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Mentoring and organizational support as predictors of internship satisfaction: the mediating role of grit among pre-service teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of mentoring and organizational support on internship satisfaction among pre-service teachers, with grit as a mediating variable. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, data were collected from 140 pre-service teacher interns and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The results showed that mentoring and organizational support had significant positive effects on internship satisfaction. Grit also significantly predicted internship satisfaction and partially mediated the relationship between mentoring and internship satisfaction, while no mediation effect was found for organizational support. These findings highlight the central role of interpersonal mentoring in fostering perseverance and satisfaction during teaching internships. The study contributes to teacher education literature by clarifying how contextual support and personal perseverance interact to shape internship experiences in a developing-country context.

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1. INTRODUCTION

For many pre-service teachers, the internship marks the point where theory meets classroom reality. During this phase, future educators begin shaping their professional identity while confronting the emotional and instructional demands of teaching. Research consistently shows that internship experiences influence teaching confidence, identity formation, and long-term professional commitment [1]–[3]. As interns navigate lesson planning, classroom management, and institutional expectations, they negotiate between personal goals and contextual demands [4], [5]. Understanding what contributes to a positive internship experience therefore remains central to teacher education.

Mentoring is widely recognized as a key source of support during this transition. Effective mentors provide instructional guidance while also offering reassurance, constructive feedback, and modeling professional perseverance [6], [7]. When mentoring balances challenge with support, interns report reduced anxiety, stronger professional identity, and higher practicum satisfaction [8], [9]. In contrast, inconsistent mentoring may contribute to stress and disengagement [10]. These findings support the expectation that mentoring positively influences internship satisfaction (H1).

Beyond mentoring, the broader organizational environment also shapes internship experiences. Perceived organizational support refers to interns' beliefs that their institutions value their contributions, provide adequate resources, and foster an inclusive climate [11], [12]. Supportive contexts—characterized by

accessible supervision, clear communication, and collaborative cultures—enhance belonging and engagement [5], [13]. Prior research links organizational support to increased satisfaction, motivation, and professional commitment in internship settings [13], [14]. Accordingly, organizational support is expected to positively influence internship satisfaction (H2).

Internship outcomes, however, are influenced not only by contextual support but also by personal characteristics. Grit—defined as sustained perseverance and commitment toward long-term goals—has received growing attention in demanding educational contexts. Empirical studies show that grit predicts persistence, engagement, academic performance, and well-being, particularly under prolonged challenge [15]–[17]. In applied settings such as internships, perseverance of effort appears especially relevant, reflecting continued effort despite setbacks [18], [19]. Although critics argue that grit overlaps with conscientiousness and may vary across cultures, evidence continues to support its value in high-demand learning environments [15]–[17]. Within pre-service teacher internships, grit may function as an internal resource that helps interns endure difficulty, respond constructively to feedback, and manage emotional demands. Thus, grit is expected to positively influence internship satisfaction (H3).

Recent perspectives suggest that grit is not entirely fixed but shaped by learning environments. Mentoring relationships may foster perseverance by normalizing struggle and reinforcing long-term professional goals [6], [20]. Instructional support is associated with self-regulation and persistence, constructs closely aligned with grit [15], [21]. Organizational support may also contribute by promoting psychological safety and adaptive coping [11], [12], [22]. On this basis, mentoring and organizational support are expected to positively influence grit (H4 and H5).

Although mentoring, organizational support, and grit have been examined independently, fewer studies have analyzed how they operate together in teacher education [22], [23]. Grit may function as a mechanism through which contextual support translates into positive internship experiences by enabling sustained effort and effective use of feedback [18], [19], [24]. Therefore, grit is hypothesized to mediate the relationships between mentoring and internship satisfaction (H6) and between organizational support and internship satisfaction (H7).

Most existing research has been conducted in Western or East Asian contexts, with limited evidence from the Philippines. Internship satisfaction is closely linked to teacher retention and long-term professional commitment [3], [25], making local investigation important. Moreover, few studies have simultaneously tested these structural relationships using predictive modeling approaches such as partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) within internship settings. This study addresses these gaps by examining grit as a mediating mechanism linking contextual support to internship satisfaction among Filipino pre-service teachers. This study specifically aimed to test the following hypotheses:

- H1: mentoring significantly and positively influences the internship satisfaction of pre-service teachers.
- H2: organizational support significantly and positively influences the internship satisfaction of pre-service teachers.
- H3: grit significantly and positively influences the internship satisfaction of pre-service teachers.
- H4: mentoring significantly and positively influences the grit of pre-service teachers.
- H5: organizational support significantly and positively influences the grit of pre-service teachers.
- H6: grit mediates the relationship between mentoring and internship satisfaction.
- H7: grit mediates the relationship between organizational support and internship satisfaction.

2. METHOD

2.1. Respondents' demographic characteristics

The study involved 140 pre-service teachers enrolled in teacher education programs who were engaged in internship placements. According to Hair *et al*. [26], this sample size is sufficient for PLS-SEM. Based on the 10-times rule and current statistical power recommendations, the minimum required sample for this model is substantially lower than 140 [26], [27]. The sample size exceeded the minimum statistical power requirements for detecting medium effect sizes at a 5% significance level.

The sample was predominantly female, with 99 participants (70.71%), while males accounted for 41 participants (29.29%). In terms of age, most respondents were 22 to 23 years old, with 48 participants (34.29%) aged 22 and 64 participants (45.71%) aged 23, indicating that the sample largely consisted of interns in the typical age range for graduating teacher education students. Participants also represented a wide range of program specializations. The largest groups were from culture and arts (12.86%) and Filipino (12.14%), followed closely by mathematics, science, and technology and livelihood education (TLE), each comprising 11.43% of the sample. Specializations in elementary education accounted for 10.71%, while English, social studies, and physical education each represented 10.00% of the participants. The majority of

interns were deployed in junior high schools, with 88 respondents (62.86%). Senior high school assignments accounted for 37 participants (26.43%), while 15 interns (10.71%) were assigned to elementary schools. Most of the respondents completed their internship off-campus, with 119 participants (85.00%) assigned to external partner schools, while 21 participants (15.00%) undertook in-campus internships.

2.2. Data collection

Data were collected through a self-administered online survey conducted from October to December 2024. The questionnaire was distributed electronically to pre-service teachers through institutional communication channels, including official class group messages and academic coordination offices. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Participants were asked to tick the appropriate box to indicate their willingness to participate, and they were informed of the purpose of the research prior to completing the survey.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the data collection process. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and no identifying information was collected. Respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Upon initial screening, responses were reviewed for completeness and overall quality. Questionnaires with excessive missing data, unusually short completion times, or patterned responses were excluded to ensure the integrity of the dataset. After this screening process, only valid and usable responses were retained for analysis.

2.3. Research instruments

All constructs in this study were measured using previously validated scales drawn from established literature and adapted to the context of pre-service teacher internships. A 5-point Likert scale was used for all instruments, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The adaptation process focused on ensuring conceptual alignment with the internship and teacher education context while preserving the theoretical foundations of the original instruments. Content validity was carefully reviewed to ensure that each item appropriately captured the intended construct. Items factor loadings were considered in assessing each item as well as the reliability and validity of the instruments. Item removal was based on established PLS-SEM criteria, including factor loadings below 0.70 and evidence of cross-loadings, to ensure construct reliability and validity.

2.3.1. Grit scale

Grit was measured using a short-form scale (8 items) adapted from Duckworth *et al*. [20], which conceptualizes grit as perseverance and sustained effort toward long-term goals. The original scale includes items reflecting two core dimensions: perseverance of effort and consistency of interest. Items were assessed and the final grit scale retained three items from perseverance of effort that demonstrated strong psychometric properties. The other items in the original grit scale were removed due to low factor loadings and cross-loadings.

2.3.2. Internship satisfaction scale

Internship satisfaction was measured using items adapted from established internship satisfaction instruments developed by [11], [28]–[31]. The scale captured interns' evaluation of their internship experience, including learning application, relevance to career goals, proactive engagement, and professional development orientation. The initial item pool consisted of 9 items. Following item assessments, 3 items were removed. The final scale retained 6 items, all of which demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity.

2.3.3. Mentoring scale

Mentoring experiences were assessed using a scale adapted from teacher education and internship literature [6], [8], [32]–[34]. The instrument was designed to capture both instructional and relational dimensions of mentoring, including goal setting, feedback, reflective practice, emotional support, classroom management guidance, and mentor professionalism. The initial scale consisted of 15 items. Item evaluation led to the removal of four items. The final mentoring scale retained 11 items, all of which demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity.

2.3.4. Organizational support scale

Organizational support was measured using a scale grounded in perceived organizational support theory originally proposed by Eisenberger *et al*. [35] and adapted to the internship context using contributions from several studies [11], [12], [29]. The instrument assessed interns' perceptions of institutional care, availability of resources, professional development opportunities, recognition, feedback, inclusion in decision-making, and responsiveness to concerns. The initial scale consisted of 10 items

representing both instrumental and socio-emotional support. All retained items demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity coefficients.

2.4. Data analysis

PLS-SEM was employed to analyze the data. The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4 software. The data analysis followed a systematic three-step procedure. First, preliminary analyses were conducted to examine descriptive statistics, missing values, and potential outliers [26], [27]. Second, the measurement model was evaluated by assessing indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), convergent validity (average variance extracted or AVE), and discriminant validity using the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio [26], [27]. Third, the structural model was evaluated by examining collinearity among predictor constructs using variance inflation factors (VIF), followed by the assessment of path coefficients and their significance through a bootstrapping procedure [26], [27]. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to evaluate the explanatory power of the model, while PLSpredict was employed to assess out-of-sample predictive performance by comparing root mean square error (RMSE) values of the PLS model with those of a naïve linear regression model [36]. Mediation effects were examined following contemporary guidelines for indirect effect testing in PLS-SEM [26].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Preliminary analysis

Prior to hypothesis testing, the dataset was screened to ensure its adequacy for multivariate analysis. The results indicated no substantial missing values. Boxplot examination further revealed no extreme outliers. Although a small number of mild outliers were observed, these cases were retained as they represented valid responses and did not meaningfully distort the data distribution [27]. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis statistics. Skewness values ranged from −0.862 to −1.532, while kurtosis values ranged from 0.121 to 1.617, all of which fall within the acceptable ±2 range for approximate normality [27]. Although the data demonstrated acceptable distributional properties, PLS-SEM was employed due to its robustness to mild non-normality and tolerance for retained outliers [26].

3.2. Measurement model assessment

3.2.1. Reliability

The reliability of the measurement model was first assessed through the outer loadings of the indicators. The results in Table 1 show that all indicators exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70. Outer loadings above 0.70 suggest adequate indicator reliability [26], [27]. Internal consistency reliability was further evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, both of which exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70 across all constructs [27].

3.2.2. Convergent validity

Convergent validity was assessed using the AVE. The AVE values for all constructs in Table 1 exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.50, indicating that each construct accounted for more than half of the variance in its associated indicators [26], [27]. This suggests that the items within each construct shared a high level of commonality and were well aligned in measuring the same underlying concept.

3.2.3. Discriminant validity

The discriminant validity was assessed using both the HTMT and the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The HTMT ratio of correlations has been recommended as a more sensitive and reliable criterion for evaluating discriminant validity in PLS-SEM models. In the results, all HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85, as seen in Table 2, indicating that each construct was empirically distinct from the others [37].

Discriminant validity was further evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, which compares the square root of the AVE of each construct with its correlations with other constructs. The square roots of the AVE values for grit, internship satisfaction, mentoring, and organizational support were all greater than their respective inter-construct correlations. This indicates that each construct shared more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs in the model, satisfying the Fornell–Larcker requirement for discriminant validity [26], [38].

Table 1. Outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE

Construct	Number of items removed	Items retained	Outer loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Grit	5 items	G1	0.829	0.761	0.779	0.673
		G2	0.796			
		G3	0.834			
Mentoring	4 items	M1	0.838	0.959	0.962	0.712
		M10	0.889			
		M11	0.757			
		M2	0.837			
		M3	0.751			
		M4	0.899			
		M5	0.889			
		M6	0.871			
		M7	0.772			
		M8	0.886			
		M9	0.871			
Organizational support	0 items	OS1	0.828	0.954	0.96	0.707
		OS10	0.848			
		OS2	0.824			
		OS3	0.865			
		OS4	0.854			
		OS5	0.867			
		OS6	0.787			
		OS7	0.836			
		OS8	0.832			
		OS9	0.863			
Internship satisfaction	3 items	S1	0.757	0.884	0.89	0.632
		S2	0.794			
		S3	0.831			
		S4	0.794			
		S5	0.827			
		S6	0.763			

Table 2. The Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratio of correlations

Construct	Fornell-Larcker criterion				HTMT			
	Grit	Internship satisfaction	Mentoring	Organizational support	Grit	Internship satisfaction	Mentoring	Organizational support
Grit	0.82							
Internship satisfaction	0.544	0.795			0.635			
Mentoring	0.437	0.537	0.844		0.486	0.574		
Organizational support	0.401	0.538	0.573	0.841	0.46	0.566	0.595	

3.3. Structural model assessment

After assessing the measurement model, collinearity among the predictor constructs was assessed using the VIF. The results indicated that all VIF values ranged from 1.29 to 1.61, which are well below the commonly recommended threshold of 3.0, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in the structural model [26], [27]. The model in Figure 1 also demonstrates meaningful predictive power for both endogenous constructs. The R^2 values indicate that the model explains 22.5% of the variance in grit and 45.3% of the variance in internship satisfaction, reflecting modest and moderate explanatory capacity, particularly for internship satisfaction [27]. More importantly, the PLSpredict assessment confirms the model's predictive relevance, as the PLS-SEM model consistently produced lower RMSE values (0.599 and 0.521) than the naïve linear model (0.685 and 0.581) for both constructs. This pattern provides strong evidence that the proposed model is capable of generating more accurate out-of-sample predictions [37]. Moreover, the effect sizes suggest that grit exerts a stronger influence on internship satisfaction than mentoring and organizational support, highlighting its role as a key psychological resource.

3.3.1. The path coefficients and direct effects

The results in Table 3 indicate that mentoring demonstrated a significant positive effect on internship satisfaction (β=0.239, p=0.012), confirming that mentoring plays a substantive role in shaping how pre-service interns evaluate their practicum experience. This finding aligns with prior research emphasizing that internship satisfaction is influenced not only by task demands but by the extent to which interns feel supported, guided, and understood during their placement [25]. Across internship contexts, mentors have been shown to function as key points of connection between interns and the workplace, helping them

interpret expectations, roles, and professional norms [28], [29]. When mentors are accessible and engaged, interns report greater clarity, confidence, and sense of belonging, which translates into higher satisfaction.

Moreover, mentoring has been repeatedly identified as a mechanism that transforms internships from stressful requirements into meaningful learning experiences. Several studies [6], [8], [33], [34] collectively demonstrate that mentors who provide consistent feedback, emotional reassurance, and practical guidance help pre-service teachers manage classroom challenges and reduce anxiety. Such support allows interns to focus on professional growth rather than survival. Moreover, mentoring relationships serve as ongoing sources of feedback and cultural interpretation, enabling interns to align expectations with actual work experiences [28], [31]. Jeske and Axtell [11] further noted that mentoring can compensate for limitations in formal organizational structures, particularly for interns still developing professional identity. These reinforce the result that mentoring is a critical determinant of internship satisfaction.

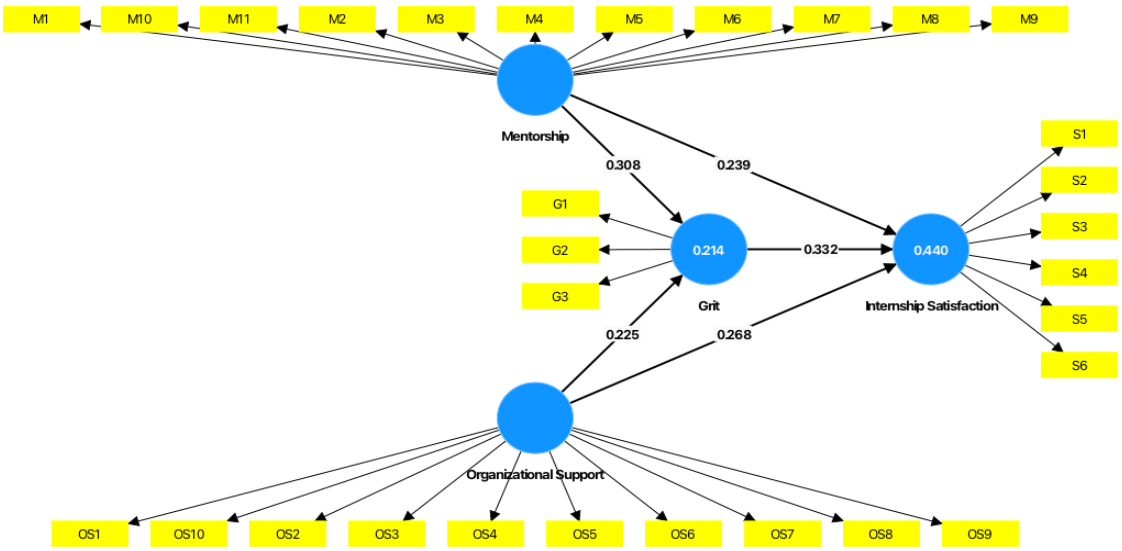

Figure 1. The model showing the path coefficients

Table 3. The direct effect of each path

Direct path	β	Sd	T statistics	P values	Description
Grit->internship satisfaction	0.332	0.088	3.755	0.000	Supported
Mentoring->grit	0.308	0.123	2.512	0.012	Supported
Mentoring->internship satisfaction	0.239	0.095	2.514	0.012	Supported
Organizational support->grit	0.225	0.128	1.756	0.079	Not supported
Organizational support->internship satisfaction	0.268	0.092	2.921	0.004	Supported

The findings that organizational support significantly and positively influences internship satisfaction (β=0.268, p=0.004) highlights the role of the institution in shaping how interns experience their placement. Internship satisfaction is often formed through everyday interactions with the organization, access to resources, clarity of expectations, responsiveness of supervisors, and the overall sense that interns are welcomed and valued. Studies on perceived organizational support suggest that when interns feel the organization cares about their well-being and development, they are more likely to evaluate their internship experience positively [12], [35]. In internship settings, this support helps interns explore unfamiliar work environments and reduces uncertainty, which contributes directly to higher levels of satisfaction.

Similarly, organizational structures, such as orientation processes, supervisory accessibility, and feedback mechanisms, play a critical role in shaping interns' satisfaction, often beyond the influence of individual tasks or workloads [28], [29]. Likewise, organizational support becomes particularly important when interns are still adjusting to professional roles, as it provides stability and reassurance during the early stages of workplace socialization [11]. Supportive school environments have been linked to more positive practicum experiences, as interns feel better equipped to handle classroom demands and institutional expectations [8], [34].

As shown in Table 3, grit had a significant positive effect on internship satisfaction (β=0.332, p<0.001), indicating that it plays an important role in how interns evaluate their practicum experience. Internship experiences are rarely smooth, often involving uncertainty, heavy workload, and moments of

self-doubt, particularly for pre-service teachers. Grit provides a psychological resource that helps interns remain engaged despite these challenges [20].

Interns with higher levels of grit tend to interpret setbacks as part of a longer developmental journey rather than as personal failures, which is especially relevant in practicum settings characterized by trial, error, and emotional strain. Moreover, grit is associated with stronger engagement, persistence, and task commitment, contributing to more positive experiential outcomes [9], [15]. In demanding educational contexts, gritty individuals are more likely to sustain effort when tasks become difficult, helping maintain motivation and satisfaction over time [39], [40]. Disabato *et al*. [41] further explained that grit operates through goal-directed behaviors that allow individuals to remain invested even when immediate rewards are limited. Together, these patterns suggest that grit shapes how interns cognitively and emotionally process their internship experiences.

Within teacher education, grit has been consistently linked to how pre-service teachers experience field placements, particularly when facing classroom management challenges, instructional uncertainty, and evaluative pressure [8], [14]. Grit helps interns stay focused on long-term professional goals despite short-term discomfort, supporting the development of professional identity and more positive satisfaction judgments [39]. Longitudinal evidence further indicates that perseverance sustains satisfaction over time by enabling individuals to remain engaged during less rewarding phases of extended learning experiences [42]–[44], reinforcing grit's role as a stabilizing psychological resource during internships.

Mentoring had a significant positive effect on grit (β=0.308, p=0.012), supporting the view that grit is shaped by social and instructional environments rather than functioning solely as a stable personality trait. Mentors are often the most consistent figures guiding interns through uncertainty, challenge, and professional self-doubt. Mentors help normalize struggle and reframe difficulties as part of the learning process, encouraging interns to remain committed even when progress feels slow [6], [8].

Moreover, mentoring practices are closely aligned with behaviors associated with grit, including persistence, sustained effort, and resilience. Supportive instructional relationships promote self-regulated learning and long-term effort, which overlap conceptually with grit [15], while mentors also model perseverance by demonstrating how experienced professionals cope with setbacks and instructional challenges [42]. Grit is strengthened when interns experience meaning, encouragement, and constructive feedback within mentoring relationships, which fosters growth in grit over time [10], [19], [24], [42].

Results showed that organizational support did not have a statistically significant effect on grit (β=0.225, p=0.079), despite theoretical expectations that supportive institutions would foster perseverance through feelings of security and psychological safety [12], [35]. While organizational support is consistently linked to positive attitudes and satisfaction, evidence suggests it may play a stronger role in shaping interns' comfort and adjustment than their deeper, internally driven persistence [11], [29]. In teaching internships, interns tend to rely more on individual relationships, especially with mentors, than on broader organizational structures when coping with daily instructional and emotional challenges [8], [45]. Organizational policies and resources may therefore be experienced as distant or evaluative rather than developmental, limiting their motivational impact [6]. Moreover, perseverance among pre-service teachers is more strongly shaped by relational encouragement and personalized feedback than by generalized institutional support, which helps explain the non-significant effect of organizational support on grit [16], [39].

3.3.2. The mediating or indirect effects of grit

As presented in Table 4, the indirect effect of mentoring on internship satisfaction through grit was statistically significant (β=0.102, p=0.028). Since the direct effect of mentoring on internship satisfaction was also significant, this pattern corresponds to partial mediation, where both direct and indirect paths coexist [27], [46]. This is consistent with previous literature highlighting the developmental role of mentoring relationships. By offering encouragement, feedback, and reassurance, mentors help interns persist through difficulty and gradually strengthen perseverance, a process through which grit is reinforced during challenging experiences [6], [8], [20]. Furthermore, mentors shape not only performance but also how interns cope with frustration and uncertainty, processes closely tied to sustained effort rather than short-term motivation [9], [28], [29]. As grit develops, interns are better able to remain engaged and evaluate their internship experience more positively even when challenges persist. The coexistence of significant direct and indirect effects emphasizes mentoring's dual role in enhancing satisfaction while strengthening interns' internal capacity to persevere [46], [47].

In contrast, the indirect effect of organizational support on internship satisfaction through grit was not statistically significant (β=0.075, p=0.142), indicating the absence of mediation despite the presence of a significant direct effect [46], [48]. Although organizational support has been widely associated with satisfaction and positive attitudes, its influence appears less effective in shaping deeper personal attributes such as perseverance. Jeske and Axtell [11] observed that organizational support primarily enhances interns' comfort and adjustment rather than their long-term motivational endurance, which helps explain why its effect on satisfaction did not operate through grit. Grit reflects sustained commitment to long-term goals that

develops through meaningful and often personalized experiences rather than generalized institutional conditions [24]. Organizational support is frequently perceived as structural or procedural, and in teaching internships, such support may be experienced as evaluative rather than developmental, limiting its motivational depth [6], [12]. Research further shows that perseverance among pre-service teachers is more strongly shaped by relational encouragement than by institutional arrangements, suggesting that organizational support may reduce stress without necessarily fostering grit [39], thus, grit responds more strongly to relational inputs than to structural support alone.

Table 4. The mediating or indirect effects of grit

Indirect path	β	Sd	T statistics	P values	Description
Mentoring->grit->internship satisfaction	0.102	0.047	2.198	0.028	Supported (partial mediation)
Organizational support->grit->internship satisfaction	0.075	0.051	1.467	0.142	Not supported

Taken together, the findings suggest that while both mentoring and organizational support enhance internship satisfaction, they operate through different mechanisms. Mentoring influences satisfaction both directly and indirectly by cultivating grit, whereas organizational support functions primarily as a contextual resource without shaping perseverance. This distinction underscores the importance of relational support in demanding learning environments such as teaching internships.

4. CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes how support from others and personal grit work together during internship experiences. By positioning mentoring, organizational support, and grit within a single model, it shows that internship satisfaction is shaped not only by how programs are designed, but also by how interns personally experience and make use of the support they receive. In this sense, grit serves as a link between mentoring and positive internship experiences, helping explain how relational support translates into sustained engagement.

For teacher education programs, the message is clear. Mentoring should not be treated as a routine supervisory task, but as an ongoing developmental relationship. When mentors are well prepared and encouraged to provide constructive feedback and reflective dialogue, interns may be better equipped to handle the emotional and professional challenges of teaching. Organizational support remains important, particularly in providing structure and resources, but its impact appears stronger when it complements meaningful mentoring relationships.

While this study contributes to the growing recognition that effective teacher preparation requires balancing institutional support with human-centered mentoring, several limitations must be acknowledged. The study involved 140 interns from a single university system, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Because the design was cross-sectional, the relationships identified represent statistical associations at one point in time rather than clear cause-and-effect patterns. Future research should employ longitudinal or experimental designs to better understand how grit develops across internship stages and whether structured mentoring programs can actively strengthen long-term professional commitment across diverse educational contexts. Moreover, future studies may also explore additional mediators such as self-efficacy or professional identity to further explain internship satisfaction.

This study makes three contributions. First, it extends internship literature by integrating contextual support and grit within a single predictive model. Second, it demonstrates that mentoring plays a unique developmental role by fostering perseverance among pre-service teachers. Third, it provides empirical evidence from the Philippine teacher education context, addressing geographic gaps in internship research.

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C : **C**onceptualization
M : **M**ethodology
So : **So**ftware
Va : **Va**lidation
Fo : **Fo**rmal analysis
I : **I**nvestigation
R : **R**esources
D : **D**ata Curation
O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft
E : Writing - Review & **E**diting
Vi : **Vi**sualization
Su : **Su**pervision
P : **P**roject administration
Fu : **Fu**nding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author, [CCM]. The data, which contain information that could compromise the privacy of research participants, are not publicly available due to certain restrictions.

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