

Piloting an Islamic Employability Skills Framework for *At-Tamayyuz* Internship Programme

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ABSTRACT

In an era dynamically changed by shifting demands on the job market, skills acquisition is increasingly vital in competing with other candidates within the job pool. Higher education continues to supply graduates yearly with macro credentials. However, what skills do they gain along the way? This study aims to pilot a new employability skills framework integrating four capital components that are timely to meet the needs of future of work. These include human, social, psychological as well as spiritual capital. The latter capital components play a role in equipping graduates with ethical skills that supplant the increasing use of artificial intelligence across all industry sectors. The pilot study uses SPSS to test the reliability of items to be tested for further study which comprise of previous cohorts that have undertaken the *At-Tamayyuz* internship programme. A sample of 82 students that had completed the programme were included within the sample. The results show that the *At-Tamayyuz* Internship Programme plays a significant role in enhancing students' employability skills, particularly in professional etiquette, lifelong learning, management, communication, ethical awareness, and self-development. The reliability analysis shows the employability skills instrument for the *At-Tamayyuz* Internship Programme has excellent psychometric quality. The high Cronbach's Alpha (0.984) confirms it reliably measures students' skill development. Strong item-total correlations and stable alpha values validate the questionnaire items. These findings show the programme effectively develops holistic employability skills, preparing students for workplace readiness by fostering professional competence, adaptability, ethical awareness, communication effectiveness, and self-development aligned with employment expectations.

Keywords: Employability skills, SPSS, Pilot Study,

INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the literature on graduate employability for future of work. Prior to COVID-19, most studies have identified different multifaceted approaches of how higher education evaluate the effectiveness of their programmes to meet industry requirements. This paper explores these different approaches and narrows down to *At-Tamayyuz* internship programme which provides inbound and outbound internships to graduates within STREAM disciplines. These graduates remain multidisciplinary in their area of studies while maintaining Islamic knowledge in Quran and Islamic epistemology as their main core niche.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher education programmes are evaluated qualitatively and quantitatively for employability impact. Three approaches are outcomes, process, and conceptual (Fakunle & Higson, 2021). The outcomes approach measures competence and work-readiness, examining policy response and labour market conditions (Fakunle & Higson, 2021). Ranking systems consider time to employment, contracts, and employment duration (Conejero et al., 2021). A study developed a tool for students to evaluate competence (Baggen et al., 2018). The process approach audits initiatives, aligning strategic aims (Fakunle & Higson, 2021). It forecasts outcomes based on uncertainty and risk, suitable for long-term programs (Rodríguez-Rivero et al., 2020). The conceptual approach uses

frameworks to measure employability, focusing on human, social, and cultural capital (Fakunle & Higson, 2021). A study using a framework on evaluations and behavioral intentions identified factors like student nationality, host country, program quality, and support (Ammigan et al., 2021). Employability links to work readiness based on role clarity, ability, and motivation (Kapareliotis et al., 2019). Work readiness measures internship impact (Kapareliotis et al., 2019). Employers see role clarity as key to performance, recommending analytical skills for independence and uncertainty management. For motivation, focus on intrinsic rewards in internships (Kapareliotis et al., 2019).

Several limitations in existing literature include a STEM focus and a mismatch between program goals and industry needs. Literature shows 52% prioritize vocational training, 45% agree higher education must improve, and 42% call for more upskilling investment (Moueddene et al., 2019). STEM graduates are more employable than STREAM graduates, based on program relevance, goal behavior, and career exploration (Bennett et al., 2020). There is little research on employability from other education backgrounds like Islamic Studies and on the impact of study abroad on host communities (Kosman et al., 2021). Most programs need better alignment with industry goals and merging theory with practice (Asgar & Satyanarayana, 2021; Kalaw, 2019). Students often lack career outcome knowledge due to curriculum designers not focusing on employability skills (Lock & Kelly, 2020). Generally, previous studies show that undergraduates' perceptions of professional purpose, with the highest on navigating work, then self and social awareness, and least on networking (Bates et al., 2019). Moreover, university graduates align more with stringent accreditation standards than industry employability criteria (Oraison et al., 2019). This leads to a mismatch between industry priorities for competencies and student performance perceptions (Wohlfart et al., 2021) necessitating deeper analysis on the effectiveness of internships. Kapareliotis et al. (2019) noted internship effectiveness depends on interns' understanding of tasks, responsibilities, and outcomes, influenced by role, ability, and motivation (Kapareliotis et al., 2019).

At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme

In Brunei Darussalam, the at-Tamayyuz internship programme was recently merged with other programmes. The internship, established in 2008, enhances graduate employability. Since 2019, it includes various programmes to boost impact. Like Borah, Malik, Massini (2020), it involves course-based teaching in Study Abroad and Student Exchange Programmes, but lacks project-based collaborations. This higher education programme supports work-based learning with public and private sectors. Literature suggests more innovative industry-based professional development (Milian & Davies, 2020). The study focuses on internships to expose students to work environments, enhancing employability skills. It's a compulsory course for undergraduates in their third academic year, lasting 9 to 24 weeks in government or non-government organizations. Recently, the duration extended to increase work exposure. Managed by two university coordinators, the head oversees administration, while faculty coordinators handle their faculties. Organizations have supervisors to monitor students. The programme targets undergraduates in Islamic knowledge fields like Shariah, Usuluddin, and others. Students must apply for placements from a list of employers related to their study field. Once placed, transfers are not allowed. The process simulates recruitment, with some employers interviewing students. Students must write daily and final reports, collected and assessed by coordinators and supervisors (CPKL, 2019; Metussin, 2020a).

Programme evaluation of the at-Tamayyuz internship programme linked with Taqwa showed attitude changes post-enrolment. It enhanced participants' relationships with themselves, others, and Allah SWT (Metussin & Jaili, 2020). The programme fostered positive self-development, building organized, disciplined personalities (Metussin & Jaili, 2020). Participants gained respect, kindness, loyalty, and trust in relationships, learning to handle work pressure and diverse personalities (Metussin & Jaili, 2020). They also reported enhanced relationships with their creator, viewing work as worship requiring effort, gaining values like tawakkal, patience, and virtue (Metussin & Jaili, 2020). Despite highlighting Islamic values, the programme used the conventional Experiential Learning Approach (Metussin, 2020b). Islamic-based learning is not yet standard in higher education, prompting this study to use Islamic development principles.

Further assessment reported students' perceptions of the programme using a Likert scale (Metussin, 2020a). The evaluation focused on preparation, relevancy, workplace, and personality. Results showed participants were

mostly prepared with a good understanding of their intern role (Metussin, 2020a). They found the programme relevant to the curriculum and sufficient in duration. 98% were satisfied with the workplace, enhancing problem-solving, communication, and adaptability. Participants agreed the programme improved self-esteem, confidence, and time management (Metussin, 2020a). Another study showed high scores in ethics and personality, with strong discipline, integrity, and commitment, but average management and leadership skills (Asmad et al, 2019).

The existing evaluation criteria of students undergoing the programme are assessed based on two aspects which is work performance and personality (CPKL, 2019; Metussin, 2020a) which can be illustrated in Figure 1:

Figure 1: At-Tamayyuz Internship Evaluation Criteria



Source: Adapted from CPKL (2010, 2019)

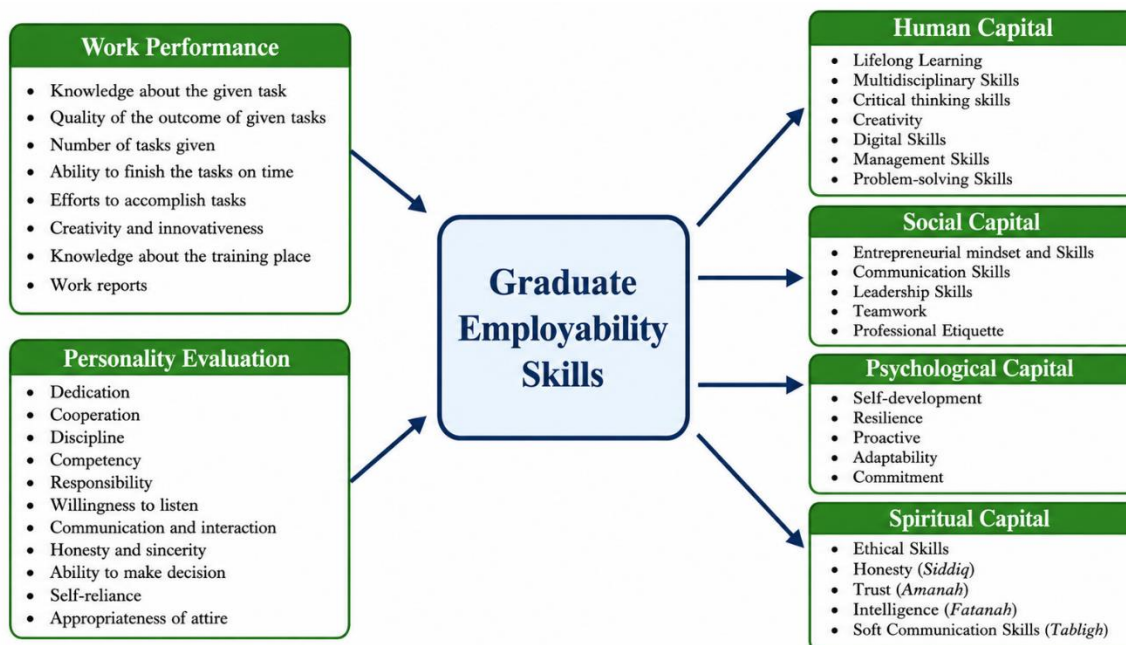
Figure 1 shows how At-Tamayyuz internship programme currently evaluates the students' ability to conduct the work tasks by looking at aspects of performance such as tacit knowledge, reliability, productivity, commitment, and creativity. However, these skills do not tally with the employability skills within the literature. This is because the existing criteria focus too much on the outcome of the work being done does not highlight what skills the students will gain upon completing the internship. For instance, previous literature has identified several employable skills which measure employability in terms of the work performance which include: problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, soft skills (such as interpersonal skills), management skills, negotiation skills, social skills, leadership skills, digital skills, and so on. These skills have not been included within the performance criteria although feedback from students have identified it as a criterion of their improvement after participating in the programme (Metussin, 2020a).

Figure 1 illustrates the evaluation of student personality during the programme by human resource managers based on professional observation. Although several criteria are relevant, further analysis could relate these attributes to enhancing psychological capital and employability. The criteria lack Islamic-based values. Literature identifies additional skills like adaptability, flexibility, integrity, passion, emotional intelligence, ethics, solidarity, curiosity, networking, and collaboration. Other universities assess employability based on personality and performance separately. For instance, in a USM webinar, Azman (2022) highlighted 15 graduate attributes, including leadership, teamwork, lifelong learning, entrepreneurship, value, attitude, ethics & professionalism, scientific thinking, art & humanity, communication, confidence, critical thinking, problem-solving, and global mindset (Azman, 2022). USM's comprehensive criteria enhance graduates' competitive advantage, with Azman (2022) noting USM's employability is 1.8% higher than the national average, boosting the university's ranking. Azman (2022) further elaborates that these attributes are complemented by skills

measuring performance for employability. These skills are clustered into 5 areas: (1) knowledge & understanding (intellectual skills), (2) cognitive skills, (3) functional work skills, (4) personal & experiential skills, and (5) ethics & professionalism (Azman, 2022). Graduate attributes and skills vary with organizational culture and country norms, supported by (Andresen, 2021) in evaluating skills. The At-Tamayyuz internship program can improve skills according to university and national objectives with an Islamic-based framework.

Figure 2 presents a conceptual framework that aims to test a new framework for graduate employability skills that will be incorporated into the At-Tamayuz internship programme upon successful validation (L. Azahari et al., 2025; L. M. Azahari et al., 2026). The framework consists of four main capital components framing the skills according to human, social, psychological and spiritual capital. The conceptual framework started with the concept of work readiness (Kapareliotis et al., 2019) and how it resonates with three principles of Islamic based development. By examining the role of actors within Islamic contexts using the framework of Islamic knowledge with sincerity as the key motivator, these principles were further underpinned with employability skills for graduates for Islamic disciplines (L. M. Azahari et al., 2024). This concept was further explored among several digital economy practitioners on their expectation towards actors on fulfilling their roles within Islamic knowledge (L. M. Azahari & Ahmad, 2025). Based on the findings, it was found that apart from the core generic skills, there is also a demand for ethical skills among graduates especially with relation to future of work (L. M. Azahari & Ahmad, 2025). Four main qualities were sought after: honesty, trust, spiritual intelligence and soft communication skills. These qualities were later on categorized under spiritual capital as the fourth capital component that shapes employability skills for future of work (L. M. Azahari et al., 2026). This study aims to test the validity and reliability of all of the items categorized as skills within the four main capital components.

Figure 2: Graduate Employability Skills Framework



METHODOLOGY

This paper presents the result of the pilot study in response to the research question: to what extent is the proposed Graduate Employability (GE) Skills in Figure 2 assessment instrument feasible and appropriate for use among At-Tamayyuz interns based on pilot testing? Using SPSS, the pilot test was conducted from 7th of April until 13th of April 2026 among 82 respondents. The survey was distributed via WhatsApp to all potential respondents, accompanied by a detailed explanation of the research project's objectives. Several noteworthy analysis was conducted including descriptive analysis of participants demographic data, and the individual item testing of employability skills and concluding the overall reliability of the 74 employability skills items before being further validated and launched within the programme.

Table 1: Participant's Demographic Data

Profile	Frequency (Pax)	Average (%)
Age:		
18-20 years old	2	2.4
21-23 years old	45	54.9
24-26 years old	35	42.7
27+ years old	-	-
Gender:		
Male	25	30.5
Female	57	69.5
Nationality:		
Bruneian	78	95.1
Malaysian	1	1.2
Indonesian	-	-
Singaporean	-	-
Other: Chinese	1	1.2
Marital Status:		
Single	78	95.1
Married	4	4.9
Divorced	-	-
Separated	-	-
Widowed	-	-
Programme Enrolled:		
HND in Shariah Criminal Justice System		
PG Diploma in Islamic Law & Legal Practice		
BA in Laws & BA in Shariah Law (LLB & BSL)	7	8.5
BA in Shariah (Fiqh & Judiciary)	3	3.7
BA in Shariah (Fiqh & Usul)		

BA in Usuluddin (Tafsir & Hadith)	2	2.4
BA in Usuluddin ('Aqidah & Da'wah)	1	1.2
BA in Tahfiz & Qira'at		
BA in Arabic Language & Translation	3	3.7
BA in Islamic Development Management	1	1.2
BA in Islamic History & Civilisation		
BA in Halal Science	48	58.5
BA in Science in Agriculture (Agrotechnology)		
BA in Science in Agriculture (Agribusiness)		
BA in Islamic Media and Communication Technology		
BA in Science in Islamic Finance	9	11.0
BA in Business Management	3	3.7
BA in Islamic Economics	5	6.1
Faculty:		
Faculty of Law Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah (FOLSHHB)	7	8.5
Faculty of Shariah (FOS)	3	3.7
Faculty of Usuluddin (FOU)	3	3.7
Faculty of Arabic Language (FAL)	3	3.7
Faculty of Islamic Development Management (FIDM)	1	1.2
Faculty of Halal Science and Sustainable Tourism (FHSST)	48	58.5
Faculty of Agriculture (FOA)	-	-
Faculty of Islamic Technology (FIT)	-	-
Faculty of Islamic Economics & Finance (FEKIm)	17	20.7

Table 1 displays the demographic data pertaining to the pilot sample using descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that the majority of respondents were between 21-23 years old, comprising 54.9% (n=45) of the total sample. This was followed by respondents aged 24-26 years old, representing 42.7% (n=35). Only a small proportion of respondents were aged 18-20 years old, accounting for 2.4% (n=2), while no respondents were reported in the 27 years old and above category.

The age distribution indicates that the respondents were predominantly young adults within the typical university-going age range. This suggests that the participants were likely at active stages of academic development and engagement within higher education institutions.

In terms of gender, female respondents constituted the majority of the sample, representing 69.5% (n=57), whereas male respondents accounted for 30.5% (n=25). The findings demonstrate a female-dominated respondent composition, suggesting that female students were more highly represented in the programmes and faculties involved in this study.

The analysis of respondents' nationality revealed that majority of the respondents were Bruneian, comprising 95.1% (n=78) of the total sample. Meanwhile, Malaysian respondents accounted for 1.2% (n=1), and respondents categorized under "Other," specifically Chinese nationality, also represented 1.2% (n = 1). No respondents were reported under the Indonesian and Singaporean categories. The findings indicate that the respondent composition was highly dominated by local Bruneian students. This suggests that the perspectives, experiences, and perceptions reflected in the study are primarily representative of the Bruneian higher education context.

In terms of marital status, the analysis showed that the vast majority of respondents were single, comprising 95.1% (n=78) of the sample, while only 4.9% (n=4) were married. No respondents were recorded under divorced separated, or widowed categories. This distribution indicates that most respondents were unmarried students, which is consistent with the demographic characteristics typically observed among university student populations.

The respondents were also enrolled across various academic programmes. However, the majority were enrolled in the Bachelor of Halal Science programme, representing 58.5% (n=48) of the total respondents. This was followed by the Bachelor of science in Islamic Finance programme with 11.0% (n=9), the HND in Shariah Criminal Justice System programme with 8.5% (n=7), and the Bachelor of Islamic Economic programme with 6.1% (n=5). Several other programmes recorded relatively small participation rates ranging between 1.2% and 3.7%.

In terms of faculty distribution, the results shows that most respondents were from the Faculty of Halal Science and Sustainable Tourism (FHSST), accounting for 58.5% (n = 48) of the respondents. This was followed by the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Finance (FEKIm), representing 20.7% (n = 17).

Meanwhile, the Faculty of Law Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah (FOLSHHB) accounted for 8.5% (n = 7), while the Faculty of Shariah (FOS), Faculty of Usuluddin (FOU), and Faculty of Arabic Language (FAL) each represented 3.7% (n = 3). The Faculty of Islamic Development Management (FIDM) recorded the lowest participation rate at 1.2% (n = 1).

Internship Programme

The second phase of the pilot study required an in-depth analysis of the demographic characteristics of the 82 respondents based on year of study, sector, district, and duration (weeks). The analysis provides an overview of the respondents' background, which is essential for understanding the representativeness of the sample and contextualizing the findings of the study.

Year of Study: The distribution of respondents by year of study reveals a significant concentration in Year 2025, with 73 respondents (89.0%). In contrast, only 7 respondents (8.5%) were in Year 2024, while Year 2021 and Year 2022 each accounted for 1 respondent (1.2%). Based on sector distribution, it was seen that respondents are distributed across various sectors, with a pronounced concentration in the Government/Public Sector, which includes 47 respondents (57.3%). Other sectors exhibit considerably lower participation, ranging from 1.2% to 7.3%, with several sectors represented by only one or two respondents. The majority of respondents are situated in the Brunei-Muara District, comprising 70 respondents (85.4%), followed by the Tutong District with 8 respondents (9.8%), and the Belait District with 4 respondents (4.9%). Respondents also differed according to the duration of internship they had enrolled. The duration variable indicates that most respondents reported a duration of 10 weeks, accounting for 44 respondents (53.7%), followed by 20 weeks (23.2%), 12 weeks (20.7%), and 9 weeks (2.4%). Overall, the demographic data demonstrates that the dataset is derived from a relatively experienced and contextually informed respondent population, providing a robust foundation for interpreting the subsequent findings on leadership and educational outcomes in the study.

Employability Skills

The descriptive statistics pertaining to respondents' perceptions of employability skill development within the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme were measured using a four-point Likert scale. The data predominantly indicates a positive trend, with the majority of responses concentrated in Scale 3 (Agree) and Scale 4 (Strongly Agree). This suggests that respondents generally perceive the programme as effective in fostering key employability skills essential for academic, professional, and workplace success.

Lifelong Learning Skills (LLS)

The responses for the Lifelong Learning Skills (LLS1–LLS9) items consistently exhibit a positive pattern, with most respondents selecting Scale 3 (Agree) and Scale 4 (Strongly Agree). For instance, LLS1 recorded 73.2% agreement and 24.4% strong agreement, with similar patterns observed across LLS2 to LLS9. This indicates that the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme effectively cultivates students' ability to continuously acquire knowledge, adapt to new learning environments, and engage in self-improvement. The low frequency of disagreement suggests that students widely recognize lifelong learning as a key outcome of their internship experience.

Digital Skills (DS)

The Digital Skills construct (DS1–DS5) demonstrates strong positive endorsement, with responses concentrated in Scale 3 (57.3%–63.4%) and notable Scale 4 responses (28.0%–36.6%). These findings indicate that the programme enhances students' ability to effectively utilize digital technologies for workplace tasks, communication, information processing, and professional productivity. This reflects the programme's relevance in preparing students for increasingly digitalized work environments.

Management Skills (MS)

The Management Skills items (MS1–MS5) reflect favorable perceptions, with MS1 showing 54.9% agreement and 43.9% strong agreement, representing one of the strongest endorsement patterns in the dataset. This suggests that the internship programme significantly enhances students' planning, organizational, time-management, and task coordination abilities. These are critical competencies that support efficiency and accountability in professional settings.

Problem-Solving Skills (PSS)

Responses to Problem-Solving Skills (PSS1–PSS5) are largely concentrated at Scale 3, ranging from 61.0% to 73.2%, with moderate strong agreement levels. This pattern suggests that students perceive the programme as supporting their ability to identify workplace challenges and develop appropriate solutions. However, the stronger concentration in "Agree" rather than "Strongly Agree" indicates opportunities for further strengthening through more complex real-world problem-solving exposure.

Professional Etiquettes (PE)

Professional Etiquettes (PE1–PE5) show exceptionally strong positive results, with responses restricted entirely to Scale 3 and Scale 4, and no disagreement recorded. This highly significant finding indicates that the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme effectively instills professionalism, workplace discipline, respect, responsibility, and appropriate conduct. The absence of negative responses reflects strong professional readiness among participating students.

Entrepreneurial Mindset and Skills (EMS)

The Entrepreneurial Mindset and Skills (EMS1–EMS3) items show positive distributions dominated by **Scale 3** and **Scale 4** responses. This suggests that the programme nurtures initiative, creativity, adaptability, and

opportunity recognition among students. These entrepreneurial attributes are essential employability skills in dynamic and competitive professional environments.

Communication Skills (CS)

Communication Skills (CS1–CS6) demonstrate strong agreement across all indicators, with most respondents selecting **Scale 3**, followed by substantial **Scale 4 endorsement**. This indicates that students perceive improvements in their ability to communicate effectively, present ideas clearly, and engage professionally with colleagues and supervisors. Such communication competencies are fundamental to workplace collaboration and professional performance.

Leadership Skills (LS)

The Leadership Skills construct shows moderate positivity, with greater concentration in **Scale 3** and relatively fewer **Scale 4 responses**. This suggests that while the programme contributes to developing leadership potential, students may still view these skills as emerging rather than fully developed. This indicates the need for additional opportunities for practical leadership engagement during internship placements.

Teamwork Skills (T)

The Teamwork indicators show strong agreement, with Scale 3 dominating and moderate to high

Scale 4 responses. This reflects students' positive perceptions of their ability to collaborate effectively, contribute to team objectives, and function productively in workplace settings. These findings suggest that the programme effectively strengthens collaborative employability competencies.

Self-Development Skills (SD)

The Self-Development construct presents consistent agreement across all twelve indicators, suggesting that students perceive the internship programme as strongly supporting personal and professional growth. This indicates that participation in At-Tamayyuz encourages reflection, resilience, adaptability, and motivation for continuous improvement—qualities essential for long-term employability.

Ethical Skills (ES)

Ethical Skills items reveal strong positive endorsement, with Scale 3 and Scale 4 dominating all responses. This suggests that the programme effectively promotes professional integrity, accountability, ethical reasoning, and responsible decision-making. Ethical competence is a critical employability attribute that supports trustworthiness and professionalism in workplace contexts.

Overall Interpretation

Collectively, the findings suggest that the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme plays a significant role in enhancing students' employability skills, particularly in professional etiquette, lifelong learning, management, communication, ethical awareness, and self-development. The predominance of "Agree" rather than "Strongly Agree" across several constructs indicates that while students perceive substantial skill development, there remains room for further strengthening, particularly in leadership and advanced problem-solving competencies. These findings demonstrate that the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme is effective in preparing students for future workplace demands by fostering comprehensive employability skills aligned with contemporary professional expectations.

Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the 74 employability skill items used to measure students' perceptions of skill development in the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, item-total correlations, and inter-item correlation analysis.

1. Overall Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability statistics indicate a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.984 for the 74-item scale, with a standardized alpha value of 0.985, which demonstrates excellent internal consistency reliability (George, Darren and Mallery, 2003).

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.984	.985	74

A Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.90 is generally interpreted as excellent, indicating that the instrument items consistently measure the underlying construct of employability skills. This exceptionally high coefficient suggests that the questionnaire is highly reliable for assessing students' employability skills within the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme. The high reliability value also confirms that respondents interpreted the items consistently, reflecting strong coherence among the measured dimensions.

2. Item Mean Analysis

The item means analysis indicates the average response score for each questionnaire item, showing respondents' overall level of agreement regarding employability skills developed through the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme. In this study, the item means range from 2.854 to 3.512, with an overall average mean of 3.237 across all 74 items. This indicates that students generally selected responses between "Agree" and "Strongly Agree," suggesting positive perceptions of employability skill development through the internship programme.

Table 3: Item-Mean Analysis

Summary Item Statistics							
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	3.237	2.854	3.512	.659	1.231	.019	74

The higher mean scores (above 3.40) indicate stronger endorsement and reflect areas where students perceived substantial skill development. These were mainly found in Professional Etiquette (PE) and Management Skills (MS), suggesting that the programme effectively strengthens workplace professionalism, discipline, responsibility, and organisational competence. While higher mean scores indicate stronger agreement among respondents, they should not be interpreted as evidence of measurement reliability on their own, as reliability refers to the internal consistency among items rather than average response levels.

The moderate mean scores (3.00–3.39) indicate generally positive agreement but suggest that there is still room for further enhancement. These include Digital Skills, Communication Skills, Teamwork, Self-Development, and Entrepreneurial Skills, showing that students acknowledged meaningful skill improvement in these areas. In measurement terms, such moderate patterns may reflect constructs that are broader or more multidimensional in nature, which can sometimes lead to more variability in responses and affect internal consistency if items are not tightly aligned.

While lower mean scores (below 3.00), particularly within some Leadership Skills (LS) items (LS1 and LS2 = 2.85), suggest that although students agreed that leadership skills were developed, these competencies may not yet be as strongly developed as other employability dimensions. From a psychometric perspective, lower or more variable item ratings may indicate weaker item cohesion or differences in how respondents interpret specific

leadership components, which may influence the overall internal consistency of the scale if the items do not consistently represent a single construct.

3. Corrected Item-Total Correlations

Table 4: Corrected Item-Total Correlation

Item	Item Description	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
LLS1	<i>I can integrate knowledge from different fields to solve problems at work.</i>	.559
LLS2	<i>I apply various types of knowledge (e.g., religious, social, technical) in my internship tasks.</i>	.450
LLS3	<i>I evaluate information critically before making decisions.</i>	.616
LLS4	<i>I am able to analyze problems from different perspectives.</i>	.713
LLS5	<i>I provide well-reasoned arguments when proposing solutions.</i>	.702
LLS6	<i>I suggest new and innovative ways to complete my internship tasks.</i>	.729
LLS7	<i>I use my Islamic knowledge creatively to address practical problems.</i>	.442
LLS8	<i>I improve ways of applying Islamic principles/theory in my internship workplace decision-making</i>	.634
LLS9	<i>I can integrate knowledge from different fields to solve problems at work.</i>	.603
DS1	<i>I confidently use digital tools (e.g., Microsoft Office, Google Workspace, Artificial Intelligence) in my tasks.</i>	.637
DS2	<i>I can quickly learn new digital platforms when needed for work.</i>	.637
DS3	<i>I use online resources to support my work effectively.</i>	.570
DS4	<i>I am able to analyse and interpret digital data or reports to support decision making.</i>	.778
DS5	<i>I encourage the use of digital technologies to improve efficiency in my work.</i>	.723
MS1	<i>I manage my time effectively to meet internship deadlines.</i>	.750
MS2	<i>I can organize and prioritize tasks efficiently.</i>	.711
MS3	<i>I help coordinate or lead small projects or assignments at work.</i>	.650
MS4	<i>I am able to work independently when completing tasks.</i>	.765
MS5	<i>I assist in ensuring that operational procedures and guidelines are properly implemented to enhance organizational efficiency and effectiveness.</i>	.671
PSS1	<i>I contribute original ideas during discussions and meetings.</i>	.616
PSS2	<i>I apply Islamic or conventional knowledge to solve real-life work problems.</i>	.684

PSS3	<i>I analyze situations thoroughly before making decisions.</i>	.693
PSS4	<i>I can identify problems and propose solutions.</i>	.681
PSS5	<i>I developed creative approaches in solving workplace problems.</i>	.620
PE1	<i>I maintain punctuality in reporting to work or meetings.</i>	.659
PE2	<i>I adhere to the appropriate dress code and organizational conduct.</i>	.572
PE3	<i>I interact respectfully with colleagues and supervisors.</i>	.598
PE4	<i>I consistently maintained good attendance throughout my internship programme.</i>	.586
PE5	<i>I listen to others' opinions with openness and respect.</i>	.618
EMS1	<i>I look for opportunities to create or improve processes during my internship.</i>	.733
EMS2	<i>I am willing to take risks when proposing new ideas.</i>	.662
EMS3	<i>I explore ways to turn my skills into potential business ventures.</i>	.621
CS1	<i>I write reports or documentation clearly and professionally.</i>	.761
CS2	<i>I can summarize complex ideas effectively in writing.</i>	.745
CS3	<i>I can write formal emails or letters using appropriate professional language</i>	.688
CS4	<i>I communicate professionally through digital platforms such as WhatsApp, email, or other messaging applications.</i>	.673
CS5	<i>I express myself confidently during discussions.</i>	.689
CS6	<i>I engage in active listening and provide constructive feedback.</i>	.802
LS1	<i>I take initiative in leading group activities or assignments.</i>	.554
LS2	<i>I actively participate in religious leadership duties.</i>	.634
LS3	<i>I try to serve as a role model in my workplace.</i>	.620
LS4	<i>I act in ways that reflect Islamic values and good character.</i>	.718
LS5	<i>My actions reflect what I expect from my subordinates or colleagues.</i>	.627
LS6	<i>I remain calm and composed even in emotionally challenging situations.</i>	.569
T1	<i>I work well with people from diverse backgrounds.</i>	.645
T2	<i>I support my team mates to achieve common goals.</i>	.703
T3	<i>I cooperate with others within my department / centre/ division</i>	.752
T4	<i>I collaborate with others outside my department/ centre/ division</i>	.716
T5	<i>I work well with difficult people</i>	.648

T6	<i>I ensure transparency when working on joint projects with other teams.</i>	.713
SD1	<i>I remain focused even when work becomes difficult.</i>	.707
SD2	<i>I manage stressful situations calmly and professionally.</i>	.738
SD3	<i>I am willing to work beyond official hours when necessary to complete important tasks.</i>	.533
SD4	<i>I volunteer for tasks without waiting to be asked.</i>	.636
SD5	<i>I look for ways to improve my own work performance.</i>	.729
SD6	<i>I am able to generate alternative approaches when solving work-related problem</i>	.777
SD7	<i>I quickly adjust to new tasks or environments.</i>	.680
SD8	<i>I embrace changes in my internship setting positively.</i>	.744
SD9	<i>I am able to work with all types of people</i>	.672
SD10	<i>I show dedication to completing tasks assigned to me.</i>	.757
SD11	<i>I am motivated to learn and improve continuously.</i>	.722
SD12	<i>I commit to all tasks even those beyond my scope</i>	.731
ES1	<i>I complete tasks honestly even when unsupervised.</i>	.751
ES2	<i>I report my progress truthfully.</i>	.706
ES3	<i>I am transparent to others about my work tasks (eg; Declaring the use of Artificial Intelligence)</i>	.675
ES4	<i>I view my work as a trust and perform it with sincerity.</i>	.736
ES5	<i>I fulfil my responsibilities without needing reminders.</i>	.722
ES6	<i>I am able to meet deadlines</i>	.749
ES7	<i>I make wise decisions based on both reason and Islamic values.</i>	.736
ES8	<i>I apply my Islamic knowledge when doing my work tasks</i>	.754
ES9	<i>I apply emotional intelligence in workplace interactions</i>	.739
ES10	<i>I share Islamic knowledge in a way that benefits others at work.</i>	.706
ES11	<i>I communicate religious values tactfully and respectfully.</i>	.689
ES12	<i>I comply with ethical principles in my workplace.</i>	.650

The corrected item–total correlations (CITC) ranging from 0.442 to 0.802 indicate that all items demonstrate acceptable to strong relationships with their respective overall constructs. In psychometric terms, corrected item–total correlation assesses the degree to which each item is consistent with the overall scale score; values above **0.30** are generally considered acceptable, indicating that the item contributes meaningfully to measuring the same underlying construct. Since all items in this study exceed this threshold, it can be concluded that each item shows satisfactory internal consistency contribution to the employability skills construct.

The particularly strong item–total correlations, such as Communication Skills 6 - I engage in active listening and provide constructive feedback ($r = 0.802$), Digital Skills 4 - I am able to analyse and interpret digital data or reports to support decision making ($r = 0.778$), Management Skills 4 - I am able to work independently when completing tasks ($r = 0.765$), Self-Development 10 - I show dedication to completing tasks assigned to me ($r = 0.757$), and Ethical Skills 8 - I apply my Islamic knowledge when doing my work task ($r = 0.754$), indicate a high degree of item homogeneity with their respective scales. These items align closely with the overall construct of employability skills, suggesting that they are strong and stable indicators of the underlying latent traits being measured. High corrected item–total correlations reflect that respondents who score highly on the overall construct also tend to score consistently high on these items, reinforcing their measurement consistency and discriminating power.

More importantly, no item falls below the commonly accepted minimum threshold of 0.30, indicating that there are no weak or poorly performing items within the instrument. This supports the conclusion that all items are suitable for retention, as each contributes positively to the scale’s internal consistency reliability. From a scale development perspective, this pattern suggests that the instrument is psychometrically sound, with coherent item functioning across all employability skill dimensions and no evidence of item redundancy or misfit that would justify deletion.

4. Cronbach’s Alpha if Item Deleted

The “Cronbach’s Alpha if Item Deleted” results provide strong evidence of excellent internal consistency and stable item functioning within the instrument. The fact that the alpha value remains consistently high at 0.984 for all items indicates that removing any single item would not meaningfully improve the overall reliability of the scale. Psychometrically, this suggests that each item contributes in a balanced way to the measurement of the underlying construct, and no item is weakening the internal consistency of the instrument.

From an item reliability perspective, this pattern demonstrates a high degree of item homogeneity, meaning that all 74 items are strongly aligned with the same underlying construct and are functioning coherently as a unified measurement scale. When alpha remains unchanged after item deletion, it indicates that no item is redundant or misfitting to the extent that its removal would enhance reliability. Instead, each item appears to add incremental measurement value, reinforcing the overall structure of the instrument.

However, while a very high Cronbach’s alpha (such as 0.984) confirms strong internal consistency, it may also suggest potential item redundancy, where several items may be measuring very similar aspects of the same construct. In scale development literature, excessively high alpha values can sometimes indicate overlap among items rather than improved construct coverage (DeVellis, 2016). Nevertheless, in this case, since all items contribute positively and none reduce reliability, the results confirm strong structural stability and internal coherence of the employability skills instrument, supporting the retention of all 74 items.

5. Inter-Item Correlation Analysis

Table 5: Inter-Item Correlation Analysis

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.464	.055	1.000	.945	18.088	.015	74

The inter-item correlation results provide evidence of how consistently the items relate to one another and the extent to which they measure a coherent underlying construct. The observed inter-item correlations range from 0.055 to 1.000, with an overall average inter-item correlation of 0.464, indicating a generally acceptable level of internal consistency among the items.

From a psychometric perspective, an average inter-item correlation between 0.20 and 0.70 is typically considered desirable, as it reflects a balance between homogeneity and non-redundancy among items. The obtained mean of 0.464 falls comfortably within this recommended range, suggesting that the items are sufficiently related to measure the same overarching construct of employability skills, while still maintaining enough diversity to capture its multidimensional nature.

The relatively strong average inter-item correlation of 0.464 indicates good item reliability, reflecting strong conceptual alignment among the employability skill dimensions. This suggests that the items consistently measure related aspects of employability without being overly repetitive. In reliability terms, this pattern supports a well-structured instrument where items collectively contribute to a stable and internally coherent scale.

However, the presence of correlations ranging from as low as 0.055 to as high as 1.000 indicates some variability in item relationships. Very high correlations (approaching 1.000) may suggest potential item redundancy within closely related constructs, while very low correlations may indicate that certain items tap into more distinct aspects of employability skills. This pattern is not necessarily problematic in multidimensional instruments, but it highlights the balance between shared variance and construct differentiation, which is important for scale validity and reliability interpretation.

Stronger correlations observed within related constructs such as Professional Etiquette, Communication Skills, Self-Development, and Ethical Skills reflect expected conceptual overlap, as these domains collectively represent core components of professional employability. From an item reliability perspective, this supports the idea that these items are functioning cohesively within their respective constructs, reinforcing the overall internal consistency and structural coherence of the instrument.

Overall, the reliability analysis demonstrates that the employability skills instrument used to evaluate the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme possesses excellent psychometric quality. The exceptionally high Cronbach's Alpha (0.984) confirms that the instrument reliably measures students' employability skill development. Strong corrected item-total correlations and stable alpha values further validate the appropriateness of all questionnaire items. These findings provide strong evidence that the At-Tamayyuz Internship Programme offers a coherent and effective framework for developing holistic employability skills among students. The results support the conclusion that the programme successfully prepares students for workplace readiness by fostering professional competence, adaptability, ethical awareness, communication effectiveness, and continuous self-development aligned with contemporary employment expectations.

CONCLUSION

Internships remain critical approaches to align higher education knowledge with industry practice. In the context of Islamic disciplines, challenges in securing relevant placements within the industry have initiated a response to produce a customized framework of employability skills to adapt these disciplines for the different sectors within Brunei Darussalam. Presently, work-based learning initiatives are present both before and after graduation. The 74 item employability skills framework was designed for At-Tamayyuz internship programme to gauge interns levels of employability post programme. The framework enables interns to reflect on their self-perceived employability skills while providing them with a direction and commitment towards progressing these skills upon completing the programme. The framework also enables supervisors from both university and industry to monitor their performance and literacy on these skills for further action and training if required. This framework also offers a potentially useful component on gauging spiritual development among graduates on how they translate their knowledge from Islamic disciplines into practice. It further enables the graduates to foster ethics not just within the industry, but also within their academic performance. The ethical skills under Spiritual Capital component provides an added value for future graduates to practice ethics in mitigating risks of artificial intelligence. These include training them to practice honesty, trustworthiness, spiritual intelligence and soft communication skills. The framework can also be replicated or tested within other contexts.

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