

**EVALUATION OF SELECTED INTERNSHIP FACTORS ON MASTERY OF SOFT  
SKILLS AMONG INTERNS: EVIDENCE FROM NAKURU COUNTY  
GOVERNMENT, KENYA**

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**A Research Project Submitted to the Institute of Post Graduate Studies of Kabarak  
University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of  
Master of Science in Human Resource Management**

**Kabarak University**

**DECEMBER, 2019**

## DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented to any other university or college for academic purposes.

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GMHR/NE/2515/05/18

## RECOMMENDATION

To the institute of Postgraduate studies:

This research project entitled “**Evaluation of selected factors internship on mastery of soft skills among interns: Evidence from Nakuru County Government**” and written by **Purity Jepkorir Changwony** is submitted to the institute of Postgraduate Studies of Kabarak University. We have reviewed the research project and recommended it to be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for award of the degree of Master of Science in Human Resource Management.

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## **DEDICATIONS**

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## ABSTRACT

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century work environment requires workers to have requisite soft skills and many organizations offer internship opportunities to enable students gain these skills and prepare them to function in current workplace. This study aimed to evaluate selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills among interns in the County Government of Nakuru. The specific objectives of the study are to analyse the effect of assessment criteria, competency of internship supervisors, person role fitness and institutional support on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. The study was anchored on experiential learning theory and Dreyfus model. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study was the 1300 interns stationed in the Nakuru County Government during the month of August from which a sample of 102 interns was obtained using stratified random sampling technique and a structured self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. A pilot study was conducted in Baringo County, Mogotio Sub-county to ascertain the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data to obtain both descriptive and inferential statistics. The main descriptive statistics obtain were frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation. Inferential statistics employed were Pearson's product moment correlation which helped to compute the direction and strength of the linear associations. Simple and multiple regression analysis were used to test the association between the variables. The study found out that assessment criteria significantly ( $\beta=0.772$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) affected soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. The study also found out that Institutional Support significantly ( $\beta=0.811$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) affected soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. This study further found out that person role fitness significantly ( $\beta=1.139$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) affected soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. However, the study found out that there is no statistically significant ( $<0.05$ ) effect of competence of the internship supervisors on soft skills mastery among the interns in Nakuru County Government. Thus, it was concluded that assessment criteria, person role fitness and institutional support were significant factors of internship which affect soft skills mastery among interns in the County. The study recommends that college institutions should work in collaboration with the organizations or industries where the students are sent for their internship programs to ensure that there is a good assessment criteria put in place, that the interns are well placed as per their professions (person role fitness) and ensure institutional support in order to enhance soft skills mastery among the interns as evidenced from Nakuru County Government, Kenya.

**Key words:** *Internship Factors, Internship, Assessment Criteria, Competence, Institutional support, Person role fitness, Soft skills Mastery.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>COPYRIGHT</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>DEDICATIONS</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS</b> .....	<b>xiii</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS</b> .....	<b>xiv</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE:INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2.1 Global Perspective of Selected Internship factors and Mastery of Soft Skills.....	2
1.2.2 Regional Perspective of Selected Internship factors and Mastery of Soft Skills .....	4
1.2.3 Local Perspective of Selected Internship factors and Mastery of Soft Skills .....	5
1.2.4 Soft Skills Mastery .....	5
1.2.5 Nakuru County Government .....	7
1.3 Statement of the Problem .....	7
1.4 Purpose of the Study.....	8
1.5 Objectives of the Study .....	8
1.6 Research Hypotheses.....	8
1.7 Justification of the Study .....	9
1.8 Significance of the Study .....	9
1.9 Scope of the study .....	9
1.10 Limitation and delimitation of the study .....	10
1.11 Assumption of the Study .....	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO:LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	<b>11</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	11
2.2 Theoretical Review.....	11
2.2.1 Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition .....	11
2.2.2 Experiential Learning .....	12



2.3 Empirical Review .....	13
2.3.1 Assessment Criteria and Mastery Soft Skills .....	13
2.3.2 Competency of the Internship Supervisors and Mastery of Soft Skills .....	15
2.3.3 Person Role Fitness and Mastery of Soft Skills .....	17
2.3.4 Institutional Support and Mastery of Soft Skills .....	19
2.4 Conceptual Framework .....	20
2.5 Research Gap.....	22
<b>CHAPTER THREE:RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>24</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	24
3.2 Research Design .....	24
3.3. Location of the study .....	24
3.4 Population of the study .....	24
3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample size .....	25
3.5.1. Sampling Procedure .....	25
3.5.2 Sampling Size Determination.....	25
3.6 Instrumentation.....	26
3.6.1 Pilot Study .....	26
3.6. 2 Validity Testing .....	27
3.6.3 Reliability Testing .....	27
3.7 Data Collection Procedure.....	27
3.8 Data Analysis Method and Presentation of Findings .....	28
3.9 Ethical Consideration .....	29
<b>CHAPTER FOUR:DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	30
4.2 Response Rate .....	30
4.3 Reliability Tests.....	30
4.4 Demographic information of Respondents.....	30
4.4.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender .....	30
4.4.2 Distribution of Respondents by Age .....	31
4.4.3 Distribution of Respondents by Education.....	31
4.5 Variables of the Study .....	32
4.5.1 Competence of the Internship Supervisors.....	32
4.5.2 Assessment Criteria.....	33
4.5.3 Personal Role Fitness .....	35

4.5.4 Institutional Support .....	36
4.5.5 Mastery of Soft Skills before Joining Internship Program .....	37
4.5.6 Soft Skills Mastery after Joining Internship Program .....	41
4.5.7 Comparing Soft Skills Mastery Before and After Joining Internship Program .....	44
4.6 Inferential statistic. ....	44
4.6.1 Correlation Matrix .....	44
4.6.2 Correlation Analysis .....	45
4.7 Regression Analysis .....	46
4.7.1 Hypothesis 1 .....	47
4.7.2 Hypothesis 2 .....	47
4.7.3 Hypothesis 3 .....	49
4.7.4 Hypothesis 4 .....	50
4.8 Multiple Regression Model .....	51
<b>CHAPTER FIVE:SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>53</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	53
5.2 Summary of Findings.....	53
5.2.1 Assessment criteria of the internship on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.....	53
5.2.2 Institutional Support on Soft Skills Mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.....	54
5.2.3 Person Role Fitness on Soft Skills Mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.....	54
5.2.4 Competence of Internship Supervisors on Soft Skills Mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.....	55
5.3 Conclusions.....	56
5.4 Recommendations.....	56
5.5 Suggestions for further research .....	57
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Appendix I: Consent Letter .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Appendix II: Questionnaire.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Appendix III: Letter Of Approval From The School Of Graduate Studies .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Appendix IV: Nacosti Approval.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Appendix V: Authorization Letter For Pilot Study .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Appendix VI: Authorization Letter From Nakuru County Goverment .....</b>	<b>72</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 2.1:</b> Research Gaps .....	24
<b>Table 3.1:</b> Sample Size Determination .....	26
<b>Table 4.1:</b> Reliability Statistics .....	30
<b>Table 4.2:</b> Distribution of Respondents by Gender.....	31
<b>Table 4.3:</b> Distribution of Respondents by Age.....	31
<b>Table 4.4:</b> Competence of the Internship Supervisors .....	33
<b>Table 4.5:</b> Assessment Criteria .....	34
<b>Table 4.6:</b> Personal Role Fitness.....	36
<b>Table 4.7:</b> Institutional Support .....	37
<b>Table 4.8:</b> Soft Skills Mastery before Joining Internship Program.....	40
<b>Table 4.9:</b> Soft Skills Mastery after Joining Internship Program .....	43
<b>Table 4.10:</b> Paired Samples Test.....	44
<b>Table 4.11:</b> Correlation Matrix.....	45
<b>Table 4.12:</b> Correlation Analysis .....	46
<b>Table 4.13:</b> Competence of the internship Supervisors Model Summary .....	47
<b>Table 4.14:</b> Assessment Criteria Model Summary.....	48
<b>Table 4.15:</b> Assessment Criteria Model Coefficients .....	48
<b>Table 4.16:</b> Person Role Fitness Model Summary.....	49
<b>Table 4.17:</b> Personal Role Fitness Coefficients .....	50
<b>Table 4.18:</b> Institutional Support Model Summary .....	51
<b>Table 4.19:</b> Institutional Support Model Coefficients .....	51
<b>Table 4.20:</b> Multiple Regression Model Summary.....	52
<b>Table 4.21:</b> Coefficients.....	52

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 2.1 :</b> Conceptual Framework .....	21
<b>Figure 4.1:</b> Distribution of Respondents by Education Level .....	32

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ATD</b>	Association for Talent Development
<b>CV</b>	Curriculum Vitae
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communications technology
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organizations
<b>LSE</b>	Life skills education
<b>MQF</b>	Malaysian Qualifications Framework
<b>NACOSTI</b>	The National Council of Science, Technology and innovation
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>TEDQUAL</b>	Tourism Education and Quality
<b>UMP</b>	University Malaysia Pahang
<b>UMT</b>	University Malaysia Terengganu
<b>UNSW</b>	University of New South Wales

## **OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS**

<b>Assessment criteria:</b>	Brookhart (2018) assessment criteria are descriptive statements that give learners and instructors the information about the characteristics, aspects and qualities of a given learning activity. The researcher applied the same definition in the study skills.
<b>Communication skills:</b>	According to Arnold and Boggs (2019), Communication skills are the ability to share information, ask questions, seek assistance, pass a message accurately, clearly and effectively. The researcher has incorporated this definition in the study.
<b>Competence:</b>	According (Lasse,2015) competence is a set of behaviors that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results or outcomes. The researcher retained the same definition in the study.
<b>Critical thinking:</b>	Is a cognitive activity, which involves using the mind, to think in critically analytical and evaluative ways using the processes of the mind such as attention categorization, selection and judgment (Cottrell, 2017). In this study critical thinking is the reflective and reasonable thinking that focused on deciding what to do, what not to do and what to believe.
<b>Hard skills:</b>	These are the technical skills pertaining to a field or specialization in which an individual wants to develop career and want to succeed (Ramatchandirane & Upadhyay, 2019). The researcher used hard skills to mean the degrees, the diplomas and the certificates which are attained after completion of a given course.
<b>Internship</b>	Are programs engaging students in service activities or tasks primarily for the purpose of providing them with hands-on experience that enhances learning and mastery of soft skills to a particular area of study (Bukaliya,2012). The researcher retained the same definition in the study

<b>Institutional support:</b>	Institutional support is the management strategies aimed at improving institutional operations and performance Welsh and Metcalf (2003). The researcher retained the same definition.
<b>Non-technical skills:</b>	These are the required people's skills that have great influence in handling people and they include among others interpersonal skills. Communication skills; leadership skills; team-work skills; decision-making skills; critical thinking skills and situation-awareness skills (Ramatchandirane & upadhyay 2019). The researcher applied the same definition in the study skills.
<b>Person role fitness</b>	According to Bukaliya (2014) person role fitness is the relevance of the internship program to the work. The researcher incorporated this definition in the study.
<b>Problem solving:</b>	It is the ability to identify the problem, develop and test ways to productively respond to the challenge and monitor progress along the way, it is the way individuals respond to uncertainty (Beghetto, 2018). The same definition is used in the study.
<b>Soft skills mastery:</b>	According to Goleman (2011) soft skills mastery is the comprehension and use of soft skills and the same definition is applicable to the research study.
<b>Soft skills:</b>	Soft skills are also known as the non-technical skills. They are the interpersonal and intrapersonal traits that help individuals to better fit the work environment (Meeks 2017). The researcher retained the same definition in the study.
<b>Teamwork:</b>	A group of individuals or employees who works together with an aim of completing a task or a large goal (Pagano & Gauvreau, 2018). The researcher retained the same definition in the study

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with background of the research study. It starts with the global perspective, regional perspective and local perspective of the selected factors of internship and mastery of soft skills. It also provides a clear statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research hypotheses. Justification and significance of the study is also highlighted. The scope, limitation and delimitation of the study is also looked into. Finally, assumption of the study is provided.

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

Human resource is the most important resource of an organization (Negruta, 2015). The competence of this resource in a workplace is partly dependent on the training they possess both the hard and soft skills are critical. Hard skills are taught in a classroom set up while internship plays a crucial role in the mastery of the soft skills. Internships are programs that engage students in tasks mainly with the determination of providing them with the necessary experience that enhances their education and mastering of soft skills and hard skills to a professional area of study (Bukaliya, 2012).

Internship involve a limited period of work experience with an employer usually lasting between a few weeks to one year (in some rare cases even longer) but which is neither part of a regular employment relationship nor a formal apprenticeship (Meeks, 2017). It also serves as excellent training ground for developing the necessary “professional skills”, which are necessary for the future job (Negruta, 2015). It must be noted by both the host and the institutions that internships factors are the key aspects of an effective internship program. According to Wen (2010), organizational factors (Assessment criteria, person role fitness, competence of the internship supervisors and institutional support) are the important ingredients of an effective internship hence justifying the selection of the internship factors by the researcher in the current study.

Maximum support is needed from both the institution and the mentors in terms of space, equipment, expert’s time, potential training and travel costs, among other costs. The university will have to devote resources to set up and maintenance of relationships with host organizations. Having a competent supervisor for internships would be very beneficial. The institution must also constantly determine the quality of implementing the internship and



changes that need to be made to enhance the student's mastery of soft skills. "Soft skills are also referred as emotional intelligence, soft skills mastery contributes more to an individual's ultimate success or failure than technical skills or intelligence," (Goleman, 2011). The Protocol School of Washington, DC and conducted by Harvard University, the Carnegie Foundation and the Stanford Research Institute has shown that technical skills and knowledge account for about 15 percent of the reason an individual gets a job, keeps the job and advances in that job, the remaining 85 percent of job success is based on the individual's "soft skills" (Crosbie, 2005).

According to Bukaliya, (2012) there is a gap between the quality of graduates produced and what the market demands, thus training institutions and employers have accepted the need to mitigate and bridge the lack of soft skills gap through effective internship programs. Hence institutions of higher learning have come up with training programs also known as field attachment. The quality of internship programs relies on factors of internship Wen (2010), organizational factors (Assessment criteria, person role fitness, competence of the internship supervisors and institutional support) are the important ingredients or factors of an effective internship. Washor (2015) a field attachment will often be that first specialized work experience for a student, and may be the best chance to master not only the hard skills but also the soft skills which will help them to easily secure a job vacancy in the future.

According to Nusrat (2018), about two million new faces are joining the workforce annually in Bangladesh; but two-thirds of them remain unemployed or underemployed while on the other hand, industries in Bangladesh are running with 10-15 percent vacant positions, caused by the challenge of soft skills mastery in the entry-level graduates. Internships are useful for developing soft skills, such as communication skills, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills and teamwork that are not generally part of the formal tertiary education curriculum (Yusoff, Rahim, Baba, Ismail and Pa 2013). The opportunity to master soft skills and experience through internships reinforces self-efficacy, which in turn influences not only their ability to secure a job but also entrepreneurial intent since interns are given more responsibility and autonomy to make their own decisions concerning the work allocated to them.

### **1.2.1 Global Perspective of Selected Internship factors and Mastery of Soft Skills**

According to Ismail (2018), internships are well established in the US and are becoming more common in the UK. In the US internships have become a popular way to bridge the gap

between education and work. Internship factors are set up by institutions and industries to enable soft skills mastery among interns. Internships in both the US and the UK are seen as powerful vehicles which enable students to master soft skills that can only be gleaned through on-the-job training. Technical skills alone are no longer adequate for graduates entering the job market. Moorthy, Munz, Sarker and Darzi, (2013), the assessment criteria during training have been considered to be a form of quality assurance for the mastery of soft skills, the assessment of the internships is the responsibility of the trainers.

According to Leblois, Damette and Wolfersberger (2017), World Bank calculations showed that more than two billion working-age adults are not equipped with the most essential soft skills required by employers. Among young adults under the age of 25, the number is about 420 million worldwide. Foundational skills, critical thinking, communication, problem solving and team work for young people are a prerequisite, helping the young people develop these skills makes economic sense. The researchers noted that internships can give young people, the skills to compete for better paying jobs.

According to Wen, et al., (2010), assessment criteria of the internships is viewed as an effective approach to equip university students with preliminary soft skills and experience, thus enhancing their employability in the competitive labor market. Focusing on identifying and evaluating the factors of internship effectiveness, the study aimed at exploring the extent to which the organization practices accounted for the internship success. Wen, et al., (2010), noted that organizational factors (Assessment criteria, person role fitness, competence of the internship supervisors and institutional support) were identified as important ingredients or factors of an effective internship.

According to Washor (2015), with competent supervisors and institutional support during internships contributes to student soft-skill mastery specifically in the areas of communication, teamwork, problem solving, initiative, and critical thinking skills. Consistent with worldwide trends, about two million new faces are joining the workforce annually in Bangladesh; but two-thirds of them remain unemployed or underemployed due to lack of mastery of soft skills (Nusrat, 2018). Employers acknowledge that the recent graduates have high technical expertise in given fields; however, soft-skill mastery, specifically teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking, and communication are areas new hires are lacking in (Barnwell 2016).

International labor Organization (2018) reported that the combination of hard and soft skills is in great demand for today's dynamic labor market and businesses. The ILO started its new learning program to help companies integrating soft skills into their training programs. The emphasis of the mastery of soft skills such as strong communications skills, teamwork, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills and showing leadership qualities are, among others, becoming essential skills for workers in all sectors of economy.

Understanding the importance of soft skills for business, the ILO in collaboration with Toyota Motor Manufacturing Indonesia started a series of soft skills trainings for employees to have a mastery of the same. These series of soft skills training consisted of three soft skills trainings raising two different modules per training. The trainings were followed by different participants from different departments with a total of 44 employees joining the training. The first training was held on 26 September, 2018 focused on interpersonal communication and reaching consensus. The second training held on 2 October, 2018 focused on critical thinking and problem solving; while the last training on 4 October, 2018 covered other important soft skills.

### **1.2.2 Regional Perspective of Selected Internship factors and Mastery of Soft Skills**

Soft skills programs are usually not 'stand-alone' in Rwanda but instead are integrated with other kinds of learning and Institutional support tailored to the interns (Winthrop 2016), in the context of formal education, the acquisition of academic skills (reading, writing, math and other subject areas) and technical-vocational skills (such as electrical engineering) should also enable the mastery of soft skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and teamwork. To achieve soft skills mastery there is a need to have institutional support, competent supervisors, person role fitness, and good assessment criteria for internship program International Labor Organization (ILO) news (2019) in Dar es Salaam, reported that internship program provides a rare opportunity for institutions to actively shape the soft skills and knowledge of the interns and enable them to secure jobs in the market. The research by ILO indicated that as the global youth labor force continues to decline dramatically by 15 % between 1993 and 2018, Tanzanian youth are just as vulnerable as their peers in other developing nations. This is brought about by a mismatch in skills which brings joblessness among the youth. Hence the ILO in collaboration with the stakeholders and expert consultants has designed an effective internship programs to address the soft skills gap among the interns.

### **1.2.3 Local Perspective of Selected Internship factors and Mastery of Soft Skills**

According to Waiganjo and Waiganjo (2018) life skills are a variety of psychosocial and interpersonal skills which can help the youth to face the realities of life. The researchers noted that life skills are vital given the dynamism of the contemporary world with its complex challenges that the young people have to face. The life skills enable young people to be responsible and contribute positively to the society and the fact that the employers desire employees that have not only the hard skills but also the life skills.

According to Kamunzyu and Ndunge (2011), added that soft skills constraints are reported by the employers to have a detrimental impact on job creation and labor market outcomes. Muthaura, Khamis, Ahmed and Hussain (2015) indicated the need for more guidance on mastery of soft skills during internship since a failure to effectively implement internship and lack of prior exposure to real working environment led to failure of interns to mastery soft skills. Despite the complex and unclear relationship between education and employment, post-basic education in youth polytechnics and internship programs had been identified as possibilities and limitations of these reforms hence lack of soft skills mastery for jobs (Balwanz, 2012).

### **1.2.4 Soft Skills Mastery**

According to Goleman (2011) soft skills mastery is the possession and use of non-technical skills. According to Ramlall, and Ramlall (2014) soft skills consist of critical thinking, problem solving skills, communication skills, and teamwork. Institutions of higher learning concentrates on teaching their students to master their respective areas of specialization only and are not concerned with the mastery of important soft skills like critical thinking, problem solving, personal communication, writing and speaking skills the learners only specialize in areas like engineer, accounting or medicine, but they fail to master soft skills (Arat 2014). With lack of these important skills, learners will encounter a lot of challenges later in the work environment. Most graduate students are able to perform well in their respective areas of specializations, for example they can design a good plan, they can treat a patient successfully, they can develop economic growth models but cannot effectively communicate, do teamwork or solve problems. Hence, much is spent for soft skills training in corporate life. Despite the fact that, trainings are short and inadequate, there is always the cost of time and money because of absence of soft skills mastery. Hence there is a need for students to master soft skills during their internship before they join the work environment.

Many institutions understand that apart from gaining the required skills and knowledge of their various professions graduates need to master essential soft skills which can enable them to secure job vacancies in the labor market in their future (Mgaya, 2014). Soft skills are then very essential skills to any organization with a strategic vision of achieving its goals hence human resource managers should consider the mastery of these skills not only at the entry level but also later in the work life of employees.

The success of an organization, in terms of quality of the product, of the industry, of the services and of the workers' life, largely depends on the soft skills mastery of the human resource not only at the entry level but also later in the work environment. The quality of the human resources working at any organization and the results they can achieve mainly depends on employees' level of soft skills mastery. Soft skills mastery is intended to enable and enhance personal growth, participation in learning and success in work environment (Gibb, Haskins, & Robertson, 2013).

Training institutions don't have only the duty of forming young professionals providing them with technical skills to be successful in their various fields of specialization, but also a duty to raise a generation which is in a position to effectively and efficiently participate in the society and they also have to support them to master the essential soft skills (Cimatti 2016). According to the researcher, soft skills are not only critical to work, they are also critical to everyday life and concluded that educational institutions must focus on practices and techniques to help students in the mastery soft skills that will be helpful to them in their future. Employees with soft skills mastery are better preferred by their employers, happier in their work place, and more likely to stay for long in their company yet the human resources managers precisely noted the lack of the following types of soft skills among employees: teamwork, critical skills, communication skills and problem-solving skills (Meeks, 2017).

Thus, soft skills mastery is very important since it has been an essential consideration when hiring new graduates. As well as being business-focused supervisors and managers also need to play a supportive role since they have proven experience, knowledge and soft skills hence it's their job to pass this knowledge along and share their skills with the interns. Internship might be a unique chance to master soft skills. During the internship, an intern has an opportunity to observe the communication, meeting and behavior at the work environment, at the same time, the intern can learn when to speak and when to stop speaking (Arat 2014).

Hasbullah (2002), it is also expected that the students would master an amount of essential soft skills depending on the quality of implementation of the internship program. For instance, the Industrial internship unit in an institution is dedicated to provide logistic supports such as getting potential companies to offer internship, students' placement, managing supervisors' visits, and keeping students' performance records.

### **1.2.5 Nakuru County Government**

According to Nakuru County integrated development plan (2018-2022), Nakuru County is one of the fastest growing counties (of 47 total counties) in the Republic of Kenya over past decade and covers 7,498.8 Km<sup>2</sup>. The County has an estimated population of 1.6 million as per 2009 census. Nakuru County Government headquarters offices are located on Government Road/Moi road in Nakuru town. The researcher chose Nakuru County Government since its headquarter is in Nakuru town and also because it receives significantly large number of the interns.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The curriculum that most college graduates are exposed to largely offer hard skills, but important soft skills that would make them well prepared for work environment are lacking. The deficiency of these soft skills among the interns create problems in their future at work place since today's work environment require highly developed soft skills due to the flattening of the organizational structure. Employers are concerned with the level and relevance of a broad set of soft skills amongst entry level workers and there is an increasing demand on new college graduates to have a mastery of soft skills in order for them to be ready to enter the work environment.

An internship is often the first interaction with work environment for a student, and may be the best opportunity for soft skill mastery. Literature support that soft skills should not be overlooked and it should accompany hard skills (Agarwal *et al.*, 2018). And this study seeks to investigate the mastery of teamwork, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, and communication skills determined by the selected internship factors (assessment criteria, competence of internship supervisors, person role fitness and institutional support). Nakuru County Government value soft skills mastery when recruiting new graduates and human resource managers are keen on testing these soft skills during interviews. In addition, this institution is unique in the sense that it offers many opportunities to interns not only for

acquiring workplace functional experience but also learn and master soft skills for a minimum period of three months.

The studies that have been done in Nakuru County and other counties in Kenya largely focus on other attributes example, a study by Waiganjo and Waiganjo (2018) examined the relevance of life skills education in preparing Kenyan youth for national development. A study conducted by Yanawati (2017) examined the need for implementing soft skills workshop that could be an instrumental in developing and improving soft skills. Study by Mayaka and King (2002) examined the soft skills needed by Kenya's tour-operating sector and the extent to which current training provision is adequate. None of these studies addressed the concerns of the present study therefore this study seeks to close this gap by evaluation of the selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills among the interns, evidence from of Nakuru County Government.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

To evaluate the effect of selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills among interns evidence from Nakuru County Government.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

- i. To assess the effect of assessment criteria on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.
- ii. To examine the effect of competency of the internship supervisors on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.
- iii. To determine the effect of person role fitness on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.
- iv. To analyse the effect of institutional support on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

#### **1.6 Research Hypotheses**

**H<sub>01</sub>** : There is no statistically significant effect of assessment criteria on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government.

**H<sub>02</sub>** : There is no statistically significant effect of competence of the internship supervisors on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government.

**H<sub>03</sub>** : There is no statistically significant effect of person role fitness on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government.

**H<sub>04</sub>** : There is no statistically significant effect of institutional support on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

### **1.7 Justification of the Study**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century work environment requires workers to have requisite soft skills and many organizations offer internship opportunities for students in order to gain these skills and prepare them to function in current workplace. According to Bukaliya, (2012) a gap exists between the quality of graduates produced and what the market demands, for this reason, training institutions and employers have accepted the need to mitigate and bridge the lack of soft skills gap through effective internship programs. Institutions of learning have introduced internship programs also referred to as field attachment. The quality of internship programs relies on the factors of internship Wen (2010). Hence this research study is helpful in evaluating selected factors of internship on mastery of soft skills.

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

If interns perform well on an employment interview, their chances of employment offer increase hence impacting positively on social change. This study could be a basis for future studies and would help institutions help their students to master the soft skills, and to make them ready for future work place experience. It would also help educators to reform their curriculum to better ensure employability for their graduates. Moreover, the study opened an avenue for further research in this field for implementing training programs effectively for attaining the most desired soft skills among the graduates. The social change expected from having well-equipped college graduates with soft skills would be more successful professionals with better opportunities to have upward mobility, and more meaningful careers that will benefit their families and their organizations (Meeks, 2017).

### **1.9 Scope of the study**

The study evaluated selected internship factors on mastery soft skills among interns evidence from Nakuru County Government. The county receives an average of 1300 interns per intake who are then distributed to the 11 Sub-counties. The study was conducted between June and October 2019. The target group was interns at Nakuru County Government who had stayed for at least two months in the internship. The researcher chose Nakuru County Government since its headquarter is in Nakuru town and also because it receives significantly large number of the interns. The study was delimited to a set of five variables. These include assessment criteria, competency, person role fitness, institutional support and soft skills



mastery. The first four were the independent variables while soft skills mastery was the dependent variable.

#### **1.10 Limitation and delimitation of the study**

The main limitation of the study was the cooperation of the respondents who met the study with some measure of apprehension. This was overcome by explaining the nature of the study and its implications. The interns were too busy to fill the questionnaires due to the assignments given to them by the internship supervisors. The researcher left the questionnaires with the interns for them to fill at their own free time. The interns were reluctant to give out all information as they viewed it as confidential. However, the researcher assured the respondents of the secrecy of non-disclosure of information.

#### **1.11 Assumption of the Study**

The researcher assumed that the participants of this study will be influenced by internship experience towards soft skills mastery and that the internship supervisors offered the necessary support to the interns during their internship period. The interns participated in this study provided candid and truthful responses concerning their mastery of soft skills.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with literature review of the research study. It starts with the theoretical review, which involves the review of pertinent theories relevant to the study variables; review of empirical studies, a conceptual framework which illustrates study variables and their relationship. Finally, a summary of reviewed literature and the research gaps is provided.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

Theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions (Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo 2015). The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists (de Lima, 2017).

##### **2.2.1 Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition**

Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1980) came up with a five-stage model of the mental activities involved in directed skill acquisition and discussed each skill level in great detail. The basic content of the Dreyfus model is that students' progress through five stages of expert status in this specific order: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert. The researchers found out that novices adhere to the set rules. Novices do not think critically nor do they exercise discretionary judgment. Advanced beginners on the other hand take a more holistic approach to the problem at hand than the novices, but advanced beginners have a limited understanding of the problem. Competency is achieved when one starts to plan his work and create routines and structure the work. Proficiency is achieved when one prioritizes different elements of the work the researchers suggested that one can know that he/she has reached proficiency when they truly grasp the whole of what one is trying to achieve. Finally, they concluded that, experts possess an intuitive grasp of situations based on deep, tacit understanding. Experts forego rules. Instead, they make decisions based on analytical approaches.

Students move through the five stages of expert status or similar processes as they participate in internships, reflect on the experience throughout the program, and measure how the experience enhances soft skills mastery. Given their active engagement in internship, interns

may be more likely to master soft skills and move forward into being expert with new ideas and motivation to explore the world. The model however is limited to the five stages of expert status other than considering other aspects that influence learning. Hence the researcher incorporated experiential learning theory to support the aforementioned model.

### **2.2.2 Experiential Learning**

John Dewey laid significant groundwork for the theory in his book, *‘Experience and Education’* (Dewey, 1938). Dewey stressed the importance of experience in education; he noted that there is an intimate and necessary relation between the experience and education (Dewey, 1938). According to his study experience is always a dynamic two-way process involving both trying and undergoing. He referred to this process as a transaction taking place between the individual and what at the time constitutes the environment doing is the purposeful engagement of the individual with the environment in Dewey’s words doing is an attempt made to have an impact on the world. ‘Undergoing’ on the other hand refers to the consequences of the experience for us.

“Education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience, the process and goal of education is one and the same thing” (Dewey, 1938). Dewey (1997, 2011) encouraged learners to have a direct interaction with the phenomena being studied, including purposeful reflection, which allows students to synthesize and internalize the direct experience. Dewey believed that education is meant to help the learner think deeply through habitual reflection (Dewey, 1997, 2011). Dewey encouraged the active learner to consider how their beliefs shape their actions. As the learner reflects on what he or she knows, it can influence their next interaction, decision, and potential growth.

Building upon earlier work by Dewey, Kolb believes “learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (Kolb, 1984). Kolb suggests that previous experiences, hereditary characteristics, and current environment together drive development of a preferred way of grasping and processing experiences. The combination of these preferred methods contributes to specific learning styles, such as initiating, experiencing, imagining, reflecting, analyzing, thinking, deciding, acting and balancing. Students’ learning styles have been assessed by using the learning style inventory (Kolb& Kolb 2005).

Students engaged in internships are adapting to the work environment as a learning place versus classroom. Students move through the experiential learning cycle or similar processes as they participate in internships, reflect on the experience throughout the program, and measure how the experience enhance soft skills mastery. Students are challenged to think about their daily internship experiences and resolve internal and external issues they are confronting at the real working environment. However, according to Kolb effective learning only occurs when a learner can execute all four stages of the model.

## **2.3 Empirical Review**

The empirical studies that have been conducted in the past five years in respect to selected factors of internship are reviewed. These studies are examined in light of soft skills mastery among interns.

### **2.3.1 Assessment Criteria and Mastery Soft Skills**

According to Brookhart (2018) assessment criteria are descriptive statements that give learners and instructors the information about the characteristics, aspects and qualities of a given learning activity making clear to the learners what they are expected to do for them to achieve their goals and the instructors will consider when making judgments about their achievements.

A study by Alem and Boudreau (2012) in the University of Southern California on the criteria to measure the performance of student interns before, during, and after their internships as well as criteria to measure their overall performance was included in the grid. The ultimate objective of the creation of this grid was to provide a validated assessment grid to the university supervisors responsible for internship placements and the internship supervisors to better assess the interns on soft skills mastery. The authors came up with the following four metric qualities to analyze those criteria: their degree of difficulty, their degree of discrimination, their degree of internal consistency and their concurrent validity. According to the findings it was noted that it is important to sensitize professional supervisors and student interns to take advantage of the full range of the evaluation scale to enhance soft skills mastery of the interns.

According to Nusrat (2018), a study conducted in Bangladesh, whose main objective was to identify the most desired soft skills frequently sought by employers for potential candidates to attain and sustain employment for graduate, about two million new faces are joining the

workforce annually; but two-thirds of them remain unemployed or underemployed. On the other hand, industries in Bangladesh are running with 10-15 percent vacant positions, problem of employability occurs due to the lack of soft skills in the entry-level graduates due to poor assessment criteria employed during the internships.

The study was conducted by Washor (2015), to examine the degree to which internships assessment criteria enhance student soft-skill mastery, specifically in the areas of communication, teamwork, initiative, and, analytical thinking. Researcher designed pre-post retrospective surveys were given to the interns and another one to corresponding supervisors to measure change in soft-skill development during a 13-week semester as a direct result from participating in an internship. It was found out that 278 students (88%) and 287 supervisors (91%) consented to participate in the study and completed all of the items on the survey regarding soft-skill development. It was found that using good internship assessment criteria contributes to student soft-skill mastery. However, the study did not research in depth the effects of internship factors which are Quality implementation on soft skills mastery.

A study conducted by Yanawati (2017) examined the need for implementing assessment criteria that could be helpful in acquiring and enhancing soft skills program in UMP. The UMP Soft skills components consist of problem solving, leadership, team working, oral communication, written communication, and learning capabilities. Hence, the soft skills expert group at the Centre for modern languages and human sciences, UMP took the initiative in organizing the soft skills workshop for final year students before they went for their internship. The main objective was to unveil the awareness of employability skills and market requirements that should be mastered by interns.

Throughout the sessions, which based on the modules, group activities and assessments criteria, the workshop aim was to instill and nurture the soft skills components within the students. A total of 226 final year Engineering students out of 549 were selected as respondents. The study was conducted using survey methods. The descriptive methods of statistical data analysis were utilized. Based on the analysis of the findings, generally it was found that the majority of the respondents agreed to the assessment criteria of the soft skills workshop. Most of them (more than 50%) stated that the “strongly agree” and “agree” results to all question asked. The study however agreed with the implementation process of soft skill mastery but did not show the correlation between internship and soft skills mastery.

The most crucial prerequisites for successful implementation of internship is the need for careful consideration of the assessment criteria or how learning takes place during internship (Govindasamy, 2001). In practice, however, this is often the most neglected aspect in any effort to effectively implement internship programs through teaching and learning activities. Internships are supervised work experiences whereby students leave their institutions and get engaged in work related programmes, during which period they are closely supervised by experienced job incumbents (Bukaliya, 2012).

Internships are considered a valuable learning experience by students, academics and prospective employers (Mgaya, 2014). Internships have been hailed for integrating classroom education with internship programs in enabling students to develop their professional knowledge and essential soft skills (Bukaliya, 2012). Integration of teaching and learning in schools in the activities of industry practice will eliminate the difference of standard grades in school, in industry, and simultaneously bring supply and demand of labor. Through the cooperation, it can be obtained an optimum outcome and output that are the creation of qualified human resources (HR) in accordance with the needs of society and the labor market (Clokie & Fourie, 2016).

### **2.3.2 Competency of the Internship Supervisors and Mastery of Soft Skills**

Competency is the ability to perform well in a specific job role (Lasse, 2015). Competency of the internship supervisors is essential for improving hard and non-technical skills of graduates who are the potential employees (Mgaya, 2014). Currently, higher institutions are aiming at improving their field attachments in an environment of world-wide economic stagnation which has seen many companies taking a variety of measures such as scaling back their expansion plans, reducing their operations, or even closing their businesses (Mgaya, 2014).

A study conducted by Gloria, Hird & Tao (2008) assessed the self-reported supervision practices, experiences, and multicultural competence of white intern supervisors (n = 211). White training directors and staff psychologists who were currently supervising predoctoral interns completed a 2-page survey regarding their multicultural supervision. Female supervisors reported higher multicultural supervision competence and spent more time processing cultural differences with their supervisees than male supervisors. Training directors also reported higher multicultural supervision competence than staff psychologists. Further, the number of interns supervised currently and over a career significantly predicted

multicultural supervision competence. Recommendations for White intern supervisors include ongoing participation in education and professional practice experiences to improve multicultural supervision competence.

According to a study conducted by Hannon (2000), on national medical education needs' assessment of interns and the development of an intern education and training program, a needs' assessment of interns was undertaken using a self-completion questionnaire and a semi structured interview. A 25% random sample of 1996 graduate doctors were selected from the five medical schools in Ireland (n=95). The overall response rate was 88% (n=84). Of the responders, 91% reported that they were not prepared for all the soft skills needed as an intern. The findings History taking and clinical examination were considered well covered at the undergraduate level but little training was received in a range of professional competencies and soft skills. Although the recommendation of the study was to improve internship, it did not clearly show the link between the competence and soft skills mastery.

In Malaysia, the higher education institutions have realized that in order to produce first class human capital requires a new alternative to increase the level of thinking as well as mastery of soft skills in a dynamic self by the passage of time (Mohammed, 2017). Internships are supervised work experiences whereby students leave their institutions and get engaged in work related programmes, during which period they are closely supervised by experienced job incumbents (Bukaliya, 2012).

The importance of developing soft skills mastery among students should be the top in the list of all the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) so as to ensure that students are well prepared to join the workforce. Therefore, it is essential for HEIs to distinguish the knowledge and soft skill levels of their students so that strategies and intervention could be implemented to improve their capabilities. Hence, it is vital that continuity between the stakeholders and the professional development of students is present in institutions. To improve learning in higher education, internship is very vital (Mgaya, 2014).

A study conducted by Walo (2000) focused on three main objectives which were; to identify the management competencies that managers of organizations within tourism and hospitality industries expected of recent tourism and hospitality graduates; to determine whether students' management competencies were developed during the internship component of Southern Cross University's Bachelor of Business in Tourism degree; and to determine whether the management competencies of Southern Cross University's Bachelor of Business

in Tourism students met the expectations of selected managers of organizations in four tourism and hospitality sectors. The study utilized the 24 management competencies and eight roles of Quinn, Thompson, and Competing Values Framework (CVF) to test two research hypotheses. The first hypothesis proposed that students' pre-internship mean scores would be significantly lower than their post-internship mean scores with respect to the 24 management competencies and eight managerial roles associated with Competing Values Framework.

The second hypothesis proposed that students' post-internship mean scores would not be significantly lower than the selected managers' mean scores with respect to the 24 management competencies and eight managerial roles associated with Competing Values Framework. A specific survey instrument, the Self-Assessment of Managerial Skills, was used to survey managers the study found generic management competencies should be effectively equipped to undertake a range of managerial opportunities that may be presented to them. However, the study did not evaluate selected internship factors on soft skills mastery thus the need for further research in this area.

### **2.3.3 Person Role Fitness and Mastery of Soft Skills**

According to Bukaliya (2014) person role fitness is the relevance of the internship program to the work. The works given to a student are not limited to only specific task of assignment. It can cover anything as long as it provides opportunities for students to master some amount of soft skills which are needed at the workplace, (Hasbullah, 2002). However according to (Mgaya, 2014), While on field attachment, each intern is given a faculty supervisor who has to monitor the intern at the place where he or she has been sent for practical experience. These visits are for the mainly meant to ensure that students are placed in work that is related to the area of their professions. Log sheets are the monitoring tools used in internship, completed weekly by every intern, to show the work done in any week. The log sheets are then signed and stamped by the internship supervisor to confirm whether what the student intern has written is right.

A study by Cimatti (2016), concerning skill mismatch was carried on at the University of Bologna in Italy, one of the main problems they face, coming back to Italy, is the soft skills shortage and the skill mismatch which affects Fashion operators when they leave school students get to know how deficient they are in certain soft skills. Soft skills are a very hot



topic now days for companies because an outstanding Curriculum Vitae (CV) does not always correspond to the performance of the person at work place.

A survey undertaken by Cheng, Roebuck and Simnett (2009) at an Australian university in 2007 investigated the factors that were associated with students obtaining job offers before graduation; a survey was undertaken of undergraduate students enrolled in accounting courses at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), one of the largest universities in Australia. The survey was undertaken towards the end of second semester. The findings indicated that students' ability to successfully obtain a job offer is significantly and positively associated with students undertaking relevant part- time work, academic performance, and time spent on extracurricular social activities (marginal). The finding suggested that employers of accounting graduates placed greater emphasis on candidates who were not only academically superior, but were also able to obtain relevant soft skills while maintaining study–life balance. The study did not however show the effect of relevance to work on soft skills mastery among interns.

A study by Pop and Barkhuizen (2013) analyzed the effectiveness of a work-integrated learning program in contributing to the employability of graduate interns. A questionnaire measuring soft skills training, technical skills training and mentorship was developed and administered among a convenience sample of graduates (N=79) in an ICT company. The findings confirmed the importance and effectiveness of soft-skills and technical skills training and mentorship in enhancing the employability of graduate interns. The findings also showed the importance of a well-structured work integrated learning program in improving mentorship however it did not place much weight on soft skills acquisition during the learning programs.

A study by Mayaka and King (2002) examined the soft skills needed by Kenya's tour-operating sector and the extent to which current training provision is adequate. The approach used in the present study is a modified version of WTO's Tourism Education and Quality (TEDQUAL) methodology. The results indicated considerable convergence between the perceptions of industry operators and education providers concerning quality gaps in the development of soft skills. A number of systemic training shortcomings are identified including curriculum deficiencies and the inadequate development and enhancement of workplace skills. The study however left quality gaps in the mastery of soft skills.

### **2.3.4 Institutional Support and Mastery of Soft Skills**

Institutional support is the management strategies aimed at improving institutional operations and performance Welsh and Metcalf (2003). A study by Bird and Oguz (2015) examined the value of internship as a form of experiential learning in library and information science education in North America. To gain a global perspective, the study examined whether such an experience was required and for what reasons and whether proper placements were considered. Participants included national libraries, associations, and academic library and information science programs from 69 different countries around the world. Results indicated that outside of American Library Association accredited institutions, internship was more often required and were give full support in terms of allocation of resources. Further, there was much stronger support for international internships. Despite the increasing use of online tools to deliver library and information science education, there was a decided lack of institutional support for virtual internships. However, the study did not clearly bring out the correlation between the institutional support and soft skills mastery.

Kenyan based study conducted by Balwanz, (2012) examined the potential solutions to employability challenges facing Kenya's youth. The finding was that in 2011 nearly 40% of Kenyan youth were neither in school or working, and the informal sector accounts for nearly 80% of jobs. The study suggested that despite the complex and unclear relationship between education and employment, post-basic education in youth polytechnics and internship programs had been identified as ineffective because of the possibilities of limitations in terms of support accorded to them. The paper however presents perceptions influencing recent post-basic education reforms, outlines factors in the economy and the non-economic environment which mediate the relationship between education and employment in Kenya only and not how to implement the aforementioned methods effectively.

Kamunzyu and Ndunge, (2011) investigated the challenges facing hospitality internship as learning experience. The study was a descriptive research with the target population being all students pursuing an accredited degree or diploma in hospitality in selected institutions in Nairobi-Kenya, their educators as well as their immediate on-the-job supervisors in 3, 4 and 5-star hotels in Nairobi where the students usually undertake their internship. A sample of 194 respondents comprising of 122 students, 32 hospitality educators and 40 immediate on-the-job supervisors was drawn from the target population. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the sample for students and their educators while cluster sampling was used in selecting the immediate on-the-job supervisors.

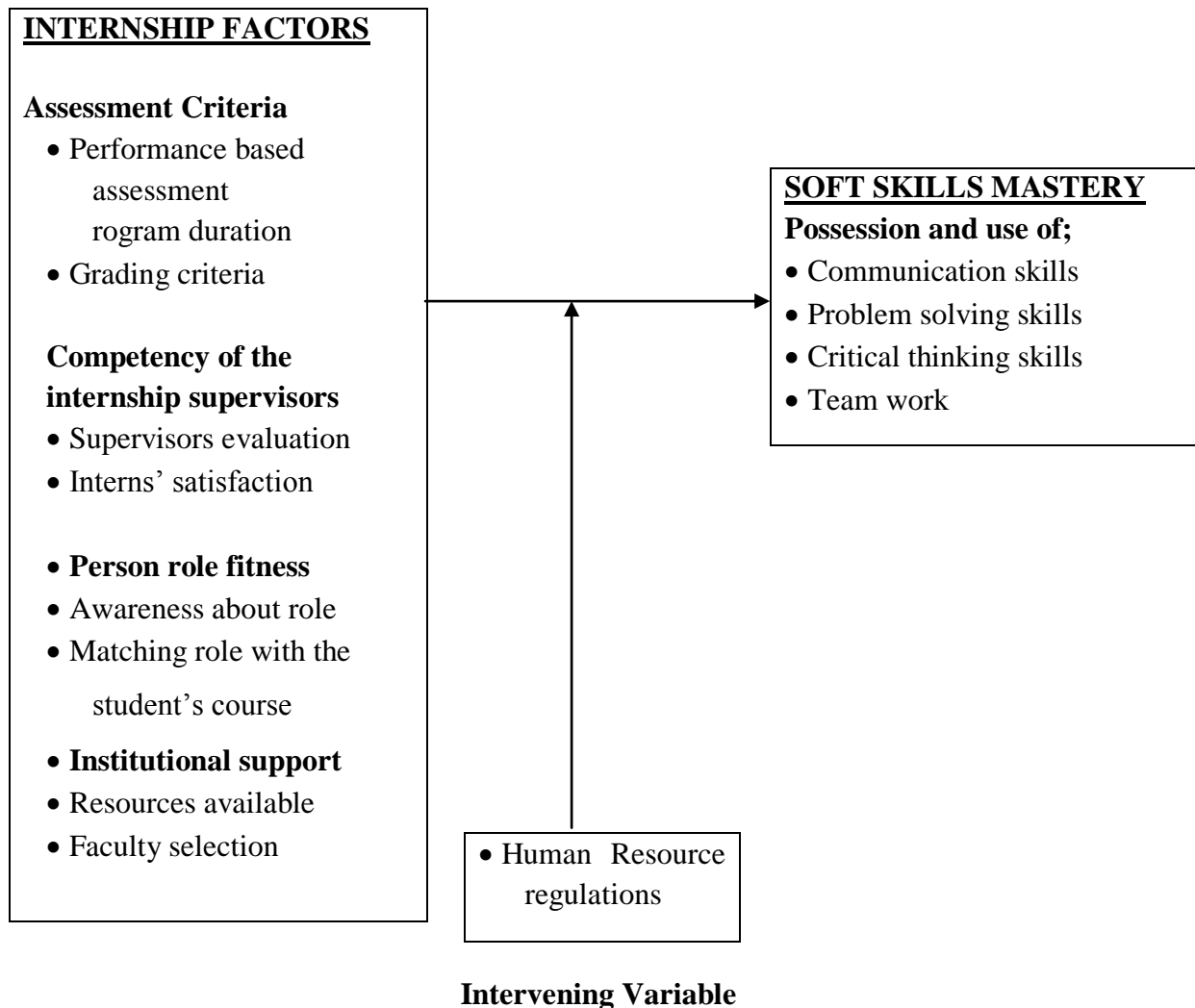
The findings of the study were that the main challenges that were facing hospitality internship included lack of adequate guidance and support to students during the internship, lack of adequate funds and time allocated for internship visits and reversed priority of the roles played by the immediate-on-the-job supervisors of the students during the internship learning experience. In this connection the researcher recommended that internships should be planned well, supported well and successfully implemented. This could be done by allocating adequate funds to support the student interns and to enable the educational institution to maintain the vital link with the student interns and the industry. The study however did not mention how institutional support would specifically influence soft skills mastery.

#### **2.4 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of inquiry and used to structure a subsequent presentation (Paul, 2011). It can also be viewed as an end result of bringing together a number of related concepts to explain or predict a given event, or give a broader understanding of the phenomenon of interest – or simply, of a research problem (Imenda, 2014), as shown in Figure 2.1

## Independent variables

## Dependent variable



**Figure 2.1 : Conceptual Framework**

According to Figure 2.1, the first independent variables of this study were assessment criteria and the indicators for this variable were the performance-based assessment, program duration and grading criteria. The second variable was competence of the internship supervisors and the indicators being, interns' satisfaction and the supervisor's evaluation. The third variable was person role fitness and the indicators being awareness about role and matching role with the student's course and the fourth variable was institutional support and the variable being resource available and faculty selection. These selected internship factors are vital for soft skills mastery among the interns. The dependent variable on the other hand was the mastery of soft skills which include teamwork, problem solving skills critical thinking and communication skills. Institutional policies and Human resource regulations will be the

intervening variables. The independent variable has been operationalized using measurable indicators.

## **2.5 Research Gap**

Many researchers have extensively focused on other attributes as is shown in the table below, however none of these studies address effect of selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills. This study therefore sought to close this gap by focusing on assessing the effect of selected internship factors on soft skills mastery among the interns, evidence from Nakuru County Government

**Table 2. 1: Research Gaps**

<b>Author and Year</b>	<b>Topic of Study</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Research Gaps</b>
<b>Waiganjo and Waiganjo (2018)</b>	Relevance of Life Skills Education in Preparing Kenyan Youth for National Development	That though Kenya has embraced LSE in the proposed curriculum the government needs to re-tool the teachers with appropriate teaching approaches, empower the schools with the requisite materials, and re-align the teacher training programs with the proposed school curriculum, in order for it to succeed	The research however did not evaluate the effect of selected internship factors on soft skills mastery
<b>Washor (2015)</b>	Bridging the soft-skill gap from education to employment through internships	Findings suggest that participating in an internship contributes to student soft-skill development.	The research study was designed to understand the degree to which internships enhance student soft-skill development, and did not evaluate the effect of selected internship factors on soft skills mastery.
<b>Yassin, Hasan, Amin and Amiruddin (2008)</b>	Employability skills for entry-level human resources management positions: Perceptions of students and employers	There exist significant differences in perceptions between students and employers regarding essential employability skills	The study examined the employability skills and failed to narrow it down to the mastery of communication skills, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills and teamwork
<b>Meeks (2017)</b>	Critical soft skills to achieve success in the workplace	Human resources directors and managers found out that soft skills were lacking among college graduates.	The study did not bring out the relation between selected internship factors and soft skills mastery
<b>Bukaliya (2012)</b>	The potential benefits and challenges of internship programs in an odl institution: a case for the Zimbabwe open university	Results showed that the majority of the students preferred the attachment program because it exposed them to the real expectations of the world of work.	The study however concentrated on other benefits of the internship to the interns other than their soft skills mastery.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter dealt with research methods and procedures used in carrying out the study. It described the research design, population of the study, sampling procedure, sample size, pilot study, validity of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Descriptive survey research design was used. This design was chosen to help evaluate effect of selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills among interns in Nakuru County Government. This design is associated with studies where pertinent data are collected at a single point in time to address study objectives and other aspects in interest (Nicholson, 2011). The design is appropriate as it describes the situation at a particular point in time. The choice of this design was further supported by the fact that it can be both descriptive and analytical. The study measured the soft skills mastery of the interns before they joined the program and the point they will be at that time (which in this study was above two months into the internship program). This was relevant to evaluate effect of selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills.

#### **3.3. Location of the study**

The study was carried out in the County Government of Nakuru. The headquarter offices are located on Government Road/Moi Road in Nakuru town. Nakuru County is one of the 47 Counties in the Republic of Kenya. Nakuru County has 11 Sub-Counties namely; Nakuru East, Nakuru West, Nakuru North, Subukia, Naivasha, Gilgil, Molo, Njoro, Kuresoi North, Kuresoi South, and Rongai. It also has 10 ministries under it namely; Agriculture, Education, ICT and e-government, Finance, Health, Infrastructure, Lands, Public service, Trade, Water and environment and Youth. Nakuru county government receives an average of 1300 interns per intake being a significant large number hence was a good representation.

#### **3.4 Population of the study**

Study population was composed of all the interns in the County Government of Nakuru who had been engaged for at least two months in internship programs. The targeted respondents were adequate. At the beginning of data collection for this study, Nakuru County had 1300 interns who fit these criteria distributed across the 11 sub-counties among the 10 ministries which constituted the study population.

### 3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample size

#### 3.5.1. Sampling Procedure

The study population of 1300 interns is significantly large a fact that necessitated sampling in order to have a feasible unit of analysis (Kothari, 2004). The researcher employed stratified random sampling technique since Nakuru County has 11 sub-counties (strata) the sample was distributed using this technique and respondents were selected from each sub-county using simple random technique.

#### 3.5.2 Sampling Size Determination

A sample size is a part of the population chosen for a survey or experiment. Selecting the sample size for a study requires compromise between balancing the need for statistical power, economy and timeliness (Ahmad & Halim 2017). A sample size was calculated at 95% confidence interval to ensure the representation of all sub-counties. The sample size was calculated using a formula proposed by Nassiuma (2000) as shown below:

$$n = \frac{Nc^2}{c^2 + (N - 1)e^2}$$

Where n represents sample size

N represents study population (1300)

C represents coefficient of variation 21%-30%)

e represents error margin (0.02-0.05) the researcher will use a coefficient variation of 0.21 and a standard error of 0.02.

$$n = \frac{1300 * (0.21)^2}{(0.21)^2 + (1300 - 1) * (0.02)^2} = 102$$

The researcher employed stratified random sampling technique and the respondents were selected from each sub-county using simple random technique. The sample size from each sub-county was calculated using Neyman allocation formulae;

$n_h = \left(\frac{N_h}{N}\right)n$  Where h is the stratum,  $n_h$  is the sample for stratum, n is the total sample,  $N_h$  is the population for stratum h and N is the total population.



**Table 3. 1: Sample Size Determination**

<b>Sub-County</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample-</b>
Nakuru East	150	12
Nakuru West	170	13
Nakuru North	200	16
Subukia	70	6
Gilgil	50	4
Naivasha	120	9
Rongai	90	7
Molo	130	10
Njoro	100	8
Kuresoi North	100	8
Kuresoi South	120	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>1300</b>	<b>102</b>

### **3.6 Instrumentation**

A self-administered questionnaire (Appendix I) was used to collect data on selected internship factors and soft skills mastery. The questionnaire was the most appropriate research tool as it allows the researcher to collect information from a large sample with diverse background; the findings remain confidential, save time and since they are presented in paper format minimize opportunity for bias (Dimmendaal & Dorrich 2018). Information was collected on various socio-demographic factors such as age, gender, and marital status. In addition, the questionnaire also included specific questions to capture information on the effects of selected factors internship on soft skills mastery among interns and a Likert Scale was employed.

#### **3.6.1 Pilot Study**

According to Subarimaniyam (2019) a pilot study is a small study to test research protocols, data collection instruments, sample requirements strategies and other research techniques in preparation for the main study. A pilot study was conducted to identify potential problem areas and deficiency in the research instruments and protocol prior to implementation during the full study. The study was then pilot tested in Baringo County, Mogotio Sub-County

(Appendix V) with the same characteristics, before collecting the data and the necessary corrections made.

### **3.6.2 Validity Testing**

Validity is a measure of the accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings (Brink, 2006). Content validity is how well an instrument measures a theoretical construct (Hong & Lee 2015). A valid instrument is one that can facilitate collection of data whose analytical results would be both accurate and truthful. The data collection tool; self-administered questionnaire was subjected to critique and scrutiny by peers and supervisors whose opinion was deemed sufficient. The researcher ensured the face and construct validity of the questionnaire by seeking expert opinion from the researcher's supervisor to ensure that the questions test or measure what they were supposed to measure.

### **3.6.3 Reliability Testing**

Reliability relates to the consistency of a measure (Heale, & Twycross 2015). A participant completing an instrument which measured soft skills mastery had approximately the same responses each time the test was completed. One of the most popular reliability statistics in use today is Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951). The researcher employed Cronbach's alpha to determine the internal consistency or average correlation of items in a survey instrument to gauge its reliability. An alpha value of 0.929 was obtained. According to Cronbach the internal consistency of the questionnaire is said to be accepted when the reliability is at 0.7, it is said to be good when it is over 0.8 and is better when it gets closer to 1.0.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

The process of data collection started with seeking the approval of the University (Appendix III) to collect data in relation to the study. This was followed by applying for a research permit from The National Council of Science, Technology and innovation (NACOSTI) (Appendix IV). Upon the receipt of the permit, the researcher sought the consent of the management of Nakuru County Government (Appendix VI) that was surveyed during the main study. Data was collected by researcher using self-administered questionnaires where the respondents entered the responses on the spaces provided. Quantitative data was collected using closed ended questions while qualitative data was entered on the spaces provided on the questionnaires by the respondents appropriately. Clarifications on particular questions were made as required by the respondents. The researcher sought to have the questionnaires filled on the spot, and where it was not possible then the respondents were requested to fill it within three days after which the filled questionnaires were collected.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Method and Presentation of Findings**

Data analysis is a process that involves inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modeling the collected data with a view of coming up with useful information, drawing conclusions, and more so enhancing decision making (Burns, 2010). Returned questionnaires were screened to ensure that they were accurately and completely filled. The data collected was analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) tool. Descriptive statistics was used to obtain frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation data. Inferential statistics in form of Pearson's product moment correlation, simple and multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the association between selected factors of internship and mastery of soft skills. All tests with a p-value of  $< 0.05$  were considered statistically significant. The results of the analysis were presented in tables and figures. This regression model guided the inferential analysis presented in tables and figures.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y = represents soft skills mastery

$\beta_0$  = represents constant

$X_1$  = represents assessment criteria

$X_2$  = represents competency of the internship supervisors

$X_3$  = represents person role fitness

$X_4$  = represents Institutional support

$\epsilon$  = error term (Assumed to be normally distributed)

### **3.9 Ethical Consideration**

The study was reviewed and approved by School of Postgraduates Studies and NACOSTI (Appendix IV). Major ethical problem in the study is privacy and confidentiality of the respondents. Respondents were given explanation of the purpose and importance of the study. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. Respondents were allowed to take part in the study on a voluntary basis and they could stop participating at any time if conditions compel them to do so.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

The findings of the study are presented in this chapter. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented first, followed by the findings as per the study objectives.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

In order to establish the effect of selected internship factors on soft skills mastery, this study administered 102 questionnaires to interns from Nakuru County Government. After data entry, validation and cleaning, 100 questionnaires were found complete representing a 98% response rate. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a 50% response rate is adequate, 60% good and above 70% rated very well. A 98% responses rate was hence considered adequate for the analysis.

#### 4.3 Reliability Tests

Reliability measures internal consistence of the questionnaire. This study adopted the Cronbach's alpha to measure the internal consistence of the questionnaire. An alpha value of 0.929 was obtained. The acceptable range is between 0.70 and 0.90 or higher depending on the type of research. Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70 is acceptable for exploratory research while 0.80 and 0.90 are acceptable for basic research and applied scenarios respectively (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The questionnaire adopted by this study was hence acceptable based on the assertion. The reliability findings were presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4. 1: Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
.929	64

#### 4.4 Demographic information of Respondents

The researcher sought the following demographic information from the respondents; gender, age, education level and the duration of internship.

##### 4.4.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

The study of gender was essential to rate the level of soft skills mastery between male and female. This study found an imbalance between female and male interns. It was found out that 47% of the interns who participated in this study were males while the females were 53%. This implies that a larger number in the current workforce constitute females and it

could also imply that a greater number of females is pursuing education than that of males. The findings were presented in Table 4.2.

**Table 4. 2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Male</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47.0</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.4.2 Distribution of Respondents by Age**

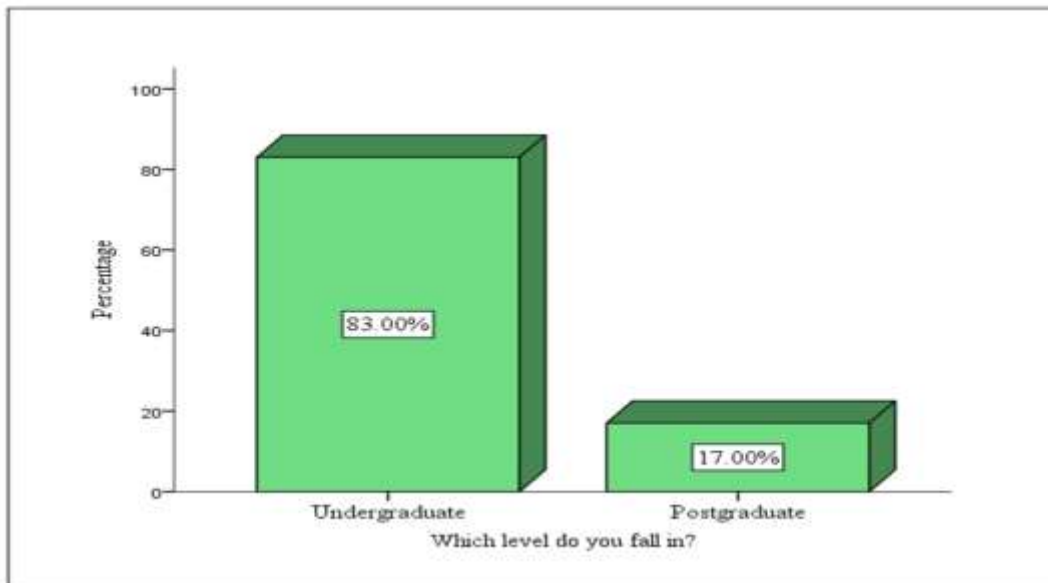
This study found out that on average the respondents were aged 23 years with a standard error margin of 0.260. The eldest intern was 28 years while the youngest was 19 years. However, the age data was moderately positively skewed thus not symmetrical as was revealed by Skewness (0.603) and Kurtosis (-0.561). This implies that the distribution of respondents by age was not symmetrical. This would imply that there is a big variation in terms of age between a postgraduate intern and an undergraduate intern. These findings were presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4. 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age**

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean	23	.260
Std. Deviation	2.339	
Minimum	19	
Maximum	28	
Skewness	.603	.267
Kurtosis	-.561	.529

#### **4.4.3 Distribution of Respondents by Education**

Education is essential as the level of education could influence the rate of soft skills mastery. This study found that majority, 83% of the interns were undergraduate. Only 17% were postgraduate students. This implies that most interns are undergraduates and very few postgraduates do join internship programs most likely because at this level most of the postgraduates are able to secure a permanent employment. The findings were presented in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4. 1: Distribution of Respondents by Education Level**

## **4.5 Variables of the Study**

### **4.5.1 Competence of the Internship Supervisors**

This study sought to establish how competence of supervisors influenced soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. To achieve this, five Likert scale questions were asked to the interns to assess their perceptions on the competence of their supervisors. This study found that majority, 84% (strongly agree and agree) indicated that information about the expectations related to their performance within the internship program were well communicated. There were other 12% who were neutral and only 4% disagreed with the statement. It was also found that 89% (strongly agree and agree) of the students agreed that there was clear establishment and communication of their tasks at the beginning of the internship by the supervisors while 10% were neutral and only 1% of the interns felt that there was no clear establishment and communication of his/her tasks at the beginning of the internship by the supervisors.

The study also established that majority, 82% (strongly agree and agree) of the interns felt that activities were well organized and distributed while those who were neutral amounted to 14% and only 4% were against the statement. Those who said that there was a well-organized induction period and a presentation of the organization by the supervisors accounted for 90% (strongly agree and agree), other 7% were neutral, 2% disagreed with 1% strongly disagreed with the statement. Majority, 83% (strongly agree and agree) of the interns also felt that there

was clear schedule and working program for interns, however 13% were neutral with 3% disagreeing and only 1% strongly disagreed with the statement.

This implies that Nakuru County has competent internship supervisors who play their role well hence enhancing soft skills mastery among the interns. Hence competence of the internship supervisors affects soft skills mastery. These findings concurred with those of Mgaya (2014) which found out that the competence of the internship supervisors was essential in enhancing technical and soft skills of the students who are the future workforce. These findings were presented in Table 4.4

**Table 4. 4: Competence of the Internship Supervisors**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Information about the expectations related to my performance within the internship program are well communicated	0.0%	4.0%	12.0%	44.0%	40.0%
There is a clear establishment and communication of my tasks at the beginning of the internship by the supervisors	0.0%	1.0%	10.0%	45.0%	44.0%
The activities are well organized and distributed	0.0%	4.0%	14.0%	37.0%	45.0%
There is a well-organized induction period and a presentation of the organization by the supervisors	1.0%	2.0%	7.0%	46.0%	44.0%
There is clear schedule and working program for interns.	1.0%	3.0%	13.0%	49.0%	34.0%

#### **4.5.2 Assessment Criteria**

The study also assessed perceptions of the interns on assessment criteria. A set five likert questions were asked to the 100 interns and the study established that generally there was relevant and consistent evaluation method of the internship (grading criteria, internship report, performance-based assessment and program duration) as those who agreed with the statement accounted for 82% (agree and strongly agree). Sixteen percent of the interns were neutral, 1% disagreed and also only 1% of the interns totally against the statement. Majority, 90% (agree and strongly agree) of the interns agreed that the relation with the representatives



of the faculty within the internship program was good,7% were neutral with the statement, 3% having disagreed and none of them totally disagreed. Also 82% (agree and strongly agree) pointed out the presence of good evaluation criteria of the internship while 16% were neutral with the statement those in disagreement accounted for 1% and also with 1% strongly disagreeing.

The study also found that 77% (agreed and strongly agree) of the interns were confident that the internship was capable of changing their career aspirations and confirming their career goals while 8% were neutral with the statement also 4% disagreed and only 1% being in strong disagreement. Majority, 94% (agreed and strongly agree) also felt that their work would be useful and meaningful for the organization and would be appreciated by colleagues while 4% being neutral only 2% disagreed and none strongly disagreed with the statement. According to these findings it is clear that assessment criteria affects soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. This study concurred with a study by Washor (2015) which found out that using good internship assessment criteria contributes to student soft skills mastery. These findings were presented in Table 4.5

**Table 4. 5: Assessment Criteria**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
There is relevant and consistent evaluation method of the internship (grading system, internship report and other documents)	1.0%	1.0%	16.0%	48.0%	34.0%
The relation with the representatives of the faculty within the internship program is good	0.0%	3.0%	7.0%	51.0%	39.0%
Presence of good evaluation criteria of the internship.	1.0%	1.0%	16.0%	43.0%	39.0%
The internship is capable of changing my career aspirations and confirming my career goals	1.0%	4.0%	8.0%	43.0%	44.0%
My work would be useful and meaningful for the organization and would be appreciated by colleagues.	0.0%	2.0%	4.0%	36.0%	58.0%

### **4.5.3 Personal Role Fitness**

To establish the influence of personal role fitness on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government, this study asked five likert type questions to a 100 of the interns to assess their perceptions on person role fitness. The study established that majority, 94% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns agreed that the tasks performed were in line with their profession with 4% being neutral and only 2% disagreeing with the statement. Majority, 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) also had the ability to develop specialized technical skills for a specific job function and only 5% being neutral. Also, it was found out that 87% (agreed and strongly agreed) had also the ability to develop realistic ideas about the work environment and 11% were neutral, one percent being in disagreement and also 1% strongly disagreeing with the statement.

The study also found out that interns who had the ability to seek and accept an intern work assignment accounted for 96% (agreed and strongly agreed) with only 4% being neutral and none disagreed with the statement. Those who could change professionally as a result of their internship program/practical training involvement were 89% (agreed and strongly agreed) with 6% being neutral with the statement while 3% disagreed and only 2% strongly felt that they did not have the ability to change professionally as a result of their internship program/practical training involvement. According to the findings it is clear that giving interns tasks that are in line with their profession enhanced soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. The study concurred with a survey study undertaken by Cheng, Roebuck and Simnett (2009) at an Australian University in 2007 which found out that students' ability to master soft skills in order to successfully obtain job offer is significantly and positively associated with students undertaking relevant practical experience. These findings were presented in Table 4.6

**Table 4. 6: Personal Role Fitness**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
The tasks performed are in line with my profession.	0.0%	2.0%	4.0%	37.0%	57.0%
I have the ability to develop specialized technical skills for a specific job function.	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	49.0%	46.0%
I have the ability to develop realistic ideas about the work world.	1.0%	1.0%	11.0%	30.0%	57.0%
I have the ability to seek and accept an intern work assignment	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	36.0%	60.0%
I have the ability to change professionally as a result of my internship/practical training involvement.	2.0%	3.0%	6.0%	39.0%	50.0%

#### **4.5.4 Institutional Support**

Institutional support was another aspect that this study chose to study. Interns were asked five likert questions to assess their perceptions on their respective institution's support. The study established that majority, 72% (agreed and strongly agreed) was in agreement that there was a good installation of infrastructure and equipment needed in order to properly perform their activity. However, 21% of the interns were neutral on this, only 3% disagreed with 4% strongly disagreeing. The study also established that 78% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns also agreed that employees were always there to help and teach them different things. There were only 20% who were neutral that employees were always there to help and teach them different things and only 2% disagreed with the statement. Majority, 88% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns felt that the support of the supervisor from the organization for the elaboration of the internship report was good only 12% were neutral with none disagreeing with the statement. It was also established that 85% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns agreed that internship supervisors were always there to offer the necessary information about the internship. However, 2% disagreed that internship supervisors are always there to offer the necessary information about the internship with 13% being neutral on the statement.

The study also established that the relation of the internship supervisor with the organization is good as those who agreed with the statement were 94% (agreed and strongly agreed) 5% were neutral and only 1% strongly disagreed with the statement. Hence, institutional support is essential in enhancing soft skills mastery among the interns in Nakuru County Government. The findings concurred with a study undertaken by Kamunzyu and Ndunge (2011) which found out that the main challenges facing hospitality internship included lack of adequate guidance and support to students during internship, hence the need for institutional support in the internship programs. These findings were presented in Table 4.7

**Table 4. 7: Institutional Support**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
There is good installation of infrastructure and equipment needed in order to properly perform my activity.	4.0%	3.0%	21.0%	41.0%	31.0%
Employees are always there to help and teach me different things.	0.0%	2.0%	20.0%	35.0%	43.0%
The support of the supervisor from the organization for the elaboration of the internship report is good	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%	37.0%	51.0%
Internship supervisors are always there to offer the necessary information about the internship.	0.0%	2.0%	13.0%	33.0%	52.0%
The relation of the internship supervisor with the organization is good.	1.0%	0.0%	5.0%	34.0%	60.0%

#### **4.5.5 Mastery of Soft Skills before Joining Internship Program**

This study assessed soft skill mastery among the interns before they joined their internship programs. The study established that 44% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns were able to clearly discuss their ideas with people, while 48% were neutral about this statement and 7% disagreed with the statement while only 1% strongly disagreed with it. It was also found out that 50% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns were also able to handle effective negotiation activities with various parties, while 38% were neutral, eight percent disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed that they are able to handle effective negotiation. the study found out that those who were able to answer questions accurately during the interview

session were only 43% (agreed and strongly agreed) while 50% were neutral and 7% disagree that they are able to answer questions accurately. Those who could communicate well according to the needs, in various situations accounted for 54% (strongly agreed and agreed) were in the position to communicate well, however 37% were neutral while 7% were in disagreement and 1% strongly disagreed with the statement.

The study further found out that 53% (agreed and strongly agreed) were able to speak fluently in public while 37% were neutral and 10% disagreeing with the statement. It was also found out that only 55% (agreed and strongly agreed) were able to work well with team members while 38% were neutral with this, 5% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed with the statement. Those who were able to work well with team members accounted for 51% (agreed and strongly agreed) while 43% were neutral, 5% disagreed and 1% being in strong disagreement with the statement. The study further established that 54% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns also did understand the benefits of working in a team and work in a collaborative style with others to achieve results while 40% were neutral 5% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreeing. Those who were able to offer support to others when asked for (empowerment) accounted for 52% while 37% were neutral, 9% disagreed and 2% strongly disagree with the statement. Those who could work with others in diverse perspectives according to different values, beliefs and behaviors of different cultures accounted for 58% (agreed and strongly agreed) while 34 being neutral and 8% disagreeing. This study also established that 50% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns were able to work in a team and in a collaborative style to achieve results while 40% being neutral and 10% were in disagreement with the statement. It was further established that 50% were also able to be patient as they dealt with day-to-day issues and problems in their workplace.

The study also found that 47% of the interns were unable to choose the best alternative to solve issues and problems in their workplace. It was also established that 50% were also able to face job-related issues and problems in their workplace while 38% were neutral and 12% did not agree with the statement. Those who were able to list down alternatives to solve issues and problems in their workplace accounted for 50% (agreed and strongly agreed) whereas 47% were neutral 2% disagreed while 1% strongly disagreed with the statement. While 54% (agreed and strongly agreed) could see job-related issues and problems before they arise and also check whether other people use logical reasoning to support their ideas while 35% were neutral on this and 11% disagreed. This study also found that 59% (agreed

and strongly agreed) of the interns were able to clarify their own point of view if others did not support their opinions 34% were neutral and 7% disagreed.

The study further established that (agreed and strongly agreed) 60% could look for evidence to separate facts from opinions as well as understand other viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives and 30 were neutral while 10% disagreed about it. Also 62% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns could understand the language that others use to present their ideas 33% was neutral about this and 5% disagreed with the statement. This clearly shows that though some of the interns had mastered soft skills the level of soft skills mastery was low among the interns before joining the internship program in Nakuru County hence the importance of internship in soft skills mastery. These findings were presented in Table 4.8

**Table 4. 8: Soft Skills Mastery before Joining Internship Program**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I am able to clearly discuss my ideas with people	1.0%	7.0%	48.0%	21.0%	23.0%
I am able to handle effective negotiation activities with various parties	4.0%	8.0%	38.0%	30.0%	20.0%
I am able to answer questions accurately during the interview session	0.0%	7.0%	50.0%	25.0%	18.0%
I am able to communicate well according to the needs, in various situations	1.0%	7.0%	37.0%	39.0%	16.0%
I am able to speak fluently in public	0.0%	10.0%	37.0%	32.0%	21.0%
I am able to work well with team members	2.0%	5.0%	38.0%	35.0%	20.0%
I am able to understand the benefits of working in a team and work in a collaborative style with others to achieve results	1.0%	5.0%	43.0%	33.0%	18.0%
I am able to offer support to others when asked for (empowerment)	1.0%	5.0%	40.0%	31.0%	23.0%
I am able to work with others in diverse perspectives according to different values, beliefs and behaviors of different cultures.	2.0%	9.0%	37.0%	35.0%	17.0%
I am able to work in a team and in a collaborative style to achieve results.	2.0%	6.0%	34.0%	28.0%	30.0%
I am able to be patient as I deal with day-to-day issues and problems in my workplace	0.0%	10.0%	40.0%	34.0%	16.0%
I am able to choose the best alternative to solve issues and problems in my workplace	0.0%	8.0%	39.0%	34.0%	19.0%
I am able to face job-related issues and problems in my workplace	1.0%	12.0%	32.0%	43.0%	12.0%
I am able to list down alternatives to solve issues and problems in my workplace	0.0%	10.0%	41.0%	34.0%	15.0%
I am able to see job-related issues and problems before they arise	0.0%	12.0%	38.0%	37.0%	13.0%
I am able to check whether other people use logical reasoning to support their ideas	1.0%	2.0%	47.0%	31.0%	19.0%
I am able to clarify my own point of view if others do not support my opinions	0.0%	11.0%	35.0%	35.0%	19.0%
I am able to look for evidence to separate facts from opinions	0.0%	7.0%	34.0%	41.0%	18.0%
I am able to understand other viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives	1.0%	9.0%	30.0%	42.0%	18.0%
I am able to understand the language that others use to present their ideas	0.0%	5.0%	33.0%	43.0%	19.0%

#### **4.5.6 Soft Skills Mastery after Joining Internship Program**

This study also assessed soft skill mastery among the interns after they joined their internship programs. The study established that 94% (Agreed and Strongly Agreed) of the interns were able to clearly discuss their ideas with people, while 3% were neutral about this statement and 2% disagreed with the statement while only 1% strongly disagreed with it. It was also found out that 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns were also able to handle effective negotiation activities with various parties, while 2% were neutral, two percent disagreed and only 1% strongly disagreed that they are able to handle effective negotiation.

The study found out that those who were able to answer questions accurately during the interview session accounted for only 93% (agreed and strongly agreed) while 4% were neutral and 3% disagreed having none in strong disagreement. Those who could communicate well according to the needs, in various situations accounted to 54% (agreed and strongly agreed) were in the position to communicate well, however 37% were neutral while 7% were in disagreement and 1% strongly disagreed that they were in a position to communicate well. The study also found that 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) were able to speak fluently in public while 2% were neutral and 3% disagreeing with the statement. It was also found out that 97% (agreed and strongly agreed) were able to work well with team members while 2% were neutral on this and only 1% disagreed with the statement. The study further established that 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns also did understand the benefits of working in a team and work in a collaborative style with others to achieve results while 2% were neutral and only 3% disagreed.

Those who were able to offer support to others when asked for (empowerment) accounted for 97% while 2% were neutral and only 1% strongly disagree with the statement. Those who could work with others in diverse perspectives according to different values, beliefs and behaviors of different cultures accounted for 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) while 5% being neutral and 1% disagreeing and 1% strongly disagreeing. This study also established that 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns were able to work in a team and in a collaborative style to achieve results while 4% being neutral and 1% were in disagreement with the statement. It was further established that 93% (strongly agree and agree) were also able to be patient as they dealt with day-to-day issues and problems in their workplace, 6% were neutral and only 1% was in disagreement. The study also found that 95% of the interns were able to choose the best alternative to solve issues and problems in their workplace while 4% were neutral and only one were in disagreement with the statement. It was also



established that 95% were also able to face job-related issues and problems in their workplace while only 5% were neutral.

Those who were able to list down alternatives to solve issues and problems in their workplace accounted for 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) whereas 2% were neutral and 3% disagreed with the statement. While 93% (agreed and strongly agreed) could see job-related issues and problems before they arise and also check whether other people use logical reasoning to support their ideas while 4% were neutral on this and 3% disagreed. This study also found that 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns were able to clarify their own point of view if others did not support their opinions 4% were neutral and 1% disagreed.

The study also established that 96% (agreed and strongly agreed) could look for evidence to separate facts from opinions as well as understand other viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives and 3% were neutral while 1% disagreed about it. Also 96% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns could understand the language that others use to present their ideas 2% was neutral about this and 2% disagreed with the statement. As per the finding it is evident that soft skills mastery among the interns in Nakuru County Government increased very much after joining the internship programs hence the importance of internship in soft skills mastery. These findings were presented in Table 4.9

**Table 4. 9: Soft Skills Mastery after Joining Internship Program**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I am able to clearly discuss my ideas with people	1.0%	2.0%	3.0%	27.0%	67.0%
I am able to handle effective negotiation activities with various parties	1.0%	2.0%	2.0%	29.0%	66.0%
I am able to answer questions accurately during the interview session	0.0%	3.0%	4.0%	29.0%	64.0%
I am able to communicate well according to the needs, in various situations	0.0%	3.0%	2.0%	31.0%	64.0%
I am able to speak fluently in public	0.0%	3.0%	2.0%	29.0%	66.0%
I am able to work well with team members	0.0%	1.0%	2.0%	27.0%	70.0%
I am able to understand the benefits of working in a team and work in a collaborative style with others to achieve results	0.0%	1.0%	3.0%	28.0%	68.0%
I am able to offer support to others when asked for (empowerment)	0.0%	1.0%	2.0%	28.0%	69.0%
I am able to work with others in diverse perspectives according to different values, beliefs and behaviors of different cultures.	0.0%	3.0%	2.0%	27.0%	68.0%
I am able to work in a team and in a collaborative style to achieve results.	1.0%	0.0%	2.0%	27.0%	70.0%
I am able to be patient as I deal with day-to-day issues and problems in my workplace	1.0%	1.0%	5.0%	37.0%	56.0%
I am able to choose the best alternative to solve issues and problems in my workplace	0.0%	1.0%	4.0%	35.0%	60.0%
I am able to face job-related issues and problems in my workplace	0.0%	1.0%	6.0%	35.0%	58.0%
I am able to list down alternatives to solve issues and problems in my workplace	0.0%	1.0%	4.0%	34.0%	61.0%
I am able to see job-related issues and problems before they arise	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	35.0%	60.0%
I am able to check whether other people use logical reasoning to support their ideas	0.0%	3.0%	2.0%	32.0%	63.0%
I am able to clarify my own point of view if others do not support my opinions	0.0%	3.0%	4.0%	21.0%	72.0%
I am able to look for evidence to separate facts from opinions	0.0%	1.0%	4.0%	26.0%	69.0%
I am able to understand other viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives	0.0%	1.0%	3.0%	23.0%	73.0%
I am able to understand the language that others use to present their ideas	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%	23.0%	73.0%

#### 4.5.7 Comparing Soft Skills Mastery Before and After Joining Internship Program

In order to compare whether there was improvement on mastery of soft skills as a result of the internship program, this study scored perceptions on soft skill mastery collected before and after the internship program by summing the likert values. This resulted into a continuous variable/score measuring soft skills mastery before internship program and another measuring soft skills mastery after the internship program. In order to assess if the two score were significantly different, this study used a paired sample t test. A paired sample t test is used to compare averages of two samples. The study found that on average, soft skills mastery score after the internship was significantly ( $t=-13.43$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) higher than the score before the internship program. This is a clear indication of the importance of internship program in mastery of soft skills evidence from Nakuru County Government. This finding is presented in Table 4.10

**Table 4. 10: Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences				Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	
Soft Skills Mastery Before Joining IP - Soft Skills Mastery After Joining IP		-19.31	14.38	-13.43	99.00	0.00

#### 4.6 Inferential statistic.

Inferential statistics in form of Pearson’s product moment correlation, simple and multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the association between selected factors of internship and mastery of soft skills. All tests with a p-value of  $< 0.05$  were considered statistically significant. The results of the analysis were presented in tables and figures.

##### 4.6.1 Correlation Matrix

A correlation matrix is a table with cells indicating correlation between two variables. This study found that competence of the internship supervisors was positively ( $r=0.617$ ) correlated with assessment criteria. It was also positively correlated with personal role fitness as well as the institutional support. The study also established that assessment criteria were positively correlated with personal role fitness as well as the institutional factors. There was also a positive correlation between personal role fitness and the institutional support. The findings were presented in Table.4.11.

**Table 4.11: Correlation Matrix**

	Competence of the Supervisors	Assessment Criteria	Personal Role Fitness	Institutional Support	Soft Skills Masterly After Joining IP
Competence of the Supervisors	1				
Assessment Criteria	0.617	1			
Personal Role Fitness	0.363	0.438	1		
Institutional Support	0.409	0.558	0.324	1	
Soft Skills Masterly After Joining IP	0.062	0.207	0.29	0.238	1

#### 4.6.2 Correlation Analysis

This study sought to evaluate the effect of selected internship factors on soft skills mastery among interns from Nakuru County Government. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher conducted correlation analysis to establish the extent to which each of the selected internship factors affected soft skill mastery. Correlation analysis assumes that linear relationship between the dependent and the independent variables exists and a correlation analysis was done to assess whether this assumption holds. Likert items measuring the constructs; competence of the internship supervisors, assessment criteria, personal role fitness, institutional support and soft skills mastery were scored into a likert scale by aggregating the values for each item. Pearson's product moment correlation was done to compute the direction and strength of the linear associations since the likert scales were continuous.

This study established that there was an insignificant ( $r=0.062$ ,  $p=0.539$ ) correlation between competence of the internship supervisors and soft skills mastery among the interns. There was however a significant ( $r=0.207$ ,  $p=0.039$ ) linear relationship between assessment criteria and soft skills mastery after joining the internship program. The findings concur with those of Washor (2015) which found out that using good internship assessment criteria has a significant effect on student soft-skill mastery. The study also found a significant ( $r=0.290$ ,  $p=0.003$ ) linear relationship between personal role fitness and soft skills mastery after joining the internship program. The findings concurred with those of Pop and Barkhuizen (2013). Institutional support also was found to be significantly ( $r=0.238$ ,  $p=0.017$ ) correlated with soft skills mastery after joining the internship program. These findings were in agreement with those of (Kamunzyu and Ndunge 2011). However, although the direction of the

relationship was positive, the correlation was small. These findings were presented in Table 4.12.

**Table 4. 12: Correlation Analysis**

		Soft Skills Mastery After Joining the Internship Program
Competence of the Supervisors	Pearson Correlation	.062
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.539
	N	100
Assessment Criteria	Pearson Correlation	.207*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039
	N	100
Personal Role Fitness	Pearson Correlation	.290**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
	N	100
Institutional Support	Pearson Correlation	.238*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017
	N	100

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

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

#### 4.7 Regression Analysis

A linear regression analysis was adopted to assess the extent to which selected internship factors affected soft skill mastery after joining internship program.

The regression was of the following form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_i * X_i \quad \text{Where } i=1, 2,3,4,$$

Where the Xi are the variables as stated in each of the study objectives. The regression was conducted and the study tested the following hypothesis:

### 4.7.1 Hypothesis 1

This study was guided by the following hypothesis 1 which stated that:

H<sub>01</sub> : There is no statistically significant effect of competence of the internship Supervisors on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

This study established that 2.6% variation in soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government was explained by competence of the internship supervisors. The model however was not significantly (Sig. >0.05) different from the null model. This study established that adding the controls to the model increased the coefficient of variation by 0.025. However, this increment was not significant (Sig. F Change >0.05) thus the controls had no significant effect on how competence of the internship supervisors influenced soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. Thus, supporting the research hypothesis that there is no statistically significant effect of competence of the internship supervisors on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. The findings concurred with those (Gloria, Hird, & Tao 2008). This finding is presented on Table 4.13.

**Table 4. 13: Competence of the internship Supervisors Model Summary**

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Change Statistics	
			R Change	Sig. F Change
1	.026	.013	.026	.154
2	.050	-.013	.025	.742

a. Predictors: (Constant), Competence of the internship supervisors (Model 1)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Competence of the internship supervisors, kindly indicate your age, Which level do you fall in? Gender, how long have you been in this internship? (Model 2)

### 4.7.2 Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis that guided this study stated that:

H<sub>02</sub> : There is no statistically significant effect of assessment criteria of the internship on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

This study established that 5.4% variation in soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government was explained by assessment criteria of the internship program. The model was significantly (Sig. <0.05) different from the null model and thus a good fit of the data. This study also tested whether the effect of assessment criteria of the internship program on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government was moderated by

control variables; gender, internship duration, education level and age. This study established that adding the controls to the model increased the coefficient of variation by 0.021. However, this increment was not significant (Sig. F Change >0.05) thus the controls had no significant effect on how assessment criteria of the internship influenced soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, the findings concurring with those of (Washor, 2015) are presented in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.14: Assessment Criteria Model Summary**

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Change Statistics	
			R Change	Sig. F Change
1	.054	.042	.054	.036
2	.075	.013	.021	.795

a. Predictors: (Constant), Assessment Criteria (Model 1)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Assessment Criteria, Gender, how long have you been in this internship? Which level do you fall in? Kindly indicate your age (Model 2)

This study found that assessment criteria significantly ( $B=0.772$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) affected soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. The null hypothesis was thus rejected and the study concluded that there is statistically significant effect of assessment criteria of the internship program on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. A unit change in assessment criteria of the internship significantly (Sig.  $<0.05$ ) resulted into 0.772 increment on soft skills mastery. The regression model was as follows:

$$\text{Soft Skills Mastery After Joining Internship Program} = 75.21 + 0.772 * \text{Assessment Criteria}$$

These findings were presented in Table 4.14

**Table 4.15: Assessment Criteria Model Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	75.210	7.908		9.510	.000
	Assessment Criteria	.772	.368	.207	2.096	.039

a. Dependent Variable: Soft skills mastery after joining the internship program

### 4.7.3 Hypothesis 3

This study was also guided by the following hypothesis 3:

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no statistically significant effect of person role fitness on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

This study established that 13.6% variation in soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government was explained by personal role fitness. The model was (Sig. <0.05) from the null model and thus a good fit of the data. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence the findings were in agreement with those of (Pop and Barkhuizen 2013). This study also tested whether the influence of personal role fitness on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government was moderated by control variables; gender, internship duration, education level and age. This study established that adding the controls to the model increased the coefficient of variation by 0.045. However, this increment was not significant (Sig. F Change >0.05) thus the controls had no significant effect on how personal role fitness influenced soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. These findings are presented in Table 4.15.

**Table 4. 16: Person Role Fitness Model Summary**

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Change Statistics	
			R Square Change	Sig. F Change
1	.136	.126	.136	.001
2	.182	.127	.045	.394

a. Predictors: (Constant), Personal Role Fitness (Model 1)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Personal Role Fitness, Which level do you fall in? Gender, how long have you been in this internship? Kindly indicate your age (Model 2)

This study found that Personal Role Fitness significantly ( $\beta=1.139$ , Sig. <0.05) affected soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. The null hypothesis was thus rejected and the study concluded that there is statistically significant effect of personal role fitness of the internship on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. A unit change in Personal Role Fitness significantly (Sig. <0.05) resulted into 1.139 increment on soft skills mastery. The regression model was as follows:



*Soft Skills Mastery After Joining IP= 66.40+1.139\* Personal Role Fitness*

These findings were presented in Table 4.16

**Table 4. 17: Personal Role Fitness Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	$\beta$	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	66.404	8.460			7.849	.000
Personal Role Fitness	1.139	.379	.290		3.004	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Soft skills mastery after joining Internship program

#### 4.7.4 Hypothesis 4

This study was guided by the following fourth hypothesis:

H<sub>04</sub> : There is no statistically significant effect of institutional support on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

The study established that 6.3% variation in soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government was significantly explained by Institutional Support. The model was significantly (Sig. <0.05) different from the null model and thus a good fit of the data. This study also tested whether the effect of institutional support on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government was moderated by control variables; gender, internship duration, education level and age. This study established that adding the controls to the model increased the coefficient of variation by 0.039. However, this increment was not significant (Sig. F Change >0.05) thus the controls had no significant effect on how Institutional Support influenced soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. The findings concurred with those of (Kamunzyu and Ndunge 2011). These findings are presented in Table 4.17

**Table 4. 18: Institutional Support Model Summary**

Model	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Change Statistics	
			R Square Change	Sig. F Change
1	.063	.051	.063	.024
2	.102	.042	.039	.518

a. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Support -Model 1

b. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Support, how long have you been in this internship? Gender, Which level do you fall in? Kindly indicate your age-Model 2

The regression model was as follows:

$$\text{Soft Skills Mastery After Joining IP} = 74.33 + 0.811 * \text{Institutional Support}$$

These findings were presented in Table 4.18

**Table 4.19: Institutional Support Model Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	74.331	7.220		10.295	.000
	Institutional Support	.811	.335	.238	2.422	.017

a. Dependent Variable: Soft Skills Mastery After Joining the internship program

The study found that Institutional Support significantly (B=0.811, Sig. <0.05) affected soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. The null hypothesis was thus rejected and the study concluded that there is statistically significant effect of Institutional Support on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. A unit change in Institutional support significantly (Sig. <0.05) resulted into 0.811 increment on soft skills mastery.

#### 4.8 Multiple Regression Model

This study conducted a multiple regression analysis to assess whether Institutional Support, personal role fitness, competence of the supervisors and assessment criteria jointly affected soft skills Mastery. The study established that the model explained 12.2% variation in soft skills Mastery. This finding is presented in Table 4.19.

**Table 4.20: Multiple Regression Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.350 <sup>a</sup>	.122	.085	9.054

a. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Support, Personal Role Fitness, Competence of the Supervisors, Assessment Criteria

In as much as the model significantly explained 12.2% variation in soft skills mastery, none of the explanatory variables significantly jointly affected soft skills mastery. The finding is presented in Table 4.20

**Table 4.21: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	60.565	9.793		6.185	.000
Competence of the Supervisors	-.464	.377	-.153	-1.232	.221
Assessment Criteria	.378	.517	.102	.730	.467
Personal Role Fitness	.941	.419	.245	2.247	.027
Institutional Support	.566	.394	.167	1.436	.154

a. Dependent Variable: Soft Skills Mastery After Joining Internship Program

The findings reveal that only personal role fitness significantly (B=0.941, Sig. <0.05) affected soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government while the rest explanatory variables were found insignificant. Hence these findings concurred with those of (Mgaya, 2014). Thus, the explanatory variables did not jointly affect the mastery of soft skills.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter is on discussion of the major findings of the study. It provides a summary of the study, the purpose and the research questions of the study. The chapter presents the conclusion and suggests some recommendations for progress and for further research.

#### 5.2 Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effect of selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills evidence from Nakuru County Government, Kenya. The study sought to realize four specific objectives: to assess the effect of assessment criteria of the internship on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government, to examine the effect of competency of the internship supervisors on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government, to determine the effect of person role fitness on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government and to analyse the effect of institutional support on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

##### 5.2.1 Assessment criteria of the internship on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government

The study established that generally there was relevant and consistent evaluation method of the internship (grading criteria, internship report, performance-based assessment and program duration) as those who agreed with the statement accounted for 82%. Also 82% (Agree and Strongly Agree) pointed out the presence of good evaluation criteria of the internship while 16% were neutral with the statement those in disagreement accounted for 1% and also with 1% strongly disagreeing that there were good evaluation criteria. The study also found that 77% (agreed and strongly agree) of the interns were confident that the internship was capable of changing their career aspirations and confirming their career goals while 8% were neutral with the statement also 4% disagreed and only 1% being in strong disagreement. Majority, 94% (agreed and strongly agree) also felt that their work would be useful and meaningful for the organization and would be appreciated by colleagues while 4% being neutral only 2% disagreed and none strongly disagreed with the statement. The study further found out that assessment criteria significantly ( $B=0.772$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) affected soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government that is a unit change in assessment criteria of the internship significantly (Sig.  $<0.05$ ) resulted into 0.772 increment on soft skills mastery.

### **5.2.2 Institutional Support on Soft Skills Mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government**

The study established that majority, 72% were in agreement that there was a good installation of infrastructure and equipment needed in order to properly perform their activity. However, 21% of the interns were neutral on this, only 3% disagreed with 4% strongly disagreeing. The study also established that 78% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns also agreed that employees were always there to help and teach them different things. There were only 20% who were neutral that employees were always there to help and teach them different things and only 2% disagreed with the statement. Majority, 88% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns felt that the support of the supervisor from the organization for the elaboration of the internship report was good only 12% were neutral with none disagreeing with the statement. It was also established that 85% (agreed and strongly agreed) of the interns agreed that internship supervisors were always there to offer the necessary information about the internship. However, 2% disagreed that internship supervisors are always there to offer the necessary information about the internship with 13% being neutral on the statement.

The study also established that the relation of the internship supervisor with the organization is good as those who agreed with the statement accounted for 94% (agreed and strongly agreed) 5% were neutral and only 1% strongly disagreed with the statement. According to the findings Institutional support significantly ( $B=0.811$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) affected soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. The study established that 6.3% variation in soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government was significantly explained by Institutional Support

### **5.2.3 Person Role Fitness on Soft Skills Mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government**

The study established that majority, 94% of the interns agreed that the tasks performed were in line with their profession with 4% being neutral and only 2% disagreeing with the statement. Majority, 95% (agreed and strongly agreed) also had the ability to develop specialized technical skills for a specific job function and only 5% being neutral. Also, it was found out that 87% (agreed and strongly agreed) had also the ability to develop realistic ideas about the work environment and 11% were neutral, one percent being in disagreement and also 1% strongly disagreeing with the statement. The study also found out that interns who had the ability to seek and accept an intern work assignment accounted for 96% (agreed and

strongly agreed) with only 4% being neutral and none disagreed with the statement. Those who could change professionally as a result of their internship program/practical training involvement were 89% (agreed and strongly agreed) with 6% being neutral with the statement while 3% disagreed and only 2% strongly felt that they did not have the ability to change professionally as a result of their internship program/practical training involvement. According to the findings it is clear that giving interns tasks that are in line with their profession enhanced soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government. The study further found out that personal role fitness significantly ( $B=1.139$ , Sig.  $<0.05$ ) affected soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. This study established that 13.6% variation in soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government was explained by personal role fitness.

#### **5.2.4 Competence of Internship Supervisors on Soft Skills Mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government**

The study found out that 89% of the students who agreed that there was clear establishment and communication of their tasks at the beginning of the internship by the supervisors and only 1% of the interns felt that there was no clear establishment and communication of his/her tasks at the beginning of the internship by the supervisors. Majority, 90% (agree and strongly agree) of the interns agreed that the relation with the representatives of the faculty within the internship program was good, 7% were neutral with the statement, 3% having disagreed and none of them totally disagreed. Also 82% (agree and strongly agree) pointed out the presence of good evaluation criteria of the internship while 16% were neutral with the statement those in disagreement accounted for 1% and also with 1% strongly disagreeing.

The study also found that 77% (agreed and strongly agree) of the interns were confident that the internship was capable of changing their career aspirations and confirming their career goals while 8% were neutral with the statement also 4% disagreed and only 1% being in strong disagreement. Majority, 94% (agreed and strongly agree) also felt that their work would be useful and meaningful for the organization and would be appreciated by colleagues while 4% being neutral only 2% disagreed and none strongly disagreed with the statement. According to these findings it is clear that assessment criteria affects soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government. This study established that 2.6% variation in soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government was explained by competence of the internship supervisors. The study found out that there is no statistically significant ( $<0.05$ ) effect of

competence of the internship supervisors on soft skills mastery in Nakuru County Government.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that the effect competence of internship supervisors was not significant (Sig.>0.05). The study further concluded that a unit change in assessment criteria of the internship significantly (Sig. <0.05) resulted into 0.772 increment on soft skills mastery as was evidence from the county and also that Nakuru County has competent internship supervisors who play their role well hence enhancing soft skills mastery among the interns. This was evidence from the majority of the interns agreeing and strongly agreeing with the indicators. Hence competence of the internship supervisors affects soft skills mastery.

A unit change in institutional support significantly (Sig. <0.05) resulted into 0.811 increment on soft skills mastery among interns evidence from Nakuru County Government. The presence of institutional support in the county was noted as the majority of the interns agreed with the indicators measuring institutional support. Hence it was concluded that institutional support has effect in soft skills mastery in the County. Also, a unit change in personal role fitness significantly (Sig. <0.05) resulted into 1.139 increment on soft skills mastery. It was concluded that the county placed its employees/interns as per their area of specialization hence enabling them to mastery soft skills. Thus, assessment criteria, person role fitness and institutional support were significant selected factors of internship which affect mastery of soft skills among interns evidence from Nakuru County Government.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

The study recommends that college institutions should work in collaboration with the organizations or industries where the students are sent for their internship programs to ensure that there is a good assessment criteria put in place, that the interns are well placed as per their professions (person role fitness) and ensure institutional support in order to enhance soft skills mastery among the interns as it was found in Nakuru County Government, Kenya. College institutions should incorporate soft skills mastery in their curriculum as it has great effect in the work environment. It is also recommended that internships should be planned well, supported well and successfully implemented. Organizations or industries should give the interns whatever they may need in order for them to master the important soft skills like

teamwork, interpersonal skills, problem solving skills and critical thinking skills that are essential in the work environment.

Human resource managers should enhance mastery of soft skills not only at the entry level but also at any level in the organization. This would help them relate well with others and also successfully perform their work hence achievement of both individual and organizational goals. Institutions may also need to revise the curriculum and how to assess the internship programs. The process may involve significant investment in monitoring of the all process to enhance soft skills mastery. Measures of effectiveness of changes must be developed and used in order to improve assessment criteria of the interns. Internship supervisors are required to develop skills in providing supervision to interns during their internship period in order for them to master soft skills.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further research**

The findings, conclusions and recommendations are stepping stones towards a better understanding of the effect of selected factors of internship on soft skills mastery which is rapidly expanding. The reality in practice may require more effort and further research. The researcher therefore suggests further research on the effect of soft skills mastery on employee performance.



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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I: CONSENT LETTER**

Dear Respondent,

I am a Student in the School of Business, Kabarak University, carrying out a research study entitled 'Evaluation of selected internship factors on mastery of soft skills among interns: evidence from Nakuru County Government. The specific objectives are to identify assessment criteria of the internship, person role fitness, competency and institutional support on soft skills mastery.

I am undertaking the research for academic purposes, inferences drawn from the findings will be used to make positive contributions, relevant recommendations and influence community action for positive changes. Note that as a respondent, you are allowed to take part in the study on a voluntary basis and you could stop participating at any time if conditions compel you to do so. The information you give in this exercise will be treated confidentially. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study

Thank you for accepting to participate in filling this questionnaire and to be interviewed.

Yours faithfully,

CHANGWONY J. PURITY

## **APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE**

The outcome of this research is purely for the academic purpose. All information submitted will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your name will not appear in any reported findings along with your responses at any given time. Kindly feel free to express yourself as much as possible. The questionnaire is an integral part of a research study on effect of selected internship factors on soft skills mastery among interns in Nakuru County Government.

### **Instructions:**

Please tick the answer of your choice or write in the space provided as the case may be.

### **Section I**

#### **Background information**

1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. Kindly indicate your age: (Optional)\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which level do you fall in?

Undergraduate

Postgraduate

4. How long have you been in this internship?

Less than two months

Two months and above



## Section II

This section covers selected internship factors (assessment criteria, competency of internship supervisors, person role fitness, institutional support) and your soft skills mastery. You are requested to rate the statements under each subsection. Kindly use the following Likert scale Where; (Strongly Agree =SA, Agree = A, Neutral = N, Disagree = D, strongly Disagree = SD) Please tick appropriately your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

<b>Sub-Section A: Competence of the Supervisors</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Information about the expectations related to my performance within the internship program are well communicated					
2. There is a clear establishment and communication of my tasks at the beginning of the internship by the supervisors					
3. The activities are well organized and distributed					
4. There is a well-organized induction period and a presentation of the organization by the supervisors					
5. There is clear schedule and working program for interns.					
<b>Sub-Section B: Assessment Criteria</b>					
	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
6. There is relevant and consistent evaluation method of the internship (grading system, internship report and other documents)					
7. The relation with the representatives of the faculty within the internship program is good					
8. Presence of good evaluation criteria of the internship.					
9. The internship is capable of changing my career aspirations and confirming my career goals					
10. My work would be useful and meaningful for the organization and would be appreciated by colleagues.					
<b>Sub-Section C: Person Role Fitness</b>					
	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
11. The tasks performed are in line with my profession.					
12. I have the ability to develop specialized technical skills for a specific job function.					
13. I have the ability to develop realistic ideas about the work world.					
14. I have the ability to seek and accept an intern work assignment					
15. I have the ability to change professionally as a result of my internship/practical training involvement.					

<b>Sub-Section D: Institutional Support</b>					
	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
16. There is good installation of infrastructure and equipment needed in order to properly perform my activity.					
17. Employees are always there to help and teach me different things.					
18. The support of the supervisor from the organization for the elaboration of the internship report is good					
19. Internship supervisors are always there to offer the necessary information about the internship.					
20. The relation of the internship supervisor with the organization is good.					

<b>Sub-Section E: Soft Skills Mastery</b> Using the same scale as in A-D, please indicate the level of mastery of soft skills	<b>Before Joining IP</b>						<b>Two Months into the IP</b>				
	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1) <i>Before joining the Internship Program (IP)</i>											
2) <i>Two months into the Internship Program (IP)</i>											
<b>Communication skills</b>											
21. I am able to clearly discuss my ideas with people											
22. I am able to handle effective negotiation activities with various parties											
23. I am able to answer questions accurately during the interview session											
24. I am able to communicate well according to the needs, in various situations											
25. I am able to speak fluently in public											
<b>Teamwork</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
26. I am able to work well with team members											
27. I am able to understand the benefits of working in a team and work in a collaborative style with others to achieve results											
28. I am able to offer support to others when asked for (empowerment)											

29. I am able to work with others in diverse perspectives according to different values, beliefs and behaviors of different cultures.										
30. I am able to work in a team and in a collaborative style to achieve results.										
<b>Problem solving skills</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
31. I am able to be patient as I deal with day-to-day issues and problems in my workplace										
32. I am able to choose the best alternative to solve issues and problems in my workplace										
33. I am able to face job-related issues and problems in my workplace										
34. I am able to list down alternatives to solve issues and problems in my workplace										
35. I am able to see job-related issues and problems before they arise										
<b>Critical thinking skills</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
36. I am able to check whether other people use logical reasoning to support their ideas										
37. I am able to clarify my own point of view if others do not support my opinions										
38. I am able to look for evidence to separate facts from opinions										
39. I am able to understand other viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives										
40. I am able to understand the language that others use to present their ideas										

**Thank you for your time and cooperation, God bless you.**

**APPENDIX III: LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**KABARAK**



**UNIVERSITY**

Private Bag - 20157  
KABARAK, KENYA  
<http://kabarak.ac.ke/institute-postgraduate-studies/>

Tel: 0773 265 999  
E-mail: [directorpostgraduate@kabarak.ac.ke](mailto:directorpostgraduate@kabarak.ac.ke)

**BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES**

18<sup>th</sup> July, 2019

The Director General  
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)  
P.O. Box 30623 – 00100  
**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: CHANGWONY JEPKORIR PURITY- REG. NO. GMHR/NE/2515/05/18**

The above named is a Master's of Science student at Kabarak University in the School of Business and Economics. She is carrying out research entitled "*Effect of Internship Determinants on Soft Skills Mastery among Interns Evidence from Nakuru County Government, Kenya*". She has defended her proposal and has been authorized to proceed with field research.

The information obtained in the course of this research will be used for academic purposes only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Please provide her with a research permit to enable her to undertake her research.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

**Dr. Betty Jeruto Tikoko**  
**DIRECTOR, POSTGRADUATE STUDIES**







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**Kabarak University Moral Code**

*As members of Kabarak University family, we purpose at all times and in all places, to set apart in one's heart, Jesus as Lord. (1 Peter 3:15)*



## APPENDIX IV: NACOSTI APPROVAL

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 477420	Date of Issue: 14/August/2019
<b>RESEARCH LICENSE</b>	
	
This is to Certify that Ms. PURITY CHANGWONY of Kabarak University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nakuru on the topic: EFFECT OF INTERNSHIP DETERMINANTS ON SOFT SKILLS MASTERY AMONG INTERNS: EVIDENCE FROM NAKURU COUNTY GOVERNMENT, KENYA for the period ending : 14/August/2020.	
License No: NACOSTI/P/19/369	
477420 Applicant Identification Number	 Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code 
NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.	

**APPENDIX V: AUTHORIZATION LETTER FOR PILOT STUDY**

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
BARINGO COUNTY GOVERNMENT**



**WARD ADMINISTRATOR – MOGOTIO**

P.o Box 67-20105, Mogotio

REF: BCG/MGTCOMP &CORRE/VOL 1/5

22/8/2019

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT PILOT RESEARCH WITHIN MOGOTIO SUB COUNTY**

MS PURITY CHANGWONY of Identity card number: 22338198, LICENCE NO. NACOSTI/P/19/369 a student from KABARAK UNIVERSITY – TOWN CAMPUS is allowed to conduct her research in the area specified above and in strict adherence with the professional ethics and within the realms of her research topic.

Please accord her the necessary assistance.

  
PIUS K. CHEBON

**WARD ADMINISTRATOR – MOGOTIO WARD**



**APPENDIX VI: AUTHORIZATION LETTER FROM NAKURU COUNTY  
GOVERNMENT**



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**  
**COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF NAKURU**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE TRAINING AND DEVOLUTION**



Telephone: +252 721 278 798 (051) 2214142  
E-Mail: [psm@nakuru.go.ke](mailto:psm@nakuru.go.ke)  
Fb: [nakuru county government-official](https://www.facebook.com/nakuru-county-government-official)

P.O. Box 2870-20100  
Nakuru  
[www.nakuru.go.ke](http://www.nakuru.go.ke)  
twitter: @nakurucountygav

NCG/HRM/Corresp/VOL.II

26th August, 2019

Purity Changwony  
P O Box  
NAKURU

**AUTHORITY TO COLLECT DATA FOR RESEARCH PROJECT**

Following your request for authority to collect data for your research project on "Effect of Internship Determinants on soft skills Mastery among Interns: Evidence from Nakuru County Government", this is to inform you that permission has been granted.

Please note that the information gotten must be used for academic purposes only.

**BII MOSES**  
**FOR: COUNTY SECRETARY & HEAD OF PUBLIC SERVICE**  
**NAKURU COUNTY**

c.c: Chief Officer Public Service Training and Devolution