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"Enhancing your Internship Program development"

Dave Keehn, Ph.D.
Professor of Christian Ministries, Biola University
david.s.keehn@biola.edu

Abstract

Building upon previous research, this Professional Development seminar seeks to present key aspects of various internship models that will produce higher rates of self-reported vocational preparedness in full-time vocational ministry leaders. Additional recommendations will also be made for church leaders and the students to enhance the internship to provide a Realistic Job Preview, launching a new ministry leader into effective and healthy ministry tenure. A time to workshop your internship program's expectations will be provided.

One goal of internships is an increase in a student's ability to apply theory in real-world context, creating an understanding of realistic vocational demands through experiential pedagogy.[1] In a 2008 survey of Christian higher education institutions in North America, 74% of the participating schools reported using "several courses to develop ministry skills, with the internship as an opportunity to deepen the development of these skills."[2] There is a wide variety of field education models used in institutions of Christian higher. Each internship model varies in the amount of time participating in field education and in the ministry competencies students are required to master, yet all seek to accomplish the same learning outcome: to equip a student to vocationally lead a ministry in a church or para-church context. Internships play a potentially significant role in preparing students to thrive in their future ministry roles as research has provided evidence that students who do not receive Realistic Job Previews are more likely to experience job turnover—or worse, ministry burnout.[3]

Enhancing Internships is about matching a student's field education experience with the realities of the ministry context to best vocationally prepare students, thus producing a Realistic Job Preview. This paper is based on research study conducted previously that compared the Immersive and Concurrent internship experiences to determine which model provided higher rates of self-reported preparedness for vocational ministry and operated as a Realistic Job Preview through higher rates of overlap between self-reported learning activities during the internship and vocational work activities.

Building upon Previous Research

Previous research into Career Development has led to the identification of the important role Realistic Job Previews (RJPs) have in the shaping of vocational expectations in the career choice process. RJPs are part of both Super's crystallization stage and Tiedeman's period of anticipation. "RJPs are defined as programs, materials, and/or presentations that provide applicants with realistic and balanced (positive and negative) information about a job."[4] While most RJPs are directly connected to a work environment, provided to new hires, it has been theorized that a college internship is a type of RJP and provides benefits of quicker transitions from the classroom to the work-place environments. Various research studies have identified potential mediating factors of RJPs: met expectations, role clarity, employer perceived as honest, and the influence of vocational self-concept in perceived fit to occupation and employer.[5]

The new employment orientations that include Realistic Job Previews (RJP) have demonstrated two key benefits in career development. First, RJPs are positively correlated with reducing turnover of new hires.[6] RJPs provide role-clarity, i.e. correct expectations, leading to reduced role conflict, and greater "satisfaction, performance, and commitment."[7] Therefore, new hires are able to temper their expectations of the job to match realistic outcomes; this translated to perceived value of the training received. It was hypothesized that an internship would serve as a "pre-hire" new employment orientation, providing many of the same benefits.

To test the hypothesis, in 2015 I compared two primary internship models: were Concurrent and Immersive. The Concurrent internship model requires a minimal amount of

hours, 8 to 10 hours per week, to allow for the student to continue coursework; while the Immersive internship model reduces classroom time to a minimum to allow students to fully engage in the work environment through "full time" placement. Summer internship is an intensive experience that is immersive in nature but shorter than an Immersive semester. As the summer ministry activities are usually unique and different from school year activities, these summer internships may not resemble the vocational ministry position nor provide a Realistic Job Preview. Therefore, only Concurrent and Immersive internships were studied. The self-reported levels of preparedness received through the internship experience will be related to expectations met in the vocational ministry position, thus demonstrating whether the internship operated as a Realistic Job Preview.

Analysis was conducted comparing the samples from recent graduates (within 2 years) from schools with similar internship models (Concurrent, Immersive), to gauge the new hires' experiences and clarity of vocational preparation from the internship. These tests revealed no statistical difference regarding the vocational preparation scores amongst graduates from similar internship models. Therefore, it was deemed appropriate to combine the participants from different schools but similar internship models for this research. Information was gathered through identification of the alumni's participation with a field education model and activities, and current ministry activities in terms of priority and frequency. You can read about this completed research in the 2015 Fall edition of the Journal of Youth Ministry.[13]

The research demonstrated that the two internship models have much in common, attesting to the strength of the effectiveness of field education as an instructional pedagogy. First, the data revealed there was no statistical difference between students' self-reported

vocational preparedness from coursework from either internship model. Students' scores indicated they believed they were adequately prepared by the academic coursework (classroom instruction and assignments, not including the internship) for the demands of their current vocational ministry position. This was an important finding to isolate the effects of the internship experience apart from the overall academic program for ministry training. As hypothesized, students from both field education models agree that the coursework, apart from the internship, prepared them for vocational ministry. This finding speaks to the strong instructional qualities from all the institutions involved in the study but further emphasizes that the field education model utilized may be a significant factor in the vocational preparedness of ministry students.

The survey also sought to identify the role of prior ministry experience, apart from the internship, in vocational preparation. Participants from both internship models participated in additional ministry experiences, besides the internship requirements. The Concurrent internship students had an average of 2.37 ministry experiences, which similarly compared to an average of 2.7 ministry experiences for students in the Immersive model. For further analysis, the participants were placed into two groups based on the number of yearlong ministry experiences they reported: 0 - 2 ministry experiences (n = 37, m = 3.77) and 3 - 5+ ministry experiences (n = 48, m = 3.94). There was no statistical difference between the groups in the means of students' self-reported vocational preparedness in regard to the number of ministry experiences they participated with in addition to the internship.

This finding speaks to the integrity of all the institutions surveyed to encourage ministry service in addition to the required internships. Interestingly, the eight respondents who had

four ministry experiences reported the second lowest vocational preparedness score (m = 3.7), which may indicate it is the amount of time invested in a specific ministry, rather than varied but shorter ministry commitments, that may yield higher feelings of vocational preparedness.

The internship models produced similar results in students who pursued vocational ministry after graduation. While 70% of Immersive interns (*n* = 35) compared to 50% of Concurrent interns (*n* = 19) pursued a vocational ministry position, no statistically significant difference between the two internship models' graduates and the decision to pursue a vocational ministry position. The qualitative responses provided a varied number of reasons for not pursuing vocational ministry. Some of the repeated responses could be classified in the following themes: calling outside of vocational ministry (*n* = 10), problems (i.e. lack of funds for desired position, burnout) (*n* = 7), marriage (*n* = 5), unsure of calling to ministry (*n* = 5), overseas missions (*n* = 4), and needing more graduate studies for vocational ministry (*n* = 3). Ministry graduates choose not to pursue vocational ministry positions for a variety of reasons, but the field education model does not appear to be one of the primary reasons, as of the 10 participants who pursued a career other than vocational ministry, an equal number (*n* = 5) came from each internship model.

From the researcher-designed questions related to spiritual integration of the internship, the data revealed there was no statistical difference in scores related to spiritual training, spiritual authority, or hardship expectations between the groups of respondents from the two field education models. This is important to note that both primary internship models utilized by schools of Christian higher education can incorporate spiritual conversations and dynamics for vocational ministry training.

Lastly, the comments received from students of each model were similar in the internship's perceived benefit of exposing the student to the realistic demands of vocational ministry. After analyzing the statements given in the survey, it was determined 55% of the respondents from Concurrent models and 62% of respondents from Immersive models made comments relating to the benefit of "hands on learning" or specifically to aspects of the internship operating as a Realistic Job Preview (RJP). This reflected the results of previous research: internships of both models allow for opportunities to try on a vocational career and apply knowledge learned in the classroom. However, while both internship models provide some exposure to an RJP, this study sought to understand if there were significant differences in levels of vocational preparation between the Concurrent and Immersive internship models.

The significant differences between the internship models were that the Immersive field education more consistently stimulated a Realistic Job Preview through higher matching levels of vocational activities, per lower difference scores, and has higher scores of self-reported vocational preparation. A *t*-test comparing the overall self-reported vocational preparedness scores found the Immersive model reported higher scores of self-reported preparedness for vocational ministry (m = 4.0, *sd* = .61) than the Concurrent model (m = 3.68, *sd* = .66). The difference between these means is statistically significant at the .05 level.[14] This demonstrates Immersive field education graduates had statistically significant higher vocational preparedness scores than graduates from Concurrent field education models.

The matching levels of field education activities' priority and frequency to vocational activities' priority and frequency was measured in the difference of reported scores; this provided analysis of the internship's functioning as a Realistic Job Preview (RJP). The lower the

score of difference indicated a greater match of an RJP. There was no statistical difference overall between the two field education models and levels of activity matching scores; however, when measuring the upper and lower quartiles there were some statistical differences between the internship models. While the Concurrent Internship model represented 43% (*n* = 38) of the total respondents compared to 57% of Immersive Internship model respondents (*n* = 50), the Concurrent Internship only had 14% (*n* = 2) of respondents in the upper quartile in Activity Frequency scores (*n* = 14). A Chi-square test for Independence revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the patterns of activity frequency of Concurrent and Immersive field education at the .01 level.[15]

Interestingly, there was no statistical difference between upper and lower quartiles of Activity Priority scores. Therefore, the Immersive field education does stimulate a Realistic Job Preview through higher matching levels of vocational activities, per lower difference scores, but not in vocational priorities. This may be due to the amount of time a student is in an Immersive field education experience, therefore being able to provide more opportunities to practice the vocational activities expected. Yet both internship models expose students to the priority ministry activities. In other words, students in both internship models see what would be expected of them in vocational ministry, but students may be able to more frequently practice the ministry activity in an Immersive internship experience.

A second potential reason for Immersive field education graduates to have statistically significant higher perceptions of vocational preparedness relates to mentoring opportunities. Previous research has established that mentors play a significant role in the internship process.[16] There was a statistically significant difference in the field education models regarding

the amount of time in intentional mentoring an intern received. The Immersive model reported greater amount of time of weekly intentional mentoring (m = 3.0, *sd* = .97) than the Concurrent model (m = 2.61, *sd* = .82).

Through the analysis of sub-groups of the number of hours intentional of mentoring received (none – less than 1 hour (*n* = 27, m = 3.44) and 1 – 5+ hours (*n* = 58, m = 4.06)), it was discovered there was a statistically significant difference found in the level of vocational preparedness between the groups of mentoring received.[17] The mentoring an intern receives during the field education experience makes a significant impact upon vocational preparedness. The Immersive field education model allowed for more time in mentoring than the Concurrent due to the amount of time available to the participants, which contributes to Immersive field education having higher self-reported vocational preparedness.

Beyond the hypotheses of this research study, additional tests were conducted to analyze new concepts related to vocational preparation. First, a comparison was conducted to measure the Realistic Job Preview of those who are currently serving in a different ministry area than their internship area of ministry. There was no statistical difference between the mean differences of the ministry activity frequency for interns who had a different area of ministry internship than their current areas of ministry service (*n* = 32, m = 9.66), than for interns who are serving in the same area of ministry as during the internship (*n* = 24, m = 8.5). This finding was deemed important, as the ministry skills developed during an internship seem to be transferable to various areas of ministry service. This transferability may be in part due to the fact that the activities of ministry are in many ways the same as those in other areas of ministry in the church (e.g. teaching, developing volunteers, attending staff meetings, etc.).

Recommendations for Enhancing Internship Program

1) Enhance Intentional Coaching Opportunities (instead of simple one-on-one "check-ins")

This research confirmed, supervisors who gave time to intentionally mentor interns provided the intern with a greater feeling of vocational preparation. Therefore, a key task during the preparation for the internship semester is to determine who might be the potential supervisor and measure the level of desire he or she has for mentoring ministry students. Multiple students in this study commented on how much they valued the mentoring they received from their ministry supervisors. The key factor is the supervisor's attitude about the internship's purpose: Is the primary beneficiary of the internship to be the ministry site or the student who is preparing for future vocational ministry? If the intern is treated as a laborer for the current ministry location, then the student will be valued for the service he or she can provide now rather than being seen as an emerging ministry leader to be trained for future ministry opportunities at a potential cost (in time and resources) to the current ministry site.

One student's comment from the survey stands out, imploring churches to take seriously the role they (the ministry site) play in providing quality internship for ministry training.

> If anything, churches need to [treat] internships with a high level of responsibility and commitment, just as the Word of God speaks in the Pastoral Epistles . . . [with] a high level of meaning in internships and its purpose. . . Internships need to be highly viewed and the program directors need to express that [value] with [the] interns and [to] organizations for the sake of all individuals of the church body.

This speaks against the view that interns are simply "cheap labor" and should rather be seen and treated as emerging leaders within the ministry.

Prior research has demonstrated the single most impactful person for the intern to talk to is a mentor, who becomes a guide in the journey to vocational ministry.

> The role of the [supervisor] becomes that of a guide who works through the problems of ministry with the [intern]. The idea of a praxis model which relates input to in-ministry experience is the type of "whole life" approach to training which is needed for ministry. The complex problems facing people in ministry today are not going to be solved by a "how-to" seminar. The real need is for a problem-posing approach which joins the [supervisor] and the [intern] in dialogue and ministry within the context of ministry.[18]

The role of a mentor is different than that of intentional coaching. A mentor was usually someone in the young ministry leader's life in a long-lasting relationship but was not necessarily equipped to help the young ministry leader navigate challenging dynamics. Mentors give encouragement and perspective with occasional training, while intentional coaching often focuses on self-perceived needs and challenges; a coach develops new awareness, and skill sets to help the young leader overcome. This may bring encouragement but often results in an "Ah Ha" moment of clarity. Mentors need to be developed to accomplish the intentional mentoring that a young ministry leader needs.

2) Enhance Participation in Vocational Ministry Activities (instead of busy work)

First, the field education experience should seek to give the intern multiple opportunities to try the vocational ministry activities while under the supervision of a mentor to simulate a Realistic Job Preview. This process can be aided by school faculty helping the intern to select the ministry site that will allow him or her to practice the activities of the desired vocational ministry area. This discovery may occur through the sampling of various ministries;

however, it is important to remember the amount of additional ministry experiences is not the key element, but rather sufficient time experiencing the ministry is.

Institutions of higher education should restructure competencies around real-world vocational practices in an environment that simulates the expectations and pressures of the job ministry graduates will be required to perform under. To accommodate the amount of time to focus upon ministry activities during the internship, institutions of higher education should seek to "free up" the intern academically, as much as possible, to invest time into the field education experience.

Students positively commented on the freedom to choose the focus and location of their internship. One student stated in detail,

> The great measure of freedom I was given in choosing where/how to fulfill the internship requirement ended up being hugely beneficial, as my location and the way in which I was able to set up the internship (through my local church) might have been the most important factor in making the internship experience as a whole the most transformational endeavor of my life thus far.

While students should be allowed to choose a ministry setting for their internship, assisting the placement of the student to match his or her vocational goals with the ministry site is necessary to provide a Realistic Job Preview and must be a priority for faculty involved with the field education programs. Therefore, the academic advising of the student is key to develop an understanding of the student's passions and needs for the internship experience, to determine whether key ministry activities can be practiced in the chosen ministry site.

Previous research has supported the need for students to reflect, integrate, and network with other students during the internship, even if no "classroom" time is provided.

Assignments should assist students in the reflection upon the ministry context as well as mastery of ministry competencies. Students commented on the benefits of various reflective assignments, specifically highlighting the encouragement and accountability provided using journals and student cohorts. The utilization of video conference calls can help provide cohort support for students who are separated due to internship locations. Lastly the processing of expectations for vocational preparation can be fulfilled through a follow-up course, just as pre-internship classes and an orientation can prepare students for the field education experience

This research demonstrated the ministry activities (i.e. skills) are transferable amongst vocational ministry positions. However, the unique nature of some ministries may emphasize different competencies or activities; therefore, greater assessment should be given to understand the required skills of the call to ministry for each student.

3) Enhance Preparation of students for the internship

The challenge to overcome is to make sure Internship will be a Realistic Job Preview, instead of simply satisfying a graduation requirement. Students are pragmatic and may choose the path of least resistance rather than finding an internship opportunity that will truly enhance their understanding of vocational calling. Students must consider if the internship experience will provide opportunities to practice the ministry activities that they will be expected to perform in their future vocational ministry position. The key practices faculty of higher educations must consider to: (1) help students choose wisely and then, (2) prepare for the internship experience. Therefore, the focus of preparation should be placed upon making a plan that is implemented

over all the academic years prior to the field education requirement. This journey should begin the student's first year at college and continue to prepare the student for their internship.

Year 1. During the freshman year, or first year of declaring their major, students should begin academic advising that provides an outline of key ministry courses which will provide a broadening knowledge of ministry practices. The student should also undertake various personality and compatibility assessments to discover their skills and temperaments that match different ministry contexts. Lastly, during this first-year students should connect to a local church to find encouragement and service opportunities within a faith community. The goal of the first year is to grow in an understanding of personal strengths that relate to vocational ministry.

Year 2. In the student's second year, intentional investment of time and energy into a selected ministry should be the focus. A student should build upon the previous year's discoveries of personal strengths and passions to experience initial ministry leadership opportunities. Faculty and church practitioners can function as key mentors in this stage, introducing and sponsoring students to appropriate ministries. Students should not feel limited to this initial ministry experience but rather seek to understand who they are and how their gifts and strengths are utilized in this specific ministry. Students should seek other ministry exposure through short-term commitments that liken ministry experiences to "speed dating" – trying on a ministry leadership to determine if more time is worthy to be invested. By the end of the second-year students should complete the foundational ministry courses and, through academic advising, seek two or three key electives, to be taken in years three and four, to expand their ministry understanding. The goal of this second year is to gain direction into

specific types of ministry contexts the student feels called to join; this will help ensure the future internship will allow a Realistic Job Preview.

Year 3. This is a crucial year in preparing for the internship requirement. Based on the previous years' discoveries in ministry experiences, a student should volunteer, if possible, at the potential ministry site in which he or she desires to perform the internship. A key element to determine prior to this initial volunteer year is the level of desire the potential supervisor has for mentoring ministry students. Would the intern be treated as an emerging ministry leader or merely cheap labor to produce ministry programming? The goal of this year, if the ministry site offers the potential of mentoring, is to build trust and a relationship with the ministry so that when the internship experience begins, the student is known and given authority to practice important ministry activities, such as teaching and leadership development. If the student is unable to participate with the ministry during year 3 due to location limitations, the student should seek to involve him or herself in the ministry as soon as possible. For example, perhaps the student can volunteer during the summer prior to a Fall semester internship experience to lengthen the time to learn the ministry's philosophy and practices. The student should also receive an internship orientation from the Faculty Internship Coordinator, to insure the student understands all assignments, requirements and procedures to be accomplished during the field education experience. The goal of the third year is to confidently choose an internship site that will allow the student to practice the ministry activities that correlate to the vocational goals of the student. Students must ask the tough questions to ensure the internship will be a Realistic Job Preview through the mentoring received (discussing expectations and potential struggles) and the prioritized ministry activities can be practiced.

Year 4. If this is the academic year in which the internship requirement is to be fulfilled, students should intentionally engage in all ministry opportunities as well as reach out to fellow students for encouragement. When the internship is completed, the Faculty Internship Coordinator should facilitate debriefing experiences, whether in a follow-up course or informal mentoring occasions. Resume crafting and interview skills should be developed along with other career counseling offered by the academic institution to facilitate the vocational ministry job search. The goal of this last year is for students to leverage their internship experience into networking connections that can lead to job interviews and vocational placements. In other words, students finish their internship experience with a high level of vocational preparedness leading to a quicker ministry placement.

4) Enhance the Internship Experience

3 Players in a Successful Internship Experience.

The internship experience is effective in preparing a student for future ministry leadership through the cooperation between three parties: student, ministry site supervisor, and the faculty coordinator. Each has important responsibilities to fulfill to accomplish the equipping of the intern. It is important to understand the expectations that accompany each responsibility.

1) Student: The student is responsible to complete the ministry tasks entrusted to him or her by their field supervisor, as well the academic assignments for course credit. This will require focused time to accomplish the ministry responsibilities and develop the ministry competencies desired while still attending to school load issues, this balance is not “50/50” but rather should be viewed as the integration of all their education. The “learning on the job” is

highly beneficial only when it is coupled with meaningful feedback that allows for encouragement and growth. Practical experience encountered alone leaves a student frustrated and confused, as they have no perspective to measure themselves against.

2) Ministry site supervisor: An appropriate ministry site can be either a church, para-church ministry or non-profit organization. While a ministry may be large enough to employ a director of internships, for the purpose of this internship program, the intern supervisor should be the director or pastor overseeing the specialized area of ministry in which the student will serve. For example, a student seeking to become a youth pastor would serve in a youth ministry (of a church or para-church) and the ministry site supervisor would be the youth pastor/director of that specific ministry. As the practitioner will observe, shape and provide feedback most often, it is appropriate for institution of higher education to view this person, not a "director of internships", as the ministry site supervisor. The role of the [supervisor] becomes that of a guide who works through the problems of ministry with the intern. The idea of a praxis model which relates input to in-ministry experience is the type of "whole life" approach to training which is needed for ministry.

3) Faculty coordinator: To empower the important role a ministry site supervisor, a faculty coordinator will support and train the supervisors and students alike. Through foundational courses taught by experienced faculty students are provided a strong theoretical understanding of ministry, and through academic advising and personal encounters, the faculty coordinator will help the student process his or her calling to vocational ministry. During this time, the faculty coordinator will begin to guide the student to the various ministries that will

provide that student with the most realistic vocation ministry experience to match his or her calling to ministry.

The faculty coordinator will also seek to develop a strong partnership with each ministry site supervisor. This will be accomplished in two primary ways. First, through increased communication, the faculty coordinator will seek to provide proper placements of students, encouragement, instruction, and problem solving of any issues that arise. The faculty coordinator will lead the interview and orientation training for all supervisors, as well as conduct a site visit once during the semester. The faculty coordinator will also seek to provide resources and training for each ministry site supervisor to empower his or her continued growth as a ministry leader. Finally, the faculty coordinator will maintain communication with each intern and ministry cohort through monthly conference calls and emails. This will assist the faculty coordinator in grading assignments and student advisement during the internship experience.

Elements that contribute to a successful internship.

Relationship with supervisor: The relationship between the supervisor and the intern has been demonstrated as the most significant variable to the success of the internship. Research by Housten Heflin states, "The difference between an average and a great internship experience may be the relationship that an intern develops with their supervisor"[19] . Heflin pointed out the significant elements associated with a close supervisor relationship were frequency of meetings (at least weekly), practicing multiple weekly spiritual disciplines with supervisor, and theological reflections with supervisor. The frequency of training meetings was

of significance to Heflin, and it was shown to be the most important variable to developing a close relationship. The benchmark of at least weekly meetings that include both ministry training and spiritual disciplines are most advantageous. During the weekly meeting various components were discussed to form a transformation triad. The components Heflin identified as most beneficial were: personal growth, ministry skills development, and spiritual discipline practices and reflection. It is important to remember that an intern is first a college student dealing with the pressures of academics, friends and family expectations, and stress from lack of financial resources. The focus on personal growth in life's concerns will help the intern grow as the person of God as they do the work of God.

Student-developed learning objectives. An additional element that contributes to a successful internship is the provision for student developed learning objectives. Empowering students to take ownership of their educational journey is important to create ministry leaders who take initiative and risks. In addition to the academic competencies students will be evaluated by, ministry site supervisors should work with each intern to craft three specific goals that will be used to assess the student's success in ministry preparation. These goals should relate to the specific contextual needs of the ministry site as well as the giftings of the intern. The learning objectives can relate to inquires a student may ponder concerning ministry or professional development that will position an intern for future employment. The key is for the student to take the lead in shaping these learning objectives in partnership with the ministry site supervisor.

Conclusion

A summary of actions to be implemented by institutions of Christian higher education seeking to vocationally train students for ministry include the following practices. First, the field education experience should seek to give the intern multiple opportunities to try the vocational ministry activities while under the supervision of a mentor to simulate a Realistic Job Preview. This process can be aided by school faculty helping the intern to select the ministry site that will allow him or her to practice the activities of the desired vocational ministry area. This may look like a process of discovery through the sampling of various ministries; however, it is important to remember the amount of additional ministry experiences is not the key element, but rather sufficient time experiencing the ministry is.

To provide a true Realistic Job Preview of vocational ministry, students can be provided strength/skill assessment tests and guidance through conversations with faculty mentors. In addition, the faculty can help students choose a ministry setting for their internship, assisting the placement of the student to match his or her vocational goals with the ministry site. Therefore, the academic advising of the student is key to develop an understanding of the student's passions and needs for the internship experience.

Previous research has supported the need for students to reflect, integrate, and network with other students, even if no "classroom" time is provided.[20] The utilization of cohorts that connect through video conference calls can help provide support for students who are separated due to internship locations. Assignments should assist students in the reflection upon the ministry context as well as mastery of ministry competencies. Lastly the processing of

expectations for vocational preparation can be fulfilled through a follow-up course, just as pre-internship classes and an orientation can prepare students for the field education experience.

Academic institutions should also invest in the development of quality mentors, as the impact of supervisors was again supported through research. The partnership between the student, practitioner/supervisor, and faculty coordinator cannot be underestimated; therefore, a clear explanation of the expectations is necessary. This can be accomplished through face-to-face interactions prior the internship being initiated, orientations, and even the provision of a manual. The on-going relationship with the site supervisor is enhanced through communication, utilizing emails, site visits, and on-campus invitations.

Previous research has shown experiential learning models (internships, service learning, etc.) increase vocational skills. Internships provide information regarding vocational expectations, simulating a greater Realistic Job Preview and yields graduates with higher self-reported scores of vocational preparation. While many factors contribute to an institution's selection of a specific field education model and its programmatic requirements, efforts should be made to provide ministry students with as much time as possible to be mentored while engaging in a realistic job preview of vocational ministry.

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[7] Barksdale, Jr. et al., "Impact of Realistic Job Previews," 126.

[13] Dave Keehn, Leveraging Internships: A Comparison of Ministry Internship Programs as Realistic Job Previews to Prepare for Vocational Ministry. *Journal of Youth Ministry*, 14, no.1 2015: 54–77.

[14] $t_{(83)} = -2.3$, $p = .024$, Cohen's $d = .40$

[15] $X^2_{(1)} = 7.33$, $p = .007$, Cramer's Phi = 0.36), with a medium effect size.

[16] Heflin, "Supervision and Success."

Selzer "Effectiveness of Seminary's Training."

[17] $t_{(83)} = -4.5$, $p = .000$, Cohen's $d = 1.08$). The effect size is large.

[18] from an unpublished class handout, Wheaton College Graduate School

[19] Heflin, H. (2010). Supervision and success in youth ministry internships. Paper presented at AYME conference in Louisville, Kentucky, October 23, 2010. (p, 7)

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