



Modeling Determinants of Undergraduate Computing Students' Participation in Internships

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Motivation

Industry Internships

Students

- build technical skills
- develop professional skills
- gain authentic experiences
- explore computing pathways
- develop professional identities
- secure future employment and higher salaries

(e.g., Minnes et al., 2021)

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- provide cues for hiring full-time employees
- offer an opportunity to evaluate potential candidates

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Computing Programs

- increase retention in computing programs
- improve quality of capstone projects

(e.g., Fryling et al., 2018)

Motivation



58%

Graduating computing undergraduate
students who pursue an internship in US

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Research Question

What are the factors that influence undergraduate computing students' participation in internships?

Prior Work

- Participation in internships in computing
 - importance of internships (Kapoor and Gardner-McCune, 2019)
 - student demographics (Kapoor and Gardner-McCune, 2020)
 - barriers that support/prohibit securing internships (Kapoor and Gardner-McCune, 2020)
 - used qualitative and bivariate analysis

Prior Work

- Participation in internships in computing
 - importance of internships (Kapoor and Gardner-McCune, 2019)
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 - barriers that support/prohibit securing internships (Kapoor and Gardner-McCune, 2020)
 - used qualitative and bivariate analysis
- Modeling internships in other domains
 - race, gender, age, first-generation status, and participation in high-impact practices such as research, etc. influenced internship participation (Hoekstra, 2021)

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- Theoretical background on identity
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Prior Work

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 - James Marcia's theory of identity development (Marcia, 1966)
 - four statuses across two dimensions: exploration and commitment
 - identity diffusion (**low** exploration, **low** commitment)
 - identity foreclosure (**low** exploration, **high** commitment)
 - identity moratorium (**high** exploration, **low** commitment)
 - identity achievement (**high** exploration, **high** commitment)

Methods

- Study Design

- Larger study: mixed methods based on a Concurrent Triangulation Design
 - surveys and interviews
- This work:
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Methods

- **Research Site**

- **Population:** Computing undergraduate students
- **Sample:** students enrolled in an undergraduate computing degree program at a large public university in the US
- **Context:**
 - admission to the site is selective
 - students can select a major when they start the program but have the flexibility to switch it at any time
 - students enrolled in CS, Computer Engineering (CE), and Digital Arts & Sciences (DAS) majors
 - participation in an internship is not mandatory before graduation

Methods

- Participants and recruitment
 - study approved by the Institutional Review Board at the research site
 - participants were recruited from CS1, CS2, software engineering, HCI, and OS courses and offered extra credit or random gift cards
 - 43% response rate (N=698, Total course enrollments=1620)

Methods

- Participants and recruitment
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 - participants were recruited from CS1, CS2, software engineering, HCI, and OS courses and offered extra credit or random gift cards
 - 43% response rate (N=698, Total course enrollments=1620)
 - Discarded data:
 - students who were not in CS-related majors
 - CS minors
 - students who completed less than 80% of the survey
 - students who were not in an undergraduate program
 - students without gender classification
 - non-traditional students over age 24
 - students with a high proportion of relevant missing data

Methods

- Participants
 - 518 students enrolled in
 - CS (66%),
 - CE (26%),
 - DAS (4%), or
 - double majors including CS (4%)
 - Average age of students: 20
 - Min = 18
 - Max = 24
 - SD = 1.4

Methods

- Participants

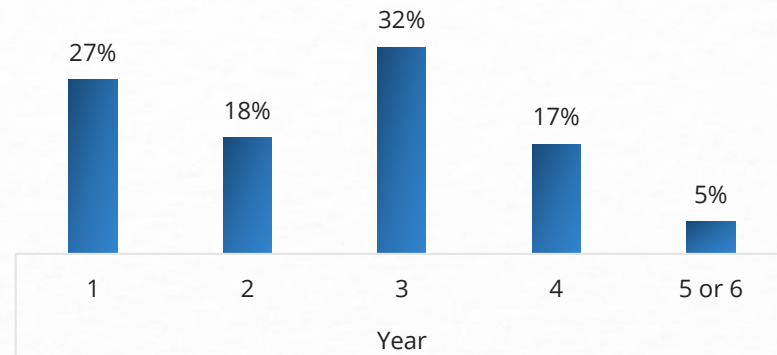
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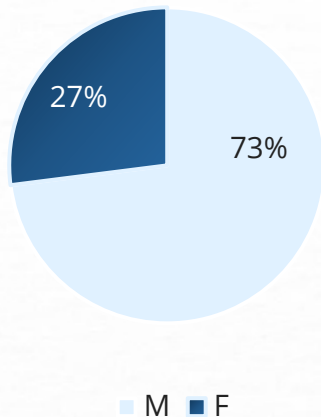
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Academic Year (N = 518)



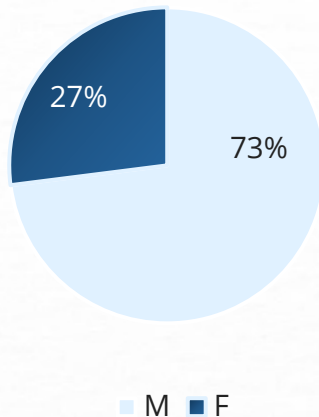
Methods

Gender (N = 518)

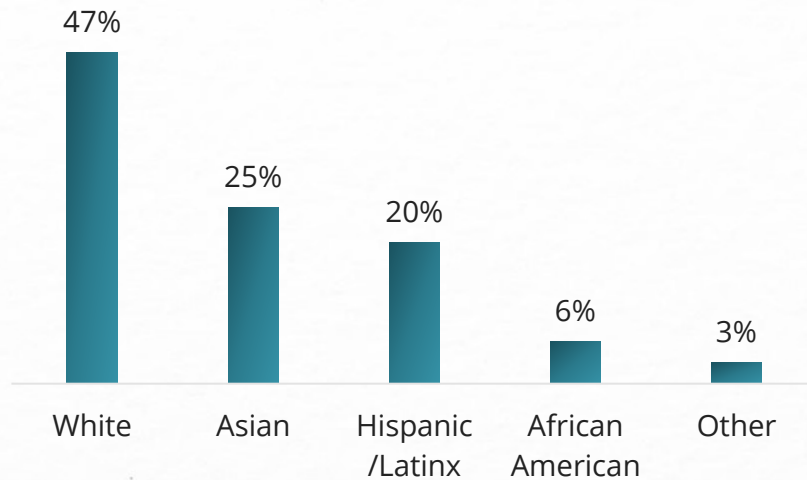


Methods

Gender (N = 518)



Race/Ethnic Identity (N = 518)



Methods

- Survey
 - 11 sections
 - demographics,
 - professional goals and identity,
 - degree program experience,
 - social support,
 - involvement in external activities

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- demographics,
 - professional goals and identity,
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- Questions developed from

- findings of our prior work and pilot study
 - NCWIT Student Experience of the Major Survey
 - CRA Data Buddies Survey
 - Bennion and Adams' Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS) instrument for measuring Marcia's identity statuses

Methods

- Response (dependent) variable
 - binary categorical variable
 - participation in internship(s) or co-op(s) during a student's enrollment in a degree program
 - not counting internships during high school

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 - binary categorical variable
 - participation in internship(s) or co-op(s) during a student's enrollment in a degree program
 - not counting internships during high school
- Explanatory or independent variables
 - 13 independent variables

Methods

Explanatory (independent) variable descriptions

Variable Category	Independent Variable	Description (Coded value)
Demographic and Socioeconomic Factors		
Academic Profile		
Identity		
External Involvement		

Key: Binary encoded categorical ▲ | Ordinal encoded categorical ★ | Quantitative ■ | Quantitative variable computed from ordinal scale questions ☺

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External Involvement	External involvement score ☉	Composite score based on involvement in 14 activities, e.g., hackathons, clubs, etc.(scale: 0-42)

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Methods

- Analysis

- binary logistic regression model
 - participation in internship (Yes/No) is the response variable
 - 13 explanatory variables (excluded one variable later – multicollinearity)
- The logit (i.e., the natural logarithm of an odds ratio) forms the basis of logistic regression
- The odds ratio represents the odds that an outcome will occur (e.g., a student participates in an internship), given the presence of some factor and controlling for other predictors

Methods

- Model

$$Z = \ln\left(\frac{P_i}{1 - P_i}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_{12} X_{12}$$

- P_i is the probability of event i ,
- β_0 is the constant coefficient,
- $X_1 \dots X_{12}$ are the explanatory variables,
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- Null and Alternate Hypothesis

$$H_0 = \beta_1 = \beta_2 = \dots = \beta_{12} = 0$$

$$H_A = \beta_1 = \beta_2 = \dots = \beta_{12} \neq 0$$

Methods

- Data imputation
 - handling 1.4% missing data
 - 326 of the total 23828 data points were replaced

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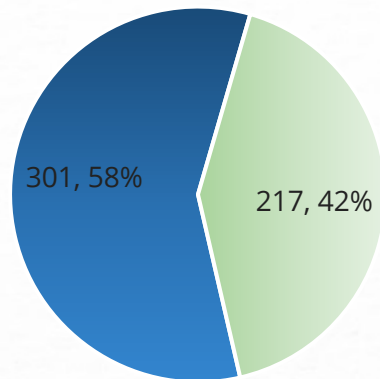
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- Multicollinearity

- correlation coefficients such as Pearson's R (correlated if $\geq \pm 0.7$)
- variance inflation factor (correlated if $VIF > 5$)
- Age was highly correlated with the year in school (Pearson's R = 0.80) and hence we excluded age

Results

Descriptive Statistics of Dependent/Response Variable (N=518)



■ No internship experience ■ Participated in at least 1 internship

Results

	Coef. β	Std. Err	Z	$p > Z $	CI for Coef. β		Odds Ratio $\exp(\beta)$	CI for Odds Ratio	
					[0.025	0.975]		5%	95%
Const	-5.53	1.60	-3.45	0.00	-8.67	-2.39	0.00	0.00	0.09
HS CS Edu.	0.29	0.21	1.36	0.18	-0.13	0.71	1.34	0.88	2.04
Employment	0.10	0.23	0.45	0.65	-0.35	0.56	1.11	0.70	1.75
Year in School	0.57	0.10	5.72	0.00**	0.38	0.77	1.77	1.46	2.16
GPA	0.51	0.28	1.80	0.07	-0.05	1.06	1.66	0.96	2.89
Household Income	0.22	0.06	3.76	0.00**	0.11	0.34	1.25	1.11	1.40
Gender	-0.28	0.24	-1.16	0.25	-0.76	0.19	0.75	0.47	1.22
Race	0.16	0.24	0.67	0.50	-0.31	0.63	1.18	0.73	1.88
Moratorium Score	0.01	0.03	0.48	0.64	-0.04	0.07	1.01	0.96	1.07
Diffusion Score	-0.06	0.03	-2.14	0.03*	-0.12	-0.01	0.94	0.89	0.99
Achievement Score	0.01	0.03	0.29	0.77	-0.05	0.07	1.01	0.95	1.07
Foreclosure Score	-0.01	0.03	-0.34	0.74	-0.06	0.05	0.99	0.94	1.05
Involvement Score	0.12	0.02	6.79	0.00**	0.09	0.16	1.13	1.09	1.17
No. of Observations: 518			Pseudo R ² : 0.21			LLR p-value: 4.7e-25			
Df Residuals: 505			Log-Likelihood: -279.5			* $p < 0.05$			
Df Model: 12			LL-Null: -352.2			** $p < 0.001$			

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GPA	0.51	0.28	1.80	0.07	-0.05	1.06	1.66	0.96	2.89
Household Income	0.22	0.06	3.76	0.00**	0.11	0.34	1.25	1.11	1.40
Gender	-0.28	0.24	-1.16	0.25	-0.76	0.19	0.75	0.47	1.22
Race	0.16	0.24	0.67	0.50	-0.31	0.63	1.18	0.73	1.88
Moratorium Score	0.01	0.03	0.48	0.64	-0.04	0.07	1.01	0.96	1.07
Diffusion Score	-0.06	0.03	-2.14	0.03*	-0.12	-0.01	0.94	0.89	0.99
Achievement Score	0.01	0.03	0.29	0.77	-0.05	0.07	1.01	0.95	1.07
Foreclosure Score	-0.01	0.03	-0.34	0.74	-0.06	0.05	0.99	0.94	1.05
Involvement Score	0.12	0.02	6.79	0.00**	0.09	0.16	1.13	1.09	1.17
No. of Observations: 518			Pseudo R ² : 0.21		LLR p-value: 4.7e-25				
Df Residuals: 505			Log-Likelihood: -279.5		* $p < 0.05$				
Df Model: 12			LL-Null: -352.2		** $p < 0.001$				

Results

	Coef. β	Std. Err	Z	$p > Z $	CI for Coef. β		Odds Ratio $\exp(\beta)$	CI for Odds Ratio	
					[0.025	0.975]		5%	95%
Const	-5.53	1.60	-3.45	0.00	-8.67	-2.39	0.00	0.00	0.09
HS CS Edu.	0.29	0.21	1.36	0.18	-0.13	0.71	1.34	0.88	2.04
Employment	0.10	0.23	0.45	0.65	-0.35	0.56	1.11	0.70	1.75
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Df Model: 12					LL-Null: -352.2		** $p < 0.001$		

Results

- Model fit evaluation:
 - McFadden's pseudo- R^2 coefficient (ρ^2) = 0.21
 - indicates an excellent model fit
 - According to McFadden, “values of .2 to .4 for ρ^2 represent an excellent fit”

Discussion

- Participation in internships is associated with:
 - year in school
 - household income
 - external involvement score
 - diffusion identity score (low exploration and low commitment)

Discussion

- Participation in internships is associated with:
 - year in school
 - household income
 - external involvement score
 - diffusion identity score (low exploration and low commitment)
- Compared with previous work on undergraduate internship participation (Hoekstra, 2021)
 - Similar results:
 - year in school
 - external involvement
 - New results:
 - race and gender were not associated with internship participation
 - household income and diffusion identity score predict internship participation

Conclusion

- We recommend CS departments :
 - provide resources and opportunities for students' participation in activities outside the curriculum by funding student organizations, coding competitions, etc.
 - underscore the importance of involvement in external activities
 - develop support programs for students from low socio-economic backgrounds to prepare for internship recruitment process

Limitations

- EOM-EIS identity scales had lower internal consistency due to the limited number of items used for each status
- our findings could be biased by the choice of our modeling technique
- observational study and results should not be interpreted as causal relationships
- data is from a modest sample of computing undergraduates enrolled at a single institution in the US where participation in internships was optional

Questions



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