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Student Perceptions of Unpaid Internships in the Arts, Entertainment, and Media Industry: A Survey of Lower Income Students' Ability to Participate in Internships

Denise F. DiRienzo

St. John Fisher College, dfd04035@students.sjfc.edu

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Student Perceptions of Unpaid Internships in the Arts, Entertainment, and Media Industry: A Survey of Lower Income Students' Ability to Participate in Internships

Abstract

The purpose of the research study was to examine if students with financial barriers were able to obtain and complete internships in the arts, entertainment, or media industry. The study was quantitative (non-experimental) in nature and used descriptive statistics as an analytical tool to evaluate student perceptions of the financial barriers to internships in the arts, entertainment, and the media industry—research that has been minimally investigated. The study took place at a 4-year, higher education institute. The survey instrument was geared to junior- or senior-year college students in the fine arts, music, theater, performing arts, dance, television, film, news, and weather broadcasting majors. The survey included student demographics for gender, race, and socio-economic status; identification of majors/minors; if an internship was planned or completed; if the internship was paid or unpaid, and perceptions of whether an internship helps or hinders students' job attainment post-graduation. The study's measurements of income was limited. A more in-depth look at student finances would yield more robust results. The empirical evidence reflects that students' perceived financial hardship was a hindrance to obtaining an unpaid internship, and they felt the internship experience was important to obtaining a job in the industry. In addition, the study identified inconsistencies in opportunities and possible barriers to opportunity. More research is recommended to study the hypothesis that financial hardship creates problems for students considering enrolling in unpaid internships in the industry and could negatively affect job attainment in the field.

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Student Perceptions of Unpaid Internships in the Arts, Entertainment, and Media
Industry: A Survey of Lower Income Students' Ability to Participate in Internships

By

Denise F. DiRienzo

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

Dr. Linda Hickmon Evans

Committee Member

Dr. Lorrie A. Clemo

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education

St. John Fisher College

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Dedication

Thank you to Dr. Evans and Dr. Clemo for all of your guidance, support, and encouragement as I searched for the right topic and undertook this scholarly journey. I couldn't have done it without your belief in my abilities. Thank you, Dr. Robinson, for your passion and dedication to the program, your commitment has made a difference for all of us.

Thank you to my family who has stood by me through countless classes, searches, and rewrites. To my parents, Sam and Barb Fresina, for taking grandparent duty to heart! To Joe for supporting me and understanding the seemingly endless hours dedicated to this journey. To Natasha and Anya for providing the inspiration for me to continue studying and setting an example for them to follow.

A special remembrance for Winnie Olmstead, friend, cohort member, and fellow graduate of the heart.

Biographical Sketch

Denise Fresina DiRienzo is currently the Director of Experiential Learning and a faculty member of the School of Media, Communications, and the Arts at the State University of New York at Oswego. Prior to working at SUNY Oswego, she was the Executive Director of the Landmark Theatre of Syracuse, NY; Promotions Manager, Senior Writer/Editor, and Community Relations Manager at Oneida Indian Nation/Turning Stone Casino Resort.

Ms. DiRienzo attended St. John Fisher College from 1984 to 1988 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism. She attended Syracuse University from 1988-1989 and graduated with a Master of Science in Public Relations. She came to St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2014 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. Ms. DiRienzo pursued her research in Student Perceptions of Unpaid Internships in the Arts, Entertainment, and the Media Industry under the direction of Dr. Linda Hickmon Evans and Dr. Lorrie A. Clemo and received the Ed.D. degree in 2016.

Abstract

The purpose of the research study was to examine if students with financial barriers were able to obtain and complete internships in the arts, entertainment, or media industry. The study was quantitative (non-experimental) in nature and used descriptive statistics as an analytical tool to evaluate student perceptions of the financial barriers to internships in the arts, entertainment, and the media industry—research that has been minimally investigated. The study took place at a 4-year, higher education institute.

The survey instrument was geared to junior- or senior-year college students in the fine arts, music, theater, performing arts, dance, television, film, news, and weather broadcasting majors. The survey included student demographics for gender, race, and socio-economic status; identification of majors/minors; if an internship was planned or completed; if the internship was paid or unpaid, and perceptions of whether an internship helps or hinders students' job attainment post-graduation. The study's measurements of income was limited. A more in-depth look at student finances would yield more robust results. The empirical evidence reflects that students' perceived financial hardship was a hindrance to obtaining an unpaid internship, and they felt the internship experience was important to obtaining a job in the industry. In addition, the study identified inconsistencies in opportunities and possible barriers to opportunity. More research is recommended to study the hypothesis that financial hardship creates problems for students considering enrolling in unpaid internships in the industry and could negatively affect job attainment in the field.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

For students in higher education seeking jobs in the entertainment or broadcasting industry, internships play an integral role (AACU, 2015; NACE, 2014a; Frenette, 2013). Internships provide students with an experiential learning opportunity that introduces them to the industry, enables them to develop workplace skills, and fosters professional networking that may lead to job placement. An employer benefits from the internship by having an opportunity to evaluate a potential employee in a non-binding environment and at a reduced financial commitment. Internships have been standard industry practice in the world of arts, broadcasting, and entertainment (Green, Braybeal, & Madison, 2011; Itin, 1999; Jones, 2002). According to Daniel & Daniel (2013), the majority of students interning in entertainment, arts, and broadcasting generally are not paid for their work because many of these industries are not for profit with limited budgets that do not include intern support.

The most recognized college/employer associations, the American Association of College and Universities (AACU), and the National Association of College and Employers (NACE) have tracked and surveyed hundreds of employers, and they confirm that internships play an integral role for college students seeking jobs in the arts, entertainment, or media industry (AACU, 2015; Frenette, 2013; NACE, 2014a). Internships are a three-way partnership between the student, college, and employer. They are advantageous to a student as a way to gain practical experience that complements academic preparation. In the arts, entertainment, and media industry, these skills include

immersion into the work environment that cannot be simulated in a classroom, including networking, which is of particular importance in the industry. In the industry of arts and entertainment, an important part of obtaining work involves building and sustaining a good reputation (Frenette, 2013) and making the right connection and gaining exposure. Entertainment workers stress the importance of strong networks at every stage, but it is vital for someone newly entering the industry. Internships help to increase students' career development, self-awareness, and ability to understand classroom teachings, which generally results in better academic performance (Westerberg & Wickersham, 2011).

The following advertisement illustrates the perception that an internship is almost necessary to get a job in the arts, entertainment, or media industry.

If you're determined to break into the entertainment business, you'll need talent, persistence, and enthusiasm. Relevant work experience is a must. An internship will help you gain the experience and invaluable contacts while you're still in school. The following organizations are seeking interns from a wide variety of backgrounds. Most of the positions are nonpaid, but you will receive college credit. HBO, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center, Arista Records, EMI Records, Elektra Records, LaFace Records, MoTown Records, SONY Music, National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, MTV Network, The Black Filmmaker Foundation, and the Art Institute of Atlanta. (Smith, 2005, p. 91)

Colleges value internships as marketing, recruitment, and learning tools for students. NACE's Class of 2015 annual student survey reports that 65% of students that graduated, participated in an internship, the highest percentage recorded by NACE

(NACE, 2016). Frenette (2013) noted that over 50% of students in the entertainment industry completed college internships in 2008 compared to only 17% in 1992.

According to Westerberg and Wickersham (2011) internships strengthen ties between community and the college and enrich a community by providing a skilled labor force.

A major benefit for employers is the opportunity to strengthen the pool of employee candidates. By having the opportunity to train and evaluate potential employees on short-term contracts without the risk of full-time, market-valued paid employment, employers are able to recruit the best of potential employees at little to no cost (NACE, 2014). Employers also benefit from the youthful energy and innovative ideas that interns bring to their positions. Industry professionals are not as familiar with textbook knowledge and theory as interns, leading to an increased knowledge base for the employer (Frenette, 2013). Employers benefit further from inexpensive labor, whether it is a paid or unpaid internship. It costs significantly less for a company to hire an intern than it would to hire a seasoned professional (NACE, 2013).

Internships are a form of experiential learning or *learning by doing*. They are work-based educational experiences that relate to a specific college major or minor. Students are expected to demonstrate skill sets on the job that they have learned in the classroom. Internships may be a component of a curriculum requirement or a course elective, and they can be offered as a class during a semester for college credit. Internships generally require students to work with their academic advisors, a faculty sponsor, and the internship supervisor at the job site to develop a learning agreement that outlines student tasks, responsibilities, and what the student will learn from the internship. The learning agreement also outlines internship supervising and faculty

sponsor responsibilities and guidelines. There is generally an administrative office of the college that assists the students in registering for college credit, finding and interviewing for an internship, and coordinating student evaluations between the internship site and the college. As part of the internship pedagogy, students are evaluated on their performance, which is based on elements set by an internship site supervisor and by corresponding academic assignments that reflect their work-based learning, which are evaluated by a faculty sponsor (Burke & Carton, 2013; Hendrie, 2004; Merritt, 2015).

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2011) adapted the following definition for internships: “An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting.” (NACE, 2014b, para. 7).

For the purposes of this study, the entertainment industry will include internships in theatre, fine art, music, the performing and production arts, cinema screen studies, dance, television, film, news, and weather broadcasting. This field is commonly referred to as *entertainment* or the *media industry*, and student interns major or minor in music, dance, theater, cinema screen studies, fine and production arts, or broadcasting.

Students may participate in internships throughout the academic year, and they may vary from 8 hours a week to full time work at 40 hours a week. Students may work on projects with one department or be involved in several departments within the company, depending on the type of industry and position. Many students work full time over the summer in an internship to gain credit and immerse themselves in the experience. Some positions are paid, while others are volunteer or unpaid positions. Students may not always earn credits for their participation in an internship program.

Some students opt not to earn credit during their internships because of financial burden or prerequisites required by the college. In order to earn college credit, students must pay tuition and fees for those credits. Many internship sites require college credit for liability purposes. If the position is an unpaid internship, it adds additional burden on the student. This causes internships to have financial implications for students. Students are required to pay college tuition to earn credits, but the time required to work at an internship may force a student to choose between working at the internship or earning money at a job. Students may have transportation costs to get to and from the internship, and the internship may have a professional dress code that would require the student to purchase appropriate clothing, or the internship opportunity may be in a city other than the location of the college or the student's home, which would require the student to pay food and housing costs. Perlin (2012), Frenette (2013), and Daniel and Daniel (2013) indicated students secured internships in cities such as New York City or Hollywood to obtain positions at nationally recognized entertainment and media headquarters, further increasing the financial burden to students enrolling in an unpaid internship.

The concept of internships or apprenticing as a way to obtain a position in a specific industry has existed since the Middle Ages. A trainee was placed with a master craftsman to learn a trade as unpaid labor. Apprenticeships were typically 7 years in length to ensure that the masters recouped their investment, and the apprentice was given sufficient time to become skilled and not be exploited as free or cheap labor (Burke & Carton, 2013; Itin, 1999). The English apprenticeship system was established as a national trade program in 1562 with the Statute of Artificers. A two-tiered or class system began to emerge because only children of the wealthy were entitled to serve as an

apprentice (Burke & Carton, 2013). The practice of apprenticeships traveled to the colonies and continued, particularly in trades of agriculture, construction, and welding. Gradually, the practice of apprenticeships diminished as secondary education, and on-the-job training increased in the United States (Itin, 1999). However, in 1906, the model of work-based learning was re-introduced at the post-secondary level as an education tool, at the University of Cincinnati by Herman Schneider (Park, 1943) as a cooperative education program, or internship style opportunity. This program integrated classroom learning into the workplace and vice versa. Interest in cooperative education grew steadily, and by 1942, there were 30 college programs in operation across the United States (Park, 1943).

In 1938, the Department of Labor established guidelines under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to ensure that an internship is a learning experience and does not violate employee rights (U.S. Department of Labor [USDOL], 2010). The FLSA was signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The law set the minimum wage for an employee at \$.25 an hour, with a standard work week of 44 hours. The Federal Department of Labor permits unpaid internships when the primary purpose is education. It applies to private and public employers. The FLSA does not exempt, or even define, interns. The FLSA Act provides protection to all employees. Therefore, the question of how to define an intern can be ambiguous.

The standard use for learning determination of an internship, was set by the 1947 Supreme Court decision in *Walling v. Portland Terminal Co.* as the basis for the definition of an intern. The case involved a week-long training program for brakemen that was conducted by a railroad shipyard. The decision identified the brakemen as

trainees, not regular employees, and defined them as shadowing regular employees for their own benefit. This case laid the foundation for unpaid internships and the criteria stated that learning must occur and the intern must be the primary beneficiary of the experience (Shaginian, 2014). Despite the determination that learning must occur to qualify for internships, there have been clear violations where interns are used to do menial labor to enrich companies. For example, in the case Glatt vs. Fox Searchlight Pictures Inc. intern duties included making photocopies, emptying trash, taking lunch orders, and running errands. It was not part of a college curriculum and was not set up as lessons to increase an intern's skillsets but unpaid labor that the interns undertook to get their "foot in the door" (Tripp, 2015). In this case, Judge Pauley III ruled that Fox Searchlight Pictures Inc. violated the Fair Labor Standards Act. The court ruled that there was no training similar to an educational environment, the only special training was how to operate a photocopier; the company received free labor; the interns displaced regular employees who would have been paid to perform menial tasks that did not require special industry knowledge such as emptying trash or running errands (Tripp, 2015).

As illustrated above, there is no clear classification of interns' employee rights. Congress and the Department of Labor have contradictory guidelines, and private litigation has been the primary mechanism by which FLSA is enforced concerning private employers who utilize unpaid internships (Tripp, 2015). As a result, many employers have eliminated their internship programs or drastically reduced the number of available internships in order to minimize their exposure to a lawsuit (Tripp, 2015). This limits the available options in a highly competitive industry. The Department of Labor's (DOL) (2010) Fact Sheet #71 "Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards

Act” details how educational criteria could be satisfied “where a college or university exercises oversight over the internship program and provides educational credit” (para. 6). This has caused employers to require school credit for an internship, which must be purchased as tuition. SONY Corporation is an example of this. In 2013, SONY settled a lawsuit with former unpaid interns, Katherine Moreno and Aaron Dumas, for \$67,000 (Gurrieri, 2016). Currently SONY has a limited number of internships available, and students must provide a letter from their school stating they are receiving course credit (SONY, 2016).

The USDOL guidelines in Fact Sheet #71 exacerbate a primary problem inherent with unpaid internships. These internships tend to favor more affluent students who can afford to work for free and pay tuition for the opportunity while lower income students must forgo an unpaid internship for a paying job or incur debt to pay tuition and cover expenses (Tripp, 2015). Low income students rely on financial aid and/or work. If an unpaid internship is accepted, financial aid dollars go to tuition, while the expenses of housing, relocation, food, professional wardrobe, etc. becomes the responsibility of the student and his/her family. If a student works, s/he may need to take a leave or quit to accommodate said internship and either be unable to accept the internship opportunity or incur additional financial burdens, whether in the form of loans or other hardships. Moreover, after the internship has ended, a low income student may or may not be able to return to her/his previous employer, and there is no guarantee that there will be a job offer as a result of the internship. Internships tend to have a significant effect on employment outcomes, and unequal access may further hide economic disparities among students and recent college graduates (Shaginian, 2014; Perlin, 2013). Internships are

increasingly becoming an important way for students to gain invaluable professional skills and training which give these students an advantage in the competitive job market (AACU, 2015; Frenette, 2013; NACE, 2014a). Therefore, Fact Sheet #71's criteria of educational credit is potentially at the expense of the marginalized student.

Since 2010, there have been a number of high profile lawsuits in which unpaid interns sued entertainment companies for violating the FLSA. Some of the companies sued include: Atlantic Records, CBS Broadcasting, Columbia Records, Conde Nast, Fox Entertainment Group, ICM, Marvel, MTV Networks, NBC Universal, Sony Corporation, The Charlie Rose Show, The Hearst Corporation, Universal Music Group, Viacom, and Warner Music Group (Suen, 2013). The researcher did a basic web search and only one to two internships were available at each company, compared to the Hearst Corporation that utilized more than 3,000 interns between 2008 and 2013 (Tripp, 2015).

In 2013, the plaintiffs in *Glatt et al. v. Fox Searchlight Pictures, Inc.* served as unpaid interns for the film production company for the movie *Black Swan*. The interns, Glatt and Footman, worked as unpaid interns between 2009 and 2010, with duties that included copying documents, maintaining takeout menus, assembling furniture, and taking out trash. The United States District Court, Southern District of New York ruled that Glatt and Footman (Glatt v. Fox, 2013; Perlin, 2013) should have been classified as employees, citing the U.S. Department of Labor's six internships criteria from 2010, which were:

1. The internship, even though it includes actual operations of the facilities of the employer, is similar to the training which would be given in an educational environment;

2. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern;
3. The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern; and operations may be impeded;
5. The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the internship - and
6. The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to wages for time spent in the internship (USDOL, 2010, para. 4).

Therefore, the court adhered to the FLSA criteria to determine an internship and determined that Glatt et al. should have been classified and paid as employees, not unpaid interns.

However, on July 8, 2015, the Second Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals made a ruling that overturned *Glatt v. Fox Searchlight Pictures* (*Glatt v. Fox*, 2015; Gardner, 2015). This decision ruled that internships can be unpaid if they are educational. The Second Circuit Court (*Glatt v. Fox*, 2015) stated that the Labor Department's criteria was out of date and not binding in federal court. The ruling states that the primary beneficiary test provides a more appropriate framework by focusing on what the intern receives in exchange for his or her work and providing the flexibility to examine the economic reality as it exists between the intern and the employer. The court recommended that an open-ended list of considerations be used to determine who benefitted the most. Considerations included whether interns received similar training in

an academic program, if they received academic credit, or whether the internship displaced an employee. The applicable framework from *Glatt v. Fox* (2015) became:

1. The extent to which the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee – and vice versa.
2. The extent to which the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
3. The extent to which the internship is tied to the intern’s formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
4. The extent to which the internship accommodates the intern’s academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
5. The extent to which the internship’s duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
6. The extent to which the intern’s work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
7. The extent to which the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship. (pp. 14-15).

This decision impacts internships in the entertainment industry in several ways. *First*, the DOL’s 6-factor test is being listed in the decision as obsolete and out of date, with updated criteria as listed above. *Second*, the decision makes clear that interns may

perform some “work” so long as the work does not displace an employee. While there is not a firm line, interns may likely be assigned projects that help current employees do their work more effectively. However, the amount of work should be weighed in the context of the entire intern program to ensure that the scale still tips toward the intern being the primary beneficiary of the program. *Third*, the educational component of the internship is a critical factor. Companies’ programs should emphasize training and educational opportunities, such as speaker series, mock projects, information sessions, open door policies to ask questions about the industry, and attendance at industry conferences or events. The greater the educational component of the program, the more likely that the interns will be the primary beneficiaries. *Fourth*, the recent wave of internship lawsuits will be impacted by this decision. This decision erects barriers to class action suits. Each position is individualized to review the seven criteria. The Second Circuit’s decision is on the merits, but as much or more because class and collective certification has become more difficult and reliant upon the educational institute (Shaw, 2015, Tripp, 2015).

The *Black Swan* case is significant for its influence on how an unpaid internship is defined and prodding entertainment companies to structure internships as educational opportunities and adhere to Department of Labor policies. The Second Circuit’s decision established education as criteria for internship and reversed the earlier decision based on theory that the Department of Labor’s Fact Sheet #10 did not clearly state education was required for internship (Tripp, 2015, Shaginian, 2014). The appeals court vacated Judge Pauley’s original decision by stating that the incorrect standards were used to determine classification as an employee or intern and the proper way to determine a worker’s status

was by using the primary beneficiary test. This case was significant for the stronger language in determining educational benefits define the validity of an internship and aligning the experience with the intern's education. The menial tasks completed by Glatt et al. were not in question, but the criteria that defined an internship is what makes this a landmark case.

As a result of the *Black Swan* more than 35 suits were filed challenging unpaid internships which has severely limited the number of internship opportunities now available (Miller, 2016). According to the Los Angeles Times, Conde Nast suspended its internship program, BuzzFeed, The Huffington Post, Wired and all the major Hollywood studios now pay their interns.

Glatt et al. sought a rehearing with the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals, but the request was denied February 2016. The case was sent back to federal court and 21st Century Fox filed court documents July 26, 2016 to settle the class action suit. The settlement proposes that all who interned for free at Fox Entertainment Group, Fox Filmed Entertainment, Fox Networks Group and Fox Interactive Media from 2010 to 2012 will receive settlements ranging from \$495 to \$7,500. This action supports the educational value of internships and encourages other employers in the industry to follow DOL criteria (Miller, 2016).

In the entertainment industry internships have provided students with an experiential learning opportunity that introduces them to the industry, enables them to develop workplace skills, and fosters professional networking that may lead to job placement in highly coveted positions. Internships have a significant effect on a student's ability to secure employment. Unequal access to internships may further compound

economic disparities. Social justice is based the concept of equal distribution of wealth, opportunities and privileges within a society (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016). The Ford Foundation has taken the lead on creating equitable opportunities for students that may help to balance disparities. Internship awards are based on academic performance and financial need. CEO Darren Walker states, “the right internship can put a young person onto a trajectory for success. This is precisely why those of us who oversee internships programs ought to make sure they provide a hand up to all people of promise, not merely a handout that, best intentions aside, accelerates a cycle of privilege and reward” (Walker, 2016). The Ford Foundation is also advocating for the Student Opportunity program identified by the researchers at the Economic Policy Institute and Demos. They have proposed using existing student aid programs, which include Federal Work Study and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, to facilitate internship grants for low-income students (Walker, 2016).

In a survey by the Chronicle of Higher Education in 2012 (Figure 1.1), employers listed internships as the top attribute in evaluating potential employees. An employer benefits from the internship by having an opportunity to evaluate a potential employee in a non-binding environment and at a reduced financial commitment. An economically disadvantaged student may not have that opportunity to come to the attention of a future employer (Tripp, 2015). Historically, students in music, art, and theatre majors have taken advantage of internships to hone their craft (Frenette, 2013). It is widely understood that internships are crucial for gaining entrance to the industry, and it is nearly impossible to obtain a job without this experience (Shaginian, 2014).

What are Employers Looking For?

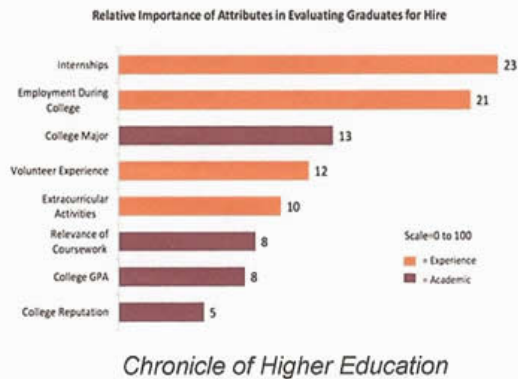


Figure 1.1. What are Employers Looking For? Adapted from “The Role of Higher Education in Career Development: Employer Perceptions” by The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2012, December. Copyright 2002 by The Chronicle of Higher Education.

According to the NACE (2014b) and AACU (2015) national surveys, which were sent to colleges and employers, other industries have increased their paid internships. Engineering, computer science, and accounting firms offer internships in which 80% of the interns are paid. Financial and marketing internships are 75% paid and general business and communication internships have 60% of their internships paid (AACU, 2015; NACE, 2014b).

Paid internships are available in the entertainment industry. For example, ABC, CBS, NBC, Paramount Pictures, SONY Pictures, Walt Disney World Resort, and Warner Brothers have created paid internship programs (Shaginian, 2014). However, it is not uncommon for the focus of these internships to be menial tasks as opposed to educationally based extension sites, and the organizations have to limit the internship spots available. Paid internships, such as at Walt Disney World Resort, have a standard practice of students working 40-hour weeks, paying for their own room and board, and

working the concession stands. The internship program is available to matriculated college students only. Students from any major can apply. The program differs from regular employment because the students take classes as part of their professional internship at Walt Disney World, albeit, they are unrelated to the students' entertainment majors.

The purpose of this research study is to examine if students with financial barriers are able to obtain internships in the arts, entertainment, or broadcasting industry, and if they obtain those internships, are they able to complete them if they are not paid. There is a question of social justice to this study to determine if divergent voices have the opportunity to be heard or express varied perspectives by becoming part of the arts, entertainment, or broadcasting industry or if their access is blocked by financial barriers.

Problem Statement

Internships are a critical component of a new college graduate's entry into the job market. At the behest of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, Hart Research Associates (2015) was engaged to conduct a survey of 400 employers who hired new graduates with bachelors and associate degrees. The survey found that employers value the ability to apply learning in real-world settings, and they place the greatest value on demonstrated proficiency in skills and knowledge that crosses all majors (Hart Research Associates, 2015). Each year, the National Association of Colleges and Employers conducts surveys relating to the employability of recent graduates. In the latest 2014 survey, NACE (2014a) asked 318 employers what they found to be one of the most important features of new college graduates. Internships were listed as the most important way students could gain knowledge of their major's industry

and job skills necessary for the job. When evaluating a potential hire, employers looked for internships on resumes of recent college graduates. Additionally, internships were viewed as being more important than the college attended, the major, or the students' GPAs (NACE, 2014a).

Today internships are common in every sector of the United States economy, however, despite the prevalence of internships there is limited research on the value of internships in specific industries (Itin, 1999, Perlin, 2013). According to Snyder and Vaughn (1998), the first internship program model began at the University of Cincinnati in 1906, as a part of college curriculum where the college manages and controls student placements and the relationship with the host employer. This is an institutional model where the student pays tuition for the unpaid internship experience. The second internship program model is where the student is responsible for securing an internship placement on his/her own and the college approves it (Snyder & Vaughn, 1998).

Internships are linked to majors, and studies show that majors that are more competitively linked to recruiting new college graduates in fields, such as engineering or accounting, support paid internships where the student may earn credit and earn a salary (NACE, 2013). Internships, or work-based learning, is a way to train and evaluate new workers. Historically, work-based learning occurred in apprenticeship form in a myriad of trades, including cobblers, tanners, theater troupes, and artists, who were sponsored by wealthy patrons.

This leads to the question of low-income students who are unable to afford unpaid internships. It questions the ability and success rate of low-income students being able to

obtain a job post-graduation in the arts, entertainment, and media industry. Ben Yagoda (2008), a professor of journalism at the University of Delaware, stated:

The pressure to complete an internship before graduation backs many low-income students into a corner; they can either take a paying job during the summer to earn money and not go further into debt, or they can take out additional loans to finance a summer internship. Both options hurt them in the long-run, by either limiting their experience and therefore marketability as a job candidate, or by accruing more debt. (Perlin, 2012, p. 161)

Internships have become a barrier for lower income students to enter professions that have broad, visible, and authoritative roles in society, such as entertainment, broadcasting, and the arts. These professions, and the people who are the face of them, matter deeply to society. Entertainment has the potential to shape reality, including stereotypes, history, and one's view of the future, and without diversity of thought and embodiment, they will be abolished in the entertainment, arts, and broadcasting arena as well as the political arena (Daniel & Daniel, 2013; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; and Shade & Jacobson, 2015).

The research problem examines the perceptions of undergraduate students' ability to participate in unpaid internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry. A secondary goal of the study is to understand the perceived hardship of lower income students who want to participate in unpaid internships. Access to entertainment is unlimited, and entertainment options are wide ranging. Entertainment reflects society, and it is imperative that the faces in the news, in movies, creating music, and in dance

reflect the demographics of the viewing audience (Frenette, 2013; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Shaginian, 2014).

Theoretical Rationale

The value of experiential learning is the link between learning, socialization, and experience. Internships serve as an anticipatory socialization process to prepare students for their future roles in the industry (Cuyler & Hodges, 2015). The early theory between education and experience was established by John Dewey (1897) as constructivist theory. Constructivism is broadly defined as students taking an active responsibility for building or constructing their learning (Dewey, 1897). At the time, learning was primarily lecture based in classrooms, but Dewey believed that education through on-the-job training was integral to the life of a community (Dewey, 1897). Dewey's pedagogy is framed by the theory that education is a social practice within a community. This framework establishes the workplace as a learning environment that fosters personal development through meaningful work and career development (Dewey, 1938).

On-site training of potential workers is not a novel idea. In craft professions, apprenticeships and journeyman certifications utilize the learning-by-doing method as a way to pass down expertise from one generation to the next (Steffes, 2004). Additionally, the medical profession has a long history of supporting interns who are there to observe, assist, be mentored, and work with experienced physicians (Moriber, 1999).

The formal use of work experience in higher education began in 1906 at the University of Cincinnati with Professor Herman Schneider when he instituted a cooperative, or *co-op*, education program as a way to extend the traditional college laboratory (Park, 1943). This allowed students to gain work experience within their

chosen profession while still being enrolled at an institution of higher education, and it created a tremendous opportunity to unite classroom theory with real-world experience. Internships are a more common form of co-op theory practice. Experiential learning creates benefits for a community, institution, employer, and student. Today, internships and co-ops are offered at roughly 900 community, comprehensive, and graduate colleges in the United States (Ruiz, 2004).

According to Jones (2002), the skills frequently developed through internships are critical thinking, dealing with the problems of professional work, applying classroom learning, working on challenging duties and assignments, gaining a perceived edge in the job market, learning about real-world politics in the workplace, enhanced communication skills, clarifying career direction, and learning to work in teams. Skills development connects to Dewey's (1897) belief that education is an integral part of community living that focuses on problem solving and critical thinking rather than memorization and rote learning. Dewey's pedagogic creed (1897), established the foundation of experiential learning theory and the importance of internships in an industry. The three principles of Dewey's pedagogical creed highlight the philosophy of education as a process involving collective experiences. Paraphrased, Dewey's (1897) principles are:

1. The school is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all students use their own powers for social ends.
2. Education, therefore, is a process of living and not preparation for future living.

3. This is a psychological necessity, because it is the only way of securing continuity in the student's growth, and the only way of giving a background of past experience to the new ideas taught or learned in school.

Dewey (1897) also believed that communities of like-minded people do not challenge each other to think at higher levels. Dewey supported the exchange of ideas among people from different social classes and backgrounds to encourage inquiry (Bleazby, 2012). It is here that Dewey's theory connects with the principles of experiential learning that were further developed by David Kolb (1984) where a student's past experiences, education, and community combine to form an advanced form of learning that links classroom with real-world experience to the benefit of the student, employer, and college.

The educational value of experiential learning is significant because such learning experiences provide students with an opportunity to apply skills discussed in a practical hands-on environment, which were discussed only as theoretical in the classroom. It is particularly important for students to gain these skills prior to seeking jobs in the entertainment industry (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). Employers seek candidates that have engaged in real-world problem solving and those who have begun to build their professional networking relationships, competencies, and skills. Moreover, these work experiences augment the resumes of students by giving them actual, relevant work listings (AACU 2015; NACE, 2014a).

This study uses Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory as influenced by Dewey (1938), as a model to review the value of internships. The study seeks to enhance Kolb's theory by outlining a structure that identifies the value interns bring to the

workplace through creative, fresh ideas that are shaped by their backgrounds and academic experiences, especially including voices from different social classes as stated by Dewey (1897). This theory builds on the idea of creating a varied picture in the workplace by including the thoughts and ideas brought forward by a diverse intern population. This further strengthens the concept that entertainment reflects society, and the faces in the news and movies, and those creating music and dance reflect the faces who are watching them (Frenette, 2013; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Shaginian, 2014), as well as Dewey's (1938) theory that learning and hands-on living are part of the community. Student interns help to shape the entertainment industry by the experiences they bring to the workplace.

Using an experiential learning framework, the transactional relationship is between the student and the work environment. Knowledge becomes the result of the transaction between students' knowledge of the business industry, their academic knowledge, and their personal knowledge of working in the industry of the arts, entertainment, and broadcasting. Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning theory (Figure 1.2) shows the learning process that builds industry skills. Kolb (1984) and Kolb and Kolb (2005) proposed that experiential learning as sets of learning, which are based on a four-stage learning cycle. Experiential learning is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). The process is depicted as a learning cycle in which the learner experiences each stage. *Concrete experiences* is the first stage in which the student is encountering a new experience or performing a new task at the internship. *Reflective observation* is the second stage in

which the student is reviewing or reflecting on the experience. This could occur through an assignment the intern completes for the faculty sponsor or reviewing the task with the internship employer. This stage is generally where clarity occurs as the student reflects on the inconsistencies between experience and understanding. *Abstract conceptualization* is the third stage in which the student is learning from the experience. This can occur on the job or in review with the faculty sponsor. Reflection may lead to modification of an abstract concept or when the learner connects classroom theory with the work task. The final stage is *active experimentation* when the student has learned the skills and applies them. For example, a student may have learned how to effectively write a press release and then wrote press releases for a school club (Kolb, 1984).

This study proposes that between active experience and concrete experience, another stage exists—collective experience. Collective experience defines the point at which the intern applies his/her experiences, learnings, and creativity to a work project to contribute to the learning. In today's society with unlimited media access and opportunities, students' collective experiences are part of the learning as their views of the world at large are transferred into the workplace and are an education link.

In his pedagogical writings, Dewey (1938) supported learning as a socialization component that encompasses community, home, and workplace. He encouraged learners to have direct interaction with the phenomena being studied, which allows students to

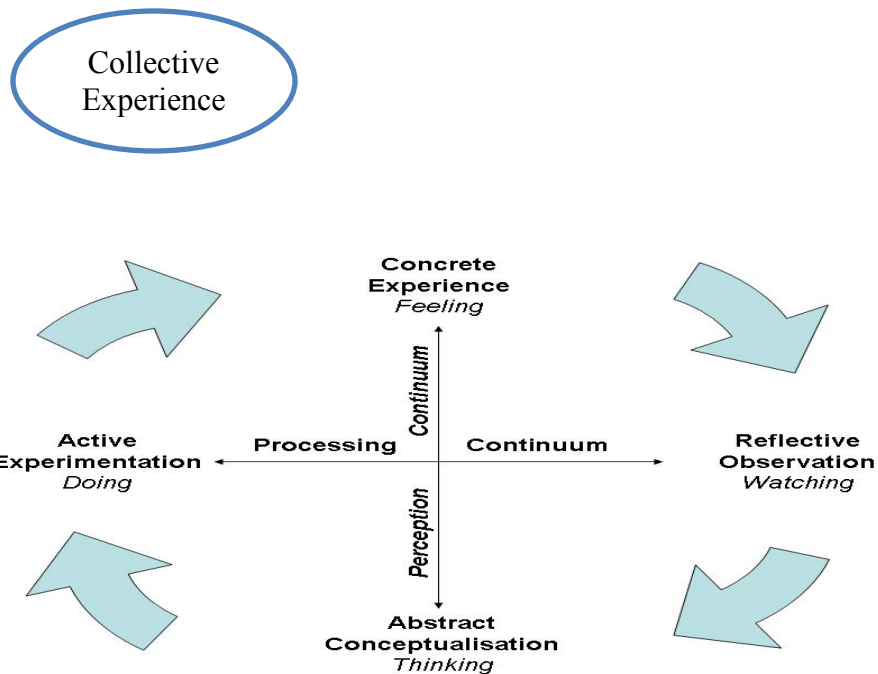


Figure 1.2. Experiential learning follows four cycles of learning: Concrete experience to reflective observation to abstract conceptualization to active experimentation. Adapted from “Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development” by D. Kolb, 1984, p. 124. Copyright 1984 by Prentice Hall.

interpret and internalize the direct experience. Dewey’s writings support an intern’s application of experiences, learnings, and creativity to learning as part of the industry socialization process.

Dewey (1938) believed that education is meant to help the learner think deeply through habitual reflection. Dewey encouraged active learners to consider how their beliefs shape their actions. As the learner reflects on what he/she knows, it influences the next decision, action, and future growth. Students engaged in internships are bringing

their socialization and background to work as part of the learning space. They are challenged to think critically and use their ideas to build a work space and identity.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, the researcher examines whether lower income students have limited access and opportunities to internships in the arts, entertainment, and broadcasting industry. Next, the researcher examines the relationships between required internships, student income, and required internships.

The overarching purpose of this study is one of social justice. The intent is to contribute to a more just world and to influence social behavior by leading change with opening access to positions of authority to a more diverse collection of employees beginning with internships. Many theories suggest that media, arts, and entertainment shape our perceptions of societal issues and trends, for example, movies, such as *The Green Mile*, might influence opinions on the death penalty or songs, such as Ani DiFranco's *Lost Woman Song*, may influence thoughts on social issues such as abortion (Sayre & King, 2003). Entertainment reflects society, and it is imperative that the faces in the news, movies, and those creating music and dance reflect and provide diversity of the thought to the faces watching them (Frenette, 2013; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Shaginian, 2014).

Research Questions

Research questions are interrogative statements that narrow the statement of purpose to specific questions (Creswell, 2002). For this research study, they are:

1. In the college majors that may lead to employment in the arts, entertainment, and media industry, what percentage of students are required to do an internship?
2. What percentage of students in these majors obtained and completed a paid or unpaid internship?
3. Is there a relationship between student income and students' perception of unpaid internships being a hardship?

Potential Significance of the Study

Internships are vital in the entertainment industry for students and employers. For students, it is a crucial experience to break into the industry (Frenette, 2013), and for employers, internships have traditionally been unpaid, and the industry is dependent on the labor as well as the fresh ideas (Shaginian, 2014.) Internships are a three-way partnership between interns, employers, and colleges. The study helps to define the impact of the economic and demographic changes that are inherent on college campuses and how they are reflected in internship attainment, particularly in public higher education. Entertainment is a visible embodiment of society, and this study will play a role in identifying who seeks internships in this industry, who is successful in job attainment, and if internships in entertainment are equitable across socio-economic classes. This study identifies inconsistencies of opportunities or possible barriers to opportunity and helps colleges to ensure that all students have an opportunity to obtain an internship in their major and that society's media industries reflect the population.

Definitions of Terms

Active Learner – a person who engages with the subject matter by demonstration and/or simulation, and the concept is applied to a real-world situation.

Educators – faculty, staff, instructors, lecturers, and advisors involved in assisting or teaching students during the internship experience.

Employers – supervisors for the student engaging in an internship. The employer typically oversees the student learning experience while on site in the professional learning environment.

Entertainment – defined as majors in theatre, art, music, performing and production arts, dance, television, film, news, and weather broadcasting.

Experiential Learning – broadly defined as providing an educational environment where students apply their analytical, oral, written, and other skills obtained in the classroom to an external setting. Pedagogical approaches include internship, faculty-led research, cooperative education, project-based learning, service learning, and practicum experiences.

Hard Skills – academic and technical skills most often tested in higher education and associated with performing a job.

Internship – a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in the professional fields they are considering for career paths, and it gives employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

Learning Objectives – goals the student hopes to accomplish during the internship experience. Students typically create a list of learning objectives at the start of the semester in collaboration with employers and educators. At the conclusion of the internship, students provide evidence to support completion of learning objectives, which often happens through portfolio or reflective journals.

Soft Skills – personality traits and habits including interpersonal and intrapersonal communication; engagement with others including teamwork; and analytical skills including the ability to develop solutions to problems and take initiative.

Soft-Skills Gap – the difference between the communication, teamwork, initiative, and analytical skills recent graduates possess and the expectations of the employers in meeting the needs of a workplace-ready environment.

Supervisor – the employer who gives assignments and evaluates student performance during the internship experience.

Workplace Ready – a new employee having the necessary soft and hard skills to perform the job when hired.

Chapter Summary

Internships play an integral role in aiding arts, entertainment, and broadcasting students in obtaining a job in the industry after graduation. They offer significant learning and networking opportunities for students, provide employers with a new talent pool, and offer marketing opportunities for colleges. Recent litigation in the arts, entertainment, and broadcasting industry has created negative perceptions of the value of unpaid internships.

This chapter reviewed the research problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the potential significance of a study examining the impact of unpaid

internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry for lower income students and how it affected their ability to obtain internships and the impact of financial barriers on students' perceived abilities to obtain internships and post-college employment. The degree of perceived hardship to obtain internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry was studied as well.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature as it relates to internships and beneficial relationships between interns, employers, and colleges. The research design, methodology, and analysis is discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of the results and findings, and Chapter 5 discusses the findings, implications, and recommendations for future research and practice.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

The research problem is the attainability of unpaid internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry by lower income college students. The research study analyzes if inequality exists and if the relationship between students' perceptions of unpaid internships are a hardship suffered by lower income college students when internships are required.

In Chapter 2, review of past work in the area of internships (paid and unpaid) will be presented. This review consists of articles and research studies that examine internships, specifically as it relates to the characteristics of successful internships, similarities or lack thereof between paid and unpaid internships, internships in the entertainment industry, and the internships' role in job attainment. This chapter looks at employers' perceptions of the interns and the benefits they bring to the employers' organizations. Finally, the chapter focuses on internships and the integral role they play in the marketability of undergraduate students as they enter the job market.

Internship Models and Characteristics of Student Intern Satisfaction

For Narayanan, Olk, and Fukami (2010), the answer to internship models and characteristics of student intern satisfaction lies in a conceptual model that depicts the interaction of the three key players in the internship experience: the student, the business, and the college. The internship experience is divided into three stages: pre-internship, or antecedents to the internship; the internship process; and outcomes of the internship.

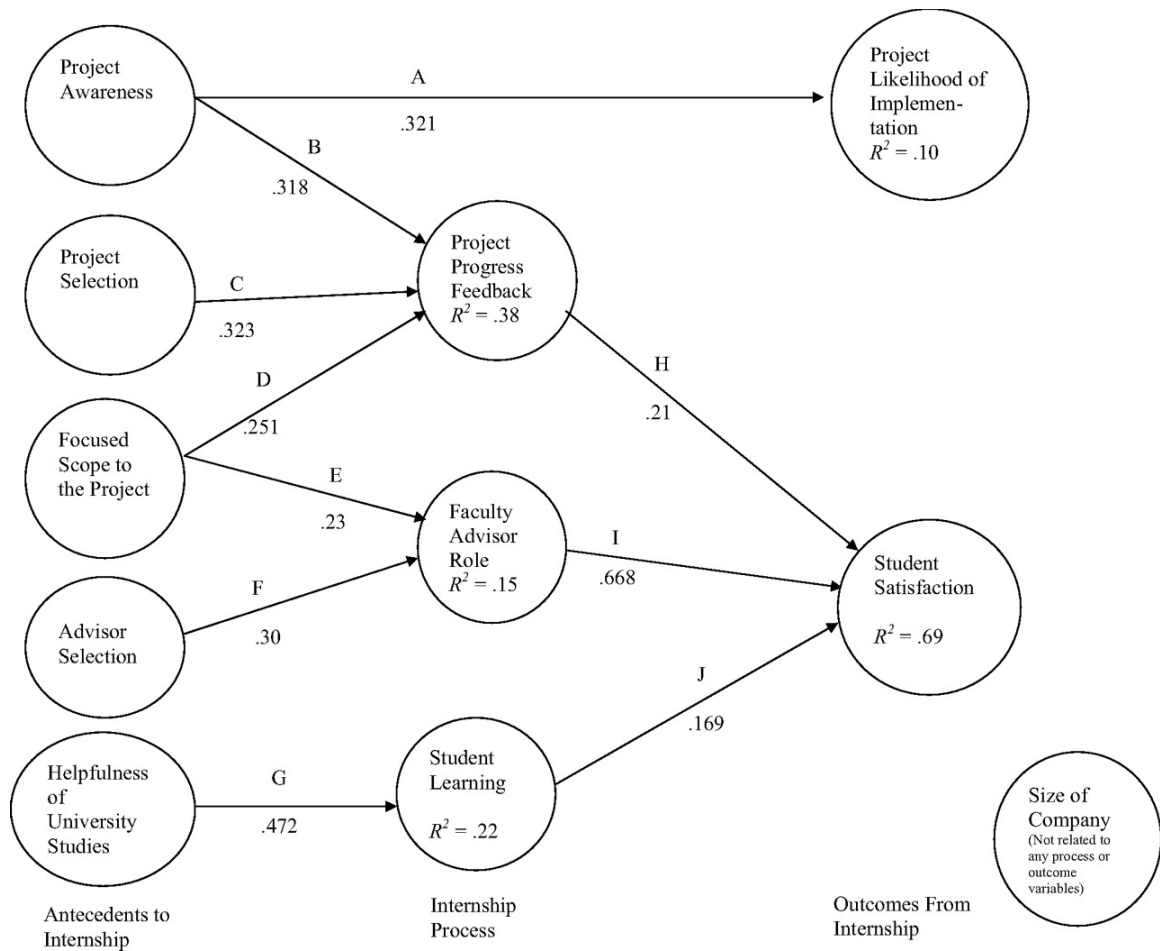


Figure 2.1. Internship Effectiveness Model. Adapted from “Determinants of Internship Effectiveness: An Exploratory Model” by V. K. Narayanan, P. M. Olk, and C. V. Fukami, 2010, *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 9(1), p. 72. Copyright 2010 by the Academy of Management.

The internship effectiveness model (Narayanan et al., 2010) (Figure 2.1) is a helpful visual representation of the different components of an internship and how they scaffold to form the basis for successful job attainment after graduation. The model links how the antecedents to the internship: project awareness, project selection, focused scope to the project, advisor selection, and helpfulness of university studies, connects with the

three entities in the internship process: evaluator (project process feedback), faculty advisor, and student learning, and how they connect with the study of student satisfaction.

Narayanan et al. (2010) developed this model after conducting a two-part study, namely, a literature review of existing and independent studies. Their study involved surveying 65 students in Portugal who were involved in internships the year before their research. They did not distinguish between paid or unpaid internships. Their study focused on three main areas of outcomes of interest for each participant: (a) the organization benefited from the completion of the internship project; (b) the student, organization, and college all benefited from the enhanced capabilities developed by the student during the project; and (c) the students had increased skills development, and the internships enhanced their career prospects.

The employing organization benefits from project completion, reduced labor costs, creative ideas, and screening and recruitment of potential employees. The college benefits from increased student satisfaction and student career placement. The student outcomes focus on skills development and career opportunities. The internship student participants are satisfied by the internship experience, they attain employment in their field, and they experience less shock moving from college to career. The significance of the study is the student learning that was exhibited.

Narayanan et al. (2010) found that before the internships began, there were five critical factors leading to success. Three of these factors were the sole responsibility of the employer, which includes awareness, selection, and scope of the project; and the other two factors were a combination of the roles and responsibilities of the college and the student intern to support learning. The first three antecedents listed are related to

understanding the internship project at hand and the student intern being ready to handle project responsibilities. This finding is congruent with discoveries made by other researchers. According to Beenen and Mrousseau (2010), task-goal clarity, or the scope of the student intern's project responsibilities, is the number one factor leading to student learning and acceptance of the job duties during the internship process. The researchers made this determination after studying the relationship between goal clarity, autonomy, and prior experience with learning and job acceptance in 110 MBA students in three different programs in the Midwestern United States (Beenen & Mrousseau, 2010). Based on their findings, success was dependent upon the interns, in conjunction with their faculty advisor and employer, of being fully aware of the goals of the projects and their related tasks and deadlines in order to fulfill their responsibilities (Beenen & Mrousseau, 2010). Having a set of goals allowed the interns and supervisors to discuss the projects periodically throughout the internships, giving enough structure for the interns to feel confident and able to complete the tasks but also giving the interns enough autonomy that they were able to grow and enjoy the experience (Beenen & Mrousseau, 2010).

Narayanan et al. (2010) found that before internships begin, there are five critical factors leading to success. Three of the five factors are the responsibility of the employer, the other two are the responsibility of the student intern and the college. Ideally, the college prepares the students through functional knowledge that will lead to practical application. The second responsibility is the role of the faculty advisor to support and encourage learning in the workplace. A site supervisor supplies mentorship in various ways, by encouraging the students to try new tasks, critiquing and providing feedback on tasks, helping them establish a professional network in the field, introducing them to the

hierarchy of the organization, teaching them the nuances of the field, and modeling professionalism.

Hoy's 2011 study validates the importance of a faculty sponsor from the same discipline as the student as it relates to the internship placement(s). Hoy surveyed 16 Australian employees in entry-level positions and she asked them to reflect on their experiences in their respective internships. The students who had supervisors who provided mentoring challenged the way the interns thought about their professional practice and the supervisors encouraged them to step outside their comfort zone. In this study, all 16 students agreed that the most valuable feature of their internships was when the supervisor was a strong mentor.

Mentoring also played a strong role in Keller's (2012) qualitative study that interviewed 19 students, five faculty members, and five employers to explore the components and learning outcomes of paid and unpaid internships. She found that internships that have high satisfaction with students and employers require commitment; a task connection from classroom to career; good communication between student, employer, and college; and a sense of community (Keller, 2012). It is a strong commitment to the internship by students, employers, and faculty members that make Keller's study relevant to this research study. While students bear some responsibility in seeking out opportunities to contribute to their own experience and demonstrate a good work ethic, employers and faculty members play a role in providing the appropriate support to students (Keller, 2012). If adequate support and mentorship were not offered by the students' supervisors, the study showed that the internship was not perceived as valuable by the students or the faculty members. As noted by one faculty member:

She has “seen instances on the employer side when they haven’t been overly enthused about having an intern.” Sometimes students “end up doing the same thing every day or they end up really being unsupervised so that mentoring relationship doesn’t really exist” As a result, students risked not being involved with experiences “that allowed for a lot of growth.” (Keller, 2012, p. 64-65)

This faculty member saw, firsthand, that internships lacking the mentorship component were less meaningful and valuable to student development. If a supervisor did not vary tasks for an intern, ensuring maximum exposure, the student’s learning was limited. Keller (2012) agreed with Hoy (2011) that the students who do not experience mentorship while engaged in internships will turn elsewhere for that relationship, potentially to their faculty advisors (Hoy, 2011; Keller, 2012).

The Narayanan et al. (2010) study, *Internship Effectiveness Model*, demonstrated that feedback, mentoring, and learning lead to two internship outcomes: the likelihood of successful project implementation in the workplace by the intern and student satisfaction. They found that feedback, interaction with faculty, and task learning led to student satisfaction, but this happened only in the presence of consistent feedback from the supervisor or employing company, and it led to the intern’s project actually being implemented. Interestingly, the project being implemented did not lead to the students’ satisfaction; instead, it was the students learning specific skills that led them to be satisfied with their internship experience. Another finding of the 2010 study is that the existence of a mentoring relationship was important to student satisfaction, but, according to students, it did not impact student learning (Narayanan et al., 2010).

Beebe, Blaylock, and Sweetser (2008) surveyed 290 students, focusing on job satisfaction in public relations internships. Similar to the findings of Narayanan, et al. (2010), Beebe et al. (2008) found that mentoring played a significant role in job satisfaction. Specifically, the researchers cited relationships with supervisors, but it is unclear if “supervisor” referred only to the mentor in the workplace or if the term included a university mentor or supervisor. Beebe et al. (2008) also found that, regardless of mentoring, learning specific job skills was very much related to student satisfaction.

Many internship studies focused on internship satisfaction. These studies played a role in the literature review as a way to support the improved candidacy of a new college graduate seeking a career in the same field of the internship. In addition to studies focused on student satisfaction, there have been a number of studies assessing students’ attitudes toward the workplace. After completing a paid or unpaid internship, students may place less value on the many traits employers look for in job candidates (Green et al., 2011). In studying pre- and post-internship students, Green et al. (2011) found that student views of important traits that employers are looking for “evolved,” (p. 106). Post-internship students placed less value on personality traits, GPA, and problem-solving skills than pre-internship students did, leading researchers to believe that students do not understand the concept of “workplace fit,” and they need mentors to help their students develop this understanding. More important to note, however, is the research finding that both pre- and post-internship students consistently valued each trait less than employers (Green et al., 2011). This finding suggests that students do not fully understand what employers are looking for, and thus do not know what skills they should be developing through their academics, leadership, and internships. This disconnect can be a factor in

determining why so many college students are struggling to launch their careers post-graduation and why some internships, particularly in fields that require more job immersion by the student to complete projects, are perceived by the employer as more valuable than the intern perceives the value.

Employer's satisfaction with interns. Companies and organizations that host interns have much to gain. Interns provide new knowledge and concepts as well as innovative ideas to help industry grow and stay current (Gault, Redington, & Schlager 2000). Interns can also provide positive public relations for host organizations, as Walt Disney World Resort does by bringing in interns from around the world to work with other students. Internship programs also create a recruitment channel for employers to preview prospective employees for their work ethic, attitude, technical competence, and organizational fit. These efforts may also help in employee retention. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers Internship and Co-Op Survey Report (2013), retention rates a year after hire for employees who came from employers' internship or co-op programs averaged 89%, compared to 80% for those who did not complete an internship with the organization.

The impact of experiential learning on college graduates' employability. Learning by doing (Dewey, 1938) and the experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) support the concept of effective student learning in the workplace. These theorists supported higher education integrating student learning in the workplace and the classroom. Studies show that experiential learning has a positive impact in students developing lifelong learning habits, which may lead to increased graduate employability.

Lifelong learning is listed by the National Association of College and Employers (2014a) as a desired workplace skill.

Jiusto and DiBiasio (2006) researched the role experiential learning plays in student attainment of self-directed and lifelong outcome as criteria. The study analyzed the effectiveness of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Global Studies Program in preparing students for lifelong learning through the acquisition of attitudes and skills that are supportive of self-directed learning. The program had approximately 350 students traveling in teams, internationally, each year to complete projects that link technology and community. The study supported internships in the arts and entertainment majors as students travelled globally, as technology continued to evolve across all of the disciplines and where culture was integral to the different communities.

Jiusto and DiBiasio (2006) used two survey instruments to measure students' preparation for lifelong and self-directed learning. The Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale is a 58-item questionnaire. It probes student attitudes toward learning. Secondary data supported this instrument by using the Individual Development and Educational Assessment Student Ratings of Instruction System. This course evaluation product focuses on student learning. Instructors selected three to five objectives to assess against comparison groups. The objectives chosen were research skills, critical thinking, and expression. Teacher assessment or grading was used as well.

The research was quantitative in nature. A pretest was administered to 259 students at the first overall group meeting before students left campus for the experiential projects and learning began. The post-test was conducted 12 weeks later, after students completed their project. The total pre- and post-test responses were received from 184

students. Statistical means were used to analyze the results with a standard *t*-test for comparisons, statistically comparing pre- and post-test with an average mean of skill sets. Those who participated in the experiential program had an average mean of 4.1, while the pre-test showed an average mean of 3.5. Jiusto and DiBiasio (2006) concluded that the experiential method of project-based learning with teams working in an international community generally achieves positive life-long learning outcomes and leads to better outcomes of critical thinking and multidisciplinary problem-solving.

Kesner's (2008) study drew upon the rich history of Northeastern University's experiential learning programs, particularly in cooperative education. The study surveyed 111 employers, through focus groups and individual interviews, to examine employer expectations of undergraduate business school co-op students. The survey population encompassed all industry and job functions. The majority of the employers were in the Northeast, although there were a number of global employers. The attribute that was shared by all employers was a commitment to improving undergraduate learning and their partnership with the co-op program. Initially, the focus of the researcher was to investigate the informational technology skills required and the curriculum necessary to address improvement and partnerships.

The initial survey and subsequent focus groups discovered that employers were looking for students who showed a capacity to learn on the job, solve problems, grasp issues, ask clarifying questions, operate independently, collect data, address problems, and have teamwork and interpersonal skills. The interviews and focus groups with the 111 employers showed that they expected students to have a general appreciation for management information, but they did not expect the students to have a technical

understanding upon hiring unless their sole role was the information technology function. The research showed that employers expected the university to do a better job at educating students on business etiquette and communication. The results were analyzed by quantifying structured responses with average means.

Kesner's (2008) research is significant to the career skills development of students as it supports this skill set as requested by employers according to NACE. As supported by Narayanan et al, (2010), Keller (2012), and Hoy (2011), business etiquette skills or workplace knowledge can be learned through an effective relationship between the student intern, workplace, and college or faculty sponsor. Kesner's (2008) study supports the study of internships in the arts, culture, and entertainment in the investigation of student skills that increase the value of internships.

The results showed that experiential learning is a positive way for students to gain more experience and increase their understanding through reflection (Kesner, 2008). The results also showed an increase in intercultural understanding, decision making, active application of learning in the field where the scenario impacts the formula, team work and collaboration, flexibility in thinking and planning, and global thinking. These characteristics are all learned skills that increased the college graduates' desirability as candidates—whatever the major (Kesner, 2008). Data results also showed the benefit of experiential learning using the framework of Kolb's (1984) learning cycle. Kesner found that concrete experiences represent the necessity of linking real-world scenarios with the technical skills learned in the classroom. In the observation cycle, the students reflected on the incidents in order to develop concepts. By reflecting on the experience, the

students also linked theory to experience to develop new skills, and in the experimentation phase, new experiences occurred for the students.

Comparing Paid and Unpaid Positions

Beebe et al. (2009) studied payment as one of the factors influencing job satisfaction. They found that paid interns were, in fact, more satisfied with their experiences than unpaid interns, but the unpaid interns were also satisfied with their experiences (Beebe et al., 2009). The researchers utilized an integration of the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and the Job In General Scale (JIG) to have students self-report job satisfaction in five areas: type of work, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision, and co-workers (Beebe et al., 2009). The participants were then given a satisfaction score from 0-54 based on their responses to both questionnaires (Beebe et al., 2009). Paid interns averaged a score of 47.22, while unpaid interns averaged a score of 42.38 (Beebe et al., 2009). Both of these scores fell above the median (32), meaning students in paid and unpaid internships were satisfied, but those in the paid internships had a greater degree of satisfaction (Beebe et al., 2009). Pay was not the only factor that influenced satisfaction. If so, unpaid interns would not have also been satisfied with their positions, but it is important to note that it was a deciding factor of satisfaction, and it was the choice method for breaking participants into groups in the study. The Beebe et al. study only involved students from a large university in the northeastern United States who had completed public relations internships, thus making the sample extremely specific.

Maynard (1997) also used public relations internships as the subject of his study. Instead of studying the interns, however, Maynard looked at the employers' letters of invitation to students and their description of the conditions of the internship. Those

letters were also used as proof to the academic department that the student was participating in an internship. Maynard (1997) found the word “opportunity” to be significant in distinguishing letters for the two types of internships. In unpaid internships, “opportunity” was used to describe a flexible work schedule, class credit, and supervision, but with paid internships, the word “opportunity” meant practicing writing skills and work-related tasks (Maynard, 1997). Based on the wording of these letters, it was implied that paid internships consisted of activities that led to the development of job-related skills compared to those of unpaid internships. While a flexible schedule may be a perk of an unpaid experience, improving written communication skills or completing real work tasks would have likely been more beneficial to the student intern in the long run. Furthermore, when combining all of the letters for each category, unpaid internship supervisors wrote 599 more words than paid internship supervisors did, demonstrating that more words were necessary to describe the unpaid experiences (Maynard, 1997). This is important because it demonstrates more variety in the types of tasks that could have been experienced in the unpaid internships, while paid experiences linked more closely with standard public relations tasks. Whether or not the duties the students completed were the same in paid and unpaid internships, it seemed as though the unpaid internship supervisors felt the need to spend more time explaining the internship or using positive descriptive words in relation to the experience. Maynard also found that unpaid internship supervisors used the word “opportunity” two times more than the paid internship supervisors (Maynard, 1997). The study does not take into account the writing style of the supervisors studied, as some of them may have had a more concise style of communicating and some may have used more descriptive words based on their

personality and educational background. The findings of the Maynard study offer some differences about paid and unpaid experiences that were present before the internship even began, which potentially shows that a stigma may exist surrounding unpaid internships. In the context of the research study, Maynard (1997) added information suggesting that unpaid internships are less valuable than paid internships, since supervisors of unpaid interns try to make the experience seem more worthwhile by using the word “opportunity” and other elevation terms when offering the internship to the student.

There are few studies that address the question of who the students are who participate in unpaid internships. Perlin’s (2012) book, *Intern Nation*, raises the question of economics but does not research the demographics. The book argues that “internship injustice is closely linked to gender issues, both because of the fields that women gravitate toward and possibly also because female students have been more accepting of unpaid, unjust situations” (Perlin, 2012, p. 27). Thompson (2012) stated the hypothesis that only the elite can undertake unpaid internships. He stated that students with financial support take internships while lower income students bypass internships for jobs to support themselves. Shade and Jacobsen (2015) interviewed 12 Canadian women who participated in unpaid internships in the creative arts in Canada. All of the women articulated that they accepted the positions as a way to secure employment in the entertainment industry. Each interviewee also confirmed that she was from an upper-income family and would not have been able to undertake the internship if she did not receive parental financial support.

Experiential learning in the arts, entertainment, or media. Blackwell, Bowes, Harvey, Hesketh, and Knight (2001) conducted a study with art/design students in the United Kingdom. The numerous benefits of the work experiences were anecdotal. The survey asked 2,000 art/design graduates to reflect on work preparation, including the availability of internships. In the study, only 29% of the students had the opportunity to participate in an internship. These students demonstrated higher rates of full-time employment and a belief that their employability increased by their internship experience. This was a significant study and one of the few that were specific to the arts and entertainment students. There were limited questions and no inquiry was made to industry partners.

Daniel and Daniel (2013) surveyed students of the arts and industries in Australia. There was an employer response rate of 51 employers or a 42.5% response. Of the employers surveyed, 36.5% had supervised or were supervising an intern at the time of the study, and many employers had been involved in internships during the preceding 10 years. Of this group, 78% found the experience positive, 68% had few or no challenges, and 68% indicated the process led to benefit for their organizations. Positive comments included interns bringing in fresh ideas, finding great employees, and enjoying the mentoring experience. Negative comments included lack of student professionalism, lack of student responsibility, and lack of knowledge of the industry.

The employer responses confirmed that internships are direct connections to the industry that are highly valuable and prepare students and employers. Daniel and Daniel (2013) concluded that there are challenges, and internships are not always successful, but the positive appears to be greater than the negative.

Chapter Summary

The articles reviewed shared a common thread of perceived value and characteristics of internships. The reviewed literature built a foundation of the criteria of internships that increased student interns' skill sets and professionalism. The research solidifies the importance of a student intern, employer, and faculty sponsor working together to achieve successful learning outcomes, which generally lead to job attainment in the field.

The successful impact of experiential learning on developing skill sets desired by employers was explored as was different student learned outcomes between paid and unpaid internships. The knowledge gained from this section, such as the components to successful internships and the differences between paid and unpaid internships, will allow readers to better understand the researcher's choice to conduct this study and the impact for colleges and the arts, broadcasting, and media industry. Unpaid internships have long been heralded as a necessity for recent college graduates to secure jobs in the arts, entertainment, and media fields. The literature review highlights that there is very little research that addresses the value of unpaid internships in this field, as well as there are few studies that research participation in unpaid internships.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology of this study. This research study looks at students who are majoring in the arts, broadcasting, or media. The study will look whether students participate in a paid or unpaid internship, and if participating in an internship is perceived as a hardship by students. The study will examine the impact of the internship being required to graduate and the student's perceived ability to participate in an unpaid internship.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

The recent economic downturn, national focus on student loans, return on investment for tuition, and an increasingly competitive global economy has placed a spotlight on U.S. college graduates. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), the unemployment rate for recent college graduates is 7.2%, the underemployment rate is 14.9%, and the percentage of 2015 college graduates not in school or employed is 10.5%. The total percentage of 2015 college graduates who are not working in professional jobs is 32.6%. Increasingly, employers, parents, and students expect colleges and universities to aid students in becoming job ready (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

NACE and the AACU asked employers what they wanted to see on a resume—84% said *internships*. In fact, internships are crucial to obtaining a job in the entertainment industry. Work-based learning has long been a way to train and incorporate neophytes into the workforce (Itin, 1999). This is particularly true for interns in the entertainment industry. Many workplaces have a distinct culture and hierarchy that is based on the employer, where there is a clear structure that delineates work, skill sets, and processes. Established members of the workplace introduce newcomers to expected behaviors and a linear process of advancement (Frenette, 2013). In the arts, entertainment, and broadcast industry, it is the individual, not the organizations that define the cultural structure. In the entertainment field, work is awarded to companies

partly on reputation, therefore building a strong professional network begins at the intern stage (Frenette, 2013). “It is increasingly difficult to enter the media and media-related industries in advanced industrial countries without having performed, at some point, a significant period of unpaid work. Launching a paid career often necessitates extended unpaid work, though some commentators and workers claim this informal requirement causes a significant barrier to entry for individuals with less privileged backgrounds” (Hesmondhalgh, 2010, p. 279).

Research Context

The research design for this study was quantitative and used descriptive statistics as an analytical tool. Creswell (2002) stated that a major purpose of many social science studies is to describe situations and events. According to Johnson and Christensen (2014) descriptive research is concerned with finding out “what is.” In this study, the descriptive techniques provide important tools for determining and reporting student access to internship opportunities in the entertainment field and how many students in the entertainment majors are participating in unpaid or paid internships (Creswell, 2002). Descriptive research communicates a general view of the data and variables, which is invaluable, especially in areas that have been minimally investigated (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

The survey tool contained two open-ended questions in which students shared their perceptions and the believed value of internships. The researcher analyzed the data using qualitative conventional content analysis to assess it by studying the answers, then defining codes during the analysis. The thematic codes were defined by frequency of use

(Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This enabled the researcher to identify the themes of the students' perceptions of the role of internships in job attainment.

The study took place at a 4-year comprehensive higher education institute in New York State. The College is a member of a 64 campus, public higher education system in New York State. Overall, the College graduates 7,000 baccalaureate students and 1,000 graduate students annually and has 110 majors/minors.

The researcher designed a survey instrument that was emailed to 851 current students in defined majors of theatre, fine art, music, performing and production arts, dance, television, film, news and weather broadcasting in their junior or senior year. According to Creswell (2002), this was a convenience sample because the participants were chosen in a non-random manner to meet the criteria. An email invitation letter described the study, the credentials of the researcher, and there was an offer to share the results of the survey with the participants. The first part of the survey asked students to self-identify their demographics including gender, race, and socio-economic status. The second part of the survey asked the student's major and minor; if an internship was obtained, planned, or completed; and the name of the internship site if obtained or completed. This section asked if the internship was paid or unpaid. The third section asked respondents to identify if they secured a job or an interview in the entertainment field for the summer and/or after graduation.

This research study used an accessible population, who were majoring in fine arts, communications, broadcasting, meteorology, music, performance, cinema screen studies, or production entertainment. This population was used to generalize the results to either support or disprove the hypothesis that an unpaid internship in the arts, entertainment, or

media field is difficult for a lower income student to obtain and complete. According to Johnson and Christensen (2014), surveys help to generalize or make statements about the population being studied. The research questions that sought to study these values were:

1. In the college majors that may lead to employment in the arts, entertainment, and media industry, what percentage of students are required to do an internship?
2. What percentage of students in these majors obtained and completed a paid or unpaid internship?
3. Is there a relationship between student income and students' perception of unpaid internships being a hardship?

Research Participants

The study participants were limited to undergraduate students at the College in their junior or senior year who were from theater, music, fine arts, production arts, communications, cinema screen studies, broadcasting, or meteorology majors or minors and who were eligible for internships. The College policy defined students as eligible for an internship if they have a minimum of a 2.5 GPA and have completed a minimum of 60 credit hours to achieve junior status.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

A survey was designed to collect primary data during a single period of time. The survey used the College's research system: VOVICI. The institutional research department sent the email invitation on the researcher's behalf to ensure student confidentiality. The data was shared as raw data for detailed analysis. An initial invitation for participants to complete the questionnaire was sent to qualified students and included

an explanation of the purpose of the study, the request for voluntary participation, the survey guidelines and expectations, availability of the survey, and the expected participation benefits. The expected benefits were the opportunity to share data that may encourage the college to financially support students who participate in internships. The researcher offered an incentive to encourage participation. Four \$25 gift cards were randomly drawn from the pool of respondents. An example of the email text with the informed consent included is displayed in Appendix A. The survey example is listed in Appendix B.

The survey contained three sections. The first section comprised demographic questions, such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status. The second section targeted information about internship opportunities. Was the student able to participate in an internship? Did the student have financial limitations? Was transportation an issue? Were there any paid internship opportunities that the student did not get hired for? Did the student seek an internship in another major, because it was paid or close to home/college?

The third section related specifically to the internship. What year was the student? Was it paid or unpaid? How many hours a week? How many credits did the intern receive? What was the student's major and company name with whom the student interned?

Confidentiality

The survey was disseminated by the College's Institutional Review Board (the researcher's employer) to ensure complete confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

Validity and Reliability

As stated by Johnson and Christensen (2014), a reliable survey instrument supports the validity of the survey instrument. Because the survey was self-designed, the researcher sought review and recommendation of the survey instrument by three quantitative researchers.

Procedures

The survey was designed using VOVICI, a survey tool that is commonly used by the College. It was a web-based survey tool designed to incorporate an easy email delivery method to ensure a wide number of potential respondents. In an effort to ensure students response, four \$25 gift certificates were used as incentive for participation. Random drawings by the completed survey respondents ensured fairness. The respondents were randomly picked through the VOVICI system. A College Institutional Research staff member notified the respondent and the respondent made arrangements with the staff member to receive the gift card. Only completed surveys were considered for this study and the incentive.

Procedures for Data Analysis

IBM© SPSS Statistics© Version 22.0 was used to conduct the analysis on all collected data where a summary of the basic responses and number of respondents were disclosed. Thereafter, descriptive statistics were implemented using frequency tables to analyze the percentage of paid and unpaid internships in the industry, required internships, and the relationship between student income and perceived hardship.

Descriptive statistics of the data analysis for Research Questions 1 and 2 were used to analyze percentages; and descriptive analysis for Research Question 3 compared

two categorical groups using Pearson correlation to analyze the relationship between student income and perceived hardship. To determine income levels, the analysis compared students who received a Pell Grant and those who did not. Pearson correlation was used to analyze the Pell Grant recipients and the number of hours they worked at a paid job on an ordinal scale. Chi-square analysis was also applied to examine which demographic categories perceived the most hardship with obtaining and completing an unpaid internship.

Descriptive statistics provided the ability to track each variable, while the frequency distribution allowed the researcher to pattern the answers. Pearson correlation measured the strength between the relationships of two variables. Chi-square analysis tested the probability of relationships between two variables.

Chapter Summary

The quantitative study looked at the percentage of paid and unpaid internships and the impact of the financial hardship on internship secured. The study used descriptive statistics to look at the ability of lower income students to participate in unpaid internships. Demographic information was compiled in a table and frequency distributions collected and ranked the role, gender, socio-economic status, race, and ethnicity might have played in the value of paid and unpaid internships.

Chapter 4: Results

Research Questions

The study examined the impact of unpaid internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry for low-income students and how it affected their ability to obtain internships. The researcher studied the impact of financial barriers on students' perceived abilities to obtain internships and post-college employment. The degree of perceived hardship to obtain internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry was studied as well.

Research questions investigated these values:

1. In the college majors that may lead to employment in the arts, entertainment, and media industry, what percentage of students are required to do an internship?
2. What percentage of students in these majors obtained and completed a paid or unpaid internship?
3. Is there a relationship between student income and students' perception of unpaid internships being a hardship?

Descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the results. The first two questions were answered using frequency tables. To answer the third question, the researcher used non-parametric statistics because the ordinal data was not normally distributed. Pearson correlation was used to answer Research Question 3 using the variables of student

income and perceived hardship to obtain and complete an unpaid internship. IBM© SPSS Statistics© Version 22.0 was used to conduct the analysis on all collected data.

The study contained two open-ended requests that students were able to write in their own answers. Opened-ended student-perception questions 24 and 25 were, respectively: “Please share any perceptions about how an internship helped/may help you obtain a job in your major or minor” and “Please share any perceptions about how the lack of an internship in your major hindered/may have hindered you from getting a job in the arts, entertainment, or media field.”

The researcher analyzed the data using a qualitative conventional content analysis to assess the data by studying the answers then defining codes during the analysis. The thematic codes were defined by frequency of use (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This enabled the researcher to identify themes of the students’ perceptions on the role of internships in job attainment.

Data Analysis and Findings

The survey population comprised 851 juniors and seniors majoring in art, broadcasting, cinema and screen studies, communications, journalism, meteorology broadcasting, music, and theatre and/or minoring in arts production and arts generalist. There were 192 surveys completed for a response rate of 23%.

Descriptive statistics were used to interpret the data. Table 4.1 illustrates the class profile of a typical student at the College where the survey took place. Table 4.2 is used to describe the demographic sample of students who participated in the survey.

Table 4.1

2013 Demographic Profile of Freshman Students at the College

Racial Breakdown of Freshman Students	
African-American, Black	5.9%
Asian American	1.8%
Caucasian	79.0%
Hispanic, Latino	8.7%
Multicultural	2.3%
Native American/Pacific Island	.2%
Unreported	1.9%
Gender Breakdown of Freshman Students	
Female	52.0%
Male	48.0%

Table 4.2

Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

Racial Breakdown of Survey Respondents at the College vs. the College Profile	
African American, Black	7.3%
Asian American	4.2%
Caucasian	74.0%
Hispanic, Latino	9.9%
Native American/Pacific	.5%
Unreported	4.2%
Gender Breakdown of Survey Respondents at the College	
Female	75.0%
Male	24.5%
N/A	.5%

Descriptive statistics were run on the survey participants to identify them demographically. The survey participants' demographics were similar to the demographic

profile students at the College. The race/ethnicity classifications used are the categories that the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2015) uses. Analysis on race and ethnicity show Caucasian/White students constituted 74% of respondents, African-American/Black represented 7.3%, Asian American at 4.2%, Hispanic/Latino at 9.9%, and Native American/Pacific at .5% with unreported at 4.2%. The largest demographic difference between the survey respondents and the College student profile is gender. The College profile is fairly evenly represented with 52% females and 48% males. There was a 23% higher percentage of females answering the survey than the College profile. The frequency analysis shows that 75% of survey respondents were female while 24.5% were male with .5% not applicable.

Research question 1. Research Question 1 sought to answer “In the college majors that may lead to employment in the arts, entertainment, and media industry, what percentage of students are required to do an internship?” The survey asked respondents if an internship was required in their major to graduate as part of their program curriculum plan. Table 4.3 depicts the number of students who’s major requires an internship for graduation.

Table 4.3

Number of Students in Study Required to Complete an Internship

Required	Total
Yes	45
No	113
Don’t know	35

The survey was sent to juniors and seniors at the College in majors that could lead to a post-graduate job in the arts, entertainment, or the media. Of those majors, only one,

broadcasting, required students complete an internship to graduate. Table 4.4 illustrates the self-identified majors of the surveyed population.

Table 4.4

Majors of Students Who Received the Survey and Responded

Selected Major	Received Email	Responded
Art BA with Art History emphasis	2	2
Art BA with Graphic Design emphasis	76	18
Art BA with Studio emphasis	22	4
Broadcasting and Mass Communications	278	66
Broadcasting/MBA 5-year program	4	0
Cinema and Screen Studies BA	48	13
Communication & Social Interaction	105	18
Fine Arts BFA	9	1
Graphic Design BFA	46	8
Journalism BA	37	14
Meteorology BS	36	5
Music BA	27	2
Public Relations BA	132	38
Theatre BA	29	7
Grand Total	851	196

Research question 2. Research Question 2 sought to define through descriptive statistics “What percentage of students in these majors obtained and completed a paid or unpaid internship?” Table 4.4 demonstrates descriptive statistics to answer this question. Frequency analysis showed that 19 students completed a paid internship, 69 students completed an unpaid internship, and 104 students did not complete an internship.

Table 4.5

Students Who Completed a Paid or Unpaid Internship

Type of Internship	Percentage
Completed paid internship	19%
Completed unpaid internship	69%
NA	104%

Of the number of internships reported in the study in the arts, entertainment, and media field, 22% were paid, and 78% were unpaid. This is consistent with earlier findings that a higher percentage of students in the majors that lead to employment in these fields complete unpaid internships (Frenette 2013, NACE, 2014).

Research question 3. Research Question 3 asked “Is there a relationship between student income and students’ perception of unpaid internships being a hardship?” For this question, the study defined the income of students with several questions relating to income. First, did the student receive a Pell Grant? A Pell grant is a federal program that determines eligibility based on financial need. Eligibility is determined by the difference between the cost of attendance (COA) at a school and expected family contribution (EFC). The expected family contribution is derived from tax returns and the family’s adjusted gross income (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Table 4.6 illustrates respondents’ who self-identified as receiving or not receiving Pell Grants.

Table 4.6

Students Who Received Pell Grants from the College

Pell Grant	Percentage
Yes	34.2%
No	28.1%
Don’t Know	35.7%

In the survey, question 2 asked if students needed to work, and if so, how many hours a week. Table 4.7 depicts the results.

Table 4.7

Student Work Hours for Financial Resources

Number of Hours	Percentage
0	.5%
1-10	20.3%
11-20	25.0%
21-30	3.1%
31-40	2.6%
Over 40	2.0%
Don't know	46.4%

A chi-square analysis tests the association between two or more categorical variations. It breaks the data out into a contingency table and compares how many cases actually occur in each cell of the table and how many cases would be expected to be there if there was no relationship between the variables (S. Townsend, personal communication, April 20, 2016). The researcher tested the association of Pell Grant recipients, work needed, how many hours of work were needed, and perceived financial barriers to an internship. The analysis showed no significant relationship between students receiving Pell Grants, needing to work, and perceived financial barrier to an internship. Statistical significance is defined as the probability of the relationship between the variables being reliable.

Chi-square analysis was used to test the association between the students that received a Pell Grant and their perception of an unpaid internship being a financial hardship. For the analysis, 67 students received Pell Grants, $N = 67$, of which 37

perceived a financial hardship to obtain an unpaid internship. The Pearson coefficient was 21.39. The probability, or p -value, was defined as less than .5. The p -value in this study was .019, which is less than .5; therefore, the relationship between the variables of students receiving a Pell Grant and their perception of an unpaid internship being a financial hardship is significant. However, the survey used was a 5-point Likert scale with five options for replying. In order for statistical significance to be valid, there must be at least five cases in each cell or table category. In two of the cells, there was under three cases; therefore, the sample size was too small to validate a statistical significance.

Chi-square analysis was used to test the association between the students' need to work while in college and their perception that an unpaid internship was a financial hardship. For the analysis, 192 students responded. Of those respondents, 27 students did not perceive a need to work, 33 chose not to answer, 32 students needed to work during the summer, 91 needed to work part time year round, and nine needed to work full time while in college. Therefore, the total number of students that needed to work while in college was 132, or $N = 132$. The chi-square analysis tested the relationship between the students' perception that obtaining an unpaid internship was a financial hardship and the students' need to work while in college. The Pearson chi-square coefficient was 35.722. The Pearson coefficient was 21.39. The probability or p -value, was defined as less than .5. The p -value was .17, which is lower than .5; therefore, the relationship between the variables is significant. However, the survey was a 5-point Likert scale. In order for statistical significance to be valid, there must be at least five cases in cell or table category. Of all of the cells, there were under three cases; therefore, the sample size was too small to validate statistical significance.

Chi-square analysis was used to test the association between how many hours the students needed to work while in college and their perception that an unpaid internship was a financial hardship. For the analysis, 192 students responded. Of the respondents, one student reported 0 hours, 26 students reported that they did not know, 39 worked 1-10 hours a week, 48 worked 6 hours, 5 worked 31-40 hours, and 4 worked more than 40 hours a week while in college. Therefore, $N = 192$ was used for the chi-square analysis that tested the relationship between students' perception that obtaining an unpaid internship was a financial hardship and the hours worked while in college. The Pearson chi-square coefficient was 89.963. The probability or p -value, was defined as less than .5. The p -value was .000, which is lower than .5; therefore, the relationship between the variables is significant. However, the survey was a 5-point Likert scale. In order for statistical significance to be valid, there must be at least five cases in cell or table category. In seven of the cells, there were under three cases; therefore, the sample size was too small to validate statistical significance.

The chi-square analysis illustrated a relationship between students the study defined as low-income, through a self-identified need to work during the academic year and as Pell Grant recipients, and students' perception of financial hardship with completing an unpaid internship. However, statistical significance was not reached because the sample size was too small. Therefore, the researcher combined several demographic classifications to analyze if relationships between variables existed. In the race/ethnicity classification, all non-White respondents were grouped together into one classification. In the income classification, respondents were grouped together under one

classification if they received a Pell Grant and self-identified the need to work over 20 hours during the academic year for financial resources.

A Pearson correlation test was calculated on four variables to determine the relationship between students' perception of unpaid internships being a hardship and income. The first variable was the student perception of financial hardship associated with doing an internship. The second variable was gender. Caucasians were the largest percentage of students answering the question at 74%. The remaining classifications were low numbers; therefore, the remaining classifications were combined to create the third variable of non-White. The fourth variable was a low-income classification as determined by students receiving Pell Grants and students working over 20 hours per week during the academic year.

Pearson correlation assessed the relationship between the variables. The researcher tested the relationship between the variables of gender, low income, race/ethnicity, internship required, and perceived financial barrier to an internship. The analysis determined a statistical significance using Pearson correlation between students' agreement that an internship was a financial hardship to obtain and their program required an internship to graduate.

As illustrated in Table 4.8, the variable of low income with high resources of Pell Grants and over 20 hours of work per week (classified in SPSS as "Resources Loan") had high correlation to students' agreement that an unpaid internship was hard to get. The probability or *p*-value, was defined as less than .5. The *p*-value was .255, which is lower than .5; therefore, the relationship between the variables was significant.

Table 4.8

Pearson Correlation from SPSS

		Gender	Agreement Hard to Get	Newrace	Internship Required	Resources Loan
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.060	-.060	-.035	-.026
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.405	.408	.629	.724
	N	192	192	192	192	192
Agreement Hard to Get	Pearson Correlation	.060	1	.047	.562**	.255**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.405		.519	.000	.000
	N	192	192	192	192	192
Newrace	Pearson Correlation	-.060		1	.009	.054
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.408			.898	.457
	N	192	192	192	192	192
Internship Required	Pearson Correlation	-.035		.009	1	.270**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.629		.898		.000
	N	192	192	192	192	192
Resources Loan	Pearson Correlation	-.026		.054	.270**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.724		.457	.000	
	N	192	192	192	192	192

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

Also illustrated in Table 4.8, the variable of internship required for graduation had a high correlation to students' agreement that an internship was hard to get. The probability or *p*-value, was defined as less than .5. The *p*-value was .562, which is higher than .5; therefore, the relationship between the variables was significant.

The last two questions on the survey were open-ended and asked students to share perceptions about how internships may help or hinder them from getting a job in the arts, entertainment, or media field. Of the 192 participants, 79 responded to both questions. Using content analysis, the researcher used qualitative content analysis as a research

method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes. This study is quantitative in nature; however, in the open-ended questions data, three themes emerged. The researcher summarized the raw data and grouped themes and processes into categories, which may also be described as inductive category development. This led to meaningful categories and codes that add to the richness of the data (Hsieu & Shannon, 2005). This method allowed the knowledge generated from content analysis to be based on participants' unique perspectives and grounded in the actual data. The sampling technique maximized the diversity of unscripted reactions, and the analysis techniques were structured to capture that complexity, which provided more meaning for the data (Saldana, 2012).

The meanings captured validated the relationships illustrated in the quantitative data that low-income students, as defined by receiving Pell Grants and needing to work over 20 hours per week, perceived financial hardship in obtaining and completing unpaid internships. The content analysis also supports the correlations between lower income students' perceived hardship obtaining and completing unpaid internships and an internship being required to graduate in their major.

Three themes emerged from the content analysis: (a) experience is necessary to gain a job in the arts, entertainment, or media industry, (b) networking is vital to obtain a job in the industry, and (c) internships provide vital knowledge of what the work environment/professionalism is like in the industry. Of the 79 respondents who answered the open-ended questions, 77 felt internships were necessary to gain the experience required to obtain a job in the industry; 35 of the 79 respondents felt that the internships were necessary to develop a professional network to obtain a job in the industry, and 32

of the 79 respondents perceived that internships provided the necessary professionalism and industry knowledge to obtain a job in the industry.

The quotes below from Participant 1 elucidates the student perceptions of the value of experience obtained through internships. The quote was an open-ended answer on the survey.

I think lack of an internship will hinder you from getting a job in the broadcasting field, which I think can be unfair since many people can't afford to have an unpaid internship. Putting themselves through college is already a lot for some people. It's like we're told, if you go to college you'll have many opportunities after college, yet when you go to college you're told, you need to spend more to work for free with no guarantee so you can MAYBE have more opportunities.

The quote below from Participant 2 illustrates student's perceived value of networking:

Our field is all about who you know. If you know everything there is to know about filmmaking, but you never meet anyone in the field you will not get a position. Filmmakers choose to work with people they know before taking a risk on an unknown.

Professionalism and field knowledge was the third emergent theme. Participant 3 stated:

An internship provides key experience in a professional atmosphere and allows students to work in an environment they aspire to hopefully be employed. In my opinion a lack of an internship would look very poor on applications for these fields. They're not the type of careers you can make a lot of real progress in school, your degree is basically just to get you through the door.

Finally, this quote is an example of a student's perception of financial hardship and why an internship is necessary. Participant 4 stated:

Because my internship created such a financial hardship for me and my family, I made sure I did the ultimate job at being the best intern ever, so that they could offer me a job. They did and now I work part-time with them and work on-air. I do know that other people can't always be as lucky as me, where even working hard will still not get you a job right out of college. The timing was just really good for me since they were short on staff and they saw my work ethic.

Summary of Results

There were 851 surveys distributed to juniors and seniors at a public college in New York State with majors in arts, entertainment, and media-related fields. The response rate was 23% with 192 surveys returned. Mainly White females responded to the survey at a 75% frequency rate. Low-income students were defined as students who were awarded Pell Grants, and self-identified the need to work over 20 hours a week while in college. Chi-square analysis examined the relationship between low-income students and their perception of hardship to obtain and complete an internship. Chi-square analysis highlighted a relationship between low-income students and their perception that an unpaid internship is a hardship to obtain and complete. The second chi-square analysis illustrated a relationship between low-income students' perception of unpaid internships being a hardship to obtain and complete and the requirement to complete an internship in their major to graduate. However, the chi-square tests did not yield statistically significant results because the sample size was too small when the demographic variables were broken down into multiple categories of ethnicity/race and

income levels. The researcher combined categories and used Pearson correlation to validate a relationship between the variable of low income with high resources of Pell Grant and over 20 hours of work per week and students' agreement that an unpaid internship was hard to get and the relationship between hardship and internship required for graduation. The *p*-value was lower than .5 for both measures; therefore, they were statistically significant relationships with a high probability of occurring.

Qualitative analysis, utilizing conventional content analysis, identified three themes in the open-ended questions. Students perceived experience, networking, and professionalism as the most important attributes to be gained by an unpaid internship.

The survey revealed information that was directly examined in the study. There is a relationship between low-income students' perception of hardship in obtaining and completing an internship, in particular when an internship was required in a program for the student to graduate. It also indicated that there was an awareness among survey participants that experience, professional networks, and professional awareness is needed to obtain post-graduate jobs in the arts, entertainment, and media industry, and internships are key to obtaining jobs in the industry. The survey showed that many undergraduate students are not aware of their financial circumstances and how their socio-economic status may impact their opportunities to participate in an unpaid internship.

Chapter 5 presents the implications of the data, limitations, and recommendation for research, policy, and practice.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of undergraduates' ability to participate in unpaid internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry and the perceived hardship of lower income students who want to participate in internships. Internships have become a barrier for lower income students to enter professions that have broad, visible, and authoritative roles in society, such as entertainment, broadcasting, and the arts.

Barriers for lower income students include lack of income, time that needs to be allocated to work at an unpaid internship, and funds for appropriate clothing and transportation. Internships are credit bearing; therefore, tuition must be paid for participating in an internship, which adds another layer of financial hardship.

Additionally, the majority of internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry are located in major metropolitan areas such as New York City, Nashville, Los Angeles or Hollywood. For students to participate in these internships, housing and living expenses have to be incurred. This forces many lower income students into working additional hours to earn funds to pay for tuition. These expenses, combined with the fact that many students do not have the personal connections to obtain the internships, leads to insurmountable barriers for a number of students.

Three research questions provided the guidelines for exploring the impact of these barriers. Seminal theorists John Dewey (1938) and David Kolb (1984) provided a

theoretical framework that underscored the value of the role of experiential learning through internships for students, employers, and higher education institutions. This research study further expands that framework by adding another cycle, entitled *collective experience*, by which interns bring value and ideas to the workplace based on their experiences. This is of particular importance when supporting the removal of barriers for low-income students to enter the arts, entertainment, and the media industry all while representing diversity of thought, words, and action.

A systematic review of the relevant literature provided history, student, and employer perceptions of internships in other sectors. The survey instrument explored student perceptions of unpaid internships and the relationships between financial hardship and their perceived ability to obtain and complete an internship. Descriptive statistical analysis examined these concepts further, providing an initial examination of low-income students' perceptions of the financial hardship to complete internships and obtain unpaid internships, and the perceived value of internships for post-graduation job attainment in the industry. Through these activities, the researcher sought to glean actionable information that is practical and applicable in higher education to support students seeking internships in the industry, especially the marginalized students who may not have the funds or professional contacts to connect with these opportunities.

Implications of Findings

The study examined student perceptions of financial barriers to obtaining and completing unpaid internships in the arts, entertainment, and media industry. Descriptive statistical analysis determined that low-income students, as defined by receiving Pell Grants, perceived financial hardship to obtain and complete an unpaid internship. Pearson

correlation identified a statistically significant relationship between low-income students' perception of hardship and an internship required to graduate. The student perceptions shared in the open-ended questions reflected three emergent themes, which were a way to *gain experience, do networking, and gain professionalism*. As Chapters 1 and 2 depicted, this was an introductory study into understanding the hardships that limit low-income students from obtaining and completing unpaid internships. Past surveys by NACE (2014) and AAUC (2015) illustrate that internships in the arts, entertainment, and media field are 80% unpaid. The frequencies of paid and unpaid internships in this research study mirror those numbers. Industry experts and students surveyed share the perception that an internship is vital to obtain a job post-graduation in the field.

The implication from this study is that lower income students in majors that lead to a post-graduate job in the arts, entertainment, and media industry may have difficulty obtaining and completing unpaid internships. Related to the findings of this study, since 2010, there have been a number of highly visible lawsuits dealing with unpaid internships. As a result of this litigation, many employers have eliminated internship programs or drastically reduced the number of available internships (Tripp, 2015). This limits available options for students in a highly competitive field, where an internship is vital to secure employment. In 2010, the Department of Labor issued Fact Sheet #71 that lists the educational criteria as a mandate for an internship. These criteria could be satisfied “where a college or university . . . provides educational credit” (para. 6), which means the student is further encumbered with tuition costs. Internships in the arts, entertainment, and media field may have a significant effect on employment outcomes,

and unequal access to these opportunities creates a larger divide between students with financial resources and students who are marginalized.

This divide creates a broader societal impact. There is a responsibility for colleges, as well as companies in the arts, entertainment and media industry, to ensure opportunities for all students, and just as importantly to measure outcomes. With tuition prices continuing to rise and greater numbers of graduates struggling in the job market, families, as well as the federal government are increasingly questioning the value that colleges are providing. In response to the public's mounting pressure, the federal government initiated a focus on graduation outcomes calling for a College Scorecard. The rating system offers families a student-level unit record that tracks graduates as they entered the workforce. Specifically, the scorecard examines what majors lead to successful, stable employment. It also indicates that internships are critical to successful outcome measures. Currently however, the outcome measures fail to capture the varying levels of opportunities that exist for diverse students, in particular those with limited resources.

If internships are included as part of the necessary graduation requirements, there is a moral responsibility for higher education institutions to allocate funds to support those requirements. Institutions of higher learning have development or fundraising offices. The development offices work toward raising funds for capital improvements, scholarships, and various advancement projects. Development offices may not be aware of the impact of internship requirements or the financial hardship that low-income students experience nor may they be aware that there is such a high level of unpaid internships in certain majors. Higher education institutions have many programs in place

to increase access and success of diversity students. Higher education should now turn its focus on the successful outcomes upon graduation. It is the responsibility of the institution to aid and support students with financial hardships to have equal opportunity for successful job attainment after graduation.

Unequal access and financial disparity may lead to low-income students not obtaining post-graduate positions in the industry or changing majors to pursue paid internships in industries that do not have such a heavy emphasis on experience and professional networks. According to AACU (2015) and NACE (2013), majors, such as computer science, engineering, accounting, and marketing, offer internships that are 90% paid. Industries, such as business and health care, have high employment rates post-graduation (Department of Labor, 2016).

A societal danger that could result from this disparity would be the homogeneous voices and faces that would be the only reflection of our society exhibited through the arts, culture, and entertainment. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009) warned of the danger of a single story in her TED Talks. She warned that if we only hear a single story about another person or omit the voice/presence of the “other,” our world is made smaller and less complete and/or accurate (Adichie, 2009). The implication of this study is that if the marginalized students and the collective views and experiences they bring are unable to obtain jobs in this industry that society listens to and watches, we are in danger of viewing the world from a single lens.

Limitations

This study demonstrated that low-income students did perceive that obtaining an unpaid internship was difficult due to the financial hardships in the arts, entertainment,

and media industry, particularly if the internship was required. However, the survey results did not yield statistical significance for any demographical classification, and many students did not know their financial category. This may be a result of the survey tool being too simplistic to measure for income. A more sophisticated measurement tool that analyzes parent/student income through student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), a form which parents/students submit to receive financial assistance, and financial aid may yield more results. This limitation was placed by the College limiting access to available financial information, and this research is the first study of its kind that begins to measure the correlation of these variables.

Another limitation presented in the study is response bias. The survey was exploratory in nature and limited by its focus on specific majors. All responses were voluntary rather than random. Of the participants that met the criteria, 75% were female and 75% were Caucasian. This is a limited response pool; more richness and a wider representation based on demographics could be obtained with more time and resources. More resources are needed to study the hypothesis that financial hardship creates problems for unpaid internships in the industry.

The findings of the Maynard study offer some differences about paid and unpaid experiences that were present before the internship even began, which potentially shows that a stigma may exist surrounding unpaid internships. In the context of the research study, Maynard (1997) added information suggesting that unpaid internships are less valuable than paid internships, since supervisors of unpaid interns try to make the experience seem more worthwhile by using the word "opportunity" and other elevation terms when offering the internship to the student.

There are limited studies that address students who participate in unpaid internships. Perlin's (2012) book, *Intern Nation*, raises the question of economics but did not have any demographics of student interns. There was no identification of race, gender, or socio-economic status. His research focused on unpaid internships being fundamentally unfair. That it is a burden for any student to pay for the privilege of working for free and many times there are living costs in addition to tuition, and earning wages for work. Perlin also (2012) stated the hypothesis that only the elite can undertake unpaid internships. He stated that students with financial support take internships while lower income students bypass internships for jobs to support themselves. Shade and Jacobsen's (2015) study supported this hypothesis. They interviewed 12 Canadian women who participated in unpaid internships in the creative arts in Canada. All of the women articulated that they accepted the positions as a way to secure employment in the entertainment industry, confirmed a higher socio-economic level, and claimed they would not have undertaken the internship without parental financial support.

As noted in the literature review there is limited research in lower income students' ability to take on unpaid internships. It is difficult to determine the effects and perceptions of undergraduate students and job attainment at the post-graduate level. This is currently an important topic in federal higher education policy debates about what majors lead to successful job attainment. Additionally, the question of whether internships are an effective way to obtain employment is also being explored. The first year after graduation, higher education institutions track employment of graduates through the National Clearing House Data Center and first-destination surveys, but employment beyond the first year is very difficult to track (Nelson, 2013). It is difficult to

determine if an internship was the catalyst for success 5 to 10 years after graduation. A longitudinal study would be an optimal way to systematically capture data that may be more robust and help to clearly link relationships between successes and barriers.

Recommendations

The findings, results, and conclusions of this study add to the existing body of knowledge that supports the notion that internships have an impact on post-graduate job attainment. Intern success in the workplace generally leads to jobs in the highly sought-after industry of the arts, entertainment, and media. This also tends to reflect positively on the educational institution from which the student graduated, and it aids in admissions for those programs.

The benefits of internships to employers are plentiful. Employers gain an extended opportunity to guide and evaluate talent (NACE, 2011), providing employers more than just the traditional resume and interview with which to appraise job candidates. In support of this notion, greater than 90% of employers prefer hiring job candidates who have completed an internship with their organization (NACE, 2011), making an internship analogous to an extended job interview for the intern. This saves the employer money. That money saved could be used to pay minimum wages to the interns, therefore, ensuring opportunities and fresh ideas from all classes of students.

As more students attend college than ever before, pay more for a secondary education than anyone before them, and incur more student debt than ever before, it is extremely vital that students be as prepared as possible for the college-to-career transition. Internships and other experiential learning models can help ease this transition and provide clarity on career paths. In 2010, 42% of college graduates with internship

experience received job offers, compared to 30% without internship experience (Hook, 2011), which means that graduates without internship experience missed out on hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Institutes of higher education have a fundamental role in supporting students as they learn necessary skills and transition to the workplace. The legal guidelines and definition of an internship is imprecise. The college's need to have a strong role in defining policy, explaining it to the employers and enforcing the policies for the benefit of the student. Colleges and universities also should be advocates for marginalized students. Ford Foundation president Darren Walker made a definitive case for paid internships in the *New York Times* July 5, 2016. He argued that America's internships system is rooted in unequal opportunity with those that already have wealth and connections landing internships and continuing the cycle of inequality. Ford Foundation had developed an internship program based on financial need. Social justice is defined when "people share a common humanity and therefore have a right to equitable treatment, support for their human rights and a fair allocation of community service." The recommendation is for higher education to take a larger role in ensuring employers are equitable, funding to support marginalized students, and advocacy for federal policies and grants to support internships as a vital component of a student's academic career.

Future research in this area should investigate the relationship between completing an internship and long-term success as measured by income and other quantifiable measures or self-reported factors. A more sophisticated instrument, that measures student income, access and need in a more comprehensive manner, could be used to better identify the students who face potential financial hardship to ensure data is

collected about barriers. A larger study would gain more in-depth data on potential financial barriers that low-income students encounter. A study that includes a larger sample size would also ensure wider representation of students to gain insight on barriers and actions students could take to overcome those barriers. Finally, additional research is needed to examine whether other socially marginalized groups (race, ethnicity, physical embodiment, gender orientation, disabilities, etc.) are systemically excluded from internships in the arts and entertainment industry as illustrated in the 2016 Academy Awards controversy that claimed ethnic and racial minorities were excluded from nominations.

Conclusion

For today's college graduates seeking jobs in the arts, entertainment, and media industry, a college diploma is not enough to secure a job. Experience and professional networks are needed, and most applicants get that experience through college-sponsored internships. It is common knowledge in this field that the majority, 80% as determined by NACE (2014a) and reinforced by this study, are unpaid.

Internships provide students with an experiential learning opportunity that introduces them to the industry, enables them to develop workplace skills, and fosters professional networking that may lead to job placement. Internships have a significant effect on a student's ability to secure employment. Unequal access to internships may further compound economic disparities. Employers benefit from internships by having the opportunity to evaluate potential employees in a non-binding environment and at a reduced financial commitment. An economically disadvantaged student may not have the opportunity afforded by an unpaid internship to come to the attention of a future

employer (Tripp, 2015). Internships have been standard industry practice in the world of the arts, entertainment, and broadcasting (Green et al., 2011; Itin, 1999; Jones, 2002). According to Daniel and Daniel (2013), the majority of students interning in the arts, entertainment, and media generally are not paid for their work because many of these industries are not for profit with strict budgets that do not include intern support. Historically, students in music, art, and theatre majors have taken advantage of internships to hone their craft (Frenette, 2013). It is widely understood that internships are crucial for gaining entrance to the industry, and it is nearly impossible to obtain a job without this experience (Shaginian, 2014).

Seminal theorist John Dewey (1897) believed that communities of like-minded people do not challenge each other to think at higher levels. Dewey supported the exchange of ideas among people from different social classes and backgrounds to encourage inquiry (Bleazby, 2012). It is here that Dewey's theory connects with the principles of experiential learning that were further developed by David Kolb (1984) where a student's past experiences, education, and community combine to form an advanced form of learning that links classroom with real-world experience to the benefit of the student, employer, and college.

The educational value of experiential learning is significant because such learning experiences provide students with an opportunity to apply skills that are discussed in a practical hands-on environment, which were discussed only as theoretical in nature in the classroom. It is particularly important for students to gain these skills prior to seeking jobs in the entertainment industry (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). Employers seek candidates who have engaged in real-world problem solving and those who have begun

to build their professional networking relationships, competencies, and skills. Moreover, these work experiences augment the resumes of students by giving them actual, relevant work listings (Hart Research Associates, 2015; NACE, 2014).

This research study enhances Kolb's (1984) theory by outlining a structure that identifies the value interns bring to the workplace through creative, fresh ideas that are shaped by their backgrounds and academic experiences, especially including voices from different social classes as stated by Dewey (1897). This theory builds on the idea of creating a varied picture in the workplace by including the thoughts and ideas brought forward by a diverse intern population. This further strengthens the concept that entertainment reflects society, and the faces in the news and movies and those creating music and dance reflect the faces who are watching them (Frenette, 2013; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Shaginian, 2014), as well as Dewey's (1938) theory that learning and hands-on living are part of community. Student interns help to shape the entertainment industry by the experiences they bring to the workplace. Interns with divergent voices and experiences ensure that we do not fall victim to the danger of a single voice (Adichie, 2009) but view the world through multiple lenses.

This study proposes that between active experience and concrete experience, another stage exists—collective experience. Collective experience defines the point at which the interns apply their experiences and creativity to a work project to contribute to the learning. In today's society, with unlimited media access and opportunities, students' collective experiences are part of learning, as their views of the world at large are transferred into the workplace, and they link new theories and technology they have learned at their college with their new roles in the workplace.

The successful impact of experiential learning on developing skill sets desired by employers was explored as was different student learned outcomes between paid and unpaid internships. The knowledge gained from this section, such as the components to successful internships and the differences between paid and unpaid internships, allow readers to better understand the researcher's choice to conduct this study and the impact for colleges and the arts, broadcasting, and media industry. Unpaid internships have long been heralded as a necessity for recent college graduates to secure jobs in the arts, entertainment, and media fields. The literature review highlights that there is very little research that addresses the value of unpaid internships in this field, as well as there are few studies that research participation in unpaid internships.

However, there is a common thread of perceived value and characteristics of internships. The qualitative aspect of the research solidifies the importance of a student intern, employer, and faculty sponsor working together to achieve successful learning outcomes, which generally lead to job attainment in the field. Students shared their perceived values through two open-ended questions on the survey. In the content analysis, three themes emerged that the students identified as valuable reasons to obtain and complete an internship. These themes, *experience*, *networking*, and *professionalism*, correspond with the literature review of successful outcomes aligning with job attainment in the industry.

This quantitative study examined the percentage of paid and unpaid internships and the impact of the financial hardship on obtaining and completing an internship in the industry. The study used descriptive statistics to look at the ability of lower income

students to participate in unpaid internships and the frequency distributions collected gender, socio-economic status, and race data.

The relationship between low-income students and perceived financial hardship was analyzed using a chi square to test the association between how many hours the student needed to work while in college and their perception that an unpaid internship was a financial hardship to obtain. For the analysis, 192 students responded. One student reported 0 hours, and 26 students did not know how many hours. Of the 192 students, 39 worked 1-10 hours, 48 worked 6 hours, five worked 31-40 hours, and four worked more than 40 hours while in college. Therefore, $N = 192$ was used for the chi squared analysis that tested the relationship between students' perception that obtaining an unpaid internship was a financial hardship and the hours worked while in college. The Pearson chi squared coefficient was 89.963. The p -value was .000, which is lower than .5, which means the relationship between the variables was significant. However, the survey was a Likert scale with five options. In order for statistical significance to be valid, there must be at least five cases in a cell, and in 27 of the cells, there were under three cases, so the sample size was too small to validate a statistical significance.

However, the last two questions on the survey were open-ended and asked students to share perceptions about how internships may help or hinder them from getting a job in the arts, entertainment, or media field. Of the 192 participants, 79 responded to both questions. Using content analysis, the researcher used article, qualitative content analysis as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data. Three themes emerged from student answers. Students perceived internships as valuable

to obtaining a job in the arts, entertainment, and media industry as a resource to gain experience, professional networks, and professionalism in the field.

The purpose of the research study was to examine if students with financial and social barriers were able to obtain an internship in the arts, entertainment, or media industry and if they were able to complete their internships if they were unpaid. This study identified the inconsistencies of opportunities or possible barriers to opportunity, and it will help to encourage colleges to ensure that all students have an opportunity to obtain an internship in their major, and that society's media industries reflect their populations.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Opportunity to Participate in Internships in the Arts, Entertainment, or Broadcasting Industry Survey

Informed Consent

Dear Students:

You are invited to participate in a study that examines student participation in internships in the arts, entertainment, or broadcasting. This study is part of a doctoral dissertation at St. John Fisher College, and your participation will be appreciated greatly.

Internships often lead to paid jobs in the arts, entertainment, or the broadcasting industry. One goal of this study is to understand the impact that internships in the industry have on successful job attainment in the field post-graduation. Another goal of the study is to assess the perception of how socio-economic status may impact internship placement. The results of this study may help college internship offices develop more effective models for internships.

The survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete. There are no expected risks, and the benefits of participation are of an informational nature. Information received may be used to help college offices structure more beneficial internship models. If you are willing to participate, please follow the link to the survey. Your participation is voluntary, and your responses will be kept confidential. The results of this survey will be published only in aggregate format—in other words, only group data (numbers) will be reported; individual responses and respondents will not be identified.

If you choose to participate in this study you have the right to:

1. Have the purpose of the study and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
4. Be informed of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to you.
5. Be informed of the rights of the study.

In appreciation of your participation, if you choose, you will be entered into a drawing for one of four \$25 VISA gift cards. Gift card recipients will be selected at random from completed survey respondents by the computer program. The survey will ask for your name and address only if you decide to enter your name for the drawing. Any names or emails collected for the raffle will not be associated with survey data. Winners will be randomly selected by a computer program and gift certificate winners' contact information will be separately forwarded to the researcher to send the gift certificate. Anticipated participation is 600 survey respondents. There are four \$25 gift certificates available, therefore, survey participant's odds are 1 in 150 chances to win a gift certificate provided all eligible participants participate.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the researcher:

Denise DiRienzo, Principal Investigator

Appendix B

Survey

Student Internships in Arts, Entertainment, and Broadcasting

Q1:

Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Father Highest Education Level	Mother Highest Education Level	Expected Date of Graduation	Year in College
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Click Answer	Click Answer	Click Answer	Click Answer	Click Answer	Click Answer
Male	Caucasian/White	No formal schooling	No formal schooling	May 2016	Junior
Female	American Indian/Alaska Native	Grades 1-12, no diploma	Grades 1-12, no diploma	December 2016	Senior Graduate
	Asian	High school graduate (diploma or GED)	High school graduate (diploma or GED)	May 2017	
	Black/African American	High school graduate (diploma or GED)	High school graduate (diploma or GED)	December 2017	
	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacifica Islander	Associate degree	Associate degree	May 2018	
	Prefer not to answer	Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	December 2018	
		Master's Degree	Master's Degree		
		Professional degree (JD, MD, DD)	Professional degree (JD, MD, DD)		
		Doctoral Degree (PhD, EdD)	Doctoral Degree (PhD, EdD)		

Q2:

What is your major in college? A pull down menu of selected majors + “other”

Q3:

What is your minor in college? A pull down menu of all minors

Is this important? Don't ask for information unless you plan to use it

Q4:

Please indicate your financial resources for your college expenses:

% of financial aid and student loan

% of scholarship

% of parent contribution

% of income from work

Q5:

Did you receive a Pell Grant?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Q6:

Did you receive a TAP Grant?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Q7:

Which of the following best describes your financial need to work while attending college?

- Do not need to work (Go to Q9)
- Need to work part-time
- Need to work full-time
- Need to work summers

Q8:

What is the average number of hours per week you are working while going to school?

- 1-10 hours
- 11-20 hours
- 21-30 hours
- 31-40 hours
- More

Q9:

Is an internship required for your major?

- Yes
- No

Q10:

Have you already completed an internship in your field?

- Yes, go to Q12
- No

Q11:

I have not completed an internship but,

- I am currently doing my internship
- I have secured an internship for next semester
- I am planning and working on it
- I am not planning to do an internship

Q12:

Please indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements:

There is a high demand for college graduates in my field of study

- 3 – agree
- 2 – neutral
- 1 – disagree

The cost of living is too high in places where internships are available

- 3 – agree
- 2 – neutral
- 1 – disagree

The value of internships is overrated

- 3 – agree
- 2 – neutral
- 1 – disagree

The financial hardship of doing an unpaid internship is a major obstacle for me

- 3 – agree
- 2 – neutral
- 1 – disagree

Q13: If an internship was completed:

Where _____

Q14: If an internship was completed

When did you perform your internship (s)? (Please check all that apply.)

- Spring
- Summer
- Fall
- Winter

Q15: If an internship was completed

Was your internship paid?

- Yes
- No

Q16:

If the answer is NO, did you need financial support to help with expenses to participate in an internship?

- Yes
- No

Q17:

Were you unable to participate an internship in your major because you could not afford to accept an unpaid internship?

- Yes
- No

Q18:

Please indicate the degree of financial hardship you experienced (or will be experiencing in doing an unpaid internship)

- 1 = not at all a financial hardship
- 2 = some assistance needed
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = some financial hardship
- 5 = significant financial hardship

Q19: Did you have financial support to cover your expenses while you were in an internship?

- Yes
- No, go to Q21

Q20:

What was the source of the support?

- Parents/guardian/family
- Loan
- Other

Q21:

Do you feel your internship will be helpful in obtaining a job after your graduation?

- Yes
- No

Q22:

Have you had job interviews as a result of your internship?

- Yes
- No

Q23:

Have you had job offers as a result of your internship?

- Yes
- No

Q24:

Please share any perceptions about how an internship helped/may help you obtain a job in your major.

Q25:

Please share any perceptions about how a lack of internship in your major hindered/may hinder you from getting a job in the arts, entertainment, or broadcasting field.

Q26: In appreciation of your participation, you may choose to have your name entered to receive one of four \$25 gift cards. Gift card recipients will be selected at random from among all completed survey respondents. Would you like to participate?

- Yes if yes go to Q27
- NO

Q27:

Name and address, e-mail address

Thank you for your time!