obligations and responsibilities of the school and the HTEs in the internship program. Meanwhile, faculty coordinators, clear coordination among stakeholders, and monitoring reports, with a median = 3.0, highlight potential weaknesses in these areas that could hinder the overall effectiveness of internship programs as perceived by the interns.

Table 9. Level of Implementation in terms of Training Plan

<i>Training Plan</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
The school has a list of pre-identified host training establishments.	3.000	0.656	Agree
The school has a training manual or training plan.	3.000	0.640	Agree
The school has a set of goals and objectives (desired outcomes and how these outcomes will be achieved).	3.000	0.536	Agree
There is a list of pre-identified knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies that interns must acquire.	3.000	0.607	Agree
There is a clear and permanent job designation and assignments, duties, roles, tasks, and responsibilities.	3.000	0.586	Agree
There is a pre-identified and defined schedule of activities to ensure a supervised applied learning experience.	3.000	0.645	Agree
There is a mechanism that ensures good working conditions and relations.	3.000	0.572	Agree
There is a transparent monitoring and evaluation system by the school and host training establishment.	3.000	0.661	Agree
There is an evaluation system to be followed in evaluating the intern's performance.	3.000	0.556	Agree

The data provided in Table 9 reflects the level of implementation of a training plan across various criteria. All criteria have a median score of 3.0 (median = 3.0), indicating an agreement among interns on the implementation of the said training plan. This may suggest that while the training plans are present, they may not be fully implemented or utilized effectively. The standard deviations range from 0.536 to 0.661, indicating varying levels of consensus among interns regarding the implementation of each criterion.

3.3.2 As Perceived by the Host Training Establishments

The HTEs were asked to evaluate the level of implementation of the SPSPS internship programs in terms of requirements, obligations and requirements, and training plans.

Table 10. Level of Implementation in terms of Requirements

<i>Requirements</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
There is a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the host training establishment for the interest and safety of the interns.	4.000	0.000	Strongly Agree
An evaluation was done on the qualifications of the interns' subjects taken and passed, enrollment, pre-requisites, and parental consent.	4.000	0.488	Strongly Agree
There was a formal endorsement of the interns to host training establishment.	4.000	0.488	Strongly Agree
The school executes an internship plan and is representative of the host training establishment and the interns.	3.000	0.632	Agree
An evaluation is performed by the host training establishments and the school every after the internship period.	4.000	0.704	Strongly Agree

There was a pre-deployment orientation of the roles and responsibilities of the school, host training establishment, and the interns.	3.000	0.488	Agree
The company issues a Certificate of Completion at the end of the internship period.	4.000	0.352	Strongly Agree
A notarized parent's waiver is accomplished before the official deployment of the interns.	3.000	0.516	Agree

Source: Author's Calculations

The data presented in Table 10 provides a quantitative assessment of various requirements necessary for an effective implementation of internship programs. The consistent median score of 4.0 across most requirements suggests a strong agreement of the HTEs to the statements about the memorandum of agreement, qualification of the interns, formal endorsement, evaluation, and issuance of certificate of completion. Meanwhile, HTEs agree to the statements pertaining to the internship plan, pre-deployment orientation, and notarized parent's waiver. The data suggests that the internship program is well-implemented in terms of requirements, and it meets the expectations of the HTEs.

Table 11. Level of Implementation in terms of Obligation and Responsibilities

<i>Obligation and Responsibilities</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Preparation and/or discussion of activities, tasks, and duties that the interns must undertake was done.	4.000	0.497	Strongly Agree
Orientation was done detailing the parties' specifics and procedures, roles, and responsibilities.	3.000	0.516	Agree
A faculty coordinator is in charge of monitoring and evaluating the interns' performance.	3.000	0.516	Agree
The partner host training establishment designates a supervisor.	3.000	0.632	Agree
There is clear coordination between the OJT coordinator, interns, and the host training establishment.	3.000	0.816	Agree
Provides monitoring and evaluation reports or other information on the student intern's performance.	3.000	1.033	Agree

Source: Author's Calculations

As shown in Table 11, there is a strong agreement among the HTEs that preparation or discussion of activities, tasks and duties that the interns must undertake are handled well with a median of 4.0 and standard deviation of 0.497. However, there appears to be a slight difference in all of the other aspects such as orientation, presence of the faculty coordinator, designated supervisor, clear coordination, and monitoring and evaluation. This suggests that some HTEs feel that these aspects are inconsistently implemented.

Table 12. Level of Implementation in terms of Training Plan

<i>Training Plan</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
The school has a list of pre-identified host training establishments.	3.000	0.655	Agree
The school has a training manual or training plan.	3.000	0.594	Agree
The school has a set of goals and objectives (desired outcomes and how these outcomes will be achieved).	3.000	0.676	Agree
There is a list of pre-identified knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies that interns must acquire.	3.000	0.862	Agree
There is a clear and permanent job designation and assignments, duties, roles, tasks, and responsibilities.	3.000	0.640	Agree
There is a pre-identified and defined schedule of activities to ensure a supervised applied learning experience.	3.000	0.775	Agree

There is a mechanism that ensures good working conditions and relations.	3.000	0.676	Agree
There is a transparent monitoring and evaluation system by the school and host training establishment.	3.000	0.884	Agree
There is an evaluation system to be followed in evaluating the intern's performance.	3.000	0.632	Agree

Source: Author's Calculations

It can be seen in Table 12 that the HTEs agree on the implementation of several aspects of the internship program related to training plans with a median of 3.0 for all the statements. The results suggest that the internship program has a clear list of HTEs, well-defined goals, competencies, and job responsibilities. The HTEs are generally satisfied with the evaluation and working conditions set for the student interns.

3.4. Level of Satisfaction of the Student Interns with the Implementation of the Student Internship Program

The student interns were asked their level of satisfaction with the implementation of the internship program.

Table 13. Level of Satisfaction of the Student Interns with the Implementation of the Internship Program

Area	Median	SD	Interpretation
Training programs or workshops provided by the school	4.000	0.907	Satisfied
Training programs provided by the company	4.000	0.827	Satisfied
Support and guidance provided by immediate supervisor	4.500	0.822	Satisfied
Support and guidance provided by internship coordinator	4.000	0.870	Satisfied
Support and guidance provided by internship adviser	4.000	1.063	Satisfied
Workplace environment of assigned office	4.500	0.767	Satisfied
Tasks assigned by the company	4.000	0.911	Satisfied
Acquired practical knowledge, skills, and desirable attitudes and values	3.500	1.177	Satisfied
Overall satisfaction with the internship experience	4.000	1.080	Satisfied

Table 13 reveals that the overall satisfaction level of the students regarding the internship program is 4.0 with a standard deviation of 1.080, which can be interpreted as satisfactory. Immediate supervisor's support and workplace environment received the highest satisfaction level (4.500), followed by the training programs provided by both the school and the company, internship coordinator's support and guidance, and assigned tasks (4.000). The students are satisfied as they feel well-supported in these areas.

It can also be noted from Table 13 that acquired practical knowledge, skills, and desirable attitudes and values obtained the lowest satisfaction level (3.500). This finding indicates that although most students are satisfied, there is still room for improvement in terms of what student interns learn from the training and how they can use these learnings for their personal and professional growth.

3.5. 21st Century Skills Highly Required by the HTEs

The HTEs were asked to rate the soft skills and technical skills that they highly require of the student interns. The responses ranged from 1 to 5.

Table 14. 21st Century Skills Highly Required by the HTEs

Soft Skills	Median	SD	Interpretation
Communication Skills. Effective written and verbal communication in conveying information clearly to clients, colleagues, and superiors.	5.000	0.704	Very Important

<i>Analytical Thinking.</i> The ability to analyze data, identify trends, and make informed decisions.	4.000	0.976	Important
<i>Attention to Detail.</i> Accuracy in financial reporting, auditing, and compliance to avoid errors and discrepancies.	4.500	0.828	Very Important
<i>Time Management.</i> Efficiently managing tasks, meeting deadlines, and prioritizing workloads.	4.500	0.828	Very Important
<i>Adaptability.</i> Being adaptable to changes in regulations, technology, and market conditions.	4.000	1.033	Important
<i>Ethics and Integrity.</i> Maintaining high ethical standards and integrity to ensure trust and compliance.	5.000	0.704	Very Important
<i>Interpersonal Skills.</i> Building and maintaining relationships with clients, colleagues, and stakeholders.	4.000	0.976	Important
<i>Problem-Solving.</i> The ability to identify and address complex financial and business challenges is highly valued.	4.000	1.014	Important

Table 15. 21st Century Skills Highly Required by the HTEs

<i>Technical Skills</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>Accounting Software Proficiency.</i> Proficiency in accounting software such as QuickBooks, etc.	4.000	1.014	Important
<i>Financial Analysis.</i> The ability to analyze financial statements, ratios, and financial data to make informed decisions and recommendations.	4.000	1.033	Important
<i>Taxation Knowledge.</i> Understanding of tax laws and regulations, including income tax, value-added tax (VAT), and other relevant taxes.	3.500	0.915	Important
<i>Auditing Skills.</i> Knowledge of auditing principles and practices for financial and internal audits.	3.500	0.976	Important
<i>Financial Reporting.</i> Preparing and interpreting financial reports, including income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements.	3.500	0.915	Important
<i>Data Analysis and Data Visualization.</i> Proficiency in tools like Microsoft Excel, Tableau, or Power BI to analyze and visualize financial data.	4.000	0.976	Important
<i>Regulatory Compliance.</i> Staying updated on local and international financial regulations and compliance requirements.	3.500	0.976	Important
<i>Business Law.</i> Knowledge of business laws, contracts, and commercial regulations that may impact business operations.	4.000	1.014	Important
<i>Risk Management.</i> Identifying and mitigating financial and operational risks.	4.000	1.033	Important
<i>Information Technology Skills.</i> Familiarity with IT systems, cybersecurity, and data management.	4.000	1.033	Important

Source: Author's Calculations

Tables 14 and 15 show that the most important soft skills are communication, ethics and integrity, attention to detail, and time management. In addition, the most important technical skills include accounting software proficiency, financial analysis, data analysis and visualization, business law, risk management, and information technology skills.

3.6. Level of Efficacy of the Student Interns in Relation to the HTEs' Highly Required 21st Century Skills

The student interns were asked to rate their level of efficacy in relation to the HTEs' highly required 21st century skills.

Table 16. Level of Efficacy of the Student Interns in Relation to the HTEs' Highly Required 21st Century Skills

<i>Soft Skills</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>Communication Skills.</i> Effective written and verbal communication in conveying information clearly to clients, colleagues, and superiors.	5.000	0.361	Strongly Agree
<i>Analytical Thinking.</i> The ability to analyze data, identify trends, and make informed decisions.	5.000	0.549	Strongly Agree
<i>Attention to Detail.</i> Accuracy in financial reporting, auditing, and compliance to avoid errors and discrepancies.	5.000	0.533	Strongly Agree
<i>Time Management.</i> Efficiently managing tasks, meeting deadlines, and prioritizing workloads.	4.500	0.474	Strongly Agree
<i>Adaptability.</i> Being adaptable to changes in regulations, technology, and market conditions.	5.000	0.541	Strongly Agree
<i>Ethics and Integrity.</i> Maintaining high ethical standards and integrity to ensure trust and compliance.	5.000	0.448	Strongly Agree
<i>Interpersonal Skills.</i> Building and maintaining relationships with clients, colleagues, and stakeholders.	4.500	0.519	Strongly Agree
<i>Problem-Solving.</i> The ability to identify and address complex financial and business challenges is highly valued.	5.000	0.457	Strongly Agree

Source: Author's Calculation

Table 17. Level of Efficacy of the Student Interns in Relation to the HTEs' Highly Required 21st Century Skills

<i>Technical Skills</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>Accounting Software Proficiency.</i> Proficiency in accounting software such as QuickBooks, etc.	4.500	0.636	Strongly Agree
<i>Financial Analysis.</i> The ability to analyze financial statements, ratios, and financial data to make informed decisions and recommendations.	4.500	0.656	Strongly Agree
<i>Taxation Knowledge.</i> Understanding of tax laws and regulations, including income tax, value-added tax (VAT), and other relevant taxes.	4.500	0.878	Strongly Agree
<i>Auditing Skills.</i> Knowledge of auditing principles and practices for financial and internal audits.	4.500	0.747	Strongly Agree
<i>Financial Reporting.</i> Preparing and interpreting financial reports, including income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements.	4.500	0.605	Strongly Agree
<i>Data Analysis and Data Visualization.</i> Proficiency in tools like Microsoft Excel, Tableau, or Power BI to analyze and visualize financial data.	4.500	0.564	Strongly Agree
<i>Regulatory Compliance.</i> Staying updated on local and international financial regulations and compliance requirements.	4.500	0.718	Strongly Agree
<i>Business Law.</i> Knowledge of business laws, contracts, and commercial regulations that may impact business operations.	4.500	0.749	Strongly Agree
<i>Risk Management.</i> Identifying and mitigating financial and operational risks.	4.500	0.659	Strongly Agree
<i>Information Technology Skills.</i> Familiarity with IT systems, cybersecurity, and data management.	4.500	0.586	Strongly Agree

Source: Author's Calculations

Tables 16 and 17 reveal that the student interns showed the highest self-efficacy in communication, analytical thinking, attention to detail, adaptability, ethics and integrity, and problem-solving. Furthermore, the student interns declared the highest self-efficacy ratings for all technical skills.

3.7. Relationship between the HTEs' Profile and the Level of Implementation of the Internship Program

The researcher used multiple linear regression to determine whether there is a relationship between the HTEs' profiles and their perceived level of implementation of the internship program. The dependent variables are the levels of implementation of the internship program in terms of requirements, obligations and requirements, and training plans, while the covariates are the industry classification, years in operation, and years of hosting interns. The results of the multiple linear regression are shown in Tables 18a, 18b, 18c, and 18d.

Table 18a. Durbin-Watson Statistics for Testing for Autocorrelation between Residuals (HTE Profile – Level of Implementation)

Dependent Variable	Model	Autocorrelation	Statistic	p
Requirements	H ₀	−0.009	1.917	0.869
	H ₁	−0.111	2.042	1.000
Obligations and Responsibilities	H ₀	0.156	1.585	0.406
	H ₁	−0.149	2.175	0.783
Training Plans	H ₀	0.395	1.147	0.076
	H ₁	−0.098	1.852	0.695

Source: Author's Calculations

As shown in Table 18a, all the test statistics for each dimension of level of implementation of the internship program are between 1 and 3, which guarantees that there is no autocorrelation between the residuals.

Table 18b. Model Summary of the Multiple Linear Regression Performed to Determine the Relationship between HTE's Profile and LIIP

Dependent Variable	Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	RMSE
Requirements	H ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.271
	H ₁	0.544	0.296	0.104	0.256
Obligations and Responsibilities	H ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.491
	H ₁	0.667	0.445	0.294	0.413
Training Plans	H ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.534
	H ₁	0.747	0.558	0.438	0.400

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 18b shows the model summary of the multiple linear regression conducted by the researcher. The table shows that the HTE profile can predict 10.4% of the outcome variance for the perceived level of implementation in terms of requirements, 29.4% for obligations and responsibilities, and 43.8% for training plans.

Table 18c. ANOVA Determining the Relationship between HTE's Profile and LIIP

Dependent Variable		SS	df	Mean Square	F	p
Requirements	Regression	0.304	3	0.101	1.540	0.259
	Residual	0.723	11	0.066		
	Total	1.027	14			
Obligations and Responsibilities	Regression	1.506	3	0.502	2.943	0.080
	Residual	1.876	11	0.171		
	Total	3.381	14			
Training Plans	Regression	2.229	3	0.743	4.635	0.025
	Residual	1.763	11	0.160		
	Total	3.992	14			

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 18c reveals whether the models can predict the dependent variables. The model for Requirements has an F-statistic of 1.540 and a p-value of 0.259, while the model for Obligations and Responsibilities has an F-statistic of 2.943 and a p-value of 0.080. The model for Training Plans has an F-statistic of 4.635 and a p-value of 0.025. Thus, the HTEs' profile can significantly predict the level of implementation of the internship program in terms of training plans.

Table 18d. Coefficients of Model Showing the Relationship between HTE's Profile and LIIP

Variable	Model		Standardized	Test Statistics	p
Requirements	H ₀			52.787	< 0.001
	H ₁	(Intercept)		16.604	< 0.001
		Classification of Industry	−0.455	−1.733	0.111
		Years in Operation	0.043	0.165	0.872
		Years of Hosting Interns	0.343	1.317	0.215
Obligations and Responsibilities	H ₀			26.881	< 0.001
	H ₁	(Intercept)		10.290	< 0.001
		Classification of Industry	0.145	0.637	0.537
		Years in Operation	−0.072	−0.309	0.763
		Years of Hosting Interns	−0.647	−2.799	0.017
Training Plans	H ₀			22.834	< 0.001
	H ₁	(Intercept)		11.425	< 0.001

Classification of Industry	-0.139	-0.683	0.509
Years in Operation	-0.313	-1.519	0.157
Years of Hosting Interns	-0.599	-2.907	0.014

Source: Author's Calculations

As shown in Table 18d, none of the HTE profiles predicts the level of implementation of the training program in terms of requirements. Meanwhile, years of hosting interns can significantly predict the level of implementation of the training program in terms of obligations, requirements, and training plans.

3.8. Relationship between the Student Interns' Profile and Their Level of Satisfaction with the Internship Program

The researcher also used multiple linear regression to determine whether there is a relationship between the student interns' profiles and their perceived level of satisfaction with the internship program. Multiple linear regression allowed the researcher to measure the effect of each student intern profile on the level of satisfaction with the internship program.

The dependent variable is the student interns' level of satisfaction with the implementation of the internship program, while the covariates are the degree program, industry classification of the HTE they were assigned to, and the nature of their assigned tasks/works. The results of the multiple linear regression are shown in Tables 19a, 19b, 19c, and 19d.

Table 19a. Durbin-Watson Statistics for Testing for Autocorrelation between Residuals (Student Interns' Profile – Level of Satisfaction)

Model	Autocorrelation	Statistic	p
H ₀	0.051	1.852	0.547
H ₁	-0.015	1.992	0.916

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 19a shows that the test statistics are between 1 and 3, guaranteeing that there is no correlation between the residuals.

Table 19b. Model Summary of the Multiple Linear Regression Performed to Determine the Relationship between Student Interns' Profile and Level of Satisfaction with the Internship Program

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	RMSE
H ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.621
H ₁	0.270	0.073	0.028	0.612

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 19b reveals that the student interns' profile can predict 61.2% of the outcome variance for their level of satisfaction with the internship program.

Table 19c. ANOVA Determining the Relationship between Student Interns' Profile and Level of Satisfaction with the Internship Program

	SS	df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	1.826	3	0.609	1.625	0.193
Residual	23.225	62	0.375		
Total	25.051	65			

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 19c shows whether the models can predict dependent variables. The model has an F-statistic of 1.625 and a p-value of 0.193, suggesting that the student interns' profile is not a significant predictor of the level of satisfaction with the internship program.

Table 19d. Coefficients of Model Showing the Relationship between Student Interns' Profile and Level of Satisfaction with the Internship Program

Model		Standardized	Test Statistics	p
H ₀			53.556	< 0.001
H ₁	(Intercept)		13.657	< 0.001
	Degree Program	-0.220	-1.703	0.094
	Classification of Industry	0.052	0.403	0.688
	Nature of Assigned Tasks/Work	0.095	0.766	0.447

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 19d reveals that none of the student intern profiles predicts the level of satisfaction with the training program.

3.9. Relationship between the Level of Implementation of the Internship Program and the Students' Level of Satisfaction

The researcher used Spearman's correlation to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the level of implementation of the internship program (in terms of Requirements, Obligations and Responsibilities, and Training Plans) and the student's level of satisfaction with the internship program. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine whether the data is normally distributed. The results are shown in Table 20a and Table 20b.

Table 20a. Shapiro-Wilk Test for Bivariate Normality for the Level of Implementation of the Internship Program and the Students' Level of Satisfaction

Paired Variables	Shapiro-Wilk	p
Requirements and Satisfaction	0.932	< 0.001
Obligations and Responsibilities and Satisfaction	0.902	< 0.001
Training Plans and Satisfaction	0.902	< 0.001

Source: Author's Calculations

Table 20a shows that all the paired variables are not normally distributed. As such, Spearman's correlation will be used instead of Pearson's correlation.

Table 20b. Correlation between the Level of Implementation of the Internship Program and the Students' Level of Satisfaction

	Students' Level of Satisfaction	
	rho	p
Requirements	-0.097	0.440
Obligations and Responsibilities	-0.019	0.881
Training Plan	-0.016	0.901

Source: Author's Calculations

As revealed in Table 20b, there is no significant relationship between the level of implementation of the internship program and the students' level of satisfaction.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The significant proportion of student interns assigned to government agencies indicates a strong reliance on government institutions for internship opportunities. In addition, the longevity of many HTEs means that there is a well-established structure for hosting student interns and substantial experience in managing internship programs.

Most students are placed in government agencies or financial services, many of which are given more administrative/clerical tasks than technical accounting tasks or managerial roles. This may create a gap in the development of practical skills for student interns in the areas that require more complex financial and strategic thinking.

The overall satisfaction of the student interns with the internship program is generally positive. In particular, they appreciate the support of their supervisors and their workplace environment.

The HTEs agree that the internship program is well-implemented, but there are concerns related to coordination and performance evaluation. The school can benefit from ensuring that both HTEs and student interns have a clear understanding of expectations.

The HTEs emphasized the importance of soft skills, including communication, ethics and integrity, attention to detail, and time management. They also emphasize technical skills like data analysis and visualization, financial analysis, IT proficiency, business law, and risk management.

The student interns' profiles do not significantly predict their level of satisfaction with the internship program. There is also no significant relationship between the implementation of the internship program and the student interns' satisfaction. This suggests that satisfaction may be influenced by personal experiences or other aspects of the internship program.

The number of years the HTEs have been in operation significantly influences the perceived quality of the internship program, especially in terms of obligation and training plans. This implies that more experienced HTEs are better at managing internship programs that meet the expectations of both students and institutions.

The following recommendations are offered based on the conclusions derived:

1. SPSPS should consider expanding its internship programs to private firms and non-government agencies so that student interns can gain exposure to a broader range of professional environments and tasks.
2. The HTEs should provide more technical and managerial learning opportunities for the student interns as these are closely related to their academic preparation. This could be done by allowing students to engage in complex financial tasks like financial analysis, budgeting, auditing, and strategic planning. Student interns can also benefit from the internship program if offered managerial or supervisory tasks such as leading projects and decision-making.
3. SPSPS should enhance the coordination and monitoring of its internship programs by facilitating better communication between internship coordinators, supervisors, and student interns. The school should also regularly conduct check-ins between coordinators, student interns, and HTEs to identify issues and challenges early.
4. SPSPS should strengthen soft and technical skills development before and during the internship by offering workshops, seminars, or online courses. This will equip the students with skills that meet the expectations of the HTEs and help them become more confident in performing their internship tasks.
5. HTEs and SPSPS should monitor and improve student interns' practical knowledge and skill acquisition by ensuring that internship tasks are directly linked with students' academic learning. The internship program should not only let students contribute to the HTEs but also give them hands-on experience that will benefit their professional growth and career readiness.

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