

The Influence of Hard Skills and Organizational Experience on Student Work Readiness Through Work Motivation as an Intervening Variable

Sintia Maroyya Dalifa^{1*}, Andriyastuti Suratman², Trias Setiawati³
Universitas Islam Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Sintia Maroyya Dalifa 21311562@students.uii.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Hard Skills, Organizational Experience, Work Readiness, Work Motivation

Received : 15, May

Revised : 30, May

Accepted: 22, June

©2025 Dalifa, Suratman, Setiawati :
This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of hard skills and organizational experience on students' work readiness, with work motivation as an intervening variable. The objects in this study were active students from various state universities in Indonesia, with a sample size of 230 respondents selected using purposive sampling techniques. The method used was a quantitative approach with Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis. The results of the study showed that hard skills and organizational experience had a positive and significant effect on students' work readiness, both directly and through work motivation as a mediating variable. Work motivation was proven to mediate the relationship between hard skills and organizational experience on work readiness significantly. This finding implies the importance of mastering technical competencies and active involvement in campus organizations as a strategy to increase students' readiness to enter the workforce, while encouraging educational institutions to strengthen programs to develop students' work motivation and skills.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid pace of globalization presents significant challenges to economic dynamics, particularly in competitiveness and employment. Companies must adapt to evolving business environments and improve work efficiency, with human resources (HR) now playing a strategic role beyond administrative functions (Setiarini et al., 2022; Muhammad et al., 2018; Amalia Putri et al., 2022). The quality of HR directly influences organizational competitiveness, requiring strategic planning to bridge the gap between labor demand and supply. Success depends not only on capital but also on competent, healthy, and disciplined human resources (Putri et al.; Safitri & Syofyan, 2023). In this context, universities are expected to produce graduates who are competent and job ready.

Job readiness reflects the ability to apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes effectively (Sihotang, 2003; Azizah et al., 2019). It is supported by both hard skills technical knowledge from formal education (Bhadraswara, 2020; Ratuela et al., 2022) and soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, often developed through student organizational involvement (Deswarta et al., 2023). Organizational experience enhances soft skills, builds professionalism, and strengthens managerial capacity (Irmayanti et al., 2020), while work motivation acts as a key internal and external driver of job readiness (Setiarini et al., 2022; Deswarta et al., 2023).

Motivation mediates the relationship between hard skills, organizational experience, and job readiness, helping students apply their competencies effectively in real work situations (Suratman & Syahputro, 2020). Based on this, the study investigates the influence of hard skills and organizational experience on student job readiness, with work motivation as a mediating variable. This research contributes to empirical literature on graduate employability and offers insights for enhancing academic and extracurricular programs in higher education.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Hard Skill

Hard skills are the ability to make decisions or determine things. Another definition of hard skills is the adequate ability to perform certain tasks or have the necessary skills and expertise. Islami, (2012) argues that hard skills are technical knowledge required in a profession and can be improved in accordance with technological developments, as well as being able to solve problems and conduct analysis. This technical skill is essential when someone enters the world of work. The following are indicators of Hard Skills according to Lestari, (2024).

1. Technical Skills

Technical skills are the ability to apply specific knowledge, methods, and techniques to accomplish a specific task. A method is a systematic and general approach to work, which is used as a tool to achieve a particular goal. The more effective the methods and techniques used, the more effective the achievement of these goals. However, no method or technique is considered best or suitable for all purposes.

2. Science and Insight

Science is a conscious effort to explore, discover and deepen human understanding of various aspects of the reality of the human world. Restrictions are applied to produce accurate information. Science provides confidence by placing limits on the scope of one's research, and scientific certainty is achieved through such limits. Insight is a way of looking at things.

3. Critical

Critical thinking can also help you become more organized, making it easier to find solutions to the problems you face. Having critical thinking can also lead to better quality products.

Organizational Experience

Organizational activeness is an important factor to consider in improving work readiness. Organizational activity refers to the level of individual participation in organizational activities that have a positive impact on the organization and change individual behavior in aspects of responsiveness, accountability, adaptability, empathy, and transparency Pasamba et al. (2024). This means that actively participating will have more readiness to deal with the challenges of the world of work than individuals who are not involved in the organization. According to Irmayanti et al., (2020) suggests that in an organization there are benefits that can be obtained by students for participation in organizations, namely: Self-actualization event, Upgrade and develop self-potential (soft skills), Develop interests and talents, Train time management, Expand networks, Train leadership, One of the added values for getting a job, Prepare yourself to win when competing for scholarships.

Work Readiness

Work readiness is influenced by two main dimensions, namely internal factors such as psychological maturity, self-drive, independence, experience, and motivation, and external factors such as the role of family, society, and friends (Kardimin, 2004). Work readiness includes skills, knowledge, and attitudes that enable graduates to contribute productively in the workplace (Makki et al., 2015). According to Slameto (2010) and Lestari (2024), readiness is a general condition of individuals that allows them to respond to certain situations, which also includes physical, mental, emotional aspects, as well as motivation and skills acquired through learning (Ramadhan et al., 2020). From these various definitions, it can be concluded that work readiness is the ability of students to enter the world of work directly after graduation, with mental provision, knowledge, experience, and self-maturity. This is important because the world of work has different challenges from the world of lectures, such as intense competition, work environment pressure, and great responsibility.

Work Motivation

Motivation comes from the internal forces that drive a person to act, which can be reflected through actions, stimuli, or energy that arise from personal needs, desires, or goals (Adi, 1994). Motivation is the basic drive that moves individuals to perform an action, and the quality of the action is greatly

influenced by the underlying motivation (Uno, 2023). Motivation is an interesting topic to research because it covers various aspects such as motivation for learning, work, and achievement, which are explained through the theories of experts as well as examples of research and measurement with current technology. Understanding motivation is expected to be applied in everyday life.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research method. According to Imam (2022), quantitative research is based on a paradigm that allows researchers to deliberately influence their surroundings through experimentation. It emphasizes numerical data collection and analysis, with a focus on objectivity. Variables in quantitative research can be identified and their intercorrelations measured. Grounded in positivism, this method is often applied to specific samples or entire populations to test predefined hypotheses. In this study, purposive sampling was used, targeting students from various universities and study programs across Indonesia to validate the research hypotheses. As noted by Ummah (2019), purposive sampling is a non-random technique based on specific criteria. The sample in this research included:

- (1) active students
- (2) students enrolled in state universities
- (3) students preparing to face career challenges

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis of Respondent Identity

In this section, we will present a tabulation of the 262 respondents that have been collected and divide them into the characteristics of the gender and age of the respondents.

Table 1. Respondent Identity Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	174	66,4%
Female	88	33,6%
Total	262	100%

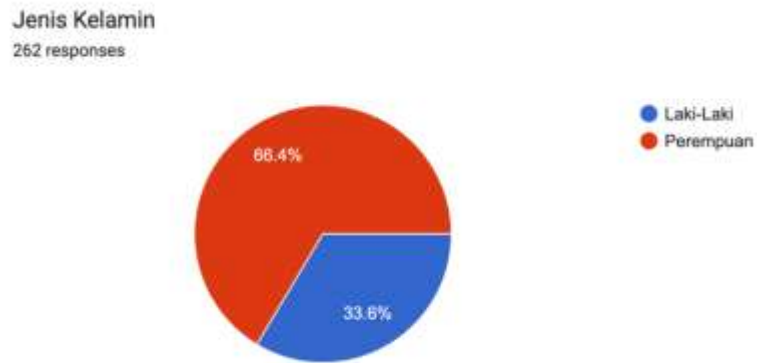


Figure 1. Diagram of Respondent Distribution Based on Gender

Based on Table 1, most respondents were male, totalling 174 individuals or 66.4%, while female respondents amounted to 88 individuals or 33.6%. These results indicate a gender proportion imbalance in respondent participation, with male students being more dominant in providing responses to this study. This distribution offers an initial overview of participant characteristics and serves as a consideration in analysing the influence of hard skills, organizational experience, and work motivation on students' job readiness.

Table 2. Respondent Identity Based on Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
<19 Years	9	3.4%
19-22 Years	214	81.7%
23-26 Years	39	14.9%
Total	262	100%

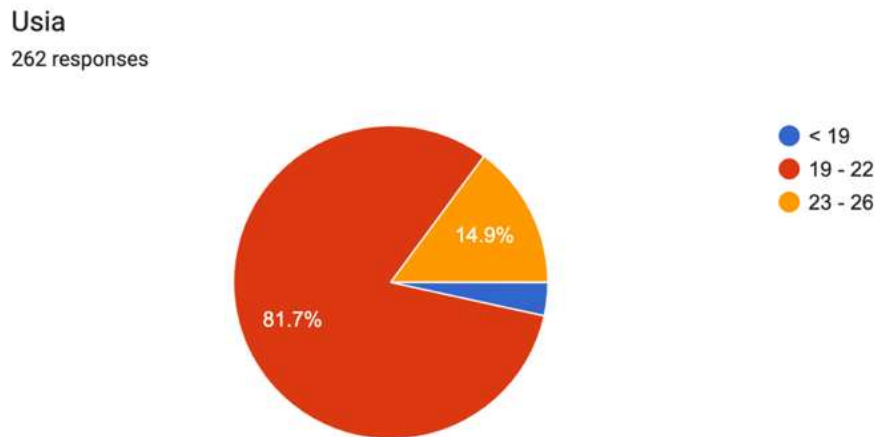


Figure 2. Diagram of Respondent Distribution Based on Age

Based on Table 2, most student respondents fell within the age range of 19–22 years, totalling 214 individuals or 81.7% of the 262 total respondents. This age group represents the typical category of active university students. Meanwhile, 39 respondents (14.9%) were in the 23–26 years range, and only 9 respondents (3.4%) were under 19 years old. This age distribution indicates that most respondents are in a critical phase of higher education and are likely in the final stages of their studies or preparing to enter the workforce. Therefore, this demographic is highly relevant for evaluating the influence of hard skills, organizational experience, and work motivation on their job readiness.

Descriptive Analysis of Hard Skill Variable

Table 3. Descriptive Results of Hard Skill Variable

Code	Indicator	Mean
HS1	Ability to apply specific academic knowledge and skills into real-world practice.	3.889
HS2	Ability to relate previously acquired knowledge to the scope of the field of study, and communicate that knowledge effectively in oral and written presentations.	3.908
HS3	Ability to answer questions and provide specific, practical explanations in one's field so that they are easily understood by individuals from other disciplines.	3.878

HS4	Ability to design and implement field studies related to one's discipline, demonstrating specific and technical knowledge.	4.080
HS5	Ability to contribute a perspective from one's field of expertise to complete group projects or assignments.	4.046

Based on the descriptive tabulation results of the Hard Skill variable in Table 3, all indicators show relatively high average values, each above 3.8. This indicates that most university students across Indonesia perceive themselves as having good hard skill capabilities. The indicator with the highest average score is HS4, "Ability to design and implement field studies related to one's discipline, demonstrating specific and technical knowledge." with a score of 4.080, followed by HS5, "Ability to contribute a perspective from one's field of expertise to complete group projects or assignments," with a score of 4.046. This reflects students' higher confidence in managerial and technical financial calculation aspects.

Meanwhile, the indicators with the lowest average scores are HS3, "Ability to answer questions and provide specific, practical explanations in one's field so that they are easily understood by individuals from other disciplines" at 3.878, and HS1, "Ability to apply specific academic knowledge and skills into real-world practice" at 3.889. Although still categorized as good, the slightly lower scores on these two indicators suggest that students may feel less optimal in terms of creativity and resource management efficiency. Overall, this data indicates that students possess a solid foundation of hard skills, particularly in planning and financial analysis aspects. However, strengthening innovation and resource management remains necessary to enhance job readiness more comprehensively.

Descriptive Analysis of Organizational Experience Variable

Table 4. Descriptive Results of Organizational Experience Variable

Code	Indicator	Mean
OE1	To what extent do you show commitment in completing tasks and responsibilities during your involvement in student organizations?	3.760

OE2	Do you feel responsible for the tasks assigned to you during your active involvement in student organizations?	3.767
OE3	How frequently do you participate in activities or programs held by the student organization you are part of?	3.958
OE4	Has your organizational experience increased your awareness of environmental or social issues and your ability to offer logical solutions?	3.817
OE5	Do you feel confident in clearly and effectively expressing your opinions in student organization meetings or forums?	3.691

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis in Table 4, all indicators have an average score above 3.6, indicating that students' organizational experiences are generally positive. The highest average score was observed in OE3 (3.958), suggesting that the systems or tools used in student organizations such as communication groups or social media are considered highly effective in supporting organizational activities. Meanwhile, OE4 received an average score of 3.817, reflecting that students feel they are treated fairly and have equal opportunities for growth within the organization, regardless of their background.

On the other hand, OE5 recorded the lowest average score at 3.691, indicating that organizational attention to member well-being – whether mental, physical, or personal development – is perceived as less than optimal by respondents. The indicators OE1 (3.760) and OE2 (3.767) show that the organizational environment is viewed as moderately supportive of collaboration and comfort, and that students feel fairly proud to represent their organization externally. Overall, students' organizational experience is considered quite good; however, greater attention to the well-being of members is needed to further enhance participation and personal development within student organizations.

Descriptive Analysis of Work Readiness Variable

Table 5. Descriptive Results of Work Readiness Variable

Code	Indicator	Mean
WR1	I feel that I already possess the necessary skills to advance in my career.	3.779
WR2	I am confident that the skills I currently have can support my career advancement.	3.985
WR3	I have mastered the essential skills required to enter the workforce.	3.794
WR4	I feel ready to face the challenges in the workplace based on the skills I possess.	3.885

Based on the descriptive analysis results of the variable in Table 5, all indicators have a mean value above 3.7, indicating that the respondents feel quite ready to enter the workforce. The indicator with the highest average score is WR2, at 3.985, which shows that most respondents are confident that the skills they currently possess can support their career advancement. This reflects a relatively high level of self-confidence in their acquired abilities.

On the other hand, the indicator with the lowest average score is WR1, at 3.779, which suggests that although most respondents feel they have the skills to grow in their careers, this belief is not as strong as their confidence in the overall support of those skills for career advancement. Other indicators, such as WR3 and WR4, have mean values of 3.794 and 3.885, respectively, indicating that respondents feel they have mastered essential skills and are ready to face workplace challenges. Overall, the data reflect that respondents' work readiness is at a reasonably good level, though further reinforcement in certain skill areas is still needed to enhance confidence and readiness for entering the professional world.

Descriptive Analysis of Work Motivation Variable

Table 6. Descriptive Results of Work Motivation Variable

Code	Indicator	Mean
WM1	I have a strong desire to start working immediately after graduation.	4.252
WM2	I hope to attain a good position in my future job.	4.496
WM3	I aspire to achieve success in the professional world after graduation.	4.542
WM4	I want to immediately apply the skills I have learned during college in the workplace.	4.317
WM5	Seeing my seniors already working motivates me to start working as well.	4.263

Based on the descriptive analysis results in Table 6, all indicators show high mean values, all above 2. The highest mean is observed in WM3, with a value of 4.542, indicating that respondents have strong aspirations to achieve success in the professional world after graduation. This is followed by WM2, with a mean of 4.496, reflecting respondents' expectations of obtaining a good position in the future. These results signify a strong internal drive within the respondents regarding their career goals.

Furthermore, indicators WM4 (4.317) and WM5 (4.263) show that respondents are eager to apply the skills they acquired during college and feel motivated by seeing their seniors already employed. WM1, which has the lowest mean value of 4.252, still reflects a strong desire to start working immediately after graduation. Overall, these results demonstrate that the respondents have a very high level of work motivation, driven by both internal factors (aspirations and self-readiness) and external influences (the surrounding environment).

Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis used in this study is SEM with the help of PLS4. The data collected as many as 262 research respondents were then processed and produced the following research statistical results.

Convergent Validity

Table 7. Convergent Validity Test

Indicator	Outer loadings	AVE	Hasil
HS1 <- HS	0.880	0,719	Valid
HS2 <- HS	0.821		Valid
HS3 <- HS	0.843		Valid
HS4 <- HS	0.849		Valid
HS5 <- HS	0.845		Valid
OE1 <- OE	0.741	0,656	Valid
OE2 <- OE	0.832		Valid
OE3 <- OE	0.813		Valid
OE4 <- OE	0.824		Valid
OE5 <- OE	0.837		Valid
WM1 <- WM	0.725	0,658	Valid
WM2 <- WM	0.814		Valid
WM3 <- WM	0.866		Valid
WM4 <- WM	0.832		Valid
WM5 <- WM	0.812		Valid
WR1 <- WR	0.877	0,765	Valid
WR2 <- WR	0.887		Valid
WR3 <- WR	0.870		Valid
WR4 <- WR	0.865		Valid

Based on the convergent validity test results in Table 4.7, all indicators of each variable show an outer loading value above 0.7, which means that they meet the requirements for indicator validity according to the Partial Least Squares (PLS) rules. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all constructs is also above 0.5, namely HS (0.719), OE (0.656), WM (0.658), and WR (0.765). This indicates that each construct has a good ability to explain the variance of its indicators, and it can be concluded that all constructs in this model have met the criteria for convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity

Table 8. Discriminant Validity Test (Fornell Larcker)

Variable	HS	OE	WM	WR
HS	0.848			
OE	0.437	0.810		
WM	0.574	0.453	0.811	
WR	0.643	0.460	0.588	0.875

Based on Table 8, discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion shows that the AVE square root value (diagonal value) for each construct is higher than the correlation between constructs (off-diagonal value). For example, the AVE root value for the HS variable of 0.848 is higher than its correlation with OE (0.437), WM (0.574), and WR (0.643). Similarly, with other constructs such as OE (0.810), WM (0.811), and WR (0.875), all of which have diagonal values greater than the correlation between constructs. This indicates that each construct in this model has good discriminant validity, as it can distinguish itself from other constructs in the model.

Table 9. Discriminant Validity Test (Cross Loading)

Indicator/Variable	HS	OE	WM	WR
HS1	0.880	0.355	0.470	0.534
HS2	0.821	0.352	0.527	0.564
HS3	0.843	0.354	0.447	0.571
HS4	0.849	0.378	0.496	0.488

HS5	0.845	0.413	0.490	0.563
OE1	0.267	0.741	0.239	0.278
OE2	0.396	0.832	0.411	0.444
OE3	0.398	0.813	0.397	0.386
OE4	0.326	0.824	0.347	0.319
OE5	0.356	0.837	0.400	0.399
WM1	0.355	0.339	0.725	0.383
WM2	0.471	0.272	0.814	0.434
WM3	0.495	0.301	0.866	0.523
WM4	0.556	0.407	0.832	0.529
WM5	0.428	0.504	0.812	0.493
WR1	0.607	0.402	0.507	0.877
WR2	0.546	0.402	0.540	0.887
WR3	0.527	0.406	0.451	0.870
WR4	0.565	0.399	0.555	0.865

Based on Table 9 regarding the discriminant validity test through cross loading, each indicator has the highest loading value on its own construct compared to other constructs. For example, the HS1 indicator has the highest loading on the HS variable of 0.880, which is much higher than its cross-loading value on OE (0.355), WM (0.470), and WR (0.534). This pattern is consistent across

indicators, such as OE2 which has the highest loading of 0.832 on OE, WM3 of 0.866 on WM, and WR2 of 0.887 on WR.

This shows that each indicator represents the construct it measures more than other constructs, so it can be concluded that this model meets the criteria for discriminant validity based on cross loading. Thus, there is no significant overlap between constructs, and the instruments used can accurately measure latent variables.

Reliability Test

Table 10. Reliability Test Results (Composite Reliability)

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
HS	0.902	0.903	0.928	0.719
OE	0.870	0.883	0.905	0.656
WM	0.870	0.879	0.906	0.658
WR	0.898	0.899	0.929	0.765

Based on the reliability test results in Table 4.10, all variables, namely HS, OE, WM, and WR, show a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70, which indicates that the instrument has good internal reliability. In addition, the Composite Reliability (rho_c) value of all variables also exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.70, even above 0.90 for HS and WR variables, which indicates a very strong internal consistency between indicators in measuring their respective constructs. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for the four variables are also all above 0.50, which means that the proportion of variance explained by the construct is greater than the error. This shows that the constructs are not only reliable but also meet convergent validity. Thus, the instruments used in this study proved to be reliable and valid for measuring the constructs under study.

**Structural Model (Inner Model)
Multicollinearity Test (VIF Inner Model)**

Table 11. Results of Multicollinearity Test (VIF Inner Model)

Relationship between Variable	VIF

HS -> WM	1.237
HS -> WR	1.585
OE -> WM	1.237
OE -> WR	1.337
WM -> WR	1.614

Based on Table 11, which presents the results of the multicollinearity test (VIF) in the inner model, all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are below the maximum threshold of 5 and are relatively low (ranging from 1.237 to 1.614). This indicates that there is no multicollinearity issue among the independent variables in the structural model. In other words, each independent variable does not exhibit a high correlation with one another, thereby not significantly affecting the stability of the model estimation. Thus, it can be concluded that the model is free from collinearity symptoms and is appropriate to proceed to the next stage of structural analysis.

Coefficient of Determination Test (R-Square)

Table 12. Results of Coefficient of Determination Test (R-Square)

Variabel	R-square	R-square adjusted
WM	0.380	0.376
WR	0.502	0.496

Based on Table 12, the results of the coefficient of determination test (R-Square) show that the variable WM (Work Motivation) has an R-Square value of 0.380, indicating that the variables HS (Hard Skill) and OE (Organizational Experience) can explain 38% of the variance in WM. Meanwhile, the variable WR (Work Readiness) has an R-Square value of 0.502, meaning that the combination of HS, OE, and WM explains approximately 50.2% of the variance in WR. The adjusted R-square values do not differ significantly from the R-square values, indicating a good model fit in relation to the number of predictors used. Therefore, the structural model is considered to have adequate predictive power and is suitable for further analysis.

Hypothesis Testing (Path Coefficient)

Table 13. Results of Hypothesis Testing (Path Coefficient)

Research Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
HS -> WM	0.465	0.465	0.070	6.631	0.000
HS -> WR	0.416	0.424	0.086	4.819	0.000
OE -> WM	0.250	0.250	0.064	3.880	0.000
OE -> WR	0.151	0.148	0.068	2.220	0.026
WM -> WR	0.281	0.274	0.068	4.158	0.000
HS -> WM -> WR	0.131	0.126	0.033	3.988	0.000
OE -> WM -> WR	0.070	0.070	0.029	2.423	0.015

The interpretation of the hypothesis testing results based on Table 4.13 is as follows:

1. H1: The Effect of Hard Skills on Work Readiness (HS -> WR)
The original sample value is 0.416 with a t-statistic of 4.819 and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05), indicating that the effect of hard skills on work readiness is significant and positive. This means that the higher the hard skills, the higher the work readiness. **Hypothesis H1 is accepted.**
2. H2: The Effect of Organizational Experience on Work Readiness (OE -> WR)
The original sample value is 0.151, with a t-statistic of 2.220 and a p-value of 0.026 (< 0.05), indicating that organizational experience has a positive and significant effect on work readiness. Greater involvement in organizations increases work readiness. **Hypothesis H2 is accepted.**

3. H3: The Effect of Hard Skills on Work Motivation (HS → WM) With an original sample value of 0.465, a t-statistic of 6.631, and a p-value of 0.000, the effect of hard skills on work motivation is proven to be positive and significant. This indicates that strong technical skills enhance work motivation. **Hypothesis H3 is accepted.**
4. H4: The Effect of Organizational Experience on Work Motivation (OE → WM) The results show an original sample value of 0.250, a t-statistic of 3.880, and a p-value of 0.000. This means that organizational experience has a positive and significant effect on work motivation. The more active the involvement in organizations, the higher the motivation. **Hypothesis H4 is accepted.**
5. H5: The Effect of Work Motivation on Work Readiness (WM → WR) The original sample value of 0.281, t-statistic of 4.158, and p-value of 0.000, indicate that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on work readiness. The more motivated an individual is, the higher their work readiness. **Hypothesis H5 is accepted.**
6. H6: The Effect of Hard Skills on Work Readiness through Work Motivation (HS → WM → WR) The mediation path shows an original sample value of 0.131, a t-statistic of 3.988, and a p-value of 0.000, indicating that this indirect effect is positive and significant. This means that work motivation significantly mediates the relationship between hard skills and work readiness. **Hypothesis H6 is accepted.**
7. H7: The Effect of Organizational Experience on Work Readiness through Work Motivation (OE → WM → WR) The results show an original sample value of 0.070, a t-statistic of 2.423, and a p-value of 0.015 (< 0.05), indicating that this indirect effect is also positive and significant. This means that work motivation mediates the relationship between organizational experience and work readiness. **Hypothesis H7 is accepted.**

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Hard Skills on Work Readiness

The findings indicate a positive and significant effect of hard skills on work readiness (original sample = 0.416, t-statistic = 4.819, p-value = 0.000). This suggests that the greater the mastery of hard skills, the higher the individual's level of readiness for the workforce. These results align with Siburian *et al.* (2022), who emphasized the importance of technical competencies such as computer proficiency, foreign language skills, and analytical abilities—in meeting the increasingly complex demands of the labour market. Furthermore, the study reinforces the notion that investing in hard skill development is a strategic approach to preparing competitive graduates. Ismaya & Achmad (2024) highlighted those hard skills acquired through formal education training, laboratory practice, and final projects are directly aligned with industry needs, enhancing job readiness. Supporting this, Prasetyo & Prabowo (2024) identified technical capabilities, including software and other industry-specific skills, as key determinants of professional preparedness. In summary, this study confirms

hypothesis H1 and underscores the critical role of hard skills in shaping work readiness, with significant implications for curriculum design and vocational training focused on technical and practical competencies.

The Effect of Organizational Experience on Work Readiness

The results show that organizational experience has a positive and significant effect on work readiness (original sample = 0.151, t-statistic = 2.220, p-value = 0.026). Greater involvement in organizational activities enhances individuals' readiness for the workforce. This supports Saleh *et al.* (2024), who argued that active participation in organizations fosters essential soft skills such as leadership, communication, and managerial abilities. Organizational involvement not only improves interpersonal skills but also cultivates a professional mindset responsive to workplace dynamics. Sun *et al.* (2020) noted that such experiences build self-confidence and a sense of responsibility key components of work readiness. Organizational activities also promote teamwork, conflict resolution, and independent decision-making, all of which are crucial workplace competencies. Wang *et al.* (2023) further affirmed that organizational experience contributes to work readiness through social networking and adaptability. They found that students active in organizations tend to be better prepared for the workforce due to their exposure to collaborative environments, time pressure, and performance targets. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is accepted, emphasizing the importance of encouraging student participation in organizational activities as a foundation for holistic work readiness development.

The Effect of Hard Skills on Work Motivation

The findings indicate that hard skills have a positive and significant effect on work motivation (original sample = 0.465, t-statistic = 6.631, p-value = 0.000). Higher mastery of technical skills enhances individuals' motivation to work, aligning with Nugraha *et al.* (2021), who emphasized that technically competent individuals tend to have greater confidence and internal drive to perform better. Well-trained, relevant hard skills also boost a sense of competence, strengthening motivation. Rusilawati (2023) stated that individuals who possess strong technical capabilities feel more valuable in the workplace, fostering enthusiasm and a desire for continuous growth. Such individuals generally demonstrate clearer, more consistent work orientation and naturally higher motivation levels. Supporting this, Putra *et al.* (2022) found that strong technical skills are a key driver of work motivation, enabling individuals to face challenges and meet job expectations effectively. Consequently, hypothesis H3 is accepted, underscoring that enhancing hard skills is a strategic approach to fostering high motivation in professional environments.

The Effect of Work Motivation on Job Satisfaction

The results show that work motivation has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction (original sample = 0.281, t-statistic = 4.158, p-value = 0.000). Higher work motivation leads to increased job satisfaction, as supported by Basalamah (2021), who explained that motivated individuals tend to feel more fulfilled because their work aligns with personal and organizational goals. High

motivation also drives optimal performance, fostering a positive and appreciative work environment. According to Riyanto *et al.* (2021), motivation serves as an internal factor that enhances satisfaction by encouraging growth and recognition, making employees feel more comfortable, loyal, and proud of their work. Haryono & Sulistyono (2021) further emphasized that motivation—both intrinsic and extrinsic—acts as a driving force that enables employees to contribute optimally, enjoy the work process, and feel psychologically fulfilled. Therefore, hypothesis H5 is accepted, indicating that increasing work motivation can serve as an effective strategy to enhance employee job satisfaction across various organizational sectors.

The Effect of Hard Skills on Job Readiness Through Work Motivation as a Mediating Variable

The findings indicate that work motivation significantly mediates the relationship between hard skills and job readiness (original sample = 0.131, t-statistic = 3.988, p-value = 0.000). This suggests that stronger technical skills lead to higher work motivation, which in turn enhances job readiness. This aligns with Siburian *et al.* (2022), who noted that technical competence more effectively promotes readiness when supported by strong internal motivation. Indrawati *et al.* (2023) emphasized that motivation acts as a crucial link between technical competence and job preparedness. Without motivational drive, hard skills alone may not ensure optimal readiness. Motivation encourages individuals to apply their skills effectively, adapt to work environments, and meet professional standards. Furthermore, Rahmadani & Mardalis (2022) highlighted that highly motivated individuals are more capable of maximizing their technical abilities in various job contexts, leading to increased readiness. Thus, motivation serves as a psychological element that strengthens the positive impact of hard skills on job readiness. Based on the findings and supporting literature, hypothesis H6 is accepted, confirming the significant mediating role of work motivation.

The Effect of Organizational Experience on Job Readiness Through Work Motivation as a Mediating Variable

The results show that work motivation significantly mediates the relationship between organizational experience and job readiness (original sample = 0.070, t-statistic = 2.423, p-value = 0.015). This indicates that greater involvement in organizational activities enhances work motivation, which in turn positively influences job readiness. Prayogo *et al.* (2022) support this by highlighting that organizational experience trains individuals in teamwork, leadership, and responsibility—key elements that foster motivation and readiness for professional life. Furthermore, Rismawati *et al.* (2022) explained that organizational involvement not only builds soft skills but also stimulates intrinsic motivation to perform better. When individuals feel that their organizational experiences are relevant, they become more confident and motivated to face workplace challenges. In this context, work motivation acts as a mediator that strengthens the impact of organizational experience on job readiness, making such experiences more meaningful and directly influential. Additionally, Sidiq *et al.* (2022) emphasized

that motivation is a crucial psychological factor that transforms organizational learning into practical readiness. Without motivation, organizational experience remains merely a record of activities rather than a driver for growth. Therefore, these findings confirm hypothesis H7, affirming that work motivation significantly mediates the relationship between organizational experience and job readiness.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study confirms that hard skills significantly and positively influence job readiness, supporting Hypothesis 1 (H1). Organizational experience also has a positive impact on job readiness by enhancing leadership, teamwork, and time management skills, thereby confirming Hypothesis 2 (H2). Furthermore, hard skills not only directly affect job readiness but also increase work motivation, supporting Hypothesis 3 (H3). Organizational experience similarly contributes to greater work motivation through active engagement, validating Hypothesis 4 (H4). The study also finds that work motivation positively affects job readiness, indicating that motivated individuals are better prepared for employment, which supports Hypothesis 5 (H5). Additionally, work motivation mediates the relationship between hard skills and job readiness (H6), as well as between organizational experience and job readiness (H7), highlighting its critical role in strengthening career preparedness.

Recommendations

Higher education institutions are encouraged to integrate hard skill development and organizational involvement into their curricula. Enhancing project-based learning, internships, and student activities can improve both technical competencies and motivation, thus fostering holistic job readiness through academic and non-academic pathways. Future research should consider incorporating variables such as soft skills, emotional intelligence, and social environment, while utilizing qualitative or mixed method approaches to gain deeper insights into motivation and job readiness. In practice, these findings can inform the design of human resource training strategies that combine technical skills, motivation, and organizational experience into comprehensive learning programs. For quality assurance, universities are advised to conduct regular evaluations of student job readiness using competency and motivation assessments, enabling data-driven improvements that align with labor market needs.

FURTHER STUDY

This study involved only 262 respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population, especially beyond the selected sample. The research focus was confined to participants from higher education institutions, thus the conclusions drawn may not fully apply to individuals or organizations outside the academic environment. Additionally, the data collection process took a considerable amount of time, potentially affecting the accuracy and relevance of the results due to changing conditions during the research period. Future studies are encouraged to include a larger and more diverse respondent base, encompassing various institutional backgrounds,

and to consider more time-efficient data collection methods to ensure consistency and up-to-date findings.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all individuals who contributed to the successful completion of this research. My deepest appreciation goes to the students who generously shared their time and insights, providing the essential data that formed the backbone of this study. Their participation was invaluable and made this research possible.

REFERENCES

- Amalia Putri, E., Tajriani, A., Syifa, A., Andi Rivai, A., Amri Perbankan Syariah, A., & Muhammadiyah Hamka, U. (2022). Penerapan fungsi MSDM untuk mengembangkan produktivitas kerja karyawan di lingkungan perusahaan Unilever Indonesia Article info A b s t r a c t. *Insight Management Journal*, 2(3), 81-90. <https://doi.org/10.47065/imj.v2i3.156>
- Basalamah, S. A. (2021). The role of work motivation and work environment in improving job satisfaction. *Golden Ratio of Human Resource Management*, 1(2), 94-103. <https://doi.org/10.52970/grhrm.v1i2.54>
- Bhadraswara, B. (2020). *The influence of hard skill, soft skill, and social motive on the work readiness of accounting students of universitas brawijaya in the industrial revolution 4.0 era*. Universitas Brawijaya.
- Dr. Imam Machali, M. P. (n.d.). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif*.
- Francisca Herdiansih Sihotang, D. S. S. S. (2003). *PENGARUH PRESTASI BELAJAR, PENGUASAAN TEKNOLOGI INFORMASI DAN PENGALAMAN ORGANISASI TERHADAP KESIAPAN KERJA*. 20.
- Nugraha, I. G. B. S. M., Sitiari, N. W., & Yasa, P. N. S. (2021). Mediation effect of work motivation on relationship of soft skill and hard skill on employee performance in Denpasar Marthalia skincare clinical. *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis Jagaditha*, 8(2), 136-145.
- Prasetyo, N. D., & Prabowo, H. (2024). Pengaruh Soft Skill dan Hard Skill Terhadap Kesiapan Kerja Mahasiswa Melalui Motivasi Kerja Sebagai Variabel Intervening. *Value Management Research*, 1(2), 87-96.

- Prayogo, D., Hermanto, A. W., Widiatmaka, F. P., Prasetyo, D., & Sugiyarto, S. (2022). The effect of practical experience, knowledge of job opportunities, teacher professionalism and work motivation on work readiness. *Jurnal Iqra': Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan*, 7(1), 204-218. <https://doi.org/10.25217/ji.v7i1.2062>
- Putri, E. A., Tajriani, A., Syifa, A., Nurrachmawati, N., Rivai, A. A. ., & Amri, A. (2022). Penerapan fungsi MSDM untuk mengembangkan produktivitas kerja karyawan di lingkungan perusahaan Unilever Indonesia. *Insight Management Journal*, 2(3), 81-90. <https://doi.org/10.47065/imj.v2i3.156>
- Setiarini, H., Prabowo, H., Sutrisno, S., & Gultom, H. C. (2022). Pengaruh soft skill dan pengalaman magang kerja terhadap kesiapan kerja mahasiswa melalui motivasi kerja sebagai variabel intervening (Studi kasus pada mahasiswa FEB Universitas PGRI Semarang). *EKOBIS: Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen dan Akuntansi*, 10(2), 195-204.
- Saleh, S., Syamsul, A. A., & Jamaluddin, J. (2024). The Influence of Organizational Experience on the Work Readiness of Office Administration Education Students. *Pinisi Journal of Officers Review*, 60-66.
- Siburian, B., Afifah, S., Sinaga, P. T., & Marpaung, O. (2022). The Effect Of Soft Skill And Hard Skill On Work Readiness Of The 2018 STIE Jayakarta Students. *International Journal of Informatics, Economics, Management and Science*, 1(2), 136-151.