

2021

Journalism Graduates' Perceptions and Experiences of Internships and Employment

Breanne L. Ahearn
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Journalism Studies Commons](#), and the [Mass Communication Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Breanne L. Ahearn

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Mary Ramirez, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Katherine Garlough, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Glenn Penny, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2021

Abstract

Journalism Graduates' Perceptions and Experiences of Internships and Employment

by

Breanne L. Ahearn

MA, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2014

BS, Kennesaw State University, 2012

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2021

Abstract

Graduates who do not have an internship show greater difficulty in obtaining gainful employment compared to those who do have an internship. However, simply believing that internships may translate into employment does not explain how students perceive the role of the internship in obtaining employment in the field. The purpose of the study was to investigate the graduates' perceptions and experiences of how internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. Kolb's four stages of experiential learning theory was used as the conceptual framework to investigate how journalism-related major graduates described their journalism internship perceptions and experiences that led to employment in the field. A qualitative phenomenographical research design was used to conduct 10 semistructured, interviews using a video platform with participants who had completed at least one journalism internship and had obtained a job in the field of journalism or a related field within 6 months of graduating. Using inductive coding, themes identified were participants perceived internships strengthened skills development and affective behavior development. Subthemes included the perceived development of (a) technical skills, (b) production skills, and (c) interviewing skills. Study findings were that graduates' journalism skills were solidified beyond learning they experienced in traditional university classrooms, consequently leading to swift employment in competitive positions in the field of journalism. These findings may inform university stakeholders to optimize the use of student internships thereby advancing graduates to the forefront of the journalism field.

Journalism Graduates' Perceptions and Experiences of Internships and Employment

by

Breanne L. Ahearn

MA, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2014

BS, Kennesaw State University, 2012

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2021

Dedication

This study is dedicated to all higher education instructional journalism professionals who not only work to ensure the success of their students, but to those who continue to work ahead of the fast paced, ever-changing curve that is journalism and media communications. It is also for those who aim tirelessly to succeed in an industry that is quick to leave anyone behind, especially those who are not fast enough or willing to progress in technological and ethical advances.

To the students who find themselves not understanding what an instructor is asking of them, who are given the title of “learning disabled” and to the educators who work tirelessly to help their students cross the finish line, this is for you. May you never take someone’s opinion or an exam’s result as a sentence of your future outcome. For every wall you face, knock it down by any means necessary and succeed where others expect you to fail.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to my amazing family for holding my hand as I worked tirelessly drudging through every correction and version of this study. Dr. Ramirez and Dr. Cooper, thank you so much for your endless efforts and not allowing me to cave to my insecurities when it seemed there was no end in sight. To my friends who understood why I cancelled plans last minute and trips due to this study, this is for you.

A special 'thank you' to Mrs. Cummings, who has been my biggest cheerleader and advocate for many years watching as I shattered each obstacle before me. Thank you to those closest to me who stood by my side as I felt this study would never finish. Grandma and Papa, I love you more than words will ever express. I wish you were here to see the result as there is now a doctor in the family.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
List of Figures	v
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background	2
Problem Statement	6
Purpose of the Study	8
Research Question	9
Conceptual Framework.....	9
Kolb’s Four Stages of ELT	10
Nature of the Study	10
Definitions.....	12
Assumptions.....	13
Scope and Delimitations	14
Limitations	15
Significance.....	15
Summary	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review	18
Literature Search Strategy.....	18
Conceptual Framework.....	20
Literature Review Related to Key Concepts.....	22
Journalism Programs.....	22
Internships.....	28

Journalism Internships	37
Journalism Employment	40
Summary and Conclusions	42
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	44
Research Design and Rationale	44
Central Phenomena	45
Research Tradition and Rationale	45
Role of the Researcher	53
Methodology	54
Participant Selection Logic	54
Instrumentation	56
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection	58
Data Analysis Plan	60
Trustworthiness.....	65
Ethical Procedures	66
Summary	66
Chapter 4: Results	68
Setting	69
Data Collection	69
Data Analysis	70
Codes, Themes, and Subthemes.....	72
Results.....	76
Participants.....	76

Discussion of Results	77
Deductive Coding Based on Kolb’s Framework	90
Internship to Employment.....	101
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	104
Summary	105
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations	107
Interpretation of the Findings.....	108
Limitations of the Study.....	113
Recommendations.....	114
Implications.....	115
Conclusion	118
References.....	120
Appendix A: One-on-One Interview Questions	139

List of Tables

Table 1. Participants' Demographics and Internship Information	76
Table 2. Participant Post-Internship Employment Information	103

List of Figures

Figure 1. Focus of Phenomenographical Research (Mann, 2009)..... 52

Figure 2. Coding Process Used for Qualitative Analysis 71

Figure 3. 4-Stages of Kolb’s ELT Theory in Practice 79

Figure 4. Results in Relation to Kolb’s Stage One to Themes 79

Figure 5. Results in Relation to Kolb’s Stage Two to Themes..... 83

Figure 6. Results in Relation to Kolb’s Stage Three to Themes..... 85

Figure 7. Results in Relation to Kolb’s Stage Four to Themes 87

Figure 8. Overview of Results 108

Figure 9. Interpretation of Findings 110

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Many graduates from journalism programs across the United States find themselves at a disadvantage finding employment within the field after graduation due to lack of real-life work experience (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Although universities generally educate students in a wide range of theories and skills in the field of journalism, often these students are not finding employment due to a lack of experience (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Some universities require students to complete at least one internship to acquire this field experience, but others do not require any internship or make the internship optional (Kennesaw State University, 2020).

Gaining experience during an internship may allow students to not only extend their in-class studies, bridging theory and practice, but could provide hands-on experiences specific to the area of journalism they are most interested in (Clair, 2015). Some universities have found it difficult to stay updated with what the field requires entry-level employees (Carpenter et al., 2015). (Carpenter et al., 2015). Requiring at least one internship may have a positive impact on students' success in finding employment in the field after graduation. Many universities require internships for their journalism students as a way of providing up-to-date and authentic practice in the field. However, university administrators noted that the value and inclusion of internships in journalism programs is not fully understood. I examined journalism graduates' perceptions and experiences related to employment. Thus, I examined graduates' how graduates described characteristics of internships, and what they perceived as beneficial in terms of practices and relationship skills related to employers and the community following graduation.

Chapter 1 includes the background of this study, the problem statement surrounding the study, as well as the purpose of the study. I examined potential limitations and the significance behind each research question. In this chapter, I identify definitions of study and general terms and discuss the conceptual framework. For university officials to make informed decisions regarding inclusion of an internship as a requirement of a university degree program, a greater understanding of graduates' perceptions of the nature of the internship and how internship experiences are perceived to influence employment opportunities following their graduation was needed.

Background

Journalism today is no longer bound by the traditional term of studying only newspapers, magazines, television, and radio. Journalism has adapted to new conditions including digital media, social media, entrepreneur, as well as radio, television, and print (Clair, 2015). Clair (2015) argued that news is created in forms and platforms that did not exist a decade ago. Those who graduate with a journalism-related bachelor's degree find it necessary to be flexible, innovating, and able to create news across all mediums, not limited to "text, audio, photographic, and video formats" (Clair, 2015 p. 123). University students need to develop skills that will be used in the journalism field following graduation through the opportunities they are afforded in their degree programs.

Although education is important, students should develop practical skills needed to effectively work in the marketplace and develop as creative and critical thinkers (Carlson, 2014; Richards & Marshall, 2019). According to Cappelli (2015) and Beckley (2018), a survey of U.S. employers found that relevant work experience is the most

significant factor, more so than that of relevant coursework when it comes to the hiring process. Journalism graduates report difficulty gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation without having completed at least one internship during their studying years (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). However, in many programs, internships are optional or not offered at all, while others require at least one internship (Mitola et al., 2018; Nutefall, 2012).

Students who complete an internship course often find that the internship provided a uniquely independent environment that was vital in preparing them for full-time employment after graduation (Barbarash, 2016). One university professor explained that as a professional journalist who has the task of training university broadcast journalism students, a common issue with new interns is that they lacked knowledge of hands-on experience when they first entered the newsroom. They work with each student individually to help them gain a richer knowledge of journalism concepts introduced in their degree programs. Students need to apply the skills introduced in university degree programs to support their readiness for employment beyond university graduation (personal communication, July 13, 2021). Internships are important for journalism students and should be considered as part of the university degree program.

As an example of the importance of internships, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), Endicott College requires all students to participate in an internship program as part of their program curriculum. Students complete the program with two 120-hour internships during their freshman and sophomore years, along with a semester-long internship at the beginning of their senior

year (Saltikoff, 2017). As a result, 53% of students reported that their current employment position was the direct result of their internship completion or internship contacts (Saltikoff, 2017).

Graduates from other schools not requiring internships have found it difficult to obtain employment in the field without the right combination of knowledge and skills employers desire (Halman, 2016). Students have had difficulty obtaining employment post-graduation with only a degree and no practical experience (Vos & Singer, 2016). Students without prior internships display a lack of the experience needed to gain future employment (Freedman & Poulson, 2015). In the social sciences field (which includes journalism-related majors), 52% of students found employment within their field based on the internship they completed compared to the 28% of students who did not complete an internship (Freedman & Poulson, 2015). Nunley et al. (2016) argued business-related undergraduate majors who worked as interns before they graduate were 14% more likely to be hired by employers than those who did not work as interns during their studying years.

Some research suggested it is during the student's studying years that universities focus on the theoretical aspect of gaining an understanding of knowledge within the journalism-related major (Velez & Giner, 2015). However, employers may demand more practical skills and experience before a student seeks employment. When students lack practical experience, they may not understand how to accurately write a current news story or properly interview individuals and complications may arise. For example, interning allowed students in broadcast journalism majors the most up-to-date training in

a television newsroom setting (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Practical experiences at a television newsroom setting may include instruction on reporting, anchoring, producing, photography, assignment desk operations, and producing online-social media content. Madison (2014) and Gollmitzer (2018) believed that not only does successfully completing an internship within a television newsroom setting allow students the possibility of gaining a stronger journalistic knowledge, but it also strengthens the students' awareness of what is expected of them by future supervisors and the marketplace.

Students are taught various multimedia knowledge during an internship in what is called "digital era practicums" (Madison, 2014, p. 315). For students interested in broadcasting those opportunities have included control room producing, writing, graphics creating, interviewing, video and audio editing, camera operating, and television set teleprompter education (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Broadcasting areas are meaningful to journalism-related major studies because students have learned not only how to hone their professional skills, but also to practice the specific skills for their chosen area of journalism. For example, at Kennesaw State University, students had to complete a series of courses within the university's curriculum requirements (Kennesaw State University, 2020). Often this curriculum includes but is not limited to completing these specific courses: "News Reporting and Writing, Media Law, and Introduction to Mass Communications" (Kennesaw State University, 2020, pg. 1).

The more experience students have with hands-on training, the more valuable they are as students and professionals (Carpenter et al., 2016). Halman (2016) argued that

students need to identify and understand how the business they are studying works, including their professional capacity expectations. Bakker (2014) and Loosen (2019) found that internships for production work have become a developing trend. Qualifications required for employment requires diversity and a wide variety of traditional and technical knowledge in the field. Loosen (2019) argued it is impossible for any journalism bachelor's degree program to instruct in all the skills required at any profound depth.

Problem Statement

The problem is that graduates who do not have an internship show greater difficulty in obtaining gainful employment compared to those who do have an internship. However, simply believing that internships may translate into employment does not explain this gap that exists in the literature to describe how students perceive the role of the internship in obtaining employment in the field. For some students who complete an internship within a variety of journalism internships, there is evidence to suggest that certain elements of an internship may lead to employment (Saltikoff (2017)). In addition, how students describe what and how they learned during the internship may be affected, not just by the internship experience itself but also by what the student brings to the internship. Not having a greater understanding of the role of the internship, therefore, may hinder universities in providing the support for effective internship experiences for their students and thus improving post-graduation employment.

By the end of an internship, most students learned at least entry-level practices in order to gain employment. Those who interned in a newsroom suggested there is an

element of the experience they did not gain within a classroom, but only in a newsroom (Albarran, 2016; Hilt & Lipschultz, 1996). Regardless of the timing of the internship, Hilt and Lipschultz (1996) and Albarran (2016) agreed that educators need to better understand journalism internships. Future studies that establish a link between relevant internships and university educators may advance the quality of student's learning within the classroom.

Whether all types of internships have an equal effect also suggests a major question. The career of a journalist has become more and more of a technical job. Technical qualifications required new employees to diversify their understanding of the depth of the skills required to be a journalist (Bakker, 2014; Loosen, 2019). According to Loosen (2019), it is impossible for journalists to master these skills independently, just as it is impossible for bachelor's degree journalism programs to teach these skills in depth.

Providing evidence needed to help universities decide whether, and what type of internships to require, could possibly benefit graduates in future employment. It may also help students make informed decisions about the type of internship and the characteristics of the internship they chose that will most benefit them in future employment in the journalism field. In a study conducted by Saltikoff (2017) Endicott College's uniquely structured academic internship curriculum concluded that a broader study is needed to encompass the same (or different) findings that requiring at least one internship increases the chances of a graduate's ability to gain employment. As a result, additional extensive research related to the value of an internship experience with or without employer pay was highly suggested (Saltikoff, 2017).

To determine the impact of an internship experience and actual field employment decisions made by graduates, Rothman and Sisman (2016) concluded that additional studies would be necessary to understand the effect of the graduate's experience. Although some studies look at survey data, Wenger et al. (2018) suggested more in-depth data be collected rather than if graduates found employment in the broad field of communications. Specifically, that additional studies track where graduates are finding jobs.

The research problem for this study is that graduates who do not have an internship show greater difficulty in obtaining gainful employment compared to those who do have an internship. However, simply believing that internships may translate into employment, does not explain how students perceive the role of the internship in obtaining employment in the field. Therefore, I examined this problem through the perceptions and experiences of the graduates who engaged in internships. This knowledge may aid universities in determining whether to include required internships in their program curriculum to provide students with the skills sought by employers and what characteristics internships should include.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study that was to investigate the graduates' perceptions and experiences of how internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. To accomplish this, it was important to develop a deeper understanding of the perceptions and experiences of graduates who completed an internship during their program and obtained employment within 6 months of graduation.

This qualitative study provided in-depth knowledge and understanding of the type and characteristic of internships that graduates perceived as most beneficial. The study also provided evidence of the graduates' perceptions about how their internship experience affected future employment and job success. Kolb's (1971) experiential learning theory was the theoretical framework for this study.

Research Question

To obtain student perceptions about the internship they experienced, the research question for this study was:

Research Question (**RQ**): How do journalism-related major graduates, who completed at least one internship and obtained employment in their field within 6 months of graduation, describe their journalism internship perceptions and experiences that led to employment in the field?

Conceptual Framework

The primary source for the conceptual framework in this study was Kolb's (1971) experiential learning theory (ELT). Kolb contends learners progress through four distinct learning stages that include (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation of experience, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation. Kolb's premise, in learning new constructs, skills, or developing knowledge, is that adults advance through the four learning stages and if the student effectively experiences, and processes each stage, that learning occurs. (Fry & Kolb, 1979). When examining the logical connections of this study to Kolb's ELT four stages, Miettinen (2000) and Merriam and Baumgartner (2020) described ELT as a learning approach that may be used

to support cognitive invention that creates a stronger foundational understanding for graduates. Study findings reflected that graduates' internship experiences provide opportunities to apply the duties, skills and knowledge obtained in classroom instruction (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020).

Kolb's Four Stages of ELT

The phenomenon examined in this study is related to Kolb's four stages as described in ELT as interns are called to practice, reflect, conceptualize, and implement skills and knowledge in television news settings. While placed in an internship setting, students adjust, experiment, apply, and demonstrate journalism skills. During an internship, participants learn practice, reflect, and are put into future situations they may encounter thus allowing them to apply their learning in the real-world roles (Clair, 2015). Examples of real-world experiences include working in a television news setting and having work immediately seen by viewers, directors, anchors, and supervisors as it airs on local television (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Interns who work in newsrooms reported that these experiences resulted in internal motivation to either adjust or complement their practices (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Hence, students placed in internships may experience Kolb's four stages. Therefore, I used Kolb's four stages as the lens to analyze the data in this study.

Nature of the Study

The design of this study was of a qualitative nature with a phenomenographical research approach. Although a quantitative design would have provided percentages of students who have or have not completed an internship, the percentage who have or have

not gained employment within a particular amount of time after graduation, or how many internships each participant has completed, it would not have provided information on the richness of the internship experience. Choy (2014) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that qualitative research allows for more than just strength in numbers but is also used to gain various perspectives and in-depth understanding of the concept to be explored.

I used the phenomenographical research approach to determine whether there was a connection between the problem and the participant when students engaged in different internship experiences from others participating in the study. Tight's (2018) phenomenographical research approach intended to be a way "to identify the qualitatively different ways in which different people experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand various kinds of phenomena" (p. 181). Within Tight's (2018) framework, learning assumes the position of central importance as it represents a (qualitative) change from one conceptualized idea or understanding into another understanding or reality. Recognizing and discussing the way graduates perceived their internship experience and how students perceive their experience through their own lived experiences is important when universities make decisions about internships.

I used semistructured interviews as the data collection procedure for this study. I selected participants who were graduates with a degree in the field of journalism and who had at least one internship, and who had obtained employment within 6 months of graduating. I recruited participants from various universities across the United States who

completed at least one internship. In the next section, I discuss the definitions pertinent to this study.

Definitions

Key concepts for this study included:

The Accrediting Counsel on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) is the agency responsible for the evaluation of professional journalism as well as the mass communications programs in colleges and universities across the United States.

Internship is a professional learning experience in which meaningful and practical work is offered to a student based on their field of study or career interest (University of Maryland & Baltimore County, n.d.). According to University of Maryland, Baltimore County (n.d.) an internship gives the student an opportunity to explore their chosen career and learn new skills not taught in the classroom.

Journalism is the activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information whereas a result, it is the product of these activities (American Press Institute, 2013). The Open School of Journalism identifies traditional and modern journalism as digital media, social media, entrepreneurial, emerging, radio, television, and print (Areas of Journalism, n.d.).

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) identifies itself as the leading source for college-educated employment in which forecasts hiring and job-market trends, tracking entry level salaries, recruiting, and hiring practices, along with student attitudes towards post-college employment, and employment outcomes (National

Association of Colleges and Employers, 2017). According to National Association of Colleges and Employers (2017), in addition to tracking employment trends in business and technology, NACE also tracks employment in the field of journalism, making data collection invaluable for this study.

Assumptions

I initially assumed that graduates from journalism programs have difficulty finding employment in the field within 6 months of graduation when they have not completed at least one internship. I also assumed that there was a gap in practice among curriculum requirements of universities with a journalism major in which some require internships for journalism majors, and some did not. I assumed that graduate participants would be open and honest in their interview answers. I did not assume that just any internship would translate into employment within the field. It was important to note these assumptions as the curriculum, internship, and employment are specifically designed to promote the field, not just gain general employment post completion of a university's concentration.

Although there was little direct internship information pertaining to journalism internships and graduates, there are studies in many other disciplines that also applied to journalism majors. This information further explained ways for universities to assure graduates are learning the most up-to-date practices in journalism skills. Some of the research included Endicott College, which required all students, including journalism, to take at least one internship. This result showed higher rates of employment, including in the field of journalism. Other researchers included Hilt and Lipschultz (1996) and

Albarran (2016) who examined the broadcast education of undergraduates by surveying broadcast news managers and interns. They were able to learn what managers and interns look for in future employment and how interns can better construct their time in a newsroom to benefit themselves. Carlson (2014) and Richards and Marshall (2019) found that graduates believed their classroom knowledge and activities including internships made them three times more likely to be successful at work.

Scope and Delimitations

In this qualitative research I intended to document graduates' experiences with journalism internships. I intended to go beyond confirming how many graduates found employment after internships, to better understand the nature of these internships and the perceived value of the internship in providing students with the skills needed for success in the job. The choice of participants and the years studied are the major delimitations of the study. Major delimitations narrowed the scope of the study by limiting the participants to those who graduated from each selected universities who completed at least one internship during their studying years, and who gained or attempted to gain employment within 6 months of their graduation date. I did not examine participants who did not complete an internship during their studying years or completed an internship but did not graduate. In the data collection process, I used interviews to obtain students' experiences in an internship and how the internship may have aided them in gaining employment in the field. Because this was a qualitative study with limited participants, although broad reaching, I could not generalize transferability of the findings.

Limitations

Searching for possible bias within this study was critical. Galdas (2017) related that bias is a perception made by peer reviewers who argue data has, will be collected, or even analyzed is aligned too meticulously with the personal outline of the researcher. Within any qualitative study there was the possibility of research questions, data collection, or location findings bias. However, no bias appears to exist in participant selection or participation.

Significance

Insight from this study provided evidence for universities to explore if they should require at least one internship within their journalism major to increase students' real-life exposure of journalism practice. The research had the protentional to fill the identified gap that existed in the curriculum among journalism programs where some require internships whereas others do not or make it optional. A deeper understanding of the role of the internship, what type, and how many was important to better inform journalism programs in their curricular decisions. The findings from this study may provide university stakeholders with information that may influence decision-making related to the role of internships in journalism programs for university students. Expanding the role of internships at universities that provide degrees could result in positive social change by strengthening the real-world skills needed by students majoring in journalism, thus providing increased opportunities for successful post degree employment.

Summary

Chapter 1 included the basics of this study in relation to its background, nature of the study, and possible biases and limitations I faced. This chapter also included a discussion of the lack of understanding about the role and characteristics of effective internships and how this might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. In this chapter, I reviewed literature pertaining to the characteristics and number of internships especially in relation to the perceived effect of internships on employment based on each participants' individual experience.

The problem addressed in this study is that graduates who do not have an internship show greater difficulty in obtaining gainful employment compared to those who do have an internship. Evidence to support this problem is reflected in researchers' findings related to internships and mastery of skills needed in the journalism field.

Journalism has become more of an advanced and diversified field than it used to be. In qualitative studies including university interns, researchers noted that employers require university graduates to possess an in-depth understanding of specific skills and the ability to apply these skills to experiences university graduates encounter in their chosen career field. (Bakker, 2014; Loosen, 2019). Bakker (2014) and Loosen (2019) reported findings that participants perceived that in-depth skills pertaining to their chosen field were mastered through internship experiences. Furthermore, study findings were that mastering in-depth skills in the university students' chosen career field were developed most feasibly by additional practices that only internships provide. Additional researchers noted that university interns reported that they perceived the experiences and

skills gained in internships were more useful than those experiences afforded them in traditional university courses. (Albarran, 2016; Hilt & Lipschultz, 1996). Researchers suggest that future research should focus on investigating the relationship between relevant internships and the students' and employers' perceived value of students' learning related to the journalism degree programs. University educators may enhance the quality of students' learning within the classrooms as additional research may provide information that would inform university stakeholders regarding the structure and expectations of journalism degree programs that would promote future success in the journalism career field.

There is a gap in practice between the study of journalism and the actual employment of a new journalism graduate. Therefore, this study provided information for university officials to inform their decision-making regarding whether and what type of internships should be required for graduates to benefit them in their future employment. In Chapter 2, I describe the conceptual framework that was the basis for designing the research questions, interview protocol, and data analysis process. I also include a synthesis of the literature related to the problem of this study and provide a context for understanding the field of journalism, university degree programs in higher education related to journalism, research pertaining to journalism in higher education, the use of university student internships for entering the journalism field, and job placements following university graduation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

There is a gap in the literature about the characteristics of internships and what skills and knowledge graduates perceived as beneficial to helping them obtain journalism employment and find success in that employment. There are few qualitative accounts of university graduates' perceptions related to journalism internship experiences and how they may affect gainful employment following graduation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to describe the graduates' internship characteristics and how graduates perceive internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. The results of this study may help universities make decisions about whether to include at least one required internship in their journalism programs. In this literature review, I provided a synthesis of studies conducted in the field of journalism that focused on the nature of internships, the benefits of internships, needs of employers, and up-to-date curriculum in universities across the United States. In Chapter 2, I discuss the literature that has been published in the field of journalism as well as the field of internships. I synthesize the literature and provide a context for the problem studied.

Literature Search Strategy

To complete this literature review, I conducted keyword searches using the Internet search engine tool, Google Scholar in addition to Walden University's Library databases that included EBSCO ebooks, ERIC, and education source combined search, Google Books, Google Public Data Directory, ICPSR - Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research Datasets, SAGE Journals, SAGE Research Methods

Online, ScholarWorks, Thoreau Multi-Database Search, and Walden Library Books. I selected search terms to explore the literature related to this study that included: *journalism, employment, broadcast journalism, television, broadcast, broadcast internships, journalism internships, journalism education, internships, and other academic concentrations*. In the areas of internships, I used keywords such as *teaching and learning, learning and development, journalism job market, journalism degree, changes to curriculum, and field of journalism*.

Initially, specific keywords I used for conducting searches included *journalism, internships, employment, broadcast journalism, television, broadcast, broadcast internships, journalism internships, and journalism education* within the various Walden University Library databases. I located literature pertaining to the specific areas within journalism, however there appeared to be fewer studies that related to journalism, internships, and employment. I worked with Walden University's librarian to extend my research collection; however, I found the same sources within the last 5 years. As a result, I searched using the keywords *academic concentrations, internships: teaching and learning, learning and development, journalism job market, journalism degree*. In the realm of journalism, I used keywords *changes to curriculum, and field of journalism* to find any information that would enhance my foundational findings pertaining to my original data research that correlated with my research question. I searched outside the scope of the study and examined the journalism program curriculum, including internships at universities that awarded bachelor's degrees because of the limited number

of dissertations, journals, or academic articles that touched on the topic of university journalism graduates obtaining employment within the field.

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical base for this study was Kolb's (1971) ELT. Kolb contends that effective learning occurs when adult learners progress through four stages of learning (Fry & Kolb, 1979). Kolb describes the four stages of learning that include: (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation of experience, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation. Kolb grounds ELT in the work of Dewey (1997), Lewin (1964), and Piaget (1971). Stirling et al. (2017) argued ELT is holistic in nature and focuses on the dimensions of the learner. Stirling et al. (2017) believed each of the four stages of ELT provides a basis for subsequent learning. Stirling et al. observed that Kolb's premise in ELT, that learning occurs in four stages, contains drawbacks. These researchers contend that in the application of ELT in higher education frameworks, multiple learning processes may occur concurrently, consequently, Kolb fails to incorporate this notion into ELT (Stirling et al., 2017).

When using individual practices of ELT, all four stages of the theory are not only manifested in the stage of development (Stage Four: Active Experimentation) but also developed and critiqued as the learner actively participates in the learning situation (Turesky, 2005). That is, the learning process takes place as a cycle of contact between the individual and the environment (Turesky, 2005). For instruction to be effective, learners need to experience the stages of the ELT and apply their skills through concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active

experimentation (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988; Fry & Kolb, 1979). When applied to a situation such as internships, this approach allows for a better understanding of the elements of each participant's experience and the possible effect on later employment. The personal experience is not only experienced in the elements of the internship, i.e., responsibilities a student is given to complete, but also on what the individual brings to the situation including socio-cultural factors and motivation (LaPoint, et al., 2010).

As a learning approach, ELT provided a strong foundation for understanding graduates' experience and its relationship to the duties and skills learned in the classroom, putting knowledge into practice (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020; Miettinen, 2000). When examining the dynamics of ELT, Kolb recognized each phase of the model as a different form of "adaptation to reality or a "learning model" (Fry & Kolb, 1979, p. 30). Kolb insisted that students use concrete experience, reflective observation of experience, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation to:

involve themselves fully, openly, and without bias in new experiences. They must be able to reflect on and observe their experiences from many perspectives. They must be able to create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories, and they must be able to use these theories to make decisions and solve problems (Fry & Kolb, 1979, p. 30).

Kolb's theories have influenced university instruction and foundational aspects across several disciplines and countries (Gynnild, 2016). As a result, these four stages occurred during a graduate's completion of an internship. During an internship each participant had an opportunity to learn, reflect, practice, and experiment in the field situations they

encountered (Gynnild). I examined students' perceptions of the internship's effect on both their learning and successful employment. I used Kolb's theory as a framework for interpreting and analyzing the learning experiences shared by participants in interviews. Using Kolb's framework of learning, I examined participants' responses related to the stages described in the framework.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

Journalism Programs

Traditional bachelor-degree granting journalism programs may give students the foundational understandings when it comes to the theories behind the curriculum. Some research has suggested that during the student's studying years, bachelor's degree-granting universities focus on the theoretical aspect of gaining an understanding of knowledge within the journalism-related major (Velez & Giner, 2015). Observation of foundational and practical applications in such a curriculum is necessary.

Journalism curriculum in traditional terms of studying only newspapers, magazines, television, and radio is no longer studied. Journalism adapted to new conditions including digital media, social media, entrepreneurial, as well as radio, television, and print (Clair, 2015). Pérez-Serrano et al. (2015) argued the goal of journalism communication schools is to educate graduates and skilled media users beyond the simple technical aspects that anyone can learn at any time. Regarding news, Researchers argued that news is created in forms and on stages that did not exist a decade ago (Clair, 2015).

Required observations are the foundational and practical applications in such a curriculum. At the University of Georgia, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications, students are required to learn classroom foundational journalism applications including information gathering, reporting, and writing, multiplatform story production, and introduction to video journalism, introduction to photojournalism or graphics for practical applications (Grady College, 2020). Previous researchers have argued that theoretical education is important. At the same time, students should develop practical skills needed to work effectively in the marketplace as well to be creative and critical thinkers (Carlson, 2014; Richards & Marshall, 2019). Although researchers have looked at what has happened during students studying years, the review of the literature for this study suggested that there was no correlation between examined graduates, the development of practical skills, and the success rates in gaining employment after university graduation (Bourelle, 2012; Bright, 2018; Silva et al., 2016).

Intellectual leadership in journalism programs acknowledged part of their mission is to provide job-related training to future journalists (Kennesaw State University, 2020). However, University mission statements do not always translate into university program personnel designing degree programs to afford students the opportunity to adapt newsroom-related skills, develop a foundation in theoretical courses pertaining to journalism or explore and enroll in courses outside of their major that could provide students with a deeper understanding of journalism in society (Carpenter et al., 2015). Journalism university students need a rich foundation in journalism theory, critical knowledge, and skills to be successfully employed post-graduation. Without this

foundation students may not extensively relate to incentives, standards, and technology in the actual workplace (Carpenter et al., 2015). Researchers have contended that the value of internships, what is learned, and how internships should be structured is not clearly understood (Carpenter et al., 2015).

The goal of journalism communication schools, and faculties is to educate graduates so that they are highly skilled media users, possessing a depth of knowledge of the foundations in journalism, and possess the skills that are required for successful employment in the journalism field (Pérez-Serrano et al., 2015). Nationwide, university leadership in journalism implement internships differently and the curriculum in journalism degree programs reflects variance in understanding how internships have been used to support students' learning. Thus, the development of journalism skills prior to admittance to university journalism programs, skills developed during university coursework, and skills needed for entry into the job market should be examined (Pérez-Serrano et al., 2015).

Academic Preparation for Journalism

Students found specialized journalism courses often are perceived to hold more academic weight than foundational journalism courses. For example, Columbia's School of Journalism offered foundational journalism courses in journalism ethics, journalism history, reporting, and writing (Journalism Degree Programs, 2020). Whereas at the same university, specialized journalism courses included video newsroom, telling stories using sound, video broadcasting, and writing for business and financial news (Journalism Degree Programs, 2020). Core courses required and reflected a school's teaching beliefs.

Core courses provided basic skills that have an impact on students leaning when it comes to performing well in journalism courses in addition to the industry of their choosing (Blom & Davenport, 2012; Lane & Johnston, 2017).

Required journalism courses have differed slightly from university to university. At the University of Georgia, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications, students worked to develop storytelling skills in audio, visual, and written forms (Journalism Degree Programs, 2020). Students must complete the following courses at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communications: News Reporting and Writing, Mass Communication Law, Editing or Videography (B.A. Requirements, n.d.). Likewise, at Indiana University Media School, students were able to earn a bachelor's degree in news reporting and editing (Indiana University, 2020) Degree requirements for completion of a Journalism BA degree also included the following courses: Journalism Research, Statistics, and Media School Core (Majors, minors certificates, n.d.). In addition, students were required to specialize in either broadcast journalism, video journalism, or news writing that required additional coursework (Majors, minors certificates, n.d.).

Practical Preparations for Journalism

Generally, researchers have established matching theoretical and practical applications that mirror actual practice in a university laboratory is not possible (Bakker, 2014; Loosen, 2019). However, some instructors did attempt to mimic this experience. To try to teach practical journalism skills, Charles and Luce (n.d.) found that instructors turned classrooms into newsrooms in order to enhance and encourage a more professional

and authentic environment but remaining largely subjective without leaving the actual space of a university campus. Students who were involved in performing practical applications throughout their courses of study were more likely to succeed in the broadcast journalism industry (Arter et al., 2016). Feedback from industry employers and students supported the inclusion of practical activities and experiences within the classroom, aiding programs to assess their curriculum and at the same time enhance the reputation and visibility for those universities (Velez & Giner, 2015).

The goal of U.S. programs was to train students to learn the most up-to-date practices related to newsroom skills (Carpenter et al., 2015). For this reason, universities continued to expand their practical courses by introducing students to advanced technology used in the field. Students at universities with broadcast journalism programs required specific facilities and access to various equipment (Journalism Major at WVU, 2018). At Columbia University students were required to take the course Video Newsroom. Students were taught practical skills in their video newsroom course that related to the broadcast journalism industry (Alvarez, 2020). Such skills included control room producing, Associated Press writing, creating graphics, interviewing, video/audio editing, camera operations, and television set teleprompter education (Alvarez, 2020).

Such practical applications are proven invaluable to journalism-related major studies because students learned how to hone their skills in the safe environment within the classroom and build practical experiences (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Universities that provided a television newsroom setting provided students with instruction on reporting, anchoring, producing, photography, assignment desk operations,

as well as producing online-social media content (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). By applying practical and theoretical applications, students became more successful (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014).

Journalism programs have found it necessary to be flexible and innovative (Clair, 2015). Students should be able to report news across all mediums not just for “text, audio, photographic, and video formats” (Clair, 2015, p. 123). At the University of Georgia, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications, the program explained that their program prepares students for “work in photojournalism, video journalism, social media, web and publication design, media innovation and entrepreneurship, and news management” (Grady College, 2020, para. 3) in addition to traditional broadcast and print journalism fields. Journalism programs also responded to industry disruption adding curriculum pertaining to journalism practices rather than traditional theoretical aspects (Thier, 2016). Curriculum included some universities presenting courses and programs connected to philosophies of social change and community commitment as opposed to practical industry applications (Thier, 2016).

In addition to completing core and foundational courses, some programs required students to complete a senior capstone course (Grady College, 2020). For example, at the University of Georgia, leading up to the senior capstone course students had been required to demonstrate what they have learned during their time in the journalism program (Grady College, 2020). During the capstone course students focused on working in a safe space newsroom environment using their journalistic knowledge and skills in the production of daily stories for multiple platforms (Courses Home, n.d.). Multiple

platforms included TV broadcasting, online, mobile, and social media news delivery (Courses Home, n.d.). One way some universities addressed the need for applying learning to practical situations that students may have encountered in the workplace.

Instructors at different universities generally agreed that broadcast journalism capstone courses should focus on the practical rather than the theoretical (Middleweek et al., 2020; Tanner et al., 2012). Capstone courses provide instructors with opportunities to teach newer formulas of journalism while attempting not to abandon the traditional objectives of journalism education (Thier, 2016). However, due to the intensity of such courses, instructors have found a lack of available time to engage students in all they need to teach, therefore presenting the need for students to take an internship to acquire skills that they do not feel they received even through culminating courses such as the capstone (Middleweek et al., 2020; Tanner et al., 2012).

Internships

More universities, not just those with journalism majors, should integrate “the idea of work and academic training” (Carlson, 2014, p. 33). A NACE survey found that nearly 50% of university seniors within as many as 66% of liberal arts’ universities have done some type of internship, paid position, or fieldwork during their studying years (Carlson, 2014; Richards & Marshall, 2019). Similarly, the main goal of an internship is to give students experience in their chosen field (Mitola et al., 2018; Nutefall, 2012).

Internships provide valuable experience to students in various aspects (Mitola et al., 2018; Nutefall, 2012). Research in journalism internships is limited, however researchers have provided insights into the role and need for internships. For example,

internship research in social sciences may be compared to research conducted in the field of journalism. In the social sciences, such as education, researchers established that the workplace provides real life situations for problem-solving and exposure to other learning tools that a typical classroom could not duplicate (Beckley, 2018; Cappelli, 2015). For example, teacher education students who completed an internship develop a more thorough understanding of instructional strategies and classroom management as the students apply the skills from the university classroom by engaging with students in the internship. Although behavior management and instructional strategies have been included in teacher preparation programs, researchers reported that students did not demonstrate the ability to apply the skills until the students become the instructor; the opportunity for becoming the instructor is provided through the internship (Beckley, 2018; Cappelli, 2015).

Internships allow students to hone their skills before seeking actual employment after university (Pérez-Serrano et al., 2015). Halman (2016) argued that students need to identify and understand how the business they are studying works, including their professional capacity expectations. Internships provide this practical experience and foster better university performance during their internship experience, aiding in a stronger understanding of theory presented in the classroom and resulting in a higher-grade point average upon graduation (Velez & Giner, 2015). Internships give a broader experience of the real world and reinforce skills not necessarily taught in the classroom. Internship programs can emphasize technical skills, analytical skills, as well as foster awareness of the constant need to be able to adapt and be creative in a constantly

changing world (Anjum, 2020; Coco, 2000). According to a Femmel's study (Senat et al., 2019) programs that require an internship are advantageous for students.

Research shows internships help graduates acquire skills they never would have learned otherwise. For example, students are able to use practice skills they have learned in class during an internship. Because active learning is taking place during an internship, opportunities are present to the student to observe, think, reflect, and write about real-life issues and not instructor created (Arter, et al., 2016). Internships provide students an influx of new and state of the art techniques when it comes to applying methods learned in the classroom (Barbarash, 2016). Internship students are more likely to succeed in the industry while gaining a profounder sense of understanding and the facility to solve issues beyond the instantaneous focus that is usually only given in a classroom setting (Arter, et al., 2016). Development through guided practice allows the student to question, analyze, and synthesize information by challenging the understanding of concepts and organizational structures would give students a broader view of the learning experience (Perrin, 2014; Schreiner & Tobolowsky, 2018).

Internships are perceived to have a positive influence on employment after graduation. In a Gallup-Purdue index, Carlson (2014) and Richards and Marshall (2019) found that graduates felt their classroom knowledge and activities including internships made them three times more likely to be successful at work. Others stress that internships are a strategic activity regarding the growing importance of employment factors and recognizes the university learning process as fundamental (Pérez-Serrano et al., 2015). At the same time, students find their ability to obtain employment post-graduation with only

a degree and no practical experience limited and ultimately detrimental to securing their first job (Vos & Singer, 2016). Even more important, internships may allow students to have the capability of renovating the world around them while also seeing a transformation in themselves (Bourelle, 2012; Matheson & Petersen, 2020). Over 90% of students gain employment in their chosen field at one university due to curriculum that requires students to engage in internships in their first year in attendance along with each continued year after that (Saltikoff, 2017). Based on the experience of an internship, career obtainment is available (Tucciarone, 2015). Employers argue the learning provided by an internship is “perhaps even more so than education – and it can only be obtained by participating in an internship” (Tucciarone, 2015, p. 30).

Not only does the internship experience enhance student learning of the field, but evaluation of internships proves to be especially beneficial for improving curriculum and instruction (Criscoe & Land, 2020; Williams, 2010). As a result, Tucciarone (2015) investigated how universities grow student enrollment by advertising internships to interested students during the students’ search for universities to attend after graduation from high school. Recognizing benefits are practices when it comes to achieving successful marketability within the student’s concentration (Blom & Davenport, 2012; Lane & Johnston, 2017).

Internship Value

Internships are of value both to the students who participate and businesses where they occur. Internships are the building blocks between a student’s academic experiences and professional careers (Hurst et al., 2014; Stansbie et al., 2016). Study results show that

participants who have attained a set of skills and approaches are looked at as being valuable in future employment but also are testing tools for the interns themselves (Sparre & Frgemann, 2016). The majority of participants believe they would not have learned to work systematically had it not been for the internship itself combined with a university module (Sparre & Frgemann, 2016).

Students who complete an internship say they learn a variety of qualities. A study of 2,500 randomly selected graduates said their greatest lessons learned during their internship time were learning to work on a team, manage projects, adapt to working in a professional environment, solve problems, and learn independently (Carlson, 2014; Richards & Marshall, 2019). Other students have positive statements about their internship experience that provides a richness beyond just completion of their internship itself (Brooks, 2014; Zehr & Korte, 2020). Research finds positive connections between internships and the community and business (Bourelle, 2012; Matheson & Petersen, 2020). An employer in Wenger and Owens' (2012) study said:

It's somewhat of a challenge, trying to get managers to understand what young people bring to the table. A lot of good ones can go to a major site and make a contribution right away. Before, you wanted someone with 5- or 10-years' experience (Wenger & Owens, 2012, p. 15).

Internships and Gainful Employment

Particularly important is the predicting employment success as the number of internships students have during their studying years and that much of the decision to study journalism in university comes from internships made possible to students (Becker

et al., 2014; Dzula et al., 2020). A NACE survey found 73.7% of employers said they preferred to hire graduates with relevant work experience (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2017). Furthermore, 55% of employers preferred graduates who gained their professional experience from an internship (Hurst et al., 2014; Stansbie et al., 2016). When it comes to interns as non-employees, researchers discovered a lack of qualities or characteristics between interns and real employees (Scheuer & Mills, 2016). Real journalistic employees can edit video for broadcast needs, use proper program coding for electronic movement commands of studio cameras, in addition to understand and identify the difference between what news is in the community and what is not.

Both university performances and internships are known to significantly relate to employment (Becker et al., 2014; Dzula et al., 2020). In the social sciences field (including journalism related majors) 52% of students found employment within their field after completing an internship (Saltikoff, 2017). An example of the importance of internships, according to National Association of Colleges and Employers (2017), Endicott College requires all students to participate in an internship program as part of their program curriculum. Students earned a degree and obtained extensive resume experience with two 120-hour internships during their freshman and sophomore years, along with a full semester internship during their fall senior year (Saltikoff, 2017). Consequently, 53% of students reported that their current employment position directly resulted from their internship completion or internship contacts (Saltikoff, 2017).

Researchers suggested comparisons of securing a full-time job at graduation which is consistent to the graduate's major (Blau et al., 2016). When 310 business school

graduates were analyzed, Blau et al. (2016) found their results were consistent with Gault et al. (2016). All three researchers found that graduates who graduated from university within 5 years of each study's timeframe, who completed at least one internship, found a job more quickly in addition to securing significantly higher starting pay than compared to other alumni without an internship. However, employers warn interns that their positions are not just an internship, but rather an extended interview for future full-time employment (Dailey, 2016).

Internships increase the employability of students upon graduation (Velez & Giner, 2015). Those who complete an internship reported higher salaries in comparison's students who did not complete an internship. Internships are valuable not only to students and graduates, but to trades and other occupational companies (Barbarash, 2016; Rothman & Sisman, 2016). The ability to participate in an internship allows the student the opportunity to see if first or second chosen career path is suitable for them (Fox, 2020; Gardner & Bartkus, 2014). If an intern keeps up with journal writing, student learning, and validates teaching and learning strategies when it comes time to interview for a position in the field, they are more adapted (Criscoe & Land, 2020; Williams, 2010).

Over half of surveyed interns who completed at least one internship in the field of business were able to confirm their continuing pursuing of that same field work in the future (Rothman & Sisman, 2016). Less than half of the surveyed interns expressed interest in searching for a job in another field other than that of their internship. In another field, business, degree graduates who complete an internship are 4.43 times

greater to secure employment after graduation versus those who do not (Barbarash, 2016). Whereas others surveyed said they gained self-knowledge about their career fit before graduation took place (Rothman & Sisman, 2016).

The inclusion of internship experiences on a resume may aid in the competitive edge while enhancing the graduate's probability of being hired to fill a position vacancy (Silva et al., 2016). In addition, preparing, applying, monitoring, and assessing multiple internships show to be extremely arduous and time consuming for both employers and universities (Silva et al., 2016). Study results account for why internships are less common for a majority of universities even though such programs have shown to be highly successful (Silva et al., 2016).

Internships Pros and Cons

Any student or graduate who completes at least one internship generally agrees there are pros and cons to each experience (Mitola et al., 2018; Nutefall, 2012). However, internships and practicum have played a critical role in student's interest in pursuing a career in their chosen concentration. In a general sense, students use many adjectives to describe the impact of their internship (Brooks, 2014; Zehr & Korte, 2020). One study participant says they felt a sense of confidence through their internship experience (Brooks, 2014; Zehr & Korte, 2020). Another participant suggested that those with whom they worked with during their time at their internship were willing to help in starting a career (Brooks, 2014; Zehr & Korte, 2020). Although surveyed interns were thankful for the internship experience, the internship failed to meet their expectations (Rothman & Sisman, 2016).

Data collected from architectural interns show that the interns gained no experience during their internship, requiring 41% of those surveyed to change jobs to gain more diverse experience (Barbarash, 2016). In addition, 66% of interns reported no experience when it came to engineering-related internships (Barbarash, 2016). Similarly, research from student internships uncovered communications, time-management, self-confidence, critical thinking, leadership, and ability to work in a team to be skills gained by students during their time at an internship (Hurst et al., 2014; Stansbie et al., 2016).

Some cons to an internship indicate that when compared to employees, interns describe not being paid, not working full time hours, not being real staff, nor working a real job (Scheuer & Mills, 2016). Compared to older, more experienced employees, interns are in the category of “young, fresh-faced, starry-eyed, clueless, undeveloped and inexperienced students” (Scheuer & Mills, 2016, p. 463). Interns pose a greater risk to employers as they are more likely to make mistakes. Some interns, although they see themselves as part of the organization in which they intern, found they had no permanent positions made available at the end of their internship, making them question if employment would be available at a later time (Dailey, 2016). Some students found themselves in a position of influence during their internship work (Sparre & Frgemann, 2016). Such influences are found mainly in community practice even though the students considered themselves newcomers or *green*.

The importance of internships shows participants’ futures and what perceptions the participants hold to be either positive or negative towards their chosen internship (Tucciarone, 2015). At least 94% of participants found an internship at least somewhat

important to critically important including 52% of all participants agreed that real world experience is the most positive aspect of an internship (Tucciarone, 2015). Whereas Silva et al. (2016) found the existence of internships was consistent with graduates' expectations with work-related experiences, making it more likely for participants to find a job and keeping down, if not lowering, unemployment rates as one of the positive outcomes.

Students report advantages as a result, of accountability and real-world implications during their internships (Perrin, 2014; Schreiner & Tobolowsky, 2018). Students convey a feeling of accountability by their community and their internship employer to produce work that matters (Perrin, 2014; Schreiner & Tobolowsky, 2018). Participants believe their internships provide professional capability for full time roles they may later step into, including aspects not examined in universities including, professional communication and what employment is really like in particular occupational circles (Dailey, 2016). Feedback from not only employers but also students provide input for curriculum assessment and enhance reputation and visibility for the universities themselves (Velez & Giner, 2015).

Journalism Internships

Journalism internships have given students and future graduates the chance to experience their chosen career path before deciding to apply for employment. During this experience students are taught a variety of multimedia knowledge during an internship in what Madison (2014) calls digital era practicums (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Not only did successfully completing an internship within a television newsroom setting

allow students the possibility of gaining a stronger journalistic knowledge, but it also strengthened the students' awareness of what is expected of them by future supervisors and the marketplace (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Qualifications required for employment include diversity and a wide variety of traditional and technical knowledge in the journalism field (Bakker, 2014; Loosen, 2019). Employers may demand additional instruction towards practical skills and gain further experience before a student thinks about seeking employment (Velez & Giner, 2015). However, it may be impossible for anyone journalism bachelor's degree program to instruct the skills required at any profound depth (Bakker, 2014; Loosen, 2019).

Journalism students who complete an internship course often found that the internship provided a uniquely independent environment that was vital in preparing them for full-time employment after graduation (Barbarash, 2016). When the university and internship employer worked together to show trend lines, advising curriculum committees on preferred changes in coursework took place in order to keep up with the rapid expansions in advertising, journalism, and mass communications (Bugeja & Garrett, 2019). Even a study on broadcast journalism internships found all of those surveyed support the requirements of internships set by their university and degree program (Albarran, 2016; Hilt & Lipschultz, 1996). In addition, more than 59% of interns agreed that previous experience in broadcast news was important when a company is hiring. When Madison (2014) examined three universities' journalism degree programs and concentrations, the study findings indicated that internships were critical for journalism students within their chosen field.

Students who complete internships are more valued by professionals in the field versus those who did not complete an internship (Freedman & Poulson, 2015). Researchers who examine hands-on applications for students found that one of the two most important recognitions comes in jobs and internships (Freedman & Poulson, 2015). Neither broadcast managers nor interns place as much importance on the university major itself as they do on job application skills within the study (Albarran, 2016; Hilt & Lipschultz, 1996). Interning allows students in broadcast journalism majors, the most up-to-date training in a television newsroom setting (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014).

The practice of journalism is extremely important for those who apply and gain employment within the field. The more experience students have with hands-on training, the more valuable they are both as a student and a professional (Carpenter et al., 2016). Some graduates reported that during their job interviews they believed an internship provided them with valuable practice and experiences in the field of journalism or other communication tasks (Sparre & Frgemann, 2016).

Researchers argue adequate orientation must be given to interns or direction when it comes to their internship (Brunner et al., 2018; Daugherty, 2011). Some interns reported not even receiving a tour of the building, nor were they introduced to fellow employees. Site supervisors even admitted to not having enough time to properly train interns, leaving them to learn in the hustle and bustle of the newsrooms by anyone available at that moment (Brunner et al., 2018; Daugherty, 2011). Although each internship allows the students a chance to work alongside seasoned professionals, offering invaluable networking opportunities and possible leads for future employment,

interns learn very quickly that journalism organizations are a place of business and not necessarily focused on learning. Therefore, training interns is not the journalism organizations priority (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014).

Interns provide free services while learning real world practice in the world of journalism. The consensus between internship employers and interns is that it is of fair trade (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014). Interns learn valuable skills and have their work published professionally and internship employers receive free labor to help in their newsrooms.

Journalism Employment

Graduates who look for jobs in the field find it more and more difficult to obtain an entry level position without some type of practical application that they may demonstrate. Practical application includes having the right combination of knowledge and skills gathered during their studying years (Albarran, 2016; Halman, 2016; Hilt & Lipschultz, 1996; Saltikoff, 2017) whereas opportunities to enter the job market allows students a better understanding of their chosen career path beyond what the university environment can teach students (Pérez-Serrano et al., 2015). Therefore, cross-platform skills, those taught in the classroom and then practiced in the field during an internship, continue to play an important role in helping students find employment (Wenger & Owens, 2012; Wenger et al., 2018). Additionally, researchers suggest that those with little experience may have additional needed skills that veteran journalist do not, making graduates more desired in field positions (Wenger & Owens, 2012; Wenger et al., 2018).

Within non-journalism correlated research involving internship and employment some studies examine university majors, internship practice, and employment opportunities while looking at undergraduate business programs (Nunley et al., 2016). Despite examining business-related jobs there is no statistical evidence linking general business degrees to better job opportunities (Nunley et al., 2016). However, there is an estimated reduction of 27% when it comes to graduate unemployment rates as students complete at least one internship during their studying years (Silva et al., 2016). One researcher suggested candidates applying for a job not identify their internship on their resume as an internship, for it may be apparent as a gauge of uncertainty for the candidate (Silva et al., 2016). Other researchers suggest graduates looking for employment should capitalize on their experience as an intern by mentioning said internship on the graduate's resume (Bright, 2018; Kilpert & Shay, 2013).

In a business study, participants who list their internship experience on their resume and a degree in business had interview rates 14% higher than those who did not complete an internship (Nunley et al., 2016). However, having an internship usually brings significant practical experience to a graduate's employment search and is viewed as being much better than no experience at all (Bright, 2018; Kilpert & Shay, 2013). Whether stated on the resume or not, there is still strong evidence to suggest that industry-related internships significantly affect employment opportunities (Nunley et al., 2016).

Summary and Conclusions

Journalism programs continue to give students foundational understandings of journalism itself. Therefore, practical skill courses became more and vital in the progress and future of journalism programs themselves. Other than students who studied in majors where externships or internships are required (medical, law, and education) internships continue to be considered an elective course. Journalism internships, considered by many universities as elective, give practical practice to skills required to be successful in the field. In addition to employers looking for a degree in journalism, they look for experience that allows an entry-level applicant to demonstrate their understanding of the skills learned during their studying years. Otherwise, graduates may miss opportunities that should be available to them.

ELT learning has allowed graduates to put the practices and theories they were taught during their studying years into real-life experiences when incorporating a field internship into their journalism education (Fry & Kolb, 1979). Not only are the four steps, concrete experience, reflective observation of experience, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, rehearsed with each journalism concentration course, but each theory occurred during the graduate's time in the internship. Each of the four areas examined during the literature review allowed me to investigate how prior studies provide some understanding of journalism internships, journalism curriculum, and field requirements regarding gaining employment after graduation. However, a gap continues to exist in understanding the perceptions of graduate students about if and how they developed skills while having very different

experiences as are common to the variety of possible internships in the field. A comparison of the experiences could lead to recognition of specific characteristics of internships that graduates perceive to lead to early employment. This led to the current qualitative research study that sought to describe the experiences of graduates during their internships and how these experiences may affect employment.

Chapter 3 includes the methodology that has been used to address the problem for this study. The method selected was a qualitative tradition described as phenomenographical. In Chapter 3, I describe role of the researcher, participants, recruitment, data collection method, protocol, data analysis procedures, trustworthiness, ethical procedures, and I complete the chapter by providing a summary.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Qualitative researchers explore and understand the meaning ascribed to that of a social or human problem either within an individual or group (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative research therefore aligns with the purpose of the study that was to investigate the graduates' perceptions and experiences of how internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. In the methodology chapter, I describe the research question that was written to support the purpose of the study, the phenomenon of the study, research design and rationale for the chosen tradition. Thereafter, I continue by defining the participants selection, sampling strategy and justification, criterion for participant selection, as well as describing the participant sample. In addition, I describe instrumentation, how the instrument was developed, content validity, and sufficiency of the data collection related to the instrument to answer the research question. Then, I describe the procedures for recruitment, obtaining informed consent and data collection process. Subsequently, I describe the data analysis plan, issues of trustworthiness, and ethical protection of the participants.

Research Design and Rationale

I used a qualitative design and employed a phenomenographical research approach to explore the following research question:

RQ: How do journalism-related major graduates, who completed at least one internship and obtained employment in their field within 6 months of graduation,

describe their journalism internship perceptions and experiences that led to employment in the field?

Central Phenomena

The central phenomena of this study are the descriptions, experiences, and perceptions of internships related to journalism majors' employment in the field within 6 months of graduation of graduate students. I explored these descriptions, characteristics, and perceptions of graduate students through the lens of Kolb's (1971) ELT. Kolb contends the four stages of learning are: (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation of experience, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation. I studied 10 graduates who had completed at least one journalism internship and were working in the field to explore these phenomena.

Research Tradition and Rationale

I chose a qualitative approach to explore journalism graduates' descriptions, and experiences of internships related to employment in the field within 6 months of graduation of graduate students. Researchers use qualitative methodology to explore broad concepts produce descriptive data (Silverman, 2016). Previous researchers note qualitative approach enables the researcher to connect to the phenomena in their study, and to empathize and identify with participants in the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Silverman (2016) argues that identifying with the participant is essential so that the individual may understand the issue or situation. I chose the qualitative paradigm based on my purpose statement, to develop a deeper understanding of the perceptions and experiences of graduates who completed an internship during their journalism program.

Although there are theoretical or philosophical traditions of qualitative research, the goal of qualitative research is to explain or understand how a particular group experienced and interpreted a group situation (Howson, 2017). Qualitative researchers use interviews, anecdotal data material, reports, observations, and other various types of data to support their research (Howson, 2017). Qualitative researchers collect data pertaining to attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. In addition, I collected basic demographic data from the participants including whether they completed a journalism internship and gained employment. Therefore, qualitative data collected by me serves as the best option for this study.

In qualitative research, researchers often rely on informational or critical social sciences while applying logic in practice (Choy, 2014; Holloway & Galvin, 2016). Researchers may emphasize the use of detailed analysis in studies that result from the natural flow of social life (Choy, 2014; Holloway & Galvin, 2016). Researchers consider the strengths of various approaches in qualitative research when selecting a design. Researchers contend qualitative research is best used for (a) exploring similar viewpoints, (b) raising more issues related to a phenomenon using general and open-ended inquiry, and (c) understanding behaviors of principles, beliefs, and expectations. Data collection for qualitative research can include unstructured or semistructured observations, interviews with participants, examination of documentation, and visual materials, and instituting a procedure for recording collected data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative researchers focus on gaining a deep understanding of a specific event based on patterns and structures found amongst a group of specific participants (Bogdan &

Biklen, 2006). Researchers who do not employ qualitative research, question qualitative researchers about their about their bias, opinions, and prejudices as it relates to data collection (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). In order to account for personal biases, qualitative researchers spend a substantial amount of time within the experimental world collecting and reviewing masses of data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Additionally, qualitative researchers are astutely aware of the importance of data quality and employ specific practices to support trustworthiness and validity (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Howson, 2017). In summary, qualitative researchers explore perceptions values, lived experiences, beliefs, to promote understanding of phenomena in the world.

Other Methods Considered

I considered quantitative and qualitative research methods for this research study. Theoretical traditions of qualitative research include ethnography, phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, and postmodernism (Howson, 2017). However, in quantitative research, a narrow lens is used to look for connections at specific variables. As a result of examining the relationship amongst variables, quantitative researchers produce findings reflecting numerical data that is analyzed using statistical procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). When comparing qualitative and quantitative methods it is essential to understand the foundational aspects of both methods individually. In a qualitative study, the researcher examines data through a wide lens, looking for connections of inter-relationships between concepts that are unspecific (Cohen et al., 2017; Maxwell, 1992). Qualitative researchers explore and understand the meanings of individuals or groups when examining social or human problems (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In qualitative research, responses from participants answers are more likely to include complex discursive replies to in-depth interviewing (Cohen et al., 2017; Maxwell, 1992). In quantitative research, the instrument is already predetermined and selectively designed as a technological tool that does not allow for flexibility, imagination, or reflexivity (Creswell & Poth, 2017). However, qualitative researchers often use themselves as an instrument for data collection by attending to both their own cultural assumptions as well as the information obtained from interview data (Cohen et al., 2017; Maxwell, 1992).

Qualitative researchers also use case studies in various fields to develop an in-depth analysis of the event, activity, of one or more individuals (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In addition, a bounded case study approach, may include defining the boundaries of the case by time and activity. When exploring a case study as a possible approach, I considered the number of participants I would use to conduct the study, a specific timeline for data collection, and the types of data to be collected. As a result, I concluded that I would use a case study approach to deeply examine one specific area and that I would possibly include multiple data points rather than making comparisons of the experiences of the participants.

A second alternative approach that I considered in this study was the phenomenological research approach. Although this approach is similar to the phenomenographical research approach, researchers using the phenomenological approach to examine a specific phenomenon and how participants perceive the phenomenon in a given context over time (Tuffour, 2017). A phenomenological research

approach requires a deep understanding of human know-hows common to a group of people, as explained by Creswell and Poth (2017). Phenomenological interviews should be either open or semistructured and include no more than 15 participants (Padilla-Díaz, 2015).

Quantitative researchers approach problems using different designs. Quantitative researchers summarize data numerically. Researchers using quantitative methods seek to describe perceptions, values, and beliefs using descriptive statistics (Lodico, et al., 2010). Quantitative researchers select the specific approach based on the purpose of the quantitative study that could include examining the differences in an applied treatment compared to a control group, determining the relationships between variables, and seeking to explain the differences between groups (Lodico, et al., 2010). Quantitative researchers do not focus on (a) human perception and beliefs, or nonexistence of resources for large scale research, and (b) understanding in-depth description (Choy, 2014; Holloway & Galvin, 2016). In this study, I did not explore the relationship between variables or examine the differences in groups, therefore, I did not employ a quantitative approach to address the phenomena addressed by this study. Hence, I selected a qualitative approach for this study using a phenomenographical research approach.

Qualitative researchers are more concerned with the human aspect side of research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For example, in a study conducted on deaf teachers and their experiences in inclusive classrooms, researcher Hankebo (2018) explored the qualitative design using semistructured interviews and observations to collect data. In addition, Hankebo used the interpretive phenomenological research to

explore in detail each participating deaf teachers' effective communication and interaction with their hearing students. Data collected were organized into three main themes based on the based on the research question. The study findings showed that significant challenges within the classroom pertained to deaf teachers' lack of (a) pedagogical knowledge, skills, (b) proper support, and (c) interpreters in teacher education training universities (Hankebo, 2018).

Based on the phenomena I selected a qualitative research paradigm with a phenomenographical research approach as the best option for the purpose of this study. In this study, I examined participants' perceptions, and experiences of completing a journalism internship and obtaining employment. I used semistructured one-on-one interviews to address the purpose of this study and answer the research question. Creswell and Creswell (2018) argued that qualitative design includes emerging questions, procedures, data collection, and analysis as well as interpreting the meaning behind such data.

The phenomenographical research approach is one of three qualitative approaches that researchers use to follow a specific criteria in a study. The other two qualitative approaches I considered were the case study and phenomenological. Baxter and Jack (2008) described qualitative case study as:

An approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. (p. 544)

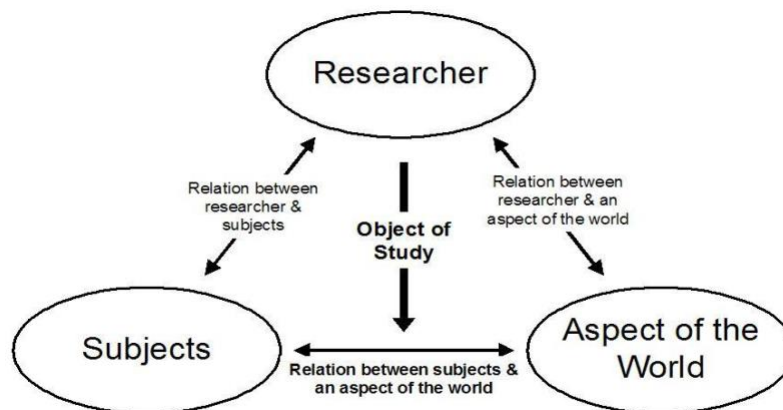
Qualitative researchers use a phenomenographical approach to examine the different ways that people experience an event. Phenomenography is defined as "a research method for mapping the qualitatively different ways people experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand various aspects of, phenomena in, the world around them" (Tight, 2018, p. 31). Researchers employ a phenomenographical approach to by integrating one's personal beliefs and thoughts as a that influence how the researcher may interpret the relationships perceived between the participants, their experiences, the events that occur, and the individual meaning personally assigned to the interactions between these perceived constructs (Feldon & Tofel-Grehl, 2018). Several researchers examined how individuals discovered different qualitative patterns when experiencing, conceptualizing, realizing, and understanding diverse aspects of a occurrences (Nallaya, 2018; Ornek, 2008). Researchers have options regarding how to interpret data when using a phenomenographical approach. When using a phenomenographical approach, researchers examine the phenomenon, and how participants' experience the phenomenon thus resulting in options related to data analysis and interpreting results (Nallaya, 2018; Ornek, 2008). Bakker (2014) described the approach:

Phenomenography focused on the ways of experiencing different phenomena, ways of seeing them, knowing about them, and having skills related to them. The aim is, however, not to find the singular essence, but the variation and the architecture of this variation by different aspects that define the phenomena (p. 26).

Figure 1 illustrates that phenomenographic research does not consider the subject (i.e.: journalism internship graduate) and aspect of the world (i.e.: what the journalism internship graduate learns and experiences during the internship and if they gain employment as a result) as separate entities within the phenomenon but instead relates the subject to the aspect (Khan, 2014; Sibanda & Ramrathan, 2017). In addition, Khan (2014) and Sibanda and Ramrathan (2017) explained that based on Bowden and Green's (2005) description of phenomenographic research, the subject and the aspect of the world are not separate but create a relationship between each. Therefore, the person's experience and the aspect create a relational approach (Case, 2016; Limberg, 2000). By using this approach, I deeply explored the relationship between the internship itself and the individual's personal experiences, and their personal experiences that they bring to the internship situation that may in turn affect the participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of the internship experience and their perceived success in the internship.

Figure 1

Focus of Phenomenographical Research (Mann, 2009)



Limberg's (2000) approach allows researchers to gain an understanding of the subjects' experience of the aspect in a more in-depth manner (Case, 2016). Limberg contends that researchers may gain a deeper understanding of the subject's experiences when employing the phenomenographic research approach. Using this approach, I examined the nature and experiences of internships, and how the internship, whether optional or required, was perceived to effect employment by graduates.

Role of the Researcher

I did not complete a journalism-related major internship during my academic years in university. However, I am the internship coordinator and video broadcasting instructor at a college on the west coast where I work with media communication students in obtaining and maintaining a media-centered internship. In addition, during my time as a producer and reporter in broadcast news, I instructed interns brought on to work in a newsroom.

I have no previous ties to any of the universities chosen for the study. I have not been a student at any of the universities chosen for the study, and I have never applied for student admission. I had no ties to participants as I did not know a single individual prior to this study. The participant selection for a qualitative study is critical as the participants selected should have knowledge about the phenomenon studied to answer interview questions related to the research questions to address the purpose of the study.

I currently work as a freelance broadcast journalist. I have worked in the field of journalism for over 10 years. I also am employed as a tenured professor of media communications and work primarily with undergraduate students. Researchers should

reflect on their personal belief systems and experiences prior to conducting the study (Lodico et al., 2010). I conducted the interview using the same protocol and process to minimize bias. I used a journal to write down my observations and personal thoughts during and after the interview process. Prior to beginning each interview, I consciously set aside my own beliefs to maintain and support the data integrity (see Merriam & Grenier, 2019). After each interview I reviewed my notes for any bias.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

Participant Population and Sampling Strategy

The population of participants for this study were graduates who had majored in journalism field. The population of students targeted for this study was important in order for them to have knowledge about the phenomenon of the study. The sampling strategy is very important in qualitative research. Creswell and Poth (2017) explain that population size is important to consider for qualitative studies. Qualitative researchers use purposeful sampling to target selected individuals to understand the primary phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Lodico et al., 2010). In qualitative research, sample sizes are often smaller, and the nature of the study is such that the researchers seek to understand a phenomenon in-depth with fewer participants to reach saturation (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Lodico et al., 2010). Qualitative researchers contend saturation is obtained when receiving the repetition of responses to interview questions (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). I used purposeful sampling to select a smaller number of participants, who were knowledgeable about the phenomenon studied, even though the student population of journalism

programs may be considered large when compared to enrollment in other degree programs.

Participant Criteria

The participant inclusion criteria for the study were graduates who: (a) had majored in a journalism or related field, (b) had participated in a least one internship during their years of study, (c) had gained employment within 6 months of their graduation date. I direct personal message participants and confirmed whether they met the inclusion criteria for the study. All participants confirmed that they met the criteria for participation. I conducted in-depth interviews of 10 participants that enabled me to reach saturation due to the rich descriptions provided by the participants during the interview.

Number of Participants and Rationale

The target number of participants for this study was eight to 12 participants who met the participant criteria. The actual sample population in this study included 10 graduates from a range of journalism programs who met the inclusion criteria for the study. All 10 participants met the criteria for this study, represented a range age of graduates in the journalism or related field and represented different ethnicities and genders. Based on the recommendation of Guest et al. (2006) population size is not a standard for qualitative research and that saturation may occur in as few as eight interviews, I determined that 10 participants were appropriate for this study.

Procedures for Participant Identification, Contact, Recruitment

I used direct personal message to recruit participants through social media websites Facebook and LinkedIn. LinkedIn profiles contained the graduate degree field, university, and employment field. I introduced myself, and my purpose in contacting them, the purpose of the study and described the consent process. I entered all returned messages from potential participants into a pool from which I chose a purposeful sample.

Instrumentation

As I was interviewing graduates regarding their perceptions and experiences pertaining to a phenomenon, I used an interview protocol as the primary method of data collection for this study (see Appendix A). I developed an interview protocol using semistructured interview questions to address the purpose of the study that was to investigate the graduates' perceptions and experiences of how internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. I created interview questions to solicit participants' perceptions and experiences related to the phenomenon studied, that aligned with the research questions. I included questions for the interview protocol that supported my investigation of each participant's perceptions and experiences during their journalism internships. I used Kolb's (1971), ELT, the conceptual framework, as a lens to analyze the data and to interpret the findings of this study.

Validity

In qualitative research, defining validity is the appropriateness of the study's tools, processes, and data (Leung, 2015). Content validity for the interview protocol focused on

clarity and of the interview questions relevance (see Beck, 2020) In order to establish content validity, I requested that academic colleagues review the protocol questions and look for any questions that may be perceived as confusing for participants. I requested that the colleagues provide feedback on clarity and content of the instrument. I revised the interview protocols based on the feedback obtained from academic colleagues. I also obtained feedback from my doctoral committee members, who are experts in research methodology, as to whether my interview questions were appropriately designed to solicit the desired content. This process of obtaining feedback from colleagues and experts supported content validity of the interview instrument (see Beck, 2020; Leung, 2015). I systematically followed appropriate and uniform strategies throughout interview process, and during the one-on-one interviews.

Reliability

I used a standardized protocol to ensure that each participant could respond to the same questions even though their described experiences were different. By using a standardized protocol for the overall interview process and for each interview, I supported reliability in the study. Additionally, by asking questions in the same way, I was able to note inconsistencies in each person's response. Procedures and processes followed also support content validity (see Leung, 2015). Saturation obtained by reviewing, coding, and analyzing the transcripts following the interview process, is one indicator that content validity is achieved (see Leung, 2015). I reached saturation in my review of transcripts data from the 10 participant interviews collected for this study.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Recruiting Procedures

Contact with potential recruited participants who matched the participant selection requirements received a message via social media. Researchers estimate that 90% of American adults use the internet making it highly likely that journalism graduates were familiar with internet use (Gelinias, et al., 2017). Participants were recruited via direct personal message through social media websites Facebook and LinkedIn. I was able to determine whom to contact if the individual identified themselves on their personal social media page as a graduate from bachelor's degree journalism programs, who list a bachelor's degree-granting university's journalism program publicly on their social media account, and who currently holds an employment position in the field of broadcast journalism. I sent each potential participant a personal message that stated whom I was, where I attended university for my doctorate, what my study is about, the interview process in which I plan to complete my research, and the consent form to sign if they wish to participate in the direct personal message. I also inquired whether the potential participants met all the listed selection requirements. I entered all returned messages from potential participants into a pool from which I chose a purposeful sample.

Informed Consent

I sent each potential participant the consent form subsequent to initial contact. Return of the signed informed consent form indicated an interest in participating in the research. The consent form included background information about the study, how the study would take place and be videotaped via Zoom, information pertaining to their

voluntary participation in the study, which included their choice to leave the study at any time, maintaining each participants privacy, any risks that may occur in the study, and how to contact me or ask any questions they may have. Interviews with each participant did not take place until I received their return email with the signed consent form.

Data Collection

The only data collection instrument used in this research was the semistructured interview protocol (Appendix A). I indicate the location of the data collected using this instrument, the frequency and duration of data collection using the instrument, and how I recorded data gained through this instrument in the next section. It is important to systemize the data collection process in qualitative research (Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

Location of Data Collection. I collected data during a semistructured interview with each participant as scheduled. Each interview took place through the electronic meeting website Zoom. Participants met with me over Zoom on the agreed upon time, and date and each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. I conducted interviews individually, and I notified each participant when they entered the meeting that the interview was being recorded. The recording is a feature offered by Zoom.

Frequency, Duration, and Recording of Data Collection. I conducted a single one-on-one interview with each participant using the protocol instrument. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. I video-recorded the interviews through Zoom using a secure internet connection. Only my committee and I have access to recordings, transcripts, and raw data. I assigned each participant a designated number (Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Etc.) so that their identities would remain confidential. I

stored all electronic video and audio data collected during each interview on my personal password protected computer. Throughout each one-on-one interview, I adhered to the semistructured interview protocol using open-ended questions and used probes to gain more in-depth responses from participants as needed (see Hatch, 2013).

To establish quality, I sent a transcript of the participants' interview and an explanation for review after completing one-on-one interviews with participants. During this time, participants had the opportunity to make comments and suggest corrections, validations, or challenges to their interviews. Once I collected data from all participants and completed follow-up procedures, I thanked participants for their time and effort by direct personal message. Participants did not receive gifts or payments for their participation in the study.

Data Analysis Plan

Background of Analysis Approach

Phenomenographic analysis should reveal two main aspects, a referential aspect, and a structural aspect (Boon et al., 2007). The referential aspect refers to descriptions of what is experienced in the internship by the participants, and from these categories of description are detailed (Boon et al., 2007). The structural aspect deals with how the phenomenon is experienced by individual participants, including the linking of the structural relationship of each experience in a different way (Akerlind, 2012; Hajar, 2020). Structural relationships represent the structure of what Tight (2018) calls the "outcome space" (p. 178), where participants described different ways of experiencing

the same experience. From the collective descriptions, an outcome space is detailed that shows how the categories of experiences are related and vary (Boon et al., 2007).

As indicated by Marton (1986), the codes capture the variations in the participants' experience. Saldaña (2016) emphasized that the most useful method for coding is to derive questions from the research subject matter itself. As coding may describe small ideas, Luborsky (1994) explained that coding is a way for themes to provide insight into various beliefs including cultural and values.

The phenomenographic focus of data collection within this study was initially on the individual experience and was then reviewed collectively (Akerlind, 2012; Hajar, 2020). When using the phenomenographical research approach to examine data, I looked at codes that emerged in the descriptions that participants provide about what they individually and then collectively experienced during their internships. The relationship between participants in this study were their perceptions and experiences during their internships and gaining employment after completing an internship.

Process for Coding

Patton (2014) argued that research questions, methodologies, and conceptual frameworks are context specific. The process for coding included phenomenographical, inductive, and deductive analysis of different elements of the data. The use of inductive coding requires the researcher to review each transcript multiple times, identifying words (codes) from the transcript that exemplify aspects of the participant's experiences or perceptions (see Patton, 2014). To begin the data analysis process, I initiated an inductive coding process. I read the transcripts to understand the perceptions and experiences that

were conveyed in the interview process. I initiated this process by looking for experiences and conceptions. I used inductive coding and began by reading and rereading each transcript multiple times while also scanning for similarities and differences within each individual transcript (see Patton, 2014). Next, I then compared interview transcripts among the participants looking for agreement and disagreement as well as additional possible codes. I began the coding process for each transcript. I color-coded the initial codes on each transcript and then grouped the color-coded words into larger groups of codes that appeared to be similar. I continued another round of inductive coding, and I omitted some initial codes and combined them into the final themes. I then separated codes, quotes, and descriptive experiences with theme names. Upon completing inductive coding, I moved on to conduct the deductive coding using Kolb's framework.

I also used deductive coding, coding that requires a predefined set of codes, to analyze the data in relation to Kolb's four stages (Kolb, 1971). The predefined codes included concrete experience, active experimentation, reflective observation, and abstract conceptualization. Each of Kolb's four phases became a code that I used to code all of the participants' transcripts looking for evidence of Kolb's framework in the text. I read the transcripts of each participant, and assigned codes based on the conceptual framework. I identified evidence to support the codes, in the form of excerpts from the participants' transcripts. The deductive coding process allowed me to identify additional themes from the interview data.

After completing the inductive coding, and deductive coding processes, I entered the initial inductive and deductive coding, the transcripts, initial codes, and themes into

MAXQDA. I conducted a line-by-line review of the transcripts in MAXQDA that allowed me to refine the themes and subthemes that I initially identified. Using MAXQDA also allowed me to identify smaller excerpts from participants' responses that provided additional insight into the participants' perceptions of the phenomenon. Through the process of using MAXQDA software, I was also able to eliminate irrelevant or redundant pieces of the text from the interviews thus allowing these data to be more manageable (see Tight, 2018). I developed figures to visually portray the process I used to analyze these data (see Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7; pgs. 80-89).

After completing the inductive, and deductive coding and MAXQDA analysis, I conducted the phenomenographical analysis of these data. Based on the themes that emerged and quotes identified during my analysis and the MAXQDA digital analysis, it was possible to analyze the perceived experiences of the participants. Through the use of phenomenographical analysis, I identified participants' experiences and how the experiences were different based on what they may have brought to the experience, such as past experience, learning, motivation, or varied view of the field. The phenomenographical analysis was the final stage of the data analysis process.

Tools for Coding

I conducted inductive and deductive coding using the conceptual framework. Following the initial coding, I used a software program, named MAXQDA. MAXQDA is an all-in-one qualitative coding tool that supports the researcher in examining the transcripts from each interview and identifies corresponding text based on the code name that the researcher identifies. During and throughout the process of examining each

transcript, I drafted codes and possible themes for MAXQDA to identify the potential text that aligned with the codes. I identified subthemes by using MAXQDA. I also refined my analysis based on additional text identified by the MAX QDA software.

Finally, using the themes and examples from the data I attempted to develop a general understanding of the content as suggested by Vella (2002) coding analysis. This included asking myself, "What does this mean? What is it telling me about internships and employment?" I organized the results by themes and included examples from the MAXDA printout. I analyzed the themes and considered the findings that emerged from the themes.

Discrepant Cases

Contradictions in research may arise, giving way to unexpected findings. Such contradictions are often known as discrepant cases. LeCompte et al. (1993) defines deviant cases as "a sampling method that aims to elaborate, modify, or refine a theory," (p. 93), whereas they define negative case sampling as, "samples that appear to wholly disprove or refute the theory being developed" (p. 93). As an irregularity within the data collection, information was categorized based on its theme, saying, or experiences. Participants described the varied details of their internship perceptions and experiences. The internship perceptions and experiences across all 10 participants were varied. However, the participants' reported variations were not perceived as discrepant cases but opportunities to examine how these differences may have affected their experience and their perceptions of the experience. There were no discrepant cases as the variance in

participants' perceptions are concluded to variances in experiences, and the reported experiences and varied perceptions do not refute the findings of the study

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is about credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability of the data (Statistics Solutions, 2019). I transcribed these data verbatim from the recordings and conducted multiple reviews of the recordings and transcriptions. In addition, I also had each participant review their transcribed interview for accuracy or credibility of meaning (see Statistics Solutions, 2019). I audio and video recorded the interviews and transcribed them word for word. I made notes on any non-verbal cues and communications that I observed from the participant during the interview to increase trustworthiness.

The transferability of the research findings demonstrates whether the findings were applicable to other situations. Although it cannot be assumed that qualitative research is transferable, the use of rich descriptions of the data and the variation in participant selection may make it possible to apply the findings to other individuals and settings (see Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

Addressing dependability in this dissertation research took place by the detailed reporting of the methodology and data analysis. Detailed reporting ensured that another person could replicate the study using the described methodology and analysis protocol. Using Kolb's (1971) stages as a framework enhanced this possibility. Finally, the study's trustworthiness was improved as the research committee reviewed the research process, analysis, and report of findings.

Ethical Procedures

There were no data collected until I obtained IRB approval. In addition, all participants of this study had already graduated from four-year universities; therefore, a letter of cooperation or IRB approval from the universities was not needed. The identity of each participant within the study remained confidential throughout the process. I gave each participant a code name: Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, etc. and reported data using this convention.

I placed all confidential direct personal messages, MAXQDA coding, and video recordings on a 64-gigabyte universal serial bus (USB). The USB is secure in a private safe where only I have access. I will destroy all collected correspondence and data in 2026, 5 years after completing the study. I had no prior relationship of any type with any of the universities or participants that have partaken in this study.

Summary

I used a qualitative phenomenographical research approach to complete this research. The conducted study took place via semistructured interviews that were video recorded. I played the role of data collector and transcriber. Participants selected include 10 post-completion journalism majors from universities across the country, who completed at least one journalism internship.

Each participant was recruited through open access using direct personal messaging on Facebook and LinkedIn social media websites as opposed to recruiting through an advertisement for participants. I transcribed each participant's interview to maintain the highest trust of data collection during this study. I conducted the data

analysis by determining inductive themes and patterns that I coded and cataloged while providing insight into the participants' response to each individual internship experience. Themes and patterns provided insight into each participants' experience and were then further analyzed for refinement and interpretation. Ethical procedures follow IRB and university standards while maintaining the confidentiality of each participant both during and after the study was concluded.

In Chapter 4, I review the data collected among the 10 participants while identifying themes and findings from the study conducted. I analyze data using phenomenographical reasoning when examining the perceptions and experiences each participant described. I used participants' reported perceptions and experiences that were similar to identify inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning per Kolb's (1971) four stages of ELT, and phenomenographical reasoning to analyze these data.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of the study that was to investigate the graduates' perceptions and experiences of how internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. The goal of developing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of how graduates in the field of journalism perceived an internship affected obtaining gainful employment within 6 months of graduation related to the gap in the literature that indicated some graduates do not demonstrate effective skills on the job after graduating with a degree in the field of journalism although literature suggests that internships promote skills and prepare the journalism graduate for gainful employment. To address this goal, the research question that guided this study was:

RQ: How do journalism-related major graduates, who completed at least one internship and obtained employment in their field within 6 months of graduation, describe their journalism internship perceptions and experiences that led to employment in the field?

In Chapter 4, I include an analysis based on 10 semistructured interviews with journalism degree-holding participants from across the United States. Each participant completed at least one journalism-based internship during their studying years. I also describe the setting, data collection steps, describe the data analysis process, present codes, themes by research question, and provide a thorough description of the overall findings of the study. I conclude by outlining evidence of trustworthiness, and finally conclude Chapter 4 summary.

Setting

Each participant within the study had no known conditions that influenced their participation. There were no incentives provided to the participants for the study nor were there any changes in who corresponded or interviewed the participants. All participants were currently employed in the field of journalism at the time of the interviews.

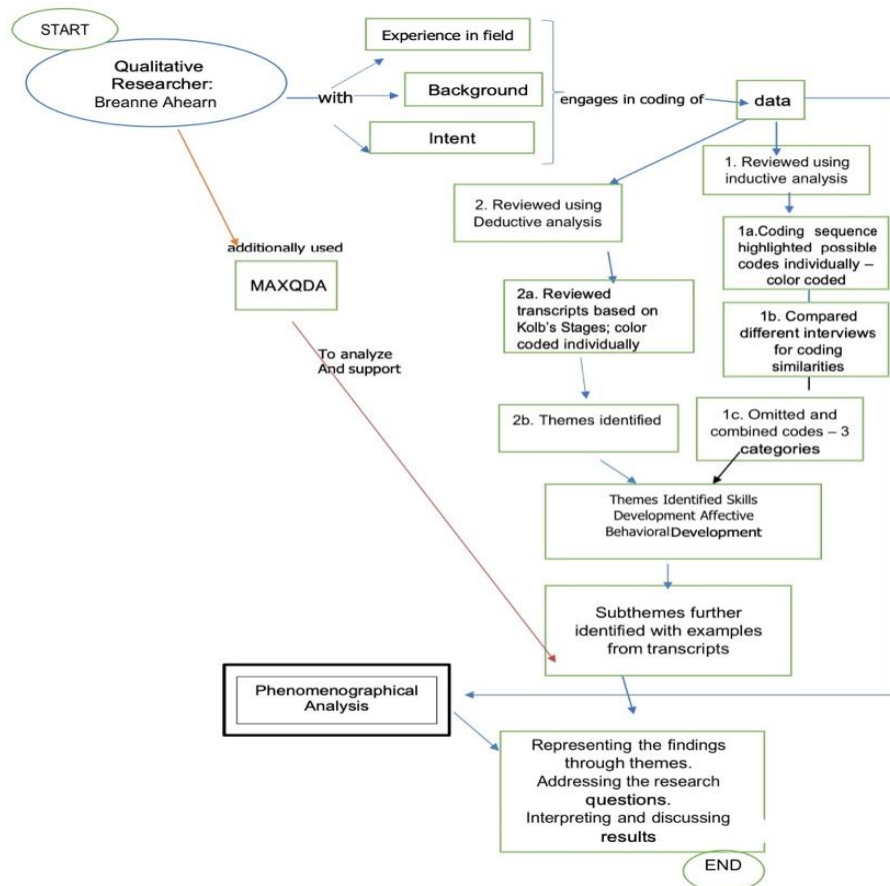
Data Collection

I conducted 10 semistructured, one-on-one interviews using a secure internet connection. I consistently used the interview protocol and process for each interview that lasted no longer than 45 minutes. I collected both video and audio recordings of the interviews using the Zoom software. Upon completing each interview, I uploaded and stored all video recordings and transcripts on my personal computer, using a software database with password protected files. I reviewed each video recording and compared the recording to the transcript to discern any errors between the video recording and transcript for each interview. I expected each interview to take approximately 60 minutes; however, the interviews were shorter than I anticipated with the longest interview lasting 45 minutes. I conducted each interview from my home office over a 5-day period and conducted two interviews each day. I did not encounter any variations in the data collection plan. Upon completing the interviews and verifying the accuracy of the transcript with each participant, I concluded these data were accurate, and I prepared the data for inductive coding.

Data Analysis

I began the data analysis by personally transcribing all interviews. Next, I reviewed each participant's transcript multiple times and compared the transcription to the audio recordings. I continued breaking down the data by organizing the data, ensuring the removal of any identifiers, and creating a pseudonym for each participant (Participant 1, 2, etc.). I sent each transcription to the participant and requested that they review their transcript for accuracy and return the transcript to me with any corrections.

I used inductive and deductive coding in this study. I analyzed these data using both an inductive approach, and deductive approach based on the Kolb framework. The process for coding using both inductive and deductive coding supported my analysis of different elements of the data. Researchers use inductive coding initially to review each transcript multiple times, identifying words from the transcript that exemplify aspects of each participant's experience (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). I initiated coding on individual interview transcripts after reviewing the transcript multiple times. I read and reread the transcripts. I assigned initial codes by using a colored highlighter to group different descriptive words of the participants' described internship experience. Figure 2 reflects the process I used for qualitative data analysis.

Figure 2*Coding Process Used for Qualitative Analysis*

In the early stages of data analysis, I looked for possible language, words, or phrases that were commonly used between participants in their descriptions. I also examined the data looking for differences in how participants described their perceptions. I also examined the transcript as a whole by focusing on different perspectives during different times, that allowed me to illuminate different aspects across participants, by considering their perspective or point of view. The initial codes that emerged from the first round of inductive coding and analysis of the transcripts included: newspaper creation, green screen, teleprompter, camera operations, video shooting, reporting,

writing, producing, social media, transcribing footage, logging footage, editing footage, time management, hard work, diligence, attitude, and willingness to learn.

In the next step of inductive coding, I collected all codes across all transcripts and reviewed each code to combine or omit codes as indicated then grouped the initial codes together with those that were similar. Next, I then grouped the combined group of codes into potential themes. I identified two main themes using inductive coding. These were: skills development and affective behavior development. Three subthemes emerged within the skills development theme (a) technical skills, (b) production skills, and (c) interviewing skills.

In the deductive analysis process, I used preidentified categories from Kolb's framework. The codes used from Kolb's model were (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation of experience, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation. I analyzed the codes and themes comparing them to Kolb's stages to look for alignment and relationships. The names of the four stages of the framework were inputted into MAXDA as codes to locate phrases and words in order to compare how the inductive codes aligned with Kolb's four stages. In the analysis of results, I describe these four deductive codes and the inductive codes.

Codes, Themes, and Subthemes

The two themes were skills development and affective behavior development. Skills development included the subthemes of technology, production, and interviewing skills. Codes for affective behavior development included attitude, time management, diligence, hard work, and preparation for work. I identified examples of phrases and

quotes in MAXDA for each theme and subtheme. Overall, the analysis showed saturation of graduates' perceptions of their internships.

Theme 1: Skills Development

Within the skills development theme, three subthemes emerged: technical, production, and interviewing. Technical skills reflected the skills learned during the creation process of news. Participants perceived that accessing and using software contributed to their skill development and abilities to create the process of news. Participants described how they perceived they developed these skills, but often their descriptions arose from different types of experiences. That is, each participant gained similar skills based on whom they shadowed each day of their internship or which position within the internship they were assigned. In addition, what experiences, learning, and personal characteristics and motivations brought to the internship experience may have influenced what and how they developed skills.

There appeared to be a possible link between learning skills and affective behavior development. Participants' perceptions of their internship appeared to align with their reports on affective behaviors experienced. Participants' varied in their reported perceptions and experiences and appeared to vary as related to their individual perceptions. Participants' varied experiences and how they see them, understand them, and identify the skills they have related to them results how they view the world (Bakker, 2014; Tight, 2018).

As indicated previously, phenomenographic research “seeks to identify the multiple conceptions that people have for a particular phenomenon,” (Akerlind, 2012, p.

119; Hajar, 2020, pg. 7), reflecting the different ways that people describe how they experience a given phenomenon (Ornek, 2008). Therefore, as a result of this research, participants described their internships (the phenomenon) very differently as described below in the results. However, the descriptions still generated similar codes and subthemes that were grouped into two major themes. The descriptions supported the literature on phenomenographic research that stated that individuals experience a phenomenon, such as an internship, in different ways, as stated by Ornek (2008), "focus on the ways of experiencing different phenomena, ways of seeing them, knowing about them, and having skills related to them (pg. 25)." Thus, I describe the individuals' experiences highlighting themes but showing how the same codes and themes emerged from different experiences.

Theme 2: Affective Behavior Development

The affective behavior development included factors that participants developed during the internship experience and those individuals stated they brought to the situation that may have affected their perceptions of the internship itself and job attainment due to the internship. When investigating different ways that people experience an event (internship), researchers Feldon and Tofel-Grehl (2018) emphasize, "personal conceptions as a necessary construct to understand the relationship between the physical events that people experience and the personal meanings that they derive from those experiences" (pg. 892).

The participants used several terms to provide a broad description of their internship experience. For example, when asked to use only one word to describe their

internship experience, terms included: interesting, tiresome, informative, exciting, successful, thrilling, brief, challenging, and educational. However, further analysis and grouping of these individual terms led to a focus on the specific language used in multiple participant descriptions that I grouped under the codes of hard work, diligence, attitude, willingness to learn, and time management. Some initial words were dropped or moved to other more appropriate subthemes as they provided better examples for those areas. For example, participants recalled working long hours, missing holiday celebrations with family, being on-call when needed, and doing anything asked of them by their internship employers.

Participants described that they were exposed to activities pertaining to time management and to new content that they had not been exposed to in their traditional classroom settings. Each participant recalled working various shifts, as early as 2 a.m. to 11 a.m. and as late as 3 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. For example, Participant 4: “I stayed long hours to knock out my internship hours and then I started in production.” According to Participant 4, ultimately, this appeared to translate into better employment opportunities.

Affective factors that participants brought to the situation appear to have affected how they engaged in the internship and how they perceived the effect of that internship. Participants addressed experiences they perceived affected their growth in learning both personally and as a journalist. However, rather than simply listing things they learned, although they did this also, participants described the experience in terms of things that built character such as time management, diligence, hard work, attitude, and willingness to learn.

Results

Participants

A total of 10 participants participated in the study. Four of the 10 participants had completed more than one internship. Eight of the 10 participants interned at a television news station. Outside of the television news station internship, Table 1 reflects internships were also completed at a newspaper, and a televised jewelry network. However, the internships varied within the news category. These included newspaper, television, and network internships. Participant 3 studied and graduated with a degree in meteorology, although they interned and worked in broadcast news as a chief meteorologist. Table 1 reflects the overall participant demographics including gender, region, and number of internships completed by each participant.

Table 1

Participants' Demographics and Internship Information

Participant Number	Gender	Internship Region	Number of Internships Completed
Participant One	Female	South	1
Participant Two	Male	South	1
Participant Three	Male	South	1
Participant Four	Female	South	1
Participant Five	Female	South	1
Participant Six	Female	South	1
Participant Seven	Female	Midwest and West	3
Participant Eight	Male	Midwest and West	3
Participant Nine	Female	West	2
Participant 10	Male	South	2

A total of nine participants graduated with degrees in the field of journalism, including general journalism, broadcasting, and mass communication, and one participant with a degree in meteorology and a minor in broadcast. Interviews included participants who completed more than one internship, and participants had internships in a variety of markets. These included small markets, large markets, and network markets. Participants completed internships in various locations including but not limited to Chicago, Illinois, Washington, D.C., Knoxville, Tennessee, and Santa Barbara, California. Some participants were offered employment at their internships before the internship concluded.

Discussion of Results

In this section I discuss the results to answer the research question in relation to the conceptual framework and the phenomenographical analysis. I draw on the themes discussed in the data analysis section and provide further quotes that support the final results. Overall, the research results indicate that all participants described a variety of internship experiences that led to skill and affective behavior development. I found the descriptions of the internship experience varied, often widely, from participant to participant and resulted in both individual and collective analysis results. However, the analysis of results indicated that similar skills and affective behaviors developed even though the experiences were so varied.

The research question addressed how journalism-related major graduates, who completed at least one internship and obtained employment in their field within 6 months of graduation, described their journalism internship perceptions and experiences that led

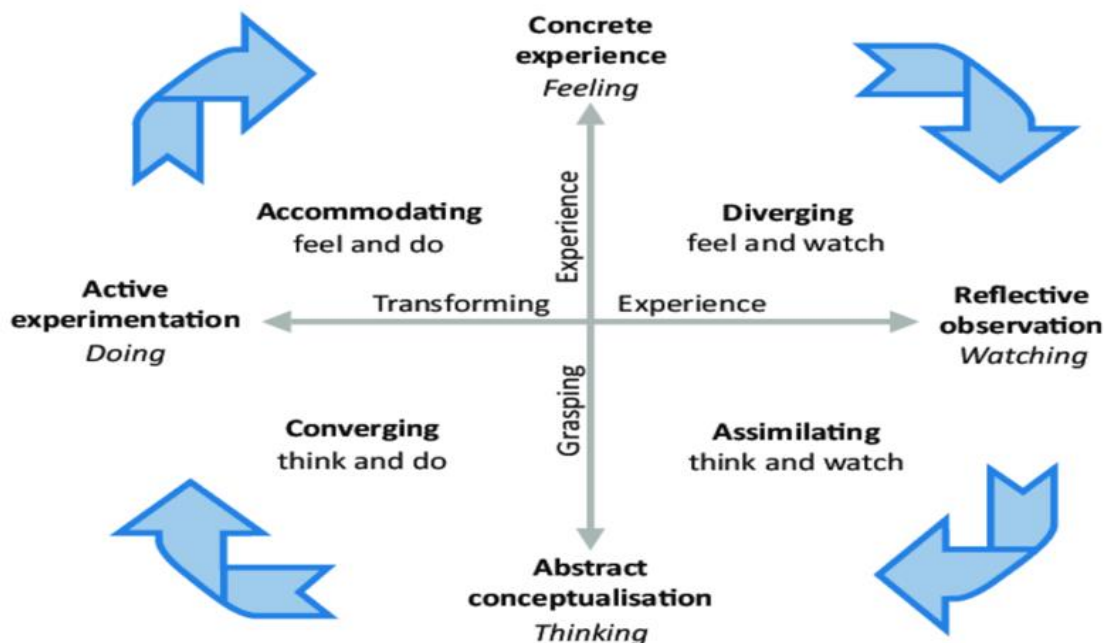
to employment in the field. The goal of the data collection and analysis was to have participants discuss their different perceptions and experiences during the internship, thus allowing for comparing in order to analyze these data by deriving codes, subthemes, and themes across interviews. Descriptions of internships were detailed and rich. The data reflected individual and collective skills acquired during the internship that participants believed were essential for later employment. I coded these descriptions and then divided them into two themes that were (a) skills development and (b) affective behavior development. In the next section, I discuss the deductive coding and themes.

Conceptual Framework Results In Relation To Themes Identified

Kolb (1971) explains that effective learning occurs when adult learners progress through four stages of learning. These stages are: (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation of experience, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation. During the transition from classroom learning to in-field practice, each participant reported that they learned hands-on practices as described by Kolb's (1971) ELT theory (see Figure 3 below). In fact, participants described using their internships to learn, practice, reflect on, and put into future practice situations they encountered while shadowing professionals during their internship. When I examined each participant's experience through the lens of ELT stages, I found a relationship between the themes identified in the inductive analysis and Kolb's four stages during deductive analysis reflected in Figure 3.

Figure 3

4-Stages of Kolb's ELT Theory in Practice



Note. From EducationTechnology.net "Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory & Learning Styles," by S. Kurt, 2020. Copyright 2021 by Education Technology.

In this study I focused on answering the question:

RQ: How do journalism-related major graduates, who completed at least one internship and obtained employment in their field within 6 months of graduation, describe their journalism internship experience that led to employment in the field?

In this study, I used inductive and deductive coding; then I conducted an analysis based on phenomenographical approach. The following figures reflect Kolb's stage, code, code description, theme, subtheme, and text from the participants that support the theme. Figures 4 – 7 detail each code along with a definition code relationship to the

themes and subthemes with an excerpt example.

Figure 4

Results in Relation to Kolb's Stage One to Themes

Stage One: Concrete Experience

<i>Code</i>	<i>Code Description</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Subtheme</i>	<i>Excerpt Example</i>
Newspaper Creation	Skills and steps involved while creating a newspaper	Skills Development (Participants described hands-on practices)	Technical Skills (Hardware skills learned during the creation process of news)	Doing the reporting, the photography, writing my stories helped with the editing and putting the paper together
Green Screen	A bright green curtain in the TV studio that allows for special effects during broadcast	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I would forecast every day with the meteorologist. He helped me build a graphic or two
Teleprompter	Two-way mirror attached to studio cameras allowing anchors and reporters to read pre-written scripts	Skills Development	Technical Skills	We learned about the teleprompter
Camera Operations	Operations including moving camera, tilting, zooming lens view, focusing, and panning	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I did help reporters do stand-up shots
Video Shooting	Camera used to visually and audio record individuals, places, or things that will be edited and used in pre-record news stories	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I was there every day shooting a VOSOT

Reporting	Interviewing individuals pertaining to a story that the news station believes the community needs to or should know about.	Skills Development	Technical Skills	Going to breaking news with a reporter and seeing how to cover it
Social Media	Posting video or reporter teasing a story that will be on the newscast later in that day or detailing breaking news that citizens need to know about	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I didn't really understand how Twitter worked as a reporter but after those three internships I knew how to update people with important information
Transcribing and Logging footage	Writing exact word said during a recorded interview or raw audio sound. This includes writing times aligning with dialogue	Skills Development	Production Skills (Software skills learned during the creation process of news)	The producer asked me to do basic transcribing to interviews... 'I need you to tell me word by word, what they said, and I need the time codes'
Editing Footage	The act of taking raw video and cutting it to visually follow script of story	Skills Development	Production Skills	The reporter taught me some things in the editing bay about moving stories along faster
Communication	Reporter or producer's ability to see non-verbal responses, gain experience with speaking with officials, politicians, and victims relating to stories	Skills Development	Interviewing Skills (Creative communication skills learned during the creation process of news)	I saw how to understand people with nonverbal cues... you've got to be empathetic too. You have to show respect for the families involved
Three Foundational Questions	Creating three open-ended questions that reporter or producer can ask during an interview that will lead to follow-up questions pertaining to the story	Skills Development	Interviewing Skills	The reporters taught me the best ways to ask the question, so that they [the interviewee] answers it in a way where your question doesn't have to be on camera, without having that conversation with them beforehand

Time Management	Word used to describe how participants were able to take their internship experience and use it to gain employment within the field	Affective Behavior Development (Word participants used to describe their internship experience)		I stayed long hours to knock out my internship hours
-----------------	---	---	--	--

In stage one, concrete experience Kolb contends that when students begin their internship, they experience something new that they had not learned before creating a new experience. In some experiences, the students will have no prior field experience, but they may identify the experience based on curriculum within their university's journalism program. In this study, participants' experiences reflected Kolb's (1971) stage one in relation to both themes and each of the three subthemes.

Figure 5*Results in Relation to Kolb's Stage Two to Themes*

Stage Two: Reflective Observation

<i>Code</i>	<i>Code Description</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Subtheme</i>	<i>Excerpt Example</i>
Newspaper Creation	Skills and steps involved while creating a newspaper	Skills Development	Technical Skills	Piece articles together with the scissors
Camera Operations	Operations including moving camera, tilting, zooming lens view, focusing, and panning	Skills Development	Technical Skills	We practice Rule of Thirds and composition
Video Shooting	Camera used to visually and audio record individuals, places, or things that will be edited and used in pre-record news stories	Skills Development	Technical Skills	The reporter was able to do a lot of dynamic shots that gave him more than just the classic face on or over the shoulder type of [visual] shots
Reporting	Interviewing individuals pertaining to a story that the news station believes the community needs to or should know about.	Skills Development	Technical Skills	See what they [reporters] do within the field and how they gather information
Writing	Associated Press (AP) writing style to tell a story for audio recording or live news broadcast	Skills Development	Technical Skills	You actually learn the skills you need for writing

Communication	Reporter or producer's ability to see non-verbal responses, gain experience with speaking with officials, politicians, and victims relating to stories	Skills Development	Interviewing Skills	My reporter was teaching me about what you should ask people, the best way to get to the root of the story, the best ways to get somebody to trust you, so that they will divulge the information
Diligence	Word used to describe how participants were able to take their internship experience and use it to gain employment within the field	Affective Behavior Development		I think there's something is to be said about someone who's willing to take something unpaid and willing to do the internship while being willing to learn
Attitude	Word used to describe how participants were able to take their internship experience and use it to gain employment within the field	Affective Behavior Development		They (producers) were kind of hesitant to let you take the reins or do anything by yourself. But once they saw you were there to learn and bug them until they let you, then you felt like you were a working professional

In stage two, reflective observation, students take the new experiences from stage one and reflect on them. Such experiences can occur in the field, in the newsroom, or the news station studio. Participants in this study reported a greater degree of stage two reflection with respect to the subtheme of technical skills rather than production or interviewing skills.

Figure 6*Results in Relation to Kolb's Stage Three to Themes*

Stage Three: Abstract Conceptualization

<i>Code</i>	<i>Code Description</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Subtheme</i>	<i>Excerpt Example</i>
Green Screen	A bright green curtain in the TV studio that allows for special effects during broadcast	Skills Development	Technical Skills	Weather graphic building skills were applied during weather report creation
Teleprompter	Two-way mirror attached to studio cameras allowing anchors and reporters to read pre-written scripts	Skills Development	Technical Skills	We learned a lot about making sure we had times and frames
Camera Operations	Operations including moving camera, tilting, zooming lens view, focusing, and panning	Skills Development	Technical Skills	Biggest skill was learning how to use the camera
Reporting	Interviewing individuals pertaining to a story that the news station believes the community needs to or should know about.	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I learned more to focus on what was hard hitting news and what would be acceptable for TV
Writing	Associated Press (AP) writing style to tell a story for audio recording or live news broadcast	Skills Development	Technical Skills	My writing skills grew. I learned to write like a journalist
Editing Footage	The act of taking raw video and cutting it to visually follow script of story	Skills Development	Production Skills	Being able to cut video that would be in the newscast later that day

Communication	Reporter or producer's ability to see non-verbal responses, gain experience with speaking with officials, politicians, and victims relating to stories	Skills Development	Interviewing Skills	My interviewing skills really grew after I shadowed the reporter. I saw how to understand them [the interviewee] with nonverbal cues
Three Foundational Questions	Creating three open-ended questions that reporter or producer can ask during an interview that will lead to follow-up questions pertaining to the story	Skills Development	Interviewing Skills	Learned a lot about how to interview and how to structure a story
Hard Work	Word used to describe how participants were able to take their internship experience and use it to gain employment within the field	Affective Behavior Development		It's frustrating... the time crunch. You learn to push yourself like they (reporters and producers) do

Stage three, abstract conceptualization, occurs when the student learns from what he or she just experienced. In stage three the students take their experiences and learn from them. Participants in this study each identified with stage three as it transitioned each participant's idea of being a student who was learning a practice and pushed them into the understanding professional journalist.

Figure 7*Results in Relation to Kolb's Stage Four to Themes*

Stage Four: Active Experimentation

<i>Code</i>	<i>Code Description</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Subtheme</i>	<i>Excerpt Example</i>
Green Screen	A bright green curtain in the TV studio that allows for special effects during broadcast	Skills Development	Technical Skills	We practiced enough [green screen weather reporting on camera] to the point where I had a full demo tape made
Teleprompter	Two-way mirror attached to studio cameras allowing anchors and reporters to read pre-written scripts	Skills Development	Technical Skills	We learned how it [time frames and the teleprompter] was applied to the news broadcast
Camera Operations	Operations including moving camera, tilting, zooming lens view, focusing, and panning	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I had this experience working with live TV cameras
Video Shooting	Camera used to visually and audio record individuals, places, or things that will be edited and used in pre-record news stories	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I would get assigned a story, go shoot it, then come back and edit it
Reporting	Interviewing individuals pertaining to a story that the news station believes the community needs to or should know about.	Skills Development	Technical Skills	The reporter would hone my package shot and telling me to redo it. I would keep redoing it until it was what the reporter was looking for

Writing	Associated Press (AP) writing style to tell a story for audio recording or live news broadcast	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I didn't realize how much the producer writes. That was a shock to my system when I started
Social Media	Posting video or reporter teasing a story that will be on the newscast later in that day or detailing breaking news that citizens need to know about	Skills Development	Technical Skills	I was running around Los Angeles and collecting news while writing for the reporter's social media
Transcribing and Logging footage	Writing exact word said during a recorded interview or raw audio sound. This includes writing times aligning with dialogue	Skills Development	Production Skills	I was writing (coding) broadcast commercial times for the engineers
Editing Footage	The act of taking raw video and cutting it to visually follow script of story	Skills Development	Production Skills	I was editing for [broadcast news] shows
Communication	Reporter or producer's ability to see non-verbal responses, gain experience with speaking with officials, politicians, and victims relating to stories	Skills Development	Interviewing Skills	I made calls. Specifically, to dispatch and officials for a quote about the story.
Three Foundational Questions	Creating three open-ended questions that reporter or producer can ask during an interview that will lead to follow-up questions pertaining to the story	Skills Development	Interviewing Skills	I was working on the best ways to ask questions without having that conversation with them [interviewee] beforehand

Hard Work	Word used to describe how participants were able to take their internship experience and use it to gain employment within the field	Affective Behavior Development		It [internship] taught me... especially in terms of live breaking news or alive content, how to prepare and how to live in that moment as a professional journalist
Diligence	Word used to describe how participants were able to take their internship experience and use it to gain employment within the field	Affective Behavior Development		I forced reporters to take me with them and I showed them that I wanted to do this
Willingness to Learn	Word used to describe how participants were able to take their internship experience and use it to gain employment within the field	Affective Behavior Development		I was able to shoot stuff for the reporters and write scripts. I was helping build [broadcast news] shows.

In Kolb's fourth and final stage, active experimentation, the student moves observation into practice. The students take the experiences they witnessed in stage one, reflected on in stage two, learned from in stage three, and now attempt to try on their own what they have learned, often in new situations. Repetition of stage four occurs until the participants succeed in their practice. For Participant 3, repeating stage four allowed for the creation of a demonstration video reel that would be used to help gain employment before they graduated. Participant 5 gained skills that facilitated employment on to the news team just weeks into their internship.

Deductive Coding Based on Kolb's Framework

Stage One: Concrete Experience

Kolb's (1971) ELT Stage One states that concrete experience is when learners encounter new experiences in a hands-on manner. Participants reported concrete experiences led to the development of specific skills, aligning with elements of all the skills theme. All 10 participants described the different skills learned.

Technical Skills. Technical skills are those skills learned during the creation process of news. Creation process of news includes creating a newspaper edition and all aspects of live broadcast in regard to control room operations and live studio news making. Each of the 10 participants in this study mentioned learning technical skills numerous times. In the area of technical skills, codes emerged in the data that included newspaper creation, green screen, teleprompter, camera operations, video shooting, reporting, writing, and social media. Many of the same skills developed, regardless of where their internship was in the field of journalism.

Participants described the development of technical skills in a variety of journalism experiences. Participant 5 developed technical skills through engaging in video production creation while shadowing producers, while Participants 6 and 10 developed camera procedure skills by operating cameras in both the studio and in the field for live broadcast even though Participant 6 worked for the jewelry network and Participant 10 a local news station. Participant 3 discussed how one day a week they would go out to report and learn how to shoot, then how to edit. Participant 8's experience included practice with producing, reporting, writing, and social media

postings: "After just two weeks of being there you feel like you're a reporter at that point, and you want to go out and create a package."

Participants described concrete experiences by both learning and doing. For example, Participant 2 experienced their first concrete experience while learning production and technical skills: "Make sure that they (*anchors*) knew exactly where they were going, in the terms of the script... I was basically at the hands of every director and a producer, depending on what they were doing." Participant 3 described daily green screen practice. The participant described having no experience outside of one news practice course at university prior to the internship: "I had zero experience with anything news related. So even being able to cut a video or just to write a quick script for something or to learn how to shoot or learn how to pitch a story..."

Participants described concrete learning by working directly with professionals in the field. For example, Participant 2 described learning how the teleprompter operated and how it applies to the broadcast news. Participant 5 discussed practicing rules of thirds and composition, while Participant 6 discussed getting behind the camera as an important concrete experience. Participant 8 learned to run live shots for correspondence at the Department of Justice and set up the SAT truck for live shots. Participant 9 described actively shooting a voice-over sound on tape every day. This video experience was also described by Participants 3, 5, 8, and 9.

Participants who engaged in more than one internship discussed how different experiences benefited them in developing technical skills. For example, Participants 8 and 4, in addition to learning the technical side of the broadcast news, described the

visual aspects of reporting and how using them provided an advantage in producing from within the newsroom.

Production Skills. Concrete production skills included the act of taking raw recorded video, including interviews and random community footage, and editing it to match the written script. Nine of the 10 participants had some type of experience when it came to discussing production skills. Codes within the production skills subtheme included transcribing and logging footage and editing footage. Participants used production skills to learn non-live broadcast aspects relating to visual storytelling that was not within the live studio broadcast. Within Kolb's concrete stage, Participant 4 discussed learning video production skills through working with reporters in the field. Participant 2 learned about production by, "making sure everything was queued up correctly..." Other production skills that fell into the concrete stage included learning how to run commercials properly (Participant 2), learning about times and frames (Participant 2), learning to cut video (Participant 6), and editing video (Participant 4, 7, and 10). Participant 4 provided details about production skill development when they stated, "we practiced rules of thirds and communication... getting behind the camera."

Directly working with professions in the field supported the development of concrete skills in production. For example, Participant 5 stated, "He [producer] allowed me to write scripts, kind of design my own blocks, gather content, make phone calls, and find regional stories." Participant 6 talked about engaging in production technologist activities: "I think that's typical of a production tech is to rotate through the three

different areas.” Participant 8 described how a reporter taught them about the editing bay and moving stories along faster.

Interviewing Skills. I grouped the codes of listening, communication, and the use of *three foundational questions* into the subtheme of interviewing skills. Elements of interviewing fell within Kolb’s concrete stage. This was noted as one of the major skills learned through a variety of internship experiences by nine out of 10 participants. Participant 1 discussed learning how to interview and structure a story, stating, “You could really see the progression and how to interview people.” Participant 4 also highlighted learning interviewing skills. They explained how developing interviewing skills helped: “It [reporting] really taught me about the importance of giving all of the information in a synced manner to the audience.”

Interviewing skills relating to concrete experience were evident particularly for Participants 4 and 10. Participant 10 focused on listening skills describing, “I would come in and go to the pitch meeting... and listen to everyone pitch their stories.” Participant 4 focused more on communicating verbally when they stated, “Learning to talk to people in a way that simply gets the message, instead of having a big, long-winded conversation was completely new to me.” Participant 7 talked about simply learning to help set up the camera for the interview. Participant 9 described going out with reporters and learning what kind of questions to ask. Similarly, Participant 4 discussed learning what to ask and how to be calm during an interview.

Stage Two: Reflective Observation

Stage two of Kolb's (1971) ELT incorporates reflective observation. Stage two deals with how participants describe reflecting on their experiences. Each of the 10 participants within this study used an action word to describe their internship experience. From the discussion about their experience with reflective observation and coding combined within the affective behavior theme, predominant words included diligence, hard work, time management, attitude, and willingness to learn. The participants had a variety of personal experiences based on the type of internship completed. For example, Participant 1's internship consisted of a weekly newspaper in which they described their experience during the internship as learning to reflect on what they did wrong and then learn from it: "When I go back and look at some of my first stories with that paper it was rough. Like, that's not how you write a lead." On the other hand, Participant 3's experience in television news came from the meteorology aspect of broadcasting. Although Participant 3's goal was to work with the weather, they were still taught the aspects of broadcast journalism during their internship. Being taught the aspects of broadcast journalism led to the reflective observation of exactly how journalists prepare for broadcasting the news. Participant stated, "Being able to walk into a newsroom and sit in meetings and learn how shows are produced and how they are stacked in certain ways was something very new to me."

Participant 2, reflecting on their experience, stated, "It [the internship] taught me how to prepare and how to live in that moment as a professional journalist in the studio." Others reflected on what they learned from experts that followed. Participant 9 learned to

hone their technical writing skills through constructive feedback from producers.

Similarly, Participant 8 learned to strengthen their writing skills while working with seasoned reporters in the field. As Participant 8 worked with a variety of reporters, they found themselves observing the reporters' manners, communication techniques with the public, and how each story they worked on would become a storytelling experience:

"Watching reporters do their job and how they do their job teaches you how to build a story, how to interact with the public, and what kind of reporter you want to be."

Reflective practice also related to how participants build on characteristics they have developed to apply them to future careers. For example, Participant 4 reflected on their foundational education at university and compared it to what they were learning in the field and how to apply aspects like interviewing to their future career: "Interviewing skills... that's something I never really thought that I would use while I was in college, so I didn't pay attention to that in class because I wanted to be behind the scenes."

Participant 10 explained having a similar experience: "I learned how to use all of those different programs [editing and producing] which I was not learning at university."

Participant 7 reflected on an experience that taught them affective behaviors crucial for the job of a reporter:

I remember how he [reporter] would approach families in distress... they were just informed that their son that was overseas died... [the reporter] needed to get an interview with them. He taught me how to approach them ... you have to show some respect for them... then I kind of see his manner and then eventually, as the

internship progressed, he would let me go with him... stand there right next to him, and I would see him do it.

This participant stressed how learning to listen empathetically allowed them to obtain a better interview. Participant 7 shadowed their reporter and attended crime scenes and city council meetings. Participant 7 used abstract conceptualization when thinking about future career practices, “taking notes and inside thinking, how would I do this? Every now and then I would ask him questions and he would always very nicely take the time to explain to me what was happening.”

Participants recalled working long hours, missing holiday celebrations with family, being on-call when needed, and doing anything asked of them by their internship employers. Each participant recalled working various shifts, as early as 2 a.m. to 11 a.m. and as late as 3 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. For example, Participant 4 stated, "I stayed long hours to knock out my internship hours with the reporters and then I started in production." In another discussion, Participant 4 described how being diligent about doing and redoing work paid off: “The reporter was honing my package and telling me to redo it. At the end of the day, it helped me because I would keep redoing it until it was what they were looking for.” Ultimately, this participant stated that being willing to put in the long hours appeared to translate into better employment opportunities.

An example of diligence was Participant 6’s statement that their internship, although unpaid, gave them the experience to succeed within a professional television newsroom: "I do think that there's something is to be said about someone who's willing to take something unpaid and willing to do the internship while being willing to learn so I

thought it definitely helped a lot." Thus, it appeared that although some internships were not precisely in the field the participant thought they wanted, in the end, these internships did have benefits. It may even be that the attitude and dedication of the participant played as big a role as the job itself. In another example of diligence, Participant 8 explained how each experience on its own transitioned them into the reporter they are today:

Even having one internship on your resume shows an employer that you have been in a newsroom, and you know what it's like... no matter how big the market is, and the more internships you do, obviously, the more you stand out.

Hard work and diligence were exemplified in Participant 9, who, when asked what they perceived to be the effect of their gaining employment after graduation, stated:

I knew I would get a job after [the internship] because I went in early every single day. I stayed late, I forced reporters to take me with them, and I showed them that I wanted to do this, and so then they helped me.

Stage Three: Abstract Conceptualization

Stage three of the ELT occurs when the learner forms new ideas or modifies ideas based on reflections that arise from the reflective observation stage. Nine out of the 10 participants discussed concepts that aligned with stage three when it came to comparing what they learned in the classroom versus what they learned in the field. They used both learning moments and applied them to situations they experienced during their internship. For example, although Participant 2 was faced with a catastrophe minutes before their newscast was to go on air, they adapted to their surroundings and aided the anchor in getting through the broadcast without the help of technology: "It taught me, especially in

terms of live breaking news or live content, how to prepare and how to live in that moment as a professional journalist.” Participant 3 applied skills they had learned in one internship area and applied it to learning other aspects of broadcasting.

Regarding their second and third internships, Participant 8 stated they applied skills developed during their first internship: “I knew exactly who to talk to, what firefighters to look out for, where to stand, what information needs to be relayed and also how to use social media.” When asking participants what they perceived to be the effect of their internship in obtaining gainful employment within the journalism field, each had a different response even though every participant said completing the internship helped them gain employment. For example, Participant 1 stated, “They [potential employers] wanted something that was actually published and read by the public. So that was very helpful to have those clips because it was published.”

All 10 participants described how skills they learned aided in future employment. Each participant learned specific important areas of their chosen internship area, using those practical experiences as examples of employment interviews. For example, Participant 2 stated that they used their technical skills learned during their time at a television news station to aid in their future endeavors of gainful employment:

Having the contacts and having the ability to say I was an intern at another TV station... the contact of the news director who employed me, then having the capabilities and knowing what it was like [to work] in an actual TV studio helped me.

Developing technical skills were noted by participants as helping them in obtaining a job. Two participants indicated that developing production skills resulted in video products that were useful in obtaining a job. Participant 1 discussed how, "A lot of what I noticed when I was applying for jobs when I got out of college was that they wanted clips from a publication. They didn't want clips from your college paper."

Participant 2 also discussed the effect learning production skills had on preparing for employment. Learning production skills came from an experience they had on a live set where a brand-new weekend reporter had everything crash on her first morning show. The prompter caused the control room to lose graphics. Participant 2 learned on the spot how to deal with a major production issue: "It taught me how to prepare and how to live in that moment as a professional journalist." Participant 5 found themselves 2 weeks into their internship with a job offer to start immediately as a producer, stating it was their willingness and curiosity that caught the eye of the TV news station news director just weeks into their internship for them to make an offer of a permanent position, "She [the news director] pulled me into the office that day and she was like you're doing some really great work; you have the right attitude. I want you as my night side producer."

Stage Four: Active Experimentation

The last stage of ELT consists of active experimentation. This means the learner applies the new ideas to their surroundings based on their experience with stages one through three. Participants describe how they actively engaged in the skills they have learned or how they would use them in the future. All participants described active experimentation experiences, especially the further along they developed within each

internship. For example, Participant 4 improved interviewing skills: “I really developed fast communication skills like learning to talk to people in a way that simply gets the message, instead of having a big, long-winded conversation.” Participant 1 took stages one through three, applied them to their reporting skills as a newspaper reporter, “How to interview people... That was very helpful because when you first get out in the field, you [have to] have your questions ready, you have to be prepared.”

Often participants discussed how learning in one area allowed them to apply skills in another area. Participant 3 interned in broadcasting, where they were given the opportunity to learn in-depth about being a broadcast journalist and weather reporting, where meteorology was their focused area in school. Participant 3 stated,

My job isn't just getting in front of a camera for two and a half minutes and talking about when it's going to rain, but to be able to get news experience to put me in good position to know what to do and what to expect when I'm in a newsroom.

Participants applied higher-level skills to new situations. For example, Participant 8, who interned in the White House, a large Los Angeles broadcast studio, and a small rural station, stated, "It was just thrilling because you can, as an intern, be able to shoot stuff for the reporters, you were writing scripts, and you were helping build shows, whether it was a network in a big city or small market." Participant 5 discussed how they learned how important writing skills were in the field and later in employment.

Participant 3 described the confidence they had when leaving the internship to know that they would take the skills they learned in their television newsroom and

applied them to their future employment interviews: “Even to be able to walk out the door my last day with confidence, and say, ‘I’m your guy, I’m your candidate. I think that’s a big deal’.”

Interviewing skill development overflowed into the participants' ability to engage in their job interview. Participant 7 discussed their experience in relying on what they learned or did not learn when called for an interview: “I sent them [a news station] a reporter resume tape, and they wanted to see me anchor, and I didn't have experience anchoring; so, that's where that ended.” Some participants detailed their experiences learning how to operate a green screen, although for others, it was honing their writing techniques and reporting both in the field and in the newsroom that they would actively use later in their jobs. For example, Participant 5 was offered a producer position within 2 weeks of starting their broadcast news internship. As a result, Participant 5 was able to apply skills that they had already learned and was continuing to progress into how they used active experimentation with their new staff members:

I was able to help new reporters because we had fresh out-of-school reporters who you kind of needed to guide them and say this is exactly what I want for my show. This is how I want it to look.

Internship to Employment

Collectively, participants indicated that the internship was a positive experience even though they had different types of experiences and different reactions to those experiences, often based on their own career goals and conceptions of what the internship meant, how they perceived the opportunities they received, and how they reacted to them.

This description of different internship experiences aligns with Marton's (1986) description of phenomenographic study, "Phenomenography is the empirical study of the differing ways in which people experience, perceive, apprehend, understand, and conceptualize various phenomena and aspects of the world around us" (p. 34). Each participant described a different experience during their internship, often in different areas of journalism. Table 2 reflects the length of time it took each participant to gain employment, what degree they earned, and their current employment role within the field of journalism.

Table 2*Participant Post-Internship Employment Information*

Participant Number	Degree Obtained	Timeline to Gainful Employment	Current Position
Participant One	Journalism	60 Days Post Graduation	TV News Producer
Participant Two	Broadcasting	30 Days Before Graduation	TV News Control Room Director
Participant Three	Meteorology	30 Days Before Graduation	TV News Chief Meteorologist
Participant Four	Mass Communications	60 Days Before Graduation	TV News Producer
Participant Five	Mass Communications	During Internship	TV News Producer
Participant Six	Journalism and Electronic Media	90 Days Post Graduation	TV News Video Editor
Participant Seven	Broadcast Journalism	90 Days Post Graduation	TV News Reporter
Participant Eight	Journalism	30 Days Before Graduation	TV News Reporter
Participant Nine	Journalism	90 Days Post Graduation	TV News Anchor
Participant 10	Journalism and Electronic Media	30 Days Before Graduation	TV News Reporter

All 10 participants consistently described how their internships influenced their abilities. All participants stated their abilities gained through the internship, made a difference when it came to finding employment. Three participants spoke about being offered employment by their internship employer, of which only Participant 5 accepted such employment. Several participants mentioned that they applied to more than one

television news station and were offered employment from at least two stations. When asked if the internship made a difference in what employers are looking for in a future employee, each of the 10 participants said their internship experience made a difference as employers inquired more about their internship rather than their experience with university journalism activities.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

I conducted one-on-one, semistructured interviews with each participant using a secure internet connection and Zoom video online software. I used the Zoom software program to transcribe each interview. I immediately reviewed each transcription by comparing the recording to the transcription to remove any errors and information that could identify the participant. After checking and rechecking the transcripts, I sent the participant their transcribed for review. I asked participant to review for any errors, changes they wished to make, and information they wished to remove or add. I then conducted additional reviews to begin the coding process, first individually and then collectively.

The transferability of the research findings applies to other situations within the same field. While the research was broad, participants completed internships across the country, and it is possible that, if examined by regions or by specific job titles, i.e., reporters, producers, photographers, or production assistants, a tentative, similar result would be found. In addition, by using a qualitative phenomenographic approach, I specified how participants described and perceived the effect of their experiences gained during internships.

Dependability is one element of trustworthiness. A study is dependable if it would show similar results if conducted again following the same procedure, design, and conceptual framework. For example, when examining the same themes of each participant, the researcher would be able to identify similar results of the study.

I established confirmability during the coding phase of the analysis of this study. As I conducted each interview codes emerged. During the examination and re-examination of each transcript, I found repeated descriptions of the internships, even though the internship experiences differed among the participants. For example, participants described technical skill development such as examining and re-examining writing practices and shadowing professionals to learn and adapt those practices. Each of these topics was unique as each participant learned from a variety of professionals who did not know each other and were geographically in different parts of the United States.

Summary

A total of 10 participants engaged in semistructured, one-on-one interviews; I examined participants' perceptions and experiences and how they perceived these internships may have affected gaining employment in the field within 6 months. Participants came from various backgrounds and completed at least one internship in newspapers, local television news, or network broadcasting. Some participants completed more than one internship. All were offered positions within the realm of journalism less than 90 days after graduation.

The interviews were first analyzed individually and then collectively to identify themes that showed similarities and differences. Two major themes emerged, skills

development and affective behavior development. The skills theme included subthemes of technical, production, and interviewing skills that describe the participants' experience in the internship, answering the research question. Participants' descriptions of their internship and perceived reasons for successful employment after the internship showed various experiences. Participants appeared to view these experiences through their own understandings.

In Chapter 5, I offer interpretations of the finding and describe limitations. I also provide recommendations pertaining to the possibility of changing journalism internships from an elective practice to a required practice at universities across the United States. I conclude by stating implications for the inclusion of internships in the university journalism degree programs in the future.

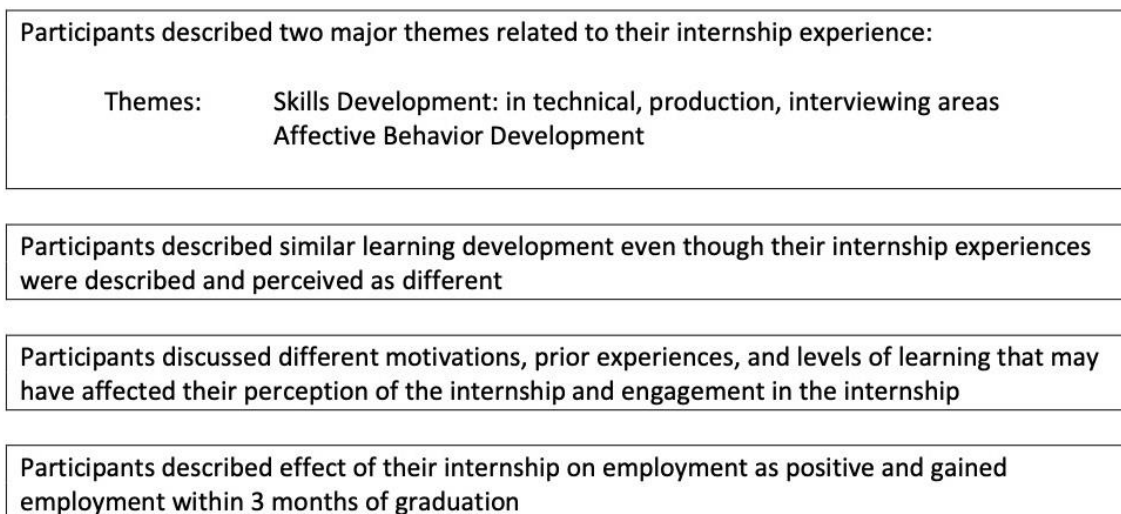
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to investigate the graduates' perceptions and experiences of how internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation. The nature of the study was qualitative with a phenomenographical research approach. Semistructured interviews were the basis for the data collection of this study. Participants consisted of those who had graduated from various universities in journalism across the United States and had completed at least one internship. According to Cappelli (2015) and Beckley (2018), a survey of U.S. employers found that relevant work experience was the most important factor, more so than relevant coursework when it came to the hiring process. Often journalism majors reported difficulty gaining employment in the field within 6 months of graduation without having completed at least one internship during their studying years (Gollmitzer, 2018; Madison, 2014).

Findings indicate that participants perceived that learning occurred in two major areas (themes): skills development and affective behavior development. Within the skills development theme, participants described developing skills subthemes of technical, production, and interviewing areas. Affective behavior development, including affective change or growth in areas that participants perceived helped with job attainment. Each of the 10 participants gained employment within 3 months of graduation. The overall findings from the analysis suggested that the effects of learning and putting into practice the skills taught from each internship solidified the participants' skills of journalism and

made them more valuable to employers by offering employment sooner than the expected 6 months (see Figure 8 below).

Figure 8 *Overview of Results*

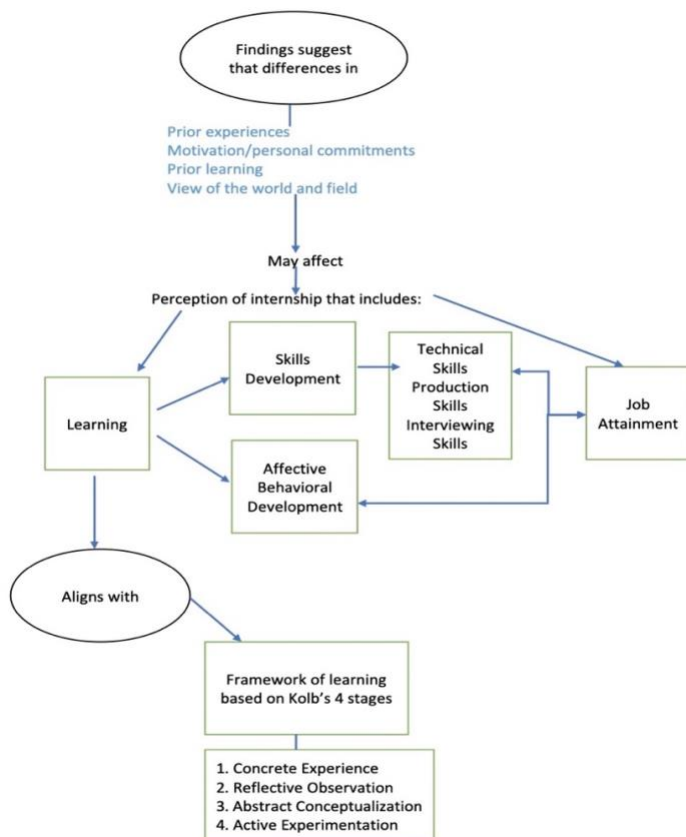


Interpretation of the Findings

Specific research surrounding journalism students and internships was somewhat scarce. As a result, peer-reviewed findings detailed several areas pertaining to internships, including journalism programs, internships outside the field, journalism internships, and journalism employment. Nutefall (2012) and Mitola et al. (2018) stated that internships provide valuable experience to students in various aspects, including practical skills learned and built upon foundation characteristics of journalism taught within the classroom.

Based on each participant's perceived experience within this study, skills development and affective behavior development were perceived to have occurred even

though the descriptions of the participants' internships were different. Each intern reported varied perceptions of the skills learned and how the internships were experienced as well as how the internship contributed to their employment following graduation. Therefore, it is possible that there is not only one ideal internship situation for a journalism student. The participants' experiences and perceptions of the internship were affected by a result of their lived experiences that they brought to the internship. The participants' prior experiences and perceptions interacted in some manner with their internship experiences thus resulting in the varied perceptions and experiences reported in the study findings. Figure 9 reflects the relationship between the prior experiences and perceptions, internship experiences and reported perceptions and also how the conceptual framework, ELT, is related to the interpretation of the study findings. While not explicitly stated, interpretations of the interview discussions suggest that prior experiences, personal motivation, prior learning, and view of the world and field may have impacted how participants perceived their internship experience. Findings are interpreted and based on each participant's experience within this study, the practical skills obtained during each participant's internship, and the application of the four stages of Kolb's ELT.

Figure 9*Interpretation of Findings*

At the initiation of this research study, I hoped to find out if there were specific characteristics about internships that would help university officials place students into internships that were the most effective for the journalism degree program. However, although it appears internships greatly improved the participants' chances of employment and enhanced the development of skills and affective behavior in the field, the findings of how participants came to these understandings differed, even when two individuals were engaged in an internship within the same journalism site. Such differences may suggest that it is not necessarily the specific characteristics of the internship, but what the

students' individual constructs are related to their perceptions and experiences of the world that influences their interpretation of the internship and hence findings of the study. The students' prior experiences may be at least as important as the type of internship that the student experiences when examining factors that influence employment and skill development.

Participants described events and experiences that affected their relationship interactions in the field and affective behavior development. King and Sweitzer (2014) stressed the phenomenon of individuals' learning in internship experiences and described as the emerging pedagogy of academic internships. These researchers emphasized that, "Internships can be vehicles for both learning and development in aspects of students' lives" (p. 43). Thus, documenting the learning process in this study as skills development and affective behavior development is essential. However, students' development involves a change in how students see themselves and make sense of their internship experience (see Swaner, 2012). Based on these researchers' findings, interpreting events and experiences, such as the internship, is critical for the students to make sense of, as students' affective behavior development is influenced through these experiences (see King & Sweitzer, 2014; Swaner, 2012).

In the original assumptions of this study, I argued that graduates gained employment within 6 months of graduation. However, after conducting this study, I discovered that each of the 10 participants gained employment in 3 months or less of graduation. The longest timeframe that it took for a graduate to obtain employment was 3 months, and the shortest timeframe was 2 weeks into the internship. Participants

attributed their ability to secure gainful employment within these short periods of time to the skills and affective behaviors developed during the internship.

Participants described their internship experience as not being just an intern but being a part of a journalistic team, although this report is consistent with the literature. For example, Barbarash (2016) argued that journalism students who complete an internship course often find that sitting in on war room meetings, having their own equipment for filming and editing, and being allowed to create their own news stories based on events of the day under the direction of a professional journalist made them feel like they were a professional and part of the newsroom team. Interns reported that their experiences contributed to the development of their diligence, time management, and work ethics. Unlike the experience of the classroom, the unique internship environment may allow students to develop skills in affective domains as well as the technical skills domain.

Participants stated that they were able to process their personal experiences through the internship assignment that would allow them to address any future potential reoccurrences of unique experiences more effectively in the journalism setting. Some participants were faced with catastrophic experiences, although others were exposed to aspects of broadcasting that they found less familiar. Some interns reported that being taught obsolete journalistic skills in the university classroom created some obstacles for them in the internship that included modifying what they had been taught at university and adjusting their learning to real-life experiences.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation for this study, which is common to qualitative research, is that (a) the findings cannot be generalized to larger populations, (b) there was a small sample size, and (c) the possibility of bias by the researcher (Lodico, et al., 2010). I recruited a purposeful sample of graduates who had obtained employment within 6 months of graduating in the field of journalism or a related field. I included female and male participants from various regions of the United States.

I had no previous ties to participants chosen for the study, nor had I been a student at any of the universities that the participants attended. I did not know any of the participants in the study prior to conducting the study. I have had experience working in the field of journalism for over 10 years, continue to work as a freelance journalist, and currently work as a tenured professor in media communications with undergraduate students. Due to my connection to the field of journalism, I took precautions to minimize bias. Lodico et al. (2010) notes that researchers should reflect on their values and prior experiences as a qualitative researcher. Therefore, I recorded my thoughts in a reflective journal during and after the interview process. I put my own beliefs and judgements aside prior to the interview and consciously focused on my role as the researcher to support integrity of the data (see Merriam & Grenier, 2019). I followed the same procedure and protocol for each interview thereby systematizing the data collection process and minimizing the opportunity for bias or error.

As with any qualitative study, there is the possibility of bias regarding the research question, data collection, or location findings. To reduce this limitation, I

conducted individual one-on-one, semistructured interviews using a secure Internet connection, and Zoom video online software. I aligned all the interview questions to the research question focusing on the realm of participants' internships related to their perceptions and experiences and how this may have influenced their ability to secure employment after graduating. Therefore, at no time was a bias to be found during the interviews or data collection. As for location findings, I was able to keep bias at a minimum due to recruiting participants via Facebook and LinkedIn, and examining the nature of their degree, and their employment status.

Recommendations

There are few qualitative studies related to journalism internships in the literature. This study added to the literature base regarding internships and gainful employment for graduates in the field of journalism. Based on the peer-reviewed publications and research conducted within the field of journalism and the methodological approach of this study, it appears that this study may be the first of its kind. Therefore, this study added to the literature base regarding the graduates' perceptions of internships and how they influence gainful employment. Also, the study findings emerged that participants perceived they obtained specific skill sets through the internship experience, moreover participants perceived the internship contributed to their gainful employment within a short timeframe of graduating, if not before graduation. The scarcity of literature on internships in the journalism degree program warrants further research in this field. Further research should be conducted regarding how university officials may include the internship in the journalism degree program and how students develop the technical and

affective skills they need to be successful in the field of journalism. Overall, additional research is needed on the value of the internship for the field of journalism and how best to structure the curriculum for students' skill development and future success. Additional research could be obtained regarding the skills learned at various internship programs and how to structure the internship for the student to develop both the affective and technical skills needed for their careers. The level of skills developed, and type of skills developed in various newsroom internships, could be more deeply explored, and compared to television network internships, and also to local news internships. Other recommendations may include comparing journalism programs that require an internship versus those that offer interning as an elective. Additional studies may include examining internships revolving around reporters versus producers or one university journalism program versus another in which both hold high percentage journalism graduation rates based on internship. Case study research of effective journalism programs could also be studied to discover how the best programs, for the various aspects of the field of journalism, develop their students to be prepared for the field of journalism following graduation. Quantitative studies could be conducted to examine the variables of internships and employment, or internships and the development of affective and technical skills. In addition, findings from this study suggest that internships are effective in both learning and development and positively affect employment.

Implications

The purpose of the study that was to investigate the graduates' perceptions and experiences of how internships might affect journalism majors' gaining employment in

the field within 6 months of graduation. This study contributed to the gap in practice between the study of journalism and the actual employment of new journalism graduates. This study filled an overall gap in the literature of developing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of how graduates in the field of journalism perceived an internship affected obtaining gainful employment within 6 months of graduation related to the gap in the literature that indicated some graduates do not demonstrate effective skills on the job after graduating with a degree in the field of journalism although literature suggests that internships promote skills and prepare the journalism graduate for gainful employment. Using Kolb's ELT, the four stages of learning served to support the interpretation of the study themes. By using the phenomenographical approach, I examined the data in relation to the aspects, experiences, and perceptions each participant expressed in order to more deeply understand the role of the internship, skills developed, and influence of perceptions and experiences the participant brings with them to the internship environment.

The findings of this study could be important for universities to make informed decisions about whether to require internships for their journalism majors and how to prepare their students for the internship. Understanding the value and effective structures of internships by university officials, could result in possible decisions regarding the programs and how they are structured. Consequently, these changes could result in a positive social impact on prospective students in the field of journalism as they could learn new skills and affective behaviors that would make it easier to obtain employment upon graduation. Ultimately, if decision-makers consider the findings of this study and

were to incorporate internships into the university degree programs for journalism students, the job opportunities and career prospects for students could be positively affected by better preparing students in the field of journalism for the job market upon graduation. Students who quickly find jobs in their field upon graduation, are able to decrease the financial burden on the student and their families. Launching internships into university degree programs could strengthen the graduation rate and possibly even student retention. Researchers maintain that programs that support student engagement lead to less attrition and increase student attrition (Saltikoff, 2017). The completion of each participant's internship resulted in additional positive social change for the individual and within the realms of economics, personally, and society.

With the experience of having completed an internship, the graduates may gain a stronger understanding of up-to-date industry practices, including writing, producing, in-field reporting, community outreach, and technical skills that would allow graduates to enter the field better prepared and shorten onboarding time and reduce the time and resources used to onboard new employees. Graduates could become more quickly adapted to their surroundings and more productive members of a team. Graduates who enter the field with real-life experience gained from an internship before employment display a stronger understanding of practical skills, communication skills, community skills, and policies relating to local, state, and federal guidelines.

Regarding positive social change within universities, it may be possible that having students complete a journalism internship would allow the university officials to graduate journalism students with a more highly competitive degree resulting in

improved placements for graduates. Concerning university policy, if an internship were required, the strengthened job placements for graduates could not only increase the number of journalists working in the field but may support university officials to integrate instruction on most up-to-date practices. Students who possess cutting-edge practices due to an internship have a deeper knowledge of expectations as well as areas of improvement within their technical and affective skills.

Possibly of equal importance to the knowledge and skills learned during an internship is a greater understanding of affective factors that individuals could bring to themselves, and to the field of journalism. University officials, if they were to consider the findings of this study, could structure programs for journalism to consciously develop experiences, such as internships, that result in strengthening student's engagement and learning. If experiences, sociocultural beliefs, and work ethics could be further understood and described, university officials could strengthen the learning experiences for university students by developing curriculum and unique internship opportunities for students

Conclusion

Journalism today is no longer bound by the traditional term of studying only newspapers, magazines, television, and radio (Clair, 2015). Furthermore, graduates from schools not requiring internships find it difficult to obtain employment in the field without the right combination of knowledge and skills employers desire (Halman, 2016). Vos and Singer (2016) argued that students have difficulty obtaining employment post-graduation with only a degree and no practical experience.

Proper journalists, that is, those who attended a formal journalism-school program, are in need more than ever to use their skills in providing fair and balanced information. In this study, I examined journalism graduates and their experiences as interns. Each participant described skills and affective behaviors developed through the internship they attributed to gaining employment within six months. The descriptions of the types of internships and the experiences within those internships differed from participant to participant. However, the skills and affective behaviors developed were similar across all internships.

Each participant obtained a position in the realm of broadcast news, as reporters anchors, producers, and editors. Each participant stated they would not be where they are if it was not for their completed internship. Each participant echoed the same statement explaining that future journalism-related major students needed to take an internship. Participants perceived an important advantage of the internship was that the experience helped them discern what they liked or did not like about the industry. Internships provide the students with opportunities to demonstrate their skills to potential future employers. Intern experiences allow graduates to contrast their experiences with graduates who have not interned and only have the degree with no application of skills in the field. As a result of this study, findings indicate a blueprint for university officials could demonstrate to emerging journalists how completing a journalism internship accelerates graduates' skills for the field and places them in the forefront of their career field.

References

- Akerlind, G. S. (2012). Variation and commonality in phenomenographic research methods. *Higher Education Research & Development, 31*(1), 115–127.
- Albarran, A. B. (2016). *The Media Economy (Media Management and Economics Series)* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Alvarez, N. (2020). Broadcast journalism. Columbia University.
<https://journalism.columbia.edu/broadcast#Classes>
- American Press Institute. (2013, October 22). *Journalism Essentials*.
<https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/>
- Anjum, S. (2020). Impact of internship programs on professional and personal development of business students: a case study from Pakistan. *Future Business Journal, 6*(1), 1–6.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-019-0007-3>
- Areas of Journalism*. (n.d.). Open School of Journalism.
<https://www.openschoolofjournalism.com/areas-of-journalism.>
- Arter, M. L., Wallace, L. N., & Shaffer, T. L. (2016). The use of reflective journals to stimulate critical thinking in the academic internship. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education, 27*(1), 140–156.
- Atkinson, G., Jr., & Murrell, P. H. (1988). Kolb's experiential learning theory: A meta-model for career exploration. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 66*(8), 374.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1988.tb00890.x>

- Bakker, P. (2014). Mr. gates returns: Curation, community management and other new roles for journalists. *Journalism Studies*, 15(5), 596-606.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2014.901783>
- Barbarash, D. (2016). Knowledge and skill competency values of an undergraduate university managed cooperative internship program: A case study in design education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 17(1), 21-30.
<http://www.apjce.org/>
- B.A. Requirements. (n.d.). Undergraduate BA requirements. Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communications. Arizona State University.
https://cronkite.asu.edu/undergrad/ba_requirements
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559.
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss4/2>
- Beck, K. (2020). Ensuring content validity of psychological and educational tests—The role of experts. *Frontline Learning Research*, 8(6), 1-37.
<http://journals.sfu.ca/flr/index.php/journal/index>
- Becker, L. B., Han, J. Y., Wilcox, D., & Vlad, T. (2014). The effects of ore-university study of journalism on entry to the job market. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 91(2), 344–356.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699014527458>
- Beckley, M. (2018). *Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World's Sole Superpower* (Cornell Studies in Security Affairs) (Unabridged ed.). Cornell University Press.

- Blau, G., Hill, T. L., Halbert, T. A., Snell, C., Atwater, C. A., Kershner, R., & Zuckerman, M. M. (2016). Correlates of graduating with a full-time job versus a full-time job consistent with major. *College Student Journal*, 50(3), 355.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2018.1502144>
- Blom, R., & Davenport, L. D. (2012). Searching for the core of journalism education: Program directors disagree on curriculum priorities. *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 67(1), 70–86.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2006). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theories and Methods, Fifth Edition* (5th ed.). Pearson.
- Boon, S., Johnston, B., & Webber, S. (2007). A phenomenographic study of English faculty's conceptions of information literacy. *Journal of Documentation*, 63(2), 204–228. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00220410710737187>
- Bourelle, T. (2012). Bridging the gap between the technical communication classroom and the internship: Teaching social consciousness and real-world writing. *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, 42(2), 183–197.
<https://doi.org/10.2190/tw.42.2.f>
- Bowden, J. A., & Green, P. (2005). *Doing developmental phenomenography*. RMIT University Press.
- Bright, A. (2018). A qualitative look at journalism programs in flux: The role of faculty in the movement toward a digital curriculum. *Teaching Journalism & Mass Communication*, 8(2), 1–10.

<https://search.proquest.com/openview/fb2668875a0e8da3390da1c5d9d14757/1?q-origsite=gscholar&cbl=2026709>

Brooks, C. F. (2014). Performed identity and community among college student interns preparing for work. *Journal of Education for Business*, 89(3), 165–170.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2013.801333>

Brunner, B., Zarkin, K., & Yates, B. (2018). What do employers want? What should faculty teach? A content analysis of entry-level employment ads in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Education*, 4(2), 21–50.

<https://aejmc.us/jpre/2018/08/17/>

Bugeja, M., & Garrett, M. (2019). “Making the connection”: Aggregate internship data as direct and indirect measure informing curricula and assessment. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 74(1), 17–30.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077695817749077>

Cappelli, P. H. (2015). Skill gaps, skill shortages, and skill mismatches: Evidence and arguments for the United States. *ILR Review*, 68(2), 251–290.

<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0019793914564961>

Carlson, S. (2014). Want a college experience that matters? Get to work. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 60(39), 32. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/want-a-college-experience-that-matters-get-to-work/>

Carpenter, S., Grant, A. E., & Hoag, A. (2016). Journalism degree motivations: The development of a scale. *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 71 (1),

5-27. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077695814551835>

- Carpenter, S., Hoag, A., Grant, A. E., & Bowe, B. J. (2015). An examination of how academic advancement of U.S. journalism students relates to their degree motivations, values, and technology use. *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 70 (1), 58-74. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077695814551834>
- Case, D. O. (2016). *Looking for Information: A Survey of Research on Information Seeking, Needs, and Behavior: 4th Edition (Studies in Information)* (4th New edition). Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Charles, M., & Luce, A. (n.d.). US 2012 Live: when the classroom becomes a newsroom. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 46(1), 113–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2015.1022137>
- Choy, L. T. (2014). The strengths and weaknesses of research methodology: Comparison and complimentary between qualitative and quantitative approaches. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4), 99-104. doi:10.9790/0837-194399104
- Clair, J. S. (2015). Doing it for real: Designing experiential journalism curricula that prepare students for the new and uncertain world of journalism work. *Coolabah*, (16), 122–142. <https://doi.org/10.1344/co201516122-142>
- Coco, M. (2000). Internships: A try before you buy arrangement. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, (2), 41-47. <https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=4332327&site=eds-live&scope=site>

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). *Research Methods in Education* (8th ed.). Routledge.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2014). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (Fourth ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Courses Home. (n.d.). *Multiplatform newsroom*. University of Georgia.
<http://bulletin.uga.edu/Link.aspx?cid=JOUR5090>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Criscoe, A., & Land, M. J. (2020). From Classroom to internship: Supervisor evaluations. *Teaching Journalism & Mass Communication*, 10(2), 22–27.
<https://aejmc.us/spig/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2020/12/TJMC-10.2-Criscoe-Land-From-classroom-to-internship.pdf>
- Dailey, S. L. (2016). What happens before full-time employment? Internships as a mechanism of anticipatory socialization. *Western Journal of Communication*, 80(4), 453–480. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2016.1159727>
- Daugherty, E. L. (2011). The public relations internship experience: A comparison of student and site supervisor perspectives. *Public Relations Review*, 37(5), 470–477. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.09.010>
- Dewey, J. (1997). *Experience and Education*. Macmillan.

- Dzula, M., Wu, S., Luna, J., Cook, A., & Chen, S. (2020). Digital participation and risk contexts in journalism education. *Media and Communication*, 8(2), 219–231.
<https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v8i2.2783>
- Feldon, D. F., & Tofel-Grehl, C. (2018). Phenomenography as a foundation for mixed models research. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 62(7), 887–899.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0002764218772640>
- Fox, J. (2020). Perspectives of experts-by-experience: an exploration of lived experience involvement in social work education. *Social Work Education*, 1–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2020.1861244>
- Freedman, E., & Poulson, D. (2015). Real-world learning of public affairs and environmental journalism: Two models. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 70(2), 187-196. doi:10.1177/1077695814555716
- Fry, R., & Kolb, D. (1979). Experiential learning theory and learning experiences in liberal arts education. *New directions for experiential learning*, 6, 79.
<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1123&context=slceslgen>
- Galdas, P. (2017). Revisiting bias in qualitative research: Reflections on its relationship with funding and impact. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917748992>
- Gardner, P., & Bartkus, K. R. (2014). What's in a name? A reference guide to work-education experiences. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 15(1), 37–54. https://www.ijwil.org/files/APJCE_15_1_37_54.pdf

- Gault, J., Redington, J., & Schlager, T. (2016). Undergraduate business internships and career success: Are they related? *Journal of Marketing Education*, 22(1), 45-53.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0273475300221006>
- Gelinas, L., Pierce, R., Winkler, S., Cohen, I. G., Lynch, H. F., & Bierer, B. E. (2017). Using social media as a research recruitment tool: Ethical issues and recommendations. *American Journal of Bioethics*, 17(3), 3–14.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1080%2F15265161.2016.1276644>
- Gollmitzer, M. (2018). Employment Conditions in Journalism. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford University Press.
- Grady College. (2020). *Journalism courses*. University of Georgia.
<https://grady.uga.edu/journalism-courses/>
- [Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. \(2006\). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 181 \(1\), 50-82.](#)
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822x05279903>
- Gynnild, A. (2016). Developing journalism skills through informal feedback training. *Becoming a Journalist*, 321. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1464884921996284>
- Hajar, A. (2020). Theoretical foundations of phenomenography: a critical review. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2020.1833844>
- Halman, V. (2016, January 21). Is a postgraduate degree necessary to get a job? *Times Higher Education*. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/postgraduate-degree-necessary-get-job>

- Hankebo, T. A. (2018). Being a deaf and a teacher: Exploring the experiences of deaf teachers in inclusive classrooms. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(3), 477–490. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11333a>
- Hatch, J. (2013). *Early childhood qualitative research*. NY: Routledge.
<http://doi:10.4324/97892943592>
- Hilt, M. L., & Lipschultz, J. H. (1996). Broadcast newsroom hiring and career preparation. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 51, 36–43.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F107769589605100105>
- Holloway, I., & Galvin, K. (2016). *Qualitative Research in Nursing and Healthcare* (4th ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Howson, A. (2017). Qualitative research methods (sociology). Research starters: Sociology (Online Edition). <https://search-ebshost-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ers&AN=95607471&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Hurst, J. L., Thye, A., & Wise, C. L. (2014). Internships: The key to career preparation, professional development, and career advancement. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 106(2), 58-62. <https://search-ebshost-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=98505440&site=eds-live&scope=site>
- Indiana University. (2020). In archived catalog Degree Majors Journalism. Indiana University. <https://www.indiana.edu/academics/degrees-majors/degree/journalism-baj-iu-bloomington-jourbaj>

Journalism Degree Programs. (2020). *Journalism*. Columbia University.

<https://journalism.columbia.edu/programs>

Journalism Major at WVU. (2018). *Academics*. West Virginia University.

<https://admissions.wvu.edu/academics/majors/journalism>

Kennesaw State University. (2020). *In archived catalog*. Kennesaw State University.

http://catalog.kennesaw.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=38&poid=4844&returnto=3040

Khan, S. (2014). Phenomenography: A qualitative research methodology in Bangladesh.

International Journal on New Trends in Education & Their Implications 5(2), 34–

43. <http://www.ijonte.org/FileUpload/ks63207/File/04.khan-.pdf>

Kilpert, L., & Shay, S. (2013). Kindling fires: examining the potential for cumulative

learning in a Journalism curriculum. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 18(1), 40–52.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2012.678326>

King, M. A., & Sweitzer, H. F. (2014). Towards a pedagogy of internships. *Journal of*

Applied Learning in Higher Education Vol. 6, 37-59.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1188574.pdf>

Kolb, D. A. (1971). Individual learning styles and the learning process. Working Paper,

535–571. *Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*.

Kurt, S. (2020, December 28). *Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory & Learning Styles*.

Educational Technology. <https://educationaltechnology.net/kolbs-experiential-learning-theory-learning-styles/>

- Lane, A. B., & Johnston, K. A. (2017). Bridging the writing gap between student and professional: Analyzing writing education in public relations and journalism. *Public Relations Review*, 43(2), 314–325.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2017.02.008>
- LaPoint, V., Butty, J. A. M., Danzy, C., & Small, C. (2010). Sociocultural factors. *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-71799-9_394
- LeCompte, M. D., Preissle, J., & Tesch, R. (1993). *Ethnography and Qualitative Design in Educational Research, Second Edition* (2nd Revised ed.). Emerald Publishing.
- Leung, L. (2015). Validity, reliability, and generalizability in qualitative research. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, 3, 324.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.4103%2F2249-4863.161306>
- Lewin, C. D. B. E. K. (1964). *Field Theory in Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers* (Harper Torchbooks: The Academy Library) (1st ed.). Harper & Row, 1976.
- Limberg, L. (2000). Phenomenography: a rational approach to research on information needs, seeking and use. *The New Review of Information Behaviour Research*, 1, 51-67. <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hb:diva-2840>
- Lodico, M. G., Spaulding, D. T., & Voegtler, K. H. (2010). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice* (28). John Wiley & Sons.

- Loosen, W. (2019). Community engagement and social media editors. *The International Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies*, 1–6.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118841570.iejs0251>
- Luborsky, M. (1994). The identification and analysis of themes and patterns. *Qualitative Methods in Aging Research* (pp. 189-210). SAGE Publications.
- Madison, E. (2014). Training digital age journalists: Blurring the distinction between students and professionals. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 69(3), 314-324. doi:10.1177/1077695814532926
- Majors, minors certificates. (n.d.). *Programs*. Indiana University.
<https://bulletin.college.indiana.edu/programs/index.html?program=jorc08>
- Mann, L. (2009, February 18). *Critical Features Of Phenomenography*. PB Works.
<http://aace-scholar.pbworks.com/w/page/1177079/Research%20Method%20-%20Phenomenography>
- Marton, F. (1986). Phenomenography—a research approach to investigating different understandings of reality. *Journal of Thought*, 21(3), 28-49.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/42589189>
- Matheson, B., & Petersen, E. J. (2020). Engaging US students in culturally Aware content creation and interactive technology design through service learning. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 63(2), 188–200.
<https://doi.org/10.1109/tpc.2020.2982253>

- Maxwell, J. A. (1992). Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62(3), 279.
<https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.62.3.8323320856251826>
- Merriam, S. B., & Baumgartner, L. M. (2020). *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B., & Grenier, R. S. (Eds.). (2019). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. Jossey-Bass.
- Middleweek, B., Mutsvairo, B., & Attard, M. (2020). Toward a theorization of student journalism collaboration in international curricula. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 75(4), 407–418.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077695820922725>
- Miettinen, R. (2000). The Concept of experiential learning and john dewey's theory of reflective thought and action. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 19(1), 54–72. DOI: 10.1080/026013700293458
- Mitola, R., Rinto, E., & Pattni, E. (2018). Student employment as a high-impact practice in academic libraries: A systematic review. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 44(3), 352–373.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2018.03.005>
- Nallaya, S. S. (2018). An exploration of how first year students are inducted into their discipline's academic discourses. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 87, 57–66.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2017.11.007>

- National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2017). *About us*. National Association of Colleges and Employers. <https://www.naceweb.org/about-us/>.
- Nunley, J. M., Pugh, A., Romero, N., & Seals, J. R. A. (2016). College major, internship experience, and employment opportunities: Estimates from a résumé audit. *Labour Economics*, 38, 37–46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2015.11.002>
- Nutefall, J. (2012). Structuring a successful instruction internship. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 19(1), 80–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10691316.2012.652550>
- Ornek, F. (2008). An overview of a theoretical framework of phenomenography in qualitative education research: An example from physics education research. *Asia-Pacific Forum on Science Learning & Teaching*, 9(2), 1–14. https://www.eduhk.hk/apfslt/v9_issue2/ornek/ornek2.htm
- Padilla-Díaz, M. (2015). Phenomenology in educational qualitative research: Philosophy as science or philosophical science. *International Journal of Educational Excellence*, 1(2), 101-110. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18562/IJEE.2015.0009>
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Pérez-Serrano, M. J., Rodríguez-Barba, D., & Rodríguez-Pallares, M. (2015). The communications market and journalism students. Structure of the demand for journalism job profiles. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, (70), 209–229. DOI: 10.4185/RLCS-2015-1043en

- Perrin, J. (2014). Features of engaging and empowering experiential learning programs for college students. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*, 11(2). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1040736.pdf>
- Piaget, J. (1971). The theory of stages in cognitive development. In D. R. Green, M. P. Ford, & G. B. Flamer, *Measurement and Piaget*. McGraw-Hill.
- Richards, M., & Marshall, S. (2019). Experiential learning theory in digital marketing communication: Application and outcomes of the applied marketing & media education norm (AMEN). *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 13(1), 86–93.
<https://doi.org/10.33423/jmdc.v13i1.684>
- Rothman, M., & Sisman, R. (2016). Internship impact on career consideration among business students. *Education + Training*, (9), 1003-1013.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-04-2015-0027>
- Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. SAGE.
- Saltikoff, N. (2017). The positive implications of internships on early career outcomes. *NACE Journal*, (4), 34. <https://www.nacweb.org/job-market/internships/the-positive-implications-of-internships-on-early-career-outcomes/>
- Scheuer, C.-L., & Mills, A. J. (2016). Discursivity and media constructions of the intern: Implications for pedagogy and practice. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 15(3), 456–470. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2014.0358>

- Schreiner, L. A., & Tobolowsky, B. F. (2018). The Role of Faculty in Sophomore Success. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2018(183), 59–70.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/he.20293>
- Senat, J., Ketterer, S., & McGuire, J. (2019). Between a rock and a hard place: Attitudes and practices of mass communication programs regarding unpaid student internships. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 75(2), 177–195.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077695819882565>
- Sibanda, M., & Ramrathan, D. (2017). Influence of information technology on organization strategy. *Foundations of Management*, 9(1), 191–202.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/fman-2017-0015>
- Silva, P., Lopes, B., Costa, M., Seabra, D., Melo, A. I., Brito, E., & Dias, G. P. (2016). Stairway to employment? Internships in higher education. *Higher Education*, (6), 703. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-015-9903-9>
- Silverman, D. (2016). *Qualitative research*. (Ed.). SAGE.
- Sparre, K., & Frgemann, H. M. (2016). Towards a broader conception of entrepreneurial journalism education starting with everyday practice. *Journalism Practice*, 10(2), 266–285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2015.1123110>
- Stansbie, P., Nash, R., & Chang, S. (2016). Linking internships and classroom learning: A case study examination of hospitality and tourism management students. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 19, 19–29.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2016.07.001>

- Statistics Solutions. (2019). *What is trustworthiness in qualitative research?* Statistics Solutions. <https://www.statisticssolutions.com/what-is-trustworthiness-in-qualitative-research/>.
- Stirling, A., Kerr, G., MacPherson, E., Banwell, J., Bandedy, A., & Battaglia, A. (2017). Do postsecondary internships address the four learning modes of experiential learning theory? An exploration through document analysis. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 47(1), 27-48. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1140033.pdf>
- Swaner, L. E. (2012). The theories, contexts, and multiple pedagogies of engaged learning: What succeeds and why? In D. W. Harvard (Ed.), *Transforming undergraduate education: Theories that compel and practices that succeed* (pp. 73-90). https://bt2p.fmsserver.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Swaner_2011-1.pdf
- Tanner, A., Forde, K. R., Besley, J. C., & Weir, T. (2012). Broadcast journalism education and the capstone experience. *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 67(3), 219–233. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077695812444097>
- Thier, K. (2016). Opportunities and challenges for initial implementation of solutions journalism coursework. *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 71(3), 329–343. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077695816666078>
- Tight, M. (2018). *Higher Education Research: The Developing Field*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Tucciarone, K. (2015). How universities can increase enrollment by advertising internships: The “message” and the “medium.” *College and University*, 90(2),

28–32. <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1062338&site=eds-live&scope=site>

Tuffour, I. (2017). A critical overview of interpretative phenomenological analysis: A contemporary qualitative research approach. *Journal of Healthcare Communications, 02*(04), 52–53.

<https://doi.org/10.4172/2472-1654.100093>

Turesky, L. F. (2005). David Kolb's experiential. *Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*. <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edo&AN=20345051&site=eds-live&scope=site>

University of Maryland, Baltimore County. (n.d.). *What is an internship?* University of Maryland. <https://careers.umbc.edu/employers/internships/what-is-an-internship/>

Velez, G. S., & Giner, G. R. (2015). Effects of business internships on students, employers, and higher education institutions: a systematic review. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 3*(3), 121. doi:10.1002/joec.12010

Vella, J. (2002). *Learning to listen, learning to teach: The power of dialogue in educating adults*. Jossey-Bass.

Vos, T. P., & Singer, J. B. (2016). Media discourse about entrepreneurial journalism: Implications for journalistic capital. *Journalism Practice, 10*(2), 143-159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2015.1124730>

- Wenger, D. H., & Owens, L. C. (2012). Help wanted 2010: An examination of new media skills required by top U.S. news companies. *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 67(1), 9–25.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077695811426826>
- Wenger, D. H., Owens, L. C., & Cain, J. (2018). Help wanted: Realigning journalism education to meet the needs of top U.S. news companies. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, 73(1), 18–36.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077695817745464>
- Williams, L. (2010). Assessment of student learning through journalism and mass communication internships. *Journal of Applied Learning in Higher Education*, 2, 23–38. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1188545.pdf>
- Zehr, S. M., & Korte, R. (2020). Student internship experiences: learning about the workplace. *Education + Training*, 62(3), 311–324.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/et-11-2018-0236>

Appendix A: One-on-One Interview Questions

In one word, tell me what comes to mind when someone asks you about your journalism internship?

Tell me about your journalism internship(s). What role did you play in the organization? What duties did you perform? What was a typical day like? What skills were you able to use or practice during the internship?

How did you use what you learned in the classroom during your internship?

How would you describe your experience in gaining employment after graduation?

Describe what aspects of your internship you found most beneficial?

Describe what aspects of your internship you found most frustrating?

How do you perceive your internship affected your ability to obtain an interview with potential employers?

How do you perceive your internship aided you in gaining employment within the journalism field?

As a result of your experience while a student in university, did your internship change your perception of working in the field?