

## INTERNSHIP PROGRAM IN SOFT SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR INTERIOR DESIGN MAJOR STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

*The development of soft skills for students helps them in developing student's creativity and innovation. Soft skills development has long been an important part of education, which is based on clear provisions as stated in UU Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, Bab I, Pasal 1 Ayat 1. Internships or work practices provide learning opportunities for students to get further education and direction on becoming a competent designer in designing buildings, organizing rooms, and implementing other projects in the company of their choice. Through this experience, students are able to gain insight and practical experience on how things actually work in the field. This will be able to provide an overview of students who will later do internships by developing soft skills in the world of interior design. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative approach and an intrinsic case study method with a case focus on the implementation of the internship program. The results showed that the Internship Program is an initiative that suits the needs of students in preparing themselves to interact with the community. Its implementation has proven effective in encouraging students to significantly apply their knowledge with creativity and collaborate with the community. Knowing how the process of developing interior design, working with a team, applying interior concepts, participating in a discussion, measuring and managing visits, and even communicating directly with clients. With the internship program, the insights gained from this experience are very diverse because interns can directly follow and participate in the process of an interior design project.*

**Keywords:** Interior design, development, soft skill

### 1. PREFACE

According to (Dalimunthe et al., 2023) soft skill development for students helps them in developing student creativity and innovation. Soft skills development has long been an important part of education, which is based on clear provisions as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Chapter I, Article 1 Paragraph 1. A person's ability can be measured not only by hard skills, but also by soft skills that determine a person's acceptance in the work environment. Soft skills include the skills and experiences that students gain through the industrial training both in the field and in educational settings, as well as through their participation in educational character development. Therefore, students must possess the skills acquired in the at University to develop and improve their potential to work after graduation, both when starting their own business and working in other business worlds (Rosana et al., 2019) to balance education and work, the need to understand the skills that can be demonstrated in the workplace.

There are many field activities that can help develop soft skills on an ongoing basis. Thus, in an effort to developing soft skills, it is highly recommended to engage in work practices or internships to gain more real-world experience. Internships are educational activities or courses that students take to improve their soft skills. (Lutfia & Rahadi, 2020) Student internships not only bring benefits to students who take part in training, but also provide many benefits to companies, such as improving the company's image in the eyes of many people. Internship is a program that

provides opportunities for students to further develop industrial skills (both hard and soft skills), depending on their field of study. In practice, how many things affect company perceptions (Mutia & Widyani, 2021).

Internships or work practices provide learning opportunities for students to get further education and direction on becoming a competent designer in designing buildings, organizing spaces, and carrying out other projects in the company of their choice. Through this experience, students can gain insights and practical experience on how things actually work in the field. In this way, students who will be doing internships in the field of design interiors can have a better understanding about how to develop their soft skills. (Maulana et al., 2021).

According to (Rochyat et al., 2021) Assessing the perception of students in implementing interior design can be a difficult challenge, considering that students who study design must have a different skill base and make them make diverse decisions. Therefore, self-development is very important for every student to become a qualified graduate or improve their ability to develop soft skills, especially in the field of interior design.

Based on the survey results of Arisandi, Widya, & Mawardi (2022), it was found that soft skills tend to improve more significantly than hard skills. Increasing student competence is also proven effective through internship and independent study policies with a minimum duration of 3 months, as expressed by implementing partners. The partners stated that in the program, students have been well trained in developing hard skills and soft skills through various activities, such as training, mentoring, and joint projects with real users.

Basically, skills can be developed through repetitive work, preparing oneself to interact with other people and industrial organizations and engage in social life in the future can be done in that way. However, to integrate soft skills education into self-development requires a series of well-coordinated observation processes in order to effectively achieve the goal of soft skills development.

Based on the previous description, self-development training is needed for interior design students so that they can be ready to enter the real world of work. The goal is to provide insight and experience on how the real work system takes place in the field. That way, students can have a better picture of soft skill development in the world of interior design and can prepare themselves well for internships.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method carried out is with a descriptive qualitative approach and intrinsic case study method with a case focus on the implementation of the internship program. Qualitative research is a process, according to Moleong (2007; 24) a study that provides descriptive information about people or behavior observed in written or oral form. The purpose of this research is to collect as much descriptive information as possible to be presented in the form of reports and descriptions. Suharsimi Arikunt also explained that this type of research is descriptive. Research must be descriptive if the researcher wants to know the situation, describe events and objects. Data analysis (in the form of words, pictures, or actions) obtained through a qualitative descriptive approach is not formally presented.

Yin (2012) suggests that the case study approach can be used for research in the fields of regional planning, public administration, public policy, business administration and education. Case studies

allow researchers to maintain a holistic and meaningful characterization of real events, and their unique strength lies in their ability to process well-documented evidence, instruments, interviews and observations. Case study data collection methods are very flexible and can be changed according to the problem, research objectives and research themes. The data collection methodology using the case study approach consists of observation, interviews, and documentation.

Observation is the activity of systematically observing and recording the symptoms or phenomena being investigated (Marzuki, 2000: 58). Data collection techniques are carried out by field visits or direct examination of objects related to the problem under study. So, researchers will directly carry out field work practices (internships) in the Tarumanagara University Interior Design Study Program and internship practices are carried out for 6 months, starting from December.

Firdaus (2011) also says that research subjects can be students who are doing internships at companies that specialize in interior design. Interview is method of collecting information by discussing questions and answers with people who can provide information. It is a technique that one uses for a specific purpose. Try to find information or opinions orally directly from informants (Rochyat et al., 2021). Documentary is a data collection method that collects and analyzes both documents and electronic images.

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Soft skills and knowledge are as important as hard skills for graduates to enter the world of industry and business (Ismail et al., 2018). Therefore, universities need to design and organize internship programs seriously so that students can develop these three elements. In this way, students will be better prepared to interact with others in the future, both in the context of industrial organizations and in society in general. (Mutiarra & Widayani, 2021). According to (Wediawati & Aransyah, 2019) Aspects of soft skills derived from the Plaquerin Activity Model are natural and follow the dynamics of student activities while undergoing internships. A more effective model can be designed and implemented through training programs conducted within the company. The Internship Program is a program that is in line with the needs of students in preparing to enter the community.

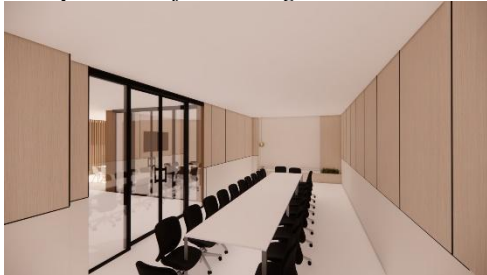
Career Explorer describes an interior designer as someone who works with clients to create beautiful room designs. Clients who hire interior designers are usually large companies or homeowners. An interior designer is someone who does design work indoors. However, interior design is not the same as decoration. When described as the art and science of architecture, interior design involves interacting with humans to understand their behavior and create functional spaces within structures. Hence, interior design can be defined as the art and science of understanding human behavior to produce a functional space within a structure. Interior designers need to have the ability to design a comfortable space, be it for a home or an office. This also means they need to have an in-depth knowledge of interior design internationally, including an awareness of technical and historical aspects. In addition, interior designers should also have the ability to translate interior design information for clients and have dialog skills interdisciplinary to communicate plans well. They must also understand the applicable building regulations and have a work ethic that underpins all their professional activities. In its implementation, the program has proven to be effective in encouraging students to broadly apply their knowledge creatively and collaboratively. With the community. Knowing how the process of making interior design, working with a team, applying interior concepts, participating in a discussion, measuring and managing visits, and even communicating directly with clients. With the internship program, the

insights gained from this experience are very diverse because interns can directly follow and participate in the process of an interior design project.

Based on this, the development of soft skills that can be provided during an internship or field work can provide more insight and knowledge for students, so that when carrying out an internship for 6 months, researchers can find out how the process of developing soft skills for students, especially in the field of interiors and making soft skills, various interior designs have been designed during fieldwork, as exemplified below:

**Figure 1**

*Perspective of Meeting Room Interior*



During the internship, researchers not only learn through observation, but also through direct communication about work process in the professional world, as well as the problems and decisions that arise in the project. This experience can be valuable source of learning for researchers in their future research and help them make informed decisions.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The development of soft skills is important in developing students' creativity and innovation. The development of soft skills is not new in the world of education, and it is very important to consider because vocational training is regulated in Chapter 1, Part 1, Article 1 of the 2003 National Education System. The program provides knowledge and hands-on experience of how the system works in the field, so that students who complete this program can develop soft skills that are important in the world of interior design. The education program is designed to meet students' needs and prepare them to engage in society.

Empirical evidence shows that the program can stimulate students' creativity, broad application of knowledge, and cooperation with the community. In addition, students can gain practical knowledge about the interior design process, work in teams, apply interior design concepts, participate in discussions, make direct visits to project sites, and even communicate directly with clients. Training through this internship program provides diverse experiences and helps trainees improve the interior design project process firsthand. The strength of this study is that the researcher has a direct link to the role of practitioners so that they can provide a more detailed description of their experiences, insights, and results, compared to other sources of information. However, the shortcoming of this study is that the duration of the training was long and insufficient to show clear conclusions. In addition, the limitation of this study lies in the small number of research subjects. Therefore, future research can increase the number of training participants to get more varied results and broaden the scope of the subject or topic covered.

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