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THE IMPACTS OF THE WORK-FROM-HOME MODEL ON INTERNS' SATISFACTION IN THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY DURING THE COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the work from home impacts on interns in the IT industry. It will be necessary for both academic parties and organizations in the IT industries to identify the areas that need to be focused on and to adjust their policies according to the virtual internships. Therefore, this research aims to study the impact on the interns in the IT industry with the work-from-home (WFH) model and to what extent they are satisfied with their internship while WFH. This analysis is based on quantitative methodology, and it includes a series of questions that request to know their opinion using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. This questionnaire measured independent variables, faculty mentor's preparedness, internet efficiency, industry mentor's preparedness, intern readiness, home working environment, and interns' satisfaction with the internship program.

Key Words: Information technology, Internship, Intern satisfaction, Work-from-home

1. Introduction

In the modern world, when new people are coming to the job industry, there is a common word that most of them hear: internship. The companies who provide employment should offer internships for people who are putting the first step into the job field. In most cases, the people who are seeking the jobs need to have an internship covered previously. The apparent idea behind this is to have some training mechanism from the employee side, which their universities or learning institutes encourage before entering a proper job position. From the company's side, they have to provide offers aiming for that job field's well-being.

A professional learning and practical experience with the industry is known as an internship. Both universities and companies are interested in internship programs. Therefore, they have a mutual understanding of the benefits gained from offering internship opportunities for university students who will join the industry. It is a compulsory module that needs to conclude many degree programs. Universities expect to graduate with confidence in academic and industrial knowledge to maintain the degree program's quality.

Further, an internship is an outstanding opportunity for a company to have fresh ideas flowing from energetic youth through their internship programs while building up their future employees-pipeline by including the topmost graduates. The experiences gained from the internship are an excellent way to recapture control over an unpredictable future. There are several reasons for that (Ebner et al.,2021); first, the training earned by applying for internships, the application process, and learning about qualifications and soft skills that organizations are looking for (Liu et al.,2014). This training overcomes the risk surrounding labor market entrance. Second, the internship provides work experience, and graduates with a genuine job preview of practice after graduation (Rose,2018), with a trial run development. Therefore, the possibility of operating in a professional context becomes unknown and less of a threat (Inceoglu et al.,2020). Intern or student satisfaction is a combination of trainee relevance, diligent learning, genuine knowledge, learning autonomy, and technical competence (Ke and Kwak, 2013).

The IT area is one of the industries where internships act as a critical role. Almost all the employees joining the software development companies have undergone at least six months of internship programs. In the same way, most of the reputed IT companies are offering internship programs covering many universities. Thus, with the new normal situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, a kind of revolution happened in the internship programs in the IT field. Although most other job industries met with problems that blocked continuing their jobs, IT industry people followed the working from home pattern since most of their work continued remotely.

Although it seems acceptable to propagate through remotely working in the IT industry, some uncovered areas need to focus on, especially when it comes to internship programs. Having a good Technology capability is one of the key strengths that need to have. Still, countries located in middle-range regions like South Asia don't have a strong technology backbone. In those countries, most software companies located in capital cities and those on-premises have a capability of technology that supports a kind of a level. Due to the pandemic, those companies had to continue sitting on their houses

instead of sitting on-premises. This WFH mode raises several problems, like having poor internet connection in rural areas, having to get supportive equipment (laptops and tools), getting technical support, occurring background disturbance, etc.

In the same way, some issues arise with WFH culture from the company side, like difficulties in tracking the employee, delivering the laptops and tools, providing technical support, etc. Interns are the main category affecting this because every six or twelve months, there is a set of interns who are completing their internships, and there is a set of interns who are newly joining the company.

Global work-from-home experience (April 04, 2020) has been mentioned based on a public survey of 3000 employee respondents; 73% agreed that the WFH model is very successful (68% globally). While 78% of workers have enough resources, they are required to be strong at home (72% globally), and 86% of respondents feel fully productive at home (77% globally). Even though these surveys indicated these studies as global, can we agree on these factors since many of these surveys have covered only developed countries. Moreover, they have taken all the employees as one collection by including the interns as well. If they can have a separate survey for interns in developed countries and developing countries, there might be a drastic gap between those results. This gap shows the requirement of a standardized internship policy, which will benefit interns suffering during WFH. Based on the prior research, there is a lack of covering interns who have some environmental and personal issues in the WFH model in the IT industry, and still under-researched where there is not enough information to identify strengths, weaknesses, and improvements under the WFH model. It is essential to locate this information since many IT companies are moving towards the fully WFH model by stepping out from the office culture.

Most of the employers had an incredibly satisfying level on the overall properties of the trainees. The findings also showed that the employers were satisfied with the intern's capability to work in a team, grooming, steadiness, and connection with peers and supervisors. However, issues related to familiarity, reporting, and communication skills were less satisfying, which indicated that the interns did not technically have the competency skills required by the employer. These issues could be due to the objective of the university internship program in providing an avenue for technical application of academic knowledge acquired, and the intern's role was only to provide technical support for reporting objectives (Sawani et al., 2016). Even in the face-to-face model, employers have dissatisfaction with some outcomes of the internships. Therefore, it is obvious to have fewer satisfactions from internship programs in the WFH model, and there is a gap to identify up to what extent WFH internships will be able to satisfy employers' expectations.

There are not adequate research papers that study WFH impacts for the interns who are in the IT industry, and this study hopes to investigate these gaps. It will be necessary for both academic parties and organizations in the IT industries to identify the areas that need to be focused on and to adjust their policies according to the virtual internships. Therefore, this research aims to study:

RQ1. What is the impact on the interns who are in the IT industry with the WFH model?

RQ2. To what extent do they satisfy with their internship while WFH?

The inspiration for this study is to investigate the lack of attention given to WFH issues for interns who are in the IT industry. This study chooses the interns in the IT industry as the study sample for the following reasons. First, with the new normal situation, many organizations in the IT industry are moving to the hybrid or fully WFH mode from the face-to-face model. Due to this, from the beginning of the intern's career is bound to their home environment. There is no idea how this will impact their future. Second, IT students will be a member of the future software industry, and it is one of the most required professions in the world. Third, IT internships take a long duration to complete, like three to twelve months. Lastly, this study will help employers and education institute who are in the IT industry to identify the gaps that need to fulfill, interns' expectations and difficulties, and the changes that need to be made in the future to achieve their expectations through these interns while WFH. So in summary, the objective of the study is to identify the impacts of the WFH model on interns, to investigate the satisfaction level of interns with the WFH model, and to show the requirement of a standardized internship policy, which will benefit interns suffering during WFH.

2. Literature Review

2.1. IT Internship and WFH mode

An opportunity for a student to gain both technical and general competencies is an internship in IT (Jones et al.,2017). Internships in the IT industry are work-related learning that integrates with academic knowledge, applications in the workplace. IT allows students to gain practical skills through their work tasks and environment. The experiences from an internship can vary depending on the content, structure, and usefulness (Chillas et al., 2015). IT internships highlighted technical competencies more than general or professional competencies (Jones et al.,2017).

An internship gives a unique experience for different students with different purposes. That is the beauty of an internship (Miller et al.,2021) while playing a vital role in obtaining the first experience not available in the classroom (Sahrir et al.,2016). A non-employee engaging with the employees of an organization for a short period is known as an internship (Youngblood, 2020).

COVID-19 changed all traditional teaching methods, learning methods, and operating modes online (Wong et al.,2021). The most popular online process is Working-From-Home (WFH) mode. Employees do not want to travel to a central workplace and can work in their home environment while spending time in the home (International Labour Organization,2020). Many of the IT companies also adapted to the WFH mode; as a result, students who are following the IT degree programs have to do their internship in their home environment. This paper uses the term "virtual internship" rather than "remote internship" to differentiate the work. Field-driven assignments assigned to students from another party are known as remote internships. A fully or partially computer-based internship provided by an employer with mentor support is a virtual internship (Bayerlein and Jeske, 2018).

2.2. Success Factors of WFH internships

There are five sub-themes identified as success factors (Wong et al.,2021). First, active preparation, interns perform their job with fewer supervision requirements. Second, personal motivators such as self-motivator and self-discipline. Third, the nature of the job, employers were not required to execute WFH mode for their employees before COVID-19 (Randall et al.,2020). Therefore, employers should implement suitable jobs for WFH mode. Finally, an appropriate communication system is a must for regular meetings and video conferences. Lastly, organizational support, both technical and workforce support, is crucial for the success of an internship.

2.3. Factors that determine intern's satisfaction

Four factors that determine an intern's satisfaction are faculty mentor's preparedness, industry mentor's preparedness, intern's readiness, and finally, intern's internet efficiency. To achieve the internship goal while WFH, internet efficiency is one of the basic requirements, and it impacts the student's comfort during online working (Maini et., al,2021). Training transfer and person-environment fit affect a positive internship experience (Ebner et al.,2021). There is no such difference in students' satisfaction depending on the organization's size. To ensure the satisfaction of their interns, some organizations supplied organizations' laptops including, other equipment like a headset, tables, and chairs for their interns with access to the servers. However, some small organizations did not provide these types of resources for their interns, and as a result, interns had to face some limitations while doing their tasks. Therefore, whether the company is large or not, the intern's satisfaction is on the cost-saving during the WFH (Ahmad, 2020).

2.4. WFH impacts on internship

Previous studies also illustrated that virtual internships have some impacts on interns and their performance. First, there is a massive communication gap between interns and supervisors. The interns are unable to join with the specific physical environment since they are in WFH mode and cannot have face-to-face communication with their teammates; as a result, interns are unfamiliar with the particular working environment (Youngblood, 2020).

A corroborative relationship between a faculty mentor and an intern is essential for intern's satisfaction and performance (Klee, 2012). Interns who have reasonable assistance from the university side have high satisfaction than the other interns (Smits, 2006). Even though university faculties have technological preparedness to mentor virtual internship, it has faced difficulties in delivering (Gibson et al., 2008). This paper considers that faculty mentors' preparedness will impact the interns by considering these factors. Hence,

H1. Faculty mentors' preparedness affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.

The remote internships do not provide adequate network opportunities for the interns to meet their supervisors and teammates (Sunder, 2008). Therefore, interns face some difficulties while maintaining a relationship with themselves and the organizational culture (Wong et al., 2021). Even in a virtual internship, the virtual interaction plays a

vital role in the intern's satisfaction. Maintaining good communication with industry and faculty mentors is essential in the dynamic work environment. An individual internet efficiency should be good enough to have a smooth interaction online and complete the assigned task on time (Maini et al., 2020). Internet is required for interns and all others planning to work on an online platform (Kuo et al., 2013). The success of an online platform that can be learning or work depends on the internet efficiency, and it decides the effectiveness of communication with mentors and peers (Roach & Lemasters, 2006). Hence,

H2. Internet efficiency affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.

When it comes to the IT industry, the industry mentor-mentee relationship plays a vital role, but that depends on the company's alignment with the intern. In terms of the time duration, it is limited and hard to maintain (Anson & Forsberg, 1990). When a company employs interns from institutions, they organize it by considering three factors: awareness of the university's interest, the structure of the internship, and internal organizational culture. In this topic, universities or institutions also have a significant role on behalf of the interns. By clearing all parties' functions, getting periodic feedback about the interns, and maintaining a good relationship with the organizations, they can improve satisfaction (Narayanan et al., 2010). On the other hand, industry mentors should focus on setting up weekly online meetings, creating a shift in the thought process to welcome innovative ideas, and creating weekly deadlines to prepare manageable chunks of tasks before the beginning of the internship (Franks & Oliver, 2012). By considering these factors, we can hypothesize that,

H3. industry mentors' preparedness affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.

General academic preparedness and specific internship willingness are two required components that interns plan to undertake an internship. Within the internship period, the assignment or task given to the intern is known as a project. Awareness regarding the project, advisor, and project selection is essential for an internship (Narayanan et al., 2010). Selecting for an internship, a student should have to show an appropriate amount of knowledge and hard and soft skills (Chen & Shen, 2012). Fearlessness to explore new applications (Franks & Oliver, 2012) and understanding the technical readiness is necessary when looking at online internships (Phoebe, 2010). While engaging in the internship, positive thinking, self-initiative, and academic preparedness will enhance the particular internship experience (Arif, 2007).

The multistage model of determinants of the effectiveness of three actors, i.e., students, university, and business, shows the importance of equipping the students for the internship by focusing on practical knowledge. By considering these factors it hypothesized that,

H4. Interns' readiness affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.

Previous research has mentioned that WFH significantly reduces interactions between people, and they have to limit virtual meetups without going for face-to-face interactions (Cowgill et al., 2009) and working progress issues such as undefined work directions, expectations, guidelines, pending work issues, and maybe causes for preventing better work performance of interns. Even the workplace serves as a social environment home

does not. Due to this, there may be some workflow missing as well (NASA, 2020). Many researchers have mentioned that distractions affect learning and working (Jamet et al., 2020). Some articles have mentioned that smartphones with social media (Facebook and Instagram) disrupt their attention (Carrier et al., 2015). Lastly, some interns' work efficiency may diminish because of the noise and disturbance created by family members and neighbors (Wong et al., 2021), and these factors lead to hypothesizing that H5. The homeworking environment affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.

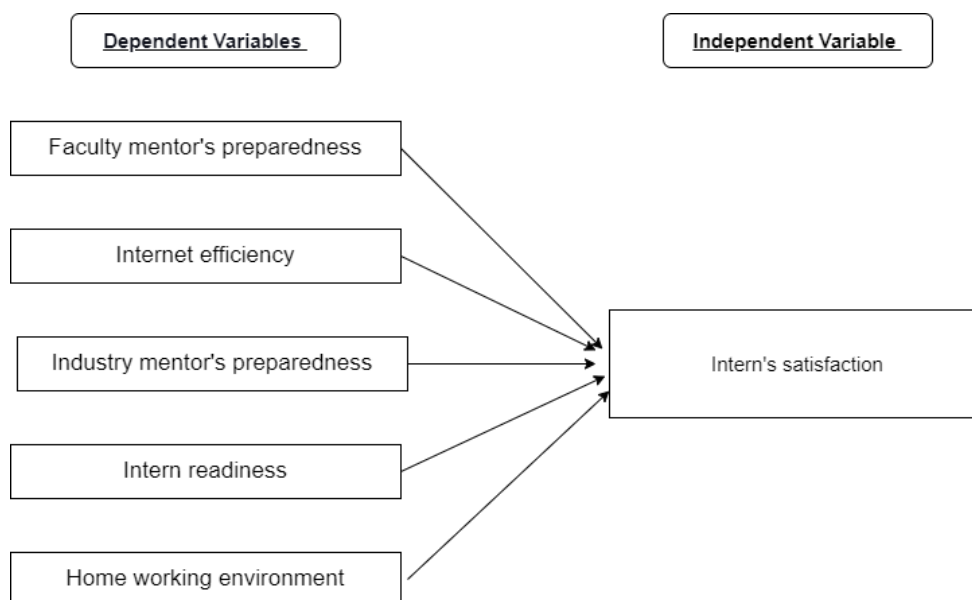


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

3. Methodology

3.1. Present study

The IT internship process consists of university students, universities, and IT companies, and all these stakeholders have distinct purposes (Narayanan et al., 2010). Based on the literature review identified, five significant factors impact the intern's satisfaction during the WFH period. Those are Faculty mentor's preparedness, internet efficiency, industry mentor's preparedness, intern readiness, and home working environment. This study is concerned with interns in the IT industry who studied in government and private universities in Sri Lanka.

An internship is essential for most IT and software engineering degree programs. After completing the second or third year, and if it is a special degree program at the end of the fourth year, every student should fulfill the internship program. After completing the internship, some students have the opportunity to join the IT industry as permanent employees. Some students may have to complete the rest of the semesters after completing the internship. Some organizations and universities have allowed students to work and learn parallelly. Because of that, they can work within the IT industry while completing their degree programs. With the current pandemic situation, interns have to limit their home environment since most IT companies are working on WFH mode.

3.2. Instrument development

This research is based on quantitative methodology and includes a series of questions that requested to know their opinion using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. This questionnaire measured independent variables, faculty mentor's preparedness, internet efficiency, industry mentor's preparedness, intern readiness, home working environment, and interns' satisfaction with the internship program. After receiving 25 responses, there were some limitations, and after revamping, the final questionnaire was presented.

3.3. Data collection

Data were collected from end-January 2022 to end-April 2022. The target audience was the interns in the IT industry covering both state and private universities who have followed IT and software-related degree programs by using the convenience sampling method. The online survey was distributed through social media like Facebook and WhatsApp, and also some organizations volunteered to distribute this survey through their interns (Table 1). Out of 87 responses, 80 were used for the final study.

Table 1: Operationalization table

Variable	Indicator	Scale	Source	Question
	Check availability	Nominal Yes/No/Not aware		Q1
Faculty mentors' preparedness	Technology	Likert 1-5	Volery & Lord, 2000	Q2
	Effectiveness	Likert 1-5		Q3
	Expectations	Likert 1-5		Q4
	Awareness	Likert 1-5		Q5
	Satisfaction	Nominal Yes/No		Q6
Internet Efficiency	Capability	Likert 1-5	Black & Bachman, 2007	Q7
	Confident	Likert 1-5		Q8
	Communication	Likert 1-5		Q9
	Check availability	Nominal Yes/No/Not aware		Q10
Industry mentors' preparedness	Transparency	Likert 1-5	Volery & Lord, 2000	Q11
	Technology	Likert 1-5		Q12
	Support	Likert 1-5		Q13

	Motivation	Likert 1-5		Q14
	Expectations	Likert 1-5		Q15
Interns' readiness	Purpose	Likert 1-5		Q16
	Deliverables	Likert 1-5		Q17
	Confident on faculty mentor	Likert 1-5		Q18
	Confident on industry mentor	Likert 1-5	Black & Bachman, 2007	Q19
	Technology	Likert 1-5		Q20
	Communication	Likert 1-5		Q21
	Homeworking environment	Background noise	Likert 1-5	
Social media		Likert 1-5	Rana, 2021	Q23
Family support		Likert 1-5		Q24
Intern's Satisfaction	Soft skills	Likert 1-5		Q25
	Management skills	Likert 1-5		Q26
	Practical experience	Likert 1-5	Volery & Lord, 2000	Q27
	Overall Satisfaction	Likert 1-5		Q28

The outcome of this study does not indicate any considerable deviations compared with the standard form. It does not lead to any separate case that confirms outliers' absence in the data set. The sample adequacy was measured using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test, and it was 0.734.

4. Results/Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

Using SPSS 25, this chapter describes the data presented & analyses the study, which is the most critical part of the research. This study aims to identify the impacts and satisfaction levels of the interns in WFH mode. This study is based on 80 respondents who have completed and still going on the internship in the IT industry of Sri Lanka. Out of 80, there were 67% of male interns and 33% of female interns, 62% of interns from the state, and the rest from private universities. This study includes the analysis of

dependent and independent variables and hypotheses, reliability, normality, and regression testing using quantitative analysis.

4.2. Hypothesis Testing

Table 2: Tests of Normality using Shapiro-Wilk

Tests of Normality			
	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
MeanOfFacultyMentor	0.799	31	0.000
MeanOfInternReadiness	0.832	31	0.000
MeanOfInternetEfficency	0.923	31	0.029
MeanOfWorkingEnv	0.893	31	0.005
MeanOfIndustryMantor	0.913	31	0.016

Since this study mainly deals with continuous variables, the Shapiro-Wilk test (Table 2) was used to test normality. According to the null hypothesis, this study considers that data are normally distributed. The values mentioned under the 'sig.' column is the p-value, and this analysis has chosen the alpha level as 0.05. This study can reject the null hypothesis because the p-values are less than 0.05.

4.3. Correlation analysis

Table 3: Correlation analysis

		MeanOfFacultyMentor	MeanOfIndustryMentor	MeanOfInternReadiness	MeanOfInternetEfficiency	MeanOfWorkingEnv	MeanOfInternSatisfaction
MeanOfFacultyMentor	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	41					
MeanOfIndustryMentor	Pearson Correlation	-0.125	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.503					
	N	31	55				
MeanOfInternReadiness	Pearson Correlation	.894**	-0.056	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.685				
	N	41	55	80			
MeanOfInternetEfficiency	Pearson Correlation	-0.067	-0.003	-0.045	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.678	0.982	0.693			
	N	41	55	80	80		
MeanOfWorkingEnv	Pearson Correlation	-0.074	-0.023	.260*	0.040	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.648	0.868	0.020	0.725		
	N	41	55	80	80	80	
MeanOfInternSatisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-0.095	-0.001	.315**	-0.001	.750**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.555	0.993	0.004	0.992	0.000	
	N	41	55	80	80	80	80

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Table 3 indicates that the faculty mentor shows a significant relationship ($p < 0.05$) with intern readiness but is weakly associated with the other four factors. The industry mentor does not show a significant association with any other components. Intern Readiness is highly associated with intern satisfaction ($p < 0.05$) and somewhat ($p > 0.01$) with the working environment. Intern satisfaction shows a significant association ($p < 0.05$) with the working environment.

4.4. Regression analysis

This study has used regression analysis to analyze the relationship between the independent (faculty mentor's preparedness, internet efficiency, industry mentor's

preparedness, intern readiness, and home working environment) and dependent (intern's satisfaction) variables. It is a statistical technique to study the association between two or more variables. Furthermore, since this study has more than one independent variables, it uses multivariate regression analysis.

Before choosing the linear regression technique, this study went through a few assumptions to check whether this module could apply the linear regression method for further analysis. The first assumption is that all the variables should be continuous type, either ratio or interval. This study mostly contained Likert-type questions, and because of that, the first assumption is satisfied. There is a linear relationship between every two variables, and hence that the second assumption is also satisfied. The third assumption is that there is no multicollinearity issue. This assumption is also satisfied using Pearson correlations (Table 3) analysis, and it is satisfied that the correlation value should be less than 0.8.

In the same way, this assumption is satisfied by the variance of inflation factor (VIF) value (Table 4), and the requirement is that the VIF value should be less than ten. The Durbin-Waston value of this study is 1.839, and therefore, this study satisfied the fourth assumption, which is that the values of the residuals are independent. Furthermore, this model achieved the requirement of homoscedasticity, and the values of the residuals are normally distributed as the fifth and sixth assumptions. Lastly, there is no significant outlier, and as a result, this study could apply regression analysis by satisfying these assumptions.

Table 4: Multivariate regression analysis

	Coef	<i>t</i>	Collinearity Statistics	
			Tolerance	VIF
Intercept	1.23	1.621		
MeanOfFacultyMentor	-0.161	-0.772	0.224	4.463
MeanOfIndustryMentor	0.008	0.881	0.889	1.125
MeanOfInternReadiness	0.227	0.418	0.21	4.76
MeanOfInternetEfficency	-0.038	0.639	0.953	1.049
MeanOfWorkingEnv	0.677***	0.001	0.949	1.054
F - value		6.053		
Sig. of F-value		0.001		
R ²		0.565		
N		80		

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 5: Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses testing	p-value	Decision
H1 → Faculty mentors' preparedness affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.	0.772	Rejected
H2 → Internet efficiency affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.	0.639	Rejected
H3 → Industry mentors' preparedness affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.	0.881	Rejected
H4 → Interns' readiness affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.	0.418	Rejected
H5 → The homeworking environment affects the interns' satisfaction while WFH.	0.001	Accepted

According to Table 4, the home working environment shows an immense significant ($p < 0.01$) relationship with intern satisfaction. Internet efficiency, intern readiness, industry mentor preparedness, and faculty mentor preparedness have to reject since the sig value is higher than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). Even though all these variables are accepted according to the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, the Multivariate regression analysis rejects all variables except the intern home working environment. The reasons behind this may be the less amount of data since this survey gathered data from only 80 interns, and there might be some other variables that impact intern satisfaction in Sri Lankan context. The R^2 value is 0.565. The R^2 means how much of the intern satisfaction can be explained by the above five independent variables. In this analysis, 56% can be explained.

Discussion

According to the Shapiro Wilk normality testing, this study can reject all the null hypotheses, and all five variables have a significant impact on intern satisfaction. It proves that these five factors can significantly impact intern satisfaction. Moreover, the faculty mentor's readiness and the intern's readiness can significantly impact ($p < 0.01$) intern satisfaction. Without an intern or mentee preparation, an industry mentor or faculty mentor cannot make an internship a successful one. Even mentors provide guidance and directions to the mentee; it is useless if that intern does not have pre-preparations to follow those. Based on the intern readiness, interns can signify whether they can learn new skills or not. Some previous studies have also mentioned the importance of intern's readiness (Volery & Lord, 2000). The faculty mentor also plays a vital role in the internship process. He or she may be able to build up intern satisfaction by maintaining a proper communication with the industry mentor. However, there is no significant relationship between intern satisfaction and the faculty mentor preparedness when it comes to the regression analysis.

Industry mentors' preparedness also plays an essential role in the internship process by giving experiential learning to the interns. Even Shapiro Wilk analysis shows a

significant association ($p < 0.05$), the regression analysis indicates it as somewhat inconsequential. Generally, the industry mentor role is more significant than the faculty mentor role (Maini et al., 2020). Especially in the IT industry, there is considerable differentiation between academic and practical knowledge. For example, when a new intern is assigned to a project, the industry mentor is responsible for supervising that intern until he or she completes the task. Otherwise, the student has to face many hardships, and the particular intern may take a long period to complete that.

Apart from that, the internet facility is essential for maintaining the communication between industry and faculty mentors and continuing the assigned task. When hearing about virtual or online internships, the first thing that comes to mind is internet efficiency. Considering countries like Sri Lanka, some villages do not have internet facilities. Students living in these villages have to face many obstacles to perform their tasks while staying at home. According to the Shapiro Wilk test, internet efficiency has a significant association ($p < 0.05$), but according to regression analysis, it is relatively less ($p < 0.10$). Previous research has also mentioned that student internet efficiency significantly impacts interns' satisfaction during the WFH mode (Black & Bachman, 2007).

The last factor is the intern's homeworking environment; according to the regression analysis, that is the most significant factor ($p < 0.01$) impacting intern satisfaction. Interns also need support from their families to make the internship successful. Suppose one intern works in a noisy and turbulent environment; it is hard to concentrate on their task. To maintain a relaxed mind and keep attention to the task, working in a calm and quiet environment is essential.

5. Conclusion, Implications, and Future Research Directions

5.1. Conclusion and Implications

The present study gives an understanding of the impacts of the WFH model on interns' satisfaction in the IT industry during the covid-19 pandemic. This study investigated the factors that impact the interns' satisfaction during the WFH mode. According to the Shapiro Wilk normality, this study could accept all the hypotheses but according to regression testing have to reject all the hypotheses except the intern's working environment (H5). However, in summary, all these five elements play an influential role on behalf of the interns' satisfaction. The results of this study mainly satisfy the prior studies as well. Both industry and faculty mentors play a vital role in making internships successful by collaborating and reviewing intern progress. Even mentors make their responsibility by exceeding their limits, and there is no gain for the interns if interns do not prepare for the internship from themselves. So, interns should focus on their preparation before starting the internship, and they should be able to maintain this practice until they finish the internship. Only then they can finish their internship as a successful one. Internet efficiency is the essential requirement to satisfy interns' virtual internships (Maini et al., 2020). In the IT industry, there is nothing to do without the internet. The development, testing, integrations, and communications operate through the internet. So, without internet efficiency, interns cannot achieve their targets on time. The last factor is the home working environment. Even if all other factors are satisfied,

interns cannot do their job smoothly if they do not have a calm, peaceful environment. So, there is a responsibility to their parents and family members to maintain a relaxed environment while interns work.

This study identified some other issues that interns face while in WFH mode. The survey was created by asking whether interns have any other difficulties in the WFH mode by adding a nonmandatory question. Following are some of the factors that they have mentioned in the survey.

- lack of socialization
- Screen sharing issues
- Enduring more time to conclude tasks than the expected duration
- Difficulties in identifying other peers
- Power outages
- Too much workload
- language problems
- Not enough equipment

5.2. Limitation

This study has some limitations too. First, this study has focused only on the IT industry of Sri Lanka; with the covid-19 pandemic, many companies in other industries also have encouraged their interns to WFH. Second, this study is based on quantitative analysis, and it is better if it can move to a qualitative or mix-method analysis. Third, it was hard to collect data through the survey with the pandemic situation, and there were only 80 valid responses.

5.3. Future research direction

This study has focused only on the IT industry, as mentioned under the limitation. Therefore, in future studies, anyone can focus on other industries as well. There is an opportunity to investigate interns' mentality during the WFH period. In the future, these interns will be employees in the IT industry. Due to this, there is a gap in employer satisfaction regarding the interns' performance during the WFH period.

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