



## BUILDING GLOBAL SKILLS: AN ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES FROM THE JAPAN INTERNSHIP CULINARY PROGRAM

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b> Received: 12 April 2025 Received in revised form: 14 Mei 2025 Accepted: 24 June 2025 Available online: 30 June 2025</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Japan Internship Program; Global Skills; Culinary Arts</p>	<p>Japan Internship Program is an initiative designed to provide international internship experience to Culinary Arts students. This study aims to analyze the competencies and impacts gained by participants. Japan Internship Program in the field of Culinary Arts, and explores differences in response results based on gender. Using a quantitative descriptive approach, this study involved 31 respondents selected through a questionnaire technique. Purposive sampling the research instrument consisted of 30 statements measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The analysis showed that the average competency and impact of participants were in the 'fair' category, with the majority of respondents achieving the 'good' category. Although the program successfully improved technical and cross-cultural skills, some participants still faced challenges in reaching their full potential, influenced by factors such as previous experience and company support. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of adequate supervision and curriculum relevance, as well as the need for ongoing support for participants. This study recommends further study to explore gender dynamics and more effective strategies to overcome obstacles faced by participants, to improve the effectiveness of international internship programs in the future.</p>

### 1. Introduction

The Independent Learning and Independent Curriculum (MBKM) policy provides opportunities for universities to develop learning innovations. This innovation is motivated by the gap between the curriculum in universities and the needs of the community on the ground [1]. To date, university curricula, especially at the study program level, have not been regularly evaluated by the government. This has resulted in graduates produced by universities not possessing the competencies needed by society [2], [3]. Therefore, the MBKM policy serves as a platform for accelerating the process of meeting community needs through theoretical studies developed by universities.

The acceleration of MBKM, implemented through several programs, provides a breath of fresh air for the industrial world and society. This is because, as time goes by, the problems faced are increasingly complex and require comprehensive skills. Universities, in this regard, serve as venues for developing skills and producing superior human resources. However, university graduates

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is the largest contributor to unemployment. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2024 showed that approximately 9.8 million college graduates were educated unemployed [4]. This is certainly very sad, considering that universities are educational institutions oriented towards developing human skills and fostering sustainable innovation.

Research conducted by Dewi [5] states that the dilemma of the relevance of higher education curriculum to societal needs is a problem that must be resolved immediately. The problems faced by society are becoming increasingly complex over time. Therefore, higher education, as a producer of the workforce, must keep up with the times to address societal issues.

In principle, higher education produces superior human resources with their own competencies. The MBKM policy provides flexibility for higher education institutions, particularly study programs, to develop curricula and course designs oriented to community needs and student skills [6], [7]. This is a response to the challenges of increasingly complex developments that require skills possessed by each generation. In this context, the government seeks to encourage higher education institutions to continuously innovate in packaging curriculum and developing 21st-century learning for students.

Yogyakarta State University (UNY) is one of the universities implementing the MBKM policy. This policy is outlined in the Rector's Regulation No. 5 of 2020 concerning the Independent Learning and Independent Campus Curriculum for Undergraduate and Applied Undergraduate Programs at UNY. The regulation clearly states that every undergraduate and applied undergraduate study program is required to develop an MBKM-based curriculum to equip students with the skills needed by society and industry. This policy has had a positive impact, with various activities offered by each study program at UNY, such as taking courses outside the study program, teaching practice programs, internships, teaching campuses, and student exchanges at both national and international levels.

The Applied Bachelor of Culinary Arts Study Program, Faculty of Vocational Studies, Yogyakarta State University has one of the MBKM programs in the form of internship or internships in collaboration with several food processing companies in Japan. Broadly speaking, this program invites students to dive into the industrial world, especially the food processing industry, so that students have international-scale industrial skills in accordance with national needs [8]. This program makes it easier for students to equalize the guided industrial practice courses and independent industrial practice offered in the study program. At least, this program has been implemented since the launch of the MBKM program and attended by more than 10 students. However, the program's achievements need to be evaluated periodically to produce recommendations for program improvements. The most important issues that will be raised in this study are the measurability of the abilities of students who participate in the program and the quality of the implementation of the internship program is not yet very clear. Student abilities so far in the MBKM policy are measured by the conversion of experience recognition so that there is no appropriate measure in providing assessments [9]. In addition, this program collaborates with several food processing industries in Japan which is expected to build students' skills comprehensively, especially in the current era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0.

The Industrial Revolution 4.0 is characterized by comprehensive changes that have a holistic impact. This certainly forces people to possess various 21st-century skills such as good communication, creativity, critical thinking skills, and the ability to work well together [10], [11]. Through internships conducted by the UNY Applied Culinary Arts Undergraduate Study Program, students are expected to possess these skills so they can develop and have the fighting spirit to compete globally.

If students lack these skills, it will undoubtedly impact on the quality of national human resources. This internship program is, however, run by the government with the goal of developing superior personal skills. Therefore, the UNY Applied Culinary Arts Undergraduate Program strives to encourage its students to develop these global skills.

The internship program has been implemented periodically since 2017. The expected achievement of this program is to provide students with direct experience and to learn about the world of the culinary industry on an international scale. Of course, the implementation of this program requires evaluation, one of which is an impact evaluation. Impact evaluation is a series of processes of measuring and comparing the implementation of a program to determine its effectiveness [12], [13]. In this context, measuring the abilities of students who participate in internship programs at Japanese companies needs to be done to determine the differences in the competencies of students who participate in these activities. This is a form of impact evaluation so that a comparison of abilities before and after participating in the program can be known.

This impact can be measured from several perspectives. The Culinary Arts Education field focuses on developing culinary skills and the food business management industry. This is often perceived as a female-only field for some. However, the program also has male students participating in an internship program in Japan. The general public's perception of this program prioritizes gender bias, which can be detrimental to certain students. This understanding underpins the UNY Applied Culinary Arts Undergraduate Program's commitment to providing equal treatment to all students. The program's goal is to provide students with the same superior skills.

This research needs to be conducted to improve the quality of program implementation. Internship in Japan, particularly regarding the program's impact. If the program is deemed effective in improving student competency, it should be continued with specific recommendations. This study aims to: 1) describe the level of competency and impact achieved by participants; Japan Internship Program based on the measured categories, and 2) to find out whether there are significant differences in the response results after taking part in Japan Internship Program based on gender.

## **2. Method**

This study is a quantitative descriptive study [14] which aims to map and describe the competencies and impacts obtained after participants take part in Japan Internship Program field of Ethics. All participants Japan Internship Program is the population in this study, with a sample of 31 respondents selected using the technique purposive sampling [15]. This technique was chosen because the respondents involved were participants who had participated in the Japan Internship Program which was implemented in the Applied Culinary Arts Undergraduate Study Program, Yogyakarta State University.

The instruments used in this study consist of two aspects that are measured, namely competence and the impact obtained after participating in Japan Internship Program. There are 30 statements used to measure these two aspects using a 5-point Likert scale. Analysis was carried out by converting ordinal data from the Likert scale into interval data using successive interval method [16]. Next, the interval data is analyzed using the ideal standard deviation (S<sub>bi</sub>) to categorize and map participant responses [17]. The final analysis will categorize participant responses in Japan Internship Program from "very good" to "very poor".

The response data will then be analyzed to compare the response results based on gender groups, namely women and men, using statistics. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) [17]. Before conducting an ANOVA analysis, an assumption test is first carried out by analyzing the normality and

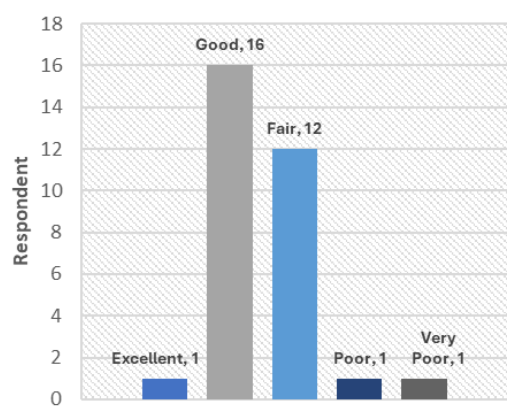
homogeneity of the data. If these two assumption tests are met, then a uni ANOVA will be carried out.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Results

Quantitative analysis of participant response data Japan Internship Program shows that the average competency and impact obtained are in the "fairly good" category with an average score of 94.76. However, the majority of respondents fall into the "good" category, with one respondent showing achievement in the "very good" category. In addition, there are 12 respondents in the "fairly good" category, while one respondent each is in the "poor" and "very poor" categories. The respondent category diagram can be seen

In Figure 1. This finding shows that there is variation in the level of competency achievement of participants after participating in Japan Internship Program, with most participants showing positive results but some still needing further improvement.



**Fig. 1.** Respondent categories

When viewed from the two main aspects, namely competence and impact obtained, both are in the "fairly good" category. The competence aspect has an average of 47.02, while the impact aspect has an average of 47.74. However, when comparing the analysis results based on aspects, there are differences in the categories obtained in each aspect. Of the total respondents, there were 5 respondents who showed differences between the two aspects (Table 1). There were respondents who responded that the competence obtained was "fairly good," although the impact obtained was "good." There were also respondents who received the "very good" competency category but the impact obtained was "good." Finally, there were respondents who received the "poor" competency category, but received a "fairly good" impact.

**Table 1.** Respondents who have different categories between aspects

Respondent	Competence	Impact
13	Fair	Good
18	Excellent	Good
22	Fair	Good
28	Excellent	Good
30	Poor	Fair

Based on the analysis, one respondent stood out as having given low scores for every item in the instrument. The analysis showed that overall, this respondent had significant competence and impact after participating. Japan Internship Program is in the "very poor" category. This finding indicates that Japan Internship Program failed to provide competency improvement and impact for

these respondents, unlike the majority of other respondents who showed increased competency. This indicates that further in-depth research specifically on these respondents is needed.

Comparing the response results based on gender groups, analyzed using JASP (Jeffreys's Amazing Statistics Program). The results of the normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk test show that the data for each gender has a p-value  $> 0.05$  (Table 2), this indicates that the data for both genders are not significantly different, so the data is normally distributed. Because the data is normally distributed, it is continued with a homogeneity test and ANOVA. The results of the homogeneity test, which was carried out using the Levene test (Table 3), show a p-value of 0.370 which means it is greater than 0.05 (p-value  $> 0.05$ ). This value means that the variance between groups is the same (homogeneous), so it can be continued with the ANOVA test.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics

	Score	
	Female	Male
Valid	19	12
Mean	97.079	91.086
Std. Deviation	15.628	24.121
Shapiro-Wilk	0.921	0.878
<b>P-value of Shapiro-Wilk</b>	<b>0.117</b>	<b>0.082</b>
Minimum	72.730	30.000
Maximum	120.160	123.050

**Table 3.** Test for equality of variance (Levene's)

F	df1	df2	p
0.829	1.000	29.000	<b>0.370</b>

**Table 4.** Analysis of Variant (ANOVA)

Cases	Sum of Square	Mean Square	p
Gender	264.167	264.167	<b>0.406</b>
Residuals	10795.871	372.271	

The ANOVA test results showed a p-value of 0.406 ( $> 0.05$ ), so it can be concluded that there was no significant difference between the gender groups tested (Table 4). Statistically, these results indicate that the average responses of Japan Internship Programme participants did not differ significantly between the female and male groups. This means that the responses were not influenced by gender factors.

### 3.2. Discussion

Results of participant response analysis Japan Internship Program shows that this program has succeeded in providing a positive impact on improving participant competency. The average competency and impact achieved are in the 'quite good' category, however, most participants managed to reach the 'good' category. This indicates that the majority of participants benefited from the program, which is in line with previous studies showing that international internship programs are able to improve participants' professional competency [18], [19]. International internship programs can have an impact on multicultural environments and can increase participant satisfaction when well prepared and supported [20].

Such programs not only build technical competencies but also facilitate the development of cross-cultural skills, which are essential for facing the challenges of the global workplace. In the context of globalization, cross-cultural skills are becoming a crucial element that professionals must master [21]. A multicultural work environment demands good adaptability, a deep understanding of cultural differences, and the ability to collaborate with individuals from diverse backgrounds [18]. Furthermore, studies show that the duration of an internship has a positive impact on personal

growth and indirectly influences academic, employment, and citizenship outcomes [22]. Japan Internship Program not only plays a role in improving participants' technical competencies, but also successfully creates a multicultural work environment, ultimately strengthening participants' global skills. These findings strengthen empirical evidence that well-structured international internships can have a lasting impact on participants, particularly in the context of adapting to a multicultural work environment.

Although Japan Internship Program Overall, the internship program has succeeded in improving competency and providing a positive impact on participants, some of whom have not yet reached their expected potential. This condition can be caused by various personal factors such as previous experience, personal motivation and support provided by the internship company [23], [24]. Language barriers, cultural differences, and adapting to unusual ways of working are common obstacles faced by participants [20], [25], [26]. Participants may experience difficulties adjusting to lifestyle, academic expectations, and sociocultural integration in another country [25]. Overall, Japan Internship Program While the program has successfully improved participants' competencies, some still face challenges in reaching their full potential. Factors such as experience, motivation, company support, language barriers, and cultural and work style differences are key obstacles. Difficulties adjusting to lifestyle, academic expectations, and sociocultural integration in another country also impact the program's success for some participants.

Gender engagement, in context Japan Internship Program, is an important aspect to consider, although the analysis showed no significant differences in the response results between female and male participants. Studies related to gender have revealed mixed findings. Although this study did not find significant gender differences, previous studies have revealed that women have higher performance in terms of job demands, resources, and workload.

and job engagement [27]. Another study reported that job engagement had a stronger influence on female employees' job satisfaction, while perceived organizational support had a greater impact on male employees' satisfaction [28]. These findings suggest that gender factors can influence various aspects of the work experience, including motivation, engagement, and performance. The lack of consistent gender differences across studies suggests the need for further research to fully understand the complex interactions between gender.

Furthermore, in order to build global competence, an approach that can be carried out with quality mentoring and supervision, as well as the relevance of the work to the field of study of students as internship participants, is very important for the success of the program [29]. The implementation of the internship program is less effective if there is inadequate supervision [30]. The relevance of the curriculum to the needs of the labor market is very important, with several studies finding a misalignment between certain groups of courses and the needs of the labor market [31]. To overcome this problem, universities need to consider curriculum reconstruction, improve the teaching process, and encourage students to develop soft skills through extracurricular activities [31]. Reconstructing the curriculum that is aligned with the needs of the labor market is very important to ensure that graduates are ready to face challenges in the professional world [23].

Optimization Japan Internship Program requires a holistic approach that includes quality mentoring, adequate supervision, and the relevance of internship assignments to the student's field of study [24]. For program organizers, establishing overseas collaborations, building good relationships with host industries, and providing adequate preparation are crucial [20]. Continuous improvement and a flexible approach are needed to align internship programs with changing industry needs and technological advances [20], [26]. By improving these aspects, internship programs can be more effective in supporting the development of student competencies, both in

terms of technical and soft skills, which will ultimately improve their readiness for a career in the global job market.

#### 4. Conclusions

This study shows that Japan Internship Program Overall, the program successfully improved competency and had a positive impact on participants, with the majority achieving a 'good' rating in the competency and impact assessment after participating. The program not only focused on developing technical skills but also strengthened cross-cultural skills, which are crucial for facing the challenges of a global workplace. However, some participants still faced obstacles in reaching their full potential, caused by factors such as previous experience, personal motivation, and support from the internship company. This indicates that while the program is effective, there is still room for improvement in supporting participants to better adapt to a multicultural environment.

The implications of this study emphasize the importance of adequate supervision, curriculum relevance, and ongoing support for participants during implementation. Japan Internship Program Future research should explore participant experiences by gender and other factors that influence program outcomes. Additionally, research could focus on developing more effective strategies to address barriers faced by participants, such as language barriers and cultural differences. and how the program can be tailored to meet the individual needs of participants. Thus, Japan Internship Program can be more optimal in preparing graduates for careers in an increasingly competitive global job market.

#### Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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