

The Influence of MBKM Internship Experience and TikTok Career Related Content on Job Readiness Among FEB UPNVJT Students with Self Efficacy as a Mediating Variable

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of MBKM internship experience and TikTok content related to the world of work on job readiness among FEB UPNVJT students, with self efficacy as a mediating variable. The research employed a quantitative method using purposive sampling involving 91 students from the 2021 cohort of Management, Accounting, and Development Economics programs who had participated in the MBKM internship program and were active TikTok users. Data were collected through a Likert scale questionnaire (1-5) and analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0 with the SEM-PLS approach. The results show that MBKM internship experience and TikTok content have a significant positive effect on self efficacy, self efficacy has a positive effect on job readiness, and mediates the relationship between internship experience and TikTok content with job readiness. These findings indicate that practical experience and digital educational content collectively enhance students confidence and readiness to enter the workforce.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) represent a strategic factor that determines organizational success in responding to the dynamics of globalization, digitalization, and technological transformation. In the modern workforce, adaptability, communication, and problem-solving abilities have become essential competencies for every individual (Ainiyah et al., 2023). Generation Z, who are now entering the labor market, face considerable challenges in meeting professional expectations. Data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS, 2025) show that the national open unemployment rate (TPT) reached 4.76%, with the 15-24 age group predominantly. Generation Z recording a significantly higher rate of 16.16%. These figures indicate the low level of job readiness among young graduates, including university students.

Job readiness encompasses cognitive, affective, and behavioral capabilities that enable individuals to adapt to workplace demands (Chairunissa et al., 2024). However, many graduates still lack adequate readiness due to limited practical experience and low self-efficacy. This issue is also evident among students of the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) at Universitas Pembangunan Nasional “Veteran” Jawa Timur (UPNVJT), where tracer study data show a sharp decline in graduate employment absorption from 83.77% in 2022 to only 23.58% in 2024 along with longer job-seeking durations. Preliminary survey results further reveal that although most students possess career plans, only a few have actively prepared themselves through application documents and skill development.

One of the government initiatives aimed at bridging the gap between higher education and industry needs is the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program, particularly through internship activities. This program enables students to gain real work experience, strengthen professional skills, and enhance self efficacy (Junaidi, 2020). Nevertheless, interviews with the FEB UPNVJT MBKM team indicate ongoing challenges related to student discipline, initiative, and technical skills during internships, highlighting the need to evaluate the effectiveness of MBKM implementation in improving job readiness.

The selection of TikTok work related content as a research variable is grounded in the platform’s algorithmic characteristics, specifically its For You Page (FYP) system, which distributes personalized and recurring content to users. This mechanism allows students to receive diverse career related information without following specific accounts, as the algorithm tailors recommendations based on interaction patterns such as watch duration, searches, comments, and engagement. With the rapid growth of digital technology, TikTok has emerged as a prominent source of career and self development information widely utilized by Generation Z to learn about CV preparation, job interview strategies, and organizational culture (Khairunnisa et al., 2023). Such educational content has the potential to shape career orientation and strengthen students confidence in entering the workforce (Ginting et al., 2024). However, the effectiveness of TikTok content in enhancing job readiness

remains uncertain, as not all students are able to translate digital information into practical workplace skills.

Self efficacy, as explained by Bandura (1997) through Social Cognitive Theory, plays an essential role as a psychological factor that mediates the relationship between learning experiences and job readiness. Students with high self efficacy are more capable of utilizing internship experiences and digital information to improve their performance and career preparedness (Kristiana et al., 2025). Preliminary surveys of FEB UPNVJT students show that although they demonstrate strong resilience, they still face challenges related to confidence in completing complex tasks and mastering new competencies. This underscores the importance of strengthening self efficacy as a strategy for enhancing job readiness.

This study provides novelty by integrating three key aspects that are rarely examined simultaneously: MBKM internship experience as a formal practical learning component, TikTok work-related content as a non formal digital learning source, and self efficacy as a psychological mediating variable. Focusing on students of FEB UPN "Veteran" Jawa Timur, this research aims to analyze the influence of MBKM internship experience and TikTok career related content on students job readiness, as well as to assess the mediating role of self efficacy in these relationships.

LITERATURE REVIEW

MBKM Internship

The Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program is an initiative by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology that provides students with opportunities to gain off-campus learning experiences through internships, projects, research, and other forms of experiential learning relevant to the professional world. According to Junaidi (2020), MBKM internship experience aims to strengthen students' competencies, professional skills, and job readiness before entering the industry. Amelia (2021) outlines five indicators of internship experience, namely: (1) Duration of internship implementation, (2) Human resource education and development, (3) Consolidation and reinforcement of learning outcomes, (4) Work related skills, and (5) Attitude formation during work.

TikTok Career Related Content

Social media today functions not only as a source of entertainment but also as a medium for learning and career-related information. TikTok has become one of the most popular platforms among young people, including university students, due to its ability to deliver short, engaging, and educational content. Khairunnisa et al. (2023) note that TikTok content related to the world of work can provide insights into career trends, required skills, and strategies for navigating recruitment processes.

The four indicators adapted from Vinanda and Trianita (2024) include: (1) Viewing frequency, (2) Content credibility, (3) Information application, and (4) Influence on motivation.

Self Efficacy

Self efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions necessary to achieve desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997). In the context of job readiness, self efficacy influences how students assess their capabilities, cope with stress, and face career related challenges (Kristiana et al., 2025). Indicators used in this study are based on Bandura's theory as cited in Kustini and Damayantie (2022), which consist of six dimensions: (1) Confidence in securing employment, (2) Confidence in performing job tasks, (3) Confidence in competing in the job market, (4) Confidence in maintaining acquired employment, (5) Confidence in handling tasks beyond one's perceived ability, and (6) Confidence in managing multiple work activities.

Job Readiness

Job readiness is a condition in which individuals possess the competencies, attitudes, and confidence required to enter the workforce and perform tasks professionally (Chairunissa et al., 2024). According to Rahayu et al. (2025), job readiness not only involves technical skills but also psychological aspects such as self-efficacy, motivation, and career maturity. Referring to Fitriyanto as cited in Kustini and Damayantie (2022), the indicators of job readiness include: (1) Logical and objective decision making, (2) Appropriate work attitudes and values, (3) Ambition for advancement, (4) Strong work motivation, and (5) Adequate knowledge and skill competencies.

Conceptual Framework

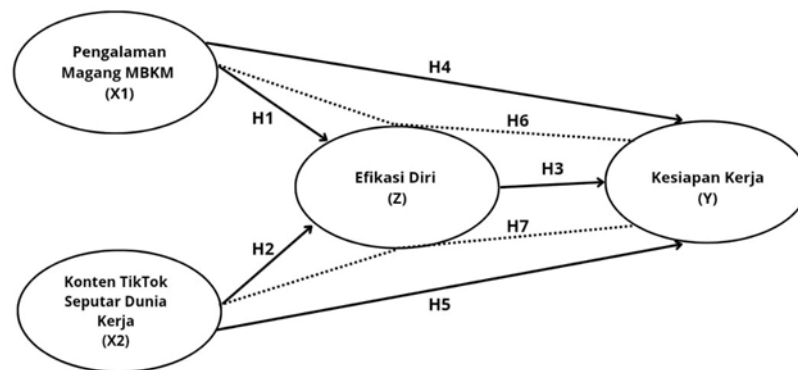


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis

H1: MBKM internship experience has an effect on the self-efficacy of FEB UPNVJT students.

H2: TikTok content related to the world of work has an effect on the self-efficacy of FEB UPNVJT students.

H3: Self-efficacy has an effect on the job readiness of FEB UPNVJT students.

H4: MBKM internship experience has an effect on the job readiness of FEB UPNVJT students.

H5: TikTok content related to the world of work has an effect on the job readiness of FEB UPNVJT students.

H6: Self efficacy mediates the effect of MBKM internship experience on the job readiness of FEB UPNVJT students.

H7: Self efficacy mediates the effect of TikTok career-related content on the job readiness of FEB UPNVJT students.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research method using a purposive sampling technique, in which the respondent criteria were aligned with the research objectives. The study population consisted of FEB UPNVJT students from the 2021 cohort in the Management, Accounting, and Development Economics study programs, with a total sample of 91 respondents (41 from Management, 19 from Development Economics, and 31 from Accounting). The respondents were required to have participated in the MBKM internship program and to have used TikTok to access or view career-related TikTok content. Primary data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire (1-5), while secondary data were obtained from institutional documents and relevant literature. Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 with a SEM-PLS approach to assess construct validity, instrument reliability, and the relationships among the research variables.

RESEARCH RESULT

Outer Loading

The outer model assessment was conducted to evaluate convergent validity, which measures the extent to which each indicator accurately represents its corresponding construct. An indicator is considered valid when it has a loading factor value above 0.70.

Convergent Validity

Tabel 1. Outer Loading

	Internship Experience (X1)	TikTok Content (X2)	Self Efficacy (Z)	Job Readiness (Y)	Ket
X1.1	0.817				Valid
X1.2	0.894				Valid
X1.3	0.856				Valid
X1.4	0.900				Valid
X1.5	0.895				Valid
X2.1		0.889			Valid
X2.2		0.867			Valid
X2.3		0.905			Valid
X2.4		0.877			Valid
Z1			0.851		Valid
Z2			0.858		Valid
Z3			0.915		Valid
Z4			0.811		Valid
Z5			0.807		Valid

Z6			0.820		Valid
Y1				0.710	Valid
Y2				0.798	Valid
Y3				0.823	Valid
Y4				0.844	Valid
Y5				0.883	Valid

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

The results of the questionnaire test showed that all indicators had values above 0.70, so they were declared convergently valid and able to describe the variables well.

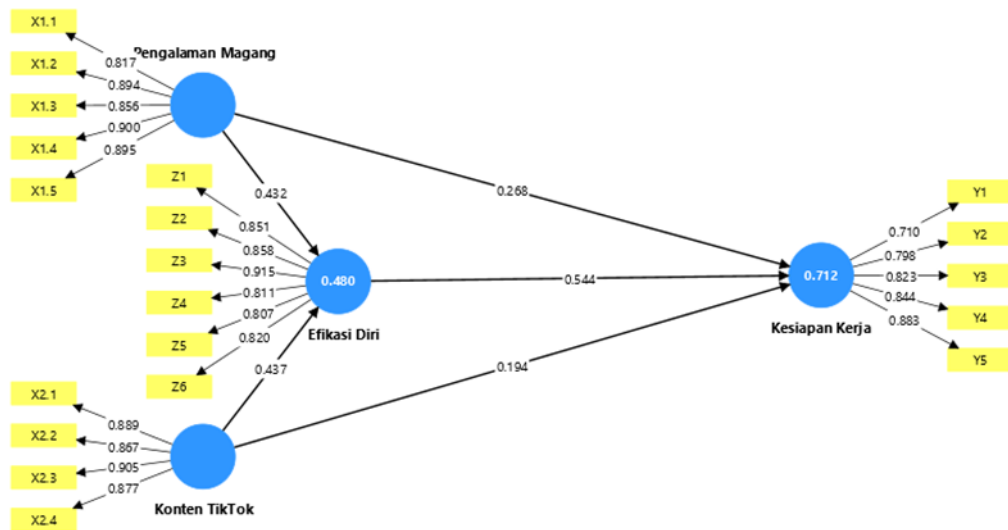


Figure 2. Inner Model

Discriminant Validity

Tabel 2. Cross Loading Results

Indicator	Internship Experience (X1)	TikTok Content (X2)	Self Efficacy (Z)	Job Readiness (Y)
X1.1	0.817	0.354	0.511	0.573
X1.2	0.894	0.254	0.537	0.606
X1.3	0.856	0.206	0.429	0.491
X1.4	0.900	0.124	0.466	0.504
X1.5	0.895	0.215	0.436	0.509
X2.1	0.210	0.889	0.425	0.538
X2.2	0.198	0.867	0.444	0.461
X2.3	0.340	0.905	0.558	0.526
X2.4	0.191	0.877	0.522	0.481
Z1	0.471	0.580	0.851	0.728
Z2	0.518	0.517	0.858	0.702
Z3	0.552	0.446	0.915	0.726

Z4	0.502	0.428	0.811	0.619
Z5	0.394	0.355	0.807	0.607
Z6	0.322	0.453	0.820	0.651
Y1	0.413	0.400	0.498	0.710
Y2	0.523	0.473	0.656	0.798
Y3	0.444	0.561	0.699	0.823
Y4	0.633	0.360	0.658	0.844
Y5	0.501	0.508	0.717	0.883

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Based on the cross-loading results, all indicators were found to meet the required criteria. The variables MBKM Internship Experience (X1), TikTok Career-Related Content (X2), Self-Efficacy (Z), and Job Readiness (Y) each demonstrated loading values above 0.70. This indicates that every indicator predominantly explains its associated construct, confirming that all indicators in this study are valid and meet the standards of discriminant validity.

Variable Reliability Test

Tabel 3. Construct Reability and Validity result

Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reability	Ket
Internship Experience (X1)	0.922	0.941	Reliabel
Career Related TikTok Content (X2)	0.908	0.935	Reliabel
Self Efficacy (Z)	0.919	0.937	Reliabel
Job Readiness (Y)	0.871	0.907	Reliabel

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability were used to assess the internal consistency of the indicators, with a minimum threshold of 0.70. The results indicate that all variables achieved values above this threshold, demonstrating that they are reliable and consistent in measuring their respective constructs, and therefore suitable for use in the structural model analysis.

Inner Model

R-square value

Tabel 4.R-Square (R²) Test Results

	R-square	Adjusted R-square
Self Efficacy	0.480	0.468
Job Readiness	0.712	0.702

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

The data analysis results show that the R² value for Self-Efficacy is 0.480, while the R² value for Job Readiness is 0.712. This indicates that 48% of the

variance in Self-Efficacy is explained by MBKM Internship Experience and TikTok Career-Related Content, whereas 71.2% of the variance in Job Readiness is explained by all three variables. These values demonstrate that the model has a good explanatory capability, with a moderate category for Self-Efficacy and a strong category for Job Readiness.

Hypothesis Testing

Tabel 5. Test Results using the Path Coefficient Bootstrapping Technique

Path Coefficient	Original sample (O)	Sample average (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value (P values)	Ket
Self-Efficacy -> Job Readiness (H3)	0.544	0.545	0.091	5.948	0.000	Evident
TikTok Content -> Self-Efficacy (H2)	0.437	0.443	0.082	5.355	0.000	Evident
TikTok Content -> Job Readiness (H5)	0.194	0.195	0.063	3.093	0.001	Evident
Internship Experience -> Self-Efficacy (H1)	0.432	0.425	0.092	4.720	0.000	Evident
Internship Experience -> Job Readiness (H4)	0.268	0.265	0.086	3.126	0.001	Evident

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Based on the bootstrapping analysis, all T-statistics values exceed 1.967 and all P-values are below 0.05, indicating that every hypothesis in this study is statistically significant. Hypothesis (H1), which states that MBKM internship experience has a positive effect on self efficacy, is supported with a path coefficient of 0.432, a T-statistic of 4.752, and a P-value of 0.000. Hypothesis (H2), which posits that TikTok career related content influences self efficacy, is also supported, with a path coefficient of 0.437, a T-statistic of 5.355, and a P-value of 0.000. Furthermore, Hypothesis (H3), which states that self efficacy positively affects job readiness, is confirmed with a path coefficient of 0.544, a T-statistic of 5.948, and a P-value of 0.000. For the direct effect of MBKM internship experience on job readiness (H4), the results show a path coefficient of 0.268, a T-statistic of 3.126, and a P-value of 0.001, indicating a positive and significant influence. Lastly, Hypothesis (H5), which states that TikTok career

related content positively affects job readiness, is also supported with a path coefficient of 0.194, a T-statistic of 3.093, and a P-value of 0.001

Tabel 6. Indirect Test Results

	Original sample (O)	Sample average (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Ket
TikTok Content -> Self-Efficacy -> Job Readiness (H7)	0.238	0.241	0.060	3.980	0.000	Evident
Internship Experience -> Self-Efficacy -> Job Readiness (H6)	0.235	0.232	0.064	3.685	0.000	Evident

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Based on the bootstrapping results, all indirect effects in the model show T-statistic values greater than 1.967 and P-values below 0.05, indicating that the indirect effects through self efficacy are statistically significant. Hypothesis (H6), which states that self efficacy mediates the effect of MBKM internship experience on job readiness, is supported with a path coefficient of 0.235, a T-statistic of 3.685, and a P-value of 0.000. Similarly, Hypothesis (H7), which posits that self efficacy mediates the effect of TikTok career related content on job readiness, is confirmed by a path coefficient of 0.238, a T-statistic of 3.980, and a P-value of 0.000, demonstrating a positive and significant mediation effect.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of MBKM Internship Experience on Self Efficacy among FEB UPNVJT Students

The MBKM internship serves as an essential foundation for enhancing the self efficacy of FEB UPNVJT students. Through internship experiences, students apply theoretical knowledge to professional practice, adapt to workplace environments, and gain an understanding of responsibilities and work ethics, thereby creating a learning atmosphere that supports the development of technical skills and confidence. This plays a significant role in strengthening self efficacy, as students feel they possess real abilities, relevant career insights, and a clearer direction in entering the workforce. Such experiences provide valuable preparation for career competition and align with the principles of experiential learning. However, the level of self efficacy is also influenced by the relevance of the internship to the student's field of study, as highlighted in the findings of Syawitri, Yakin, Shalahuddin, and Mayasari (2024).

The Effect of TikTok Career Related Content on Self Efficacy among FEB UPNVJT Students

TikTok Career Related Content is an important factor in enhancing the self efficacy of FEB UPNVJT students. Exposure to informative and educational videos helps students build confidence in their abilities to face career challenges. Students who actively engage with content on career tips, self development, and professional experiences tend to show higher self efficacy because they gain useful insights, motivation, and practical guidance. Many students reported applying information from TikTok such as improving communication skills, creating more professional CVs, and preparing for job interviews to support their career readiness. This aligns with the concept of non formal learning, where digital content supports real behavioral improvement. However, the degree of self efficacy remains influenced by how relevant the content is to the actual job market, as noted in Savitri and Dharmawan (2025).

The Effect of Self Efficacy on Job Readiness among FEB UPNVJT Students

Self efficacy is a key factor in enhancing the work readiness of FEB UPNVJT students. Individual confidence in their abilities to complete tasks and face challenges makes students more confident, responsible, and ready to compete in the workforce. The aspect of self confidence in being able to compete for jobs is a key indicator of work readiness. Experience in self development programs such as business competitions, entrepreneurship, and campus organizations helps build self efficacy by training leadership, decision-making, and teamwork skills. These findings are supported by Syifa et al. (2023) and Dwiriyanto et al. (2024), who emphasize the crucial role of self efficacy in enhancing students' job readiness.

The Effect of MBKM Internship Experience on Job Readiness among FEB UPNVJT Students

The MBKM internship provides students at the FEB of UPNVJT with the opportunity to gain real world work experience, understand organizational dynamics, and develop technical and soft skills such as communication, collaboration, and responsibility. Mastery of the technical skills acquired during the internship is a key aspect in enhancing students job readiness. Through professional supervision, students learn to adapt to the work culture, complete assignments independently, and understand professional responsibilities. This internship helps students become more mature in facing the world of work with stronger self confidence and improved adaptability. These findings are consistent with Anggraeni et al. (2024), who found that internship experience significantly improves students' job readiness.

The Effect of TikTok Career Related Content on Job Readiness among FEB UPNVJT Students

TikTok career related content serves as an accessible source of information that helps FEB UPNVJT students prepare for career challenges. Through regular exposure to educational content such as CV building tips, interview simulations, and professional etiquette, students gain practical

insights that can be directly applied to enhance their work readiness. This content supports students in managing portfolios, building personal branding, and reducing anxiety during the recruitment process. TikTok also functions as a form of non formal learning, delivering material in a concise, engaging, and easily accessible format, thereby strengthening students competencies for the workplace. These findings are supported by Conde Caballero et al. (2024), who show that TikTok-based microlearning enhances student competencies.

The Effect of MBKM Internship Experience on Job Readiness through Self-Efficacy as a Mediator

The MBKM internship experience enhances the job readiness of FEB UPNVJT students through increased self efficacy, where students who gain quality internship experience become more confident and able to face the challenges of the working world professionally and adaptively. The experience involves applying theory to practice, interacting with professionals, and developing technical and soft skills that strengthen students confidence to compete in the working world. High self efficacy encourages students readiness to face the recruitment process and professional demands with more maturity and confidence. These findings align with Anggraeni et al. (2024) which show that enhanced self efficacy through internships contributes significantly to improving students job readiness.

The Effect of TikTok Career Related Content on Job Readiness through Self Efficacy as a Mediator

TikTok rareer related content enhances the work readiness of FEB UPNVJT students, with self efficacy serving as a key mediating factor. Exposure to educational and informative TikTok content increases students confidence in their abilities, which further strengthens their job readiness. Students who watch interview tips, then apply them through interview simulations, CV development, and personal branding, tend to develop higher self efficacy, which enhances their preparation for the workforce. This finding is supported by Li, Shi, and Feng (2025), who explain that social media can enhance job readiness through improvements in student self efficacy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that both MBKM internship experience and TikTok rareer related content significantly enhance the self efficacy and job readiness of FEB UPNVJT students. Self efficacy serves as an essential mediating factor that strengthens the influence of these variables on job readiness by fostering students confidence, motivation, and capability to face professional demands. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the MBKM internship program place greater emphasis on developing practical skills through direct work experience, students should be more selective in choosing TikTok content from credible and professional sources, self efficacy can be improved through continuous training and competency development and universities are encouraged to further integrate theory and practice to ensure students acquire knowledge and skills relevant to workplace requirements.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study advances current research by integrating experiential learning theory with digital media influence, providing empirical evidence that both MBKM internship experience and TikTok career related content jointly shape students' self efficacy and job readiness. Unlike previous studies that typically examine internships or social media factors in isolation, this research demonstrates a dual pathway model in which real world professional exposure and digital microlearning each contribute to career preparedness, while self efficacy functions as a key psychological mediator that strengthens these effects. The study also expands the discourse on technology enhanced career development by highlighting the role of short form career content as a credible and impactful learning resource for Generation Z students. By establishing how experiential and digital learning environments interact to enhance job readiness, this research provides new theoretical insights and practical implications for higher education institutions seeking to design holistic career development strategies aligned with students' media consumption patterns and professional needs.

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