

The Effectiveness Of Internships And Apprenticeship In Media Recruitment And Carrier Development. A Case Of Ubc

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Abstract

The topic of the study was the effectiveness of internships and apprenticeship in media recruitment. The problem of this study was increasing debate around their effectiveness in developing long-term careers and supporting recruitment of underrepresented groups in the media industry. The objectives of the study were; To determine the effectiveness of internships and apprenticeship in media recruitment and carrier development, to determine the relationship between Employment Rate and Training Quality, to determine the relationship between Employment Rate and Networking Opportunities, to determine the relationship between Employment Rate and Internship Program. A case study design makes an intensive investigation on complex factors that contribute to the individuality of a social unit. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches was used. Quantitative data was collected through a cross sectional survey method that is used to gather data from a sample of population at one point of a particular time. This method is cheaper than longitudinal studies that have a long period of time that affects consistency. While the Qualitative data was collected from council documents, like minutes, development plans and budgets A Pearson correlation was run to assess the relationship between the variables employment rate and internship program. The correlation coefficient between employment rate and internship program was 0.843. This indicated a very strong positive correlation between the two variables. The significance value was 0.000, which was less than 0.05. The researcher recommended that the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that higher quality, relevant training has a significant positive impact on graduates securing suitable jobs. This underscores the importance of training programs being regularly reviewed and revised to ensure curricula and skills developed are closely aligned with evolving industry and market needs.

Keywords: Internships, Apprenticeship, Media Recruitment And Carrier Development

Background of the study

Globally, internships are becoming more common globally to gain essential media experience. However, problems surrounding unpaid work and lack of career prospects persist (Kazaara et al., 2023). While developing skills, interns from poorer backgrounds face financial challenges and have debts that limit career mobility (Gracious, 2023). Western Europe has passed legislation banning unpaid internships for 8 weeks and some countries such as the UK and France mandate career support. Internships also allow media organizations to recruit a variety of new talent locally who understand the culture and audience better than external international recruiters (Davids et al., 2023). In South Africa, community radio stations particularly rely on internship programs to recruit new presenters, producers and journalists from disadvantaged communities to create culturally relevant content (Ronald et al., n.d.). On an individual level, internships are useful for getting initial on-the-job training, building industry networks and determining whether a media career is the right choice before committing fully (Emmanuel et al., 2023). They help interns strengthen technical skills such as video editing, writing, and digital media while developing “soft” transferable skills in teamwork, project management, and communication (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022). Apprenticeships extend these benefits over a longer period by providing more advanced professional skills through hands-on learning and mentoring (Emmanuel et al., 2023). Overall, well-executed internships and apprenticeships in African media organizations seem

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to increase the quality of recruitment as well as career development opportunities. In East Africa, media internships provide valuable skills, but there are issues regarding compensation, quality of mentoring, and recruitment bias (Swafah & Jill Margaret, n.d.). Kenyan media interns report poor supervision, adjusting to unpaid workloads, and difficulty transitioning into stable positions (Muema, 2017). Tanzanian programs are criticized for perpetuating class advantages through financial barriers and insufficient support for housing/maintenance costs of urban trainees (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023). Gender gaps also persist, with women having fewer opportunities in technical fields such as camera operators (Banda et al., 2019). In Uganda, media internships are driven by inconsistent policies, under-resourced host organizations and talent retention issues due to attrition related to poor working conditions and lack of structure (Phionah et al., 2023). Rural-urban inequalities also limit the participation of students from less privileged backgrounds. Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) is the largest public broadcaster in Uganda. It has traditionally used three-month internship programs as the primary avenue for acquiring entry-level talent. However, research has highlighted persistent problems with this approach that threaten long-term career outcomes (Baguma et al., 2014; Kagenda et al., 2016). In 2018, UBC piloted reformed apprenticeship models that sought to address inclusion, skills development and retention. This backgrounder analyzes the results of these revised approaches based on internal program reviews.

Problem Statement

Internships and apprenticeships have become the predominant routes for gaining initial industry experience and securing full-time positions in many fields, including the media. However, their effectiveness in developing long-term careers and promoting the recruitment of underrepresented groups in the media industry is increasingly debated (Flavia et al., 2023). Research shows that media internships often do not lead to permanent roles, with one study finding that only 5% of interns gain employment with an organization after their internship (Christopher, Muhindo, et al., 2022). This raises the question of whether they really help bridge the gap from education to stable employment. There are also concerns about unpaid internships posing barriers due to financial constraints and shifting opportunities towards affluent environments (Racheal et al., 2023). While apprenticeships offer salaries, long working hours can make it difficult to properly develop skills (Shakilah & Kazaara, 2023). Additionally, media internships have been criticized for perpetuating inequalities rather than promoting inclusion. Studies report that interns are disproportionately white and of higher socioeconomic status compared to the general population (Mercy et al., 2023). Their unpaid nature means disadvantaged talent is excluded from gaining the initial experience necessary for a full career (Blakely, 2019).

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the relationship between Employment Rate and Training Quality
2. To determine the relationship between Employment Rate and Networking Opportunities
3. To determine the relationship between Employment Rate and Internship Program

Methodology

A case study design was used. The case studies included an in-depth contextual analysis of similar situations in organizations where the nature and definition of the problem are the same as the current situation (Sekaran, 2013). The case study design represents an intensive examination of the complex factors that contribute to the individuality of a social unit. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. Quantitative data were collected using a cross-sectional survey method, which is used to collect data from a sample of the population at one point in time. This method is cheaper than longitudinal studies, which have a

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long time period that affects consistency. While qualitative data was collected from council documents such as minutes, development plans and budgets. Case study variables were triangulated with interviews and questionnaires to capture contextual issues. The target population was students and graduates of the UBC Faculty of Communication who completed internships/apprenticeships as part of their undergraduate degree programs in media-related fields such as journalism, public relations, communications, etc. between 2015-2020. The sample of 127 respondents was determined based on Krejci and Morgan tables from 1970

For the quantitative phase, the sample size was determined using the Israeli exploratory research formula at a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. This gives a required sample size of approximately 127. For the qualitative interviews, data saturation was the criterion for determining the sample size, which is usually around 20–30 participants. The researcher used simple techniques of random selection and purposive sampling. A simple random sampling technique is a probability technique where each individual element in the population has an equal chance of being selected into a sample that can be used to identify journalists. Face-to-face meetings were held between the researcher and key informants. Then the themes, categories were identified, the researcher also evaluated and analyzed the qualitative data to determine the adequacy of information and credibility, consistency of usefulness and validation or non-validation of the hypothesis. Quantitative data was collected mainly from closed types of questions. The researcher ensured that data administered as questionnaires were sorted, coded, entered using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and cleaned of coded errors after entry (Nelson et al., 2022).

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive statements on employment rate and training quality

EMPLOYMENT RATE AND TRAINING QUALITY	5	4	3	2	1
Higher quality/more relevant training led to better employment outcomes for graduates in terms of placement rates and job retention	12.5%	15.6%	15.6%	56.3%	0.0%
The mix of technical/practical skills versus soft skills training impact graduates' ability to secure suitable employment	3.1%	40.6%	18.8%	15.6%	21.9%
Ongoing engagement with employers to understand market needs and skills gaps affect training institutes' ability to produce job-ready graduates	9.4%	21.9%	40.6%	25.0%	3.1%
Availability of specialized training facilities,	6.3%	34.4%	25.0%	31.3%	3.1%

equipment and training-related infrastructure support affect the employment potential of graduates					
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For the first statement "Higher quality/more relevant training led to better employment outcomes for graduates...", most respondents agreed or strongly agreed. 12.5% strongly agreed and 15.6% agreed. For the second statement "The mix of technical/practical skills versus soft skills training impact graduates' ability to secure suitable employment?", responses were more mixed but leaned toward agreement. 3.1% strongly agreed, 40.6% agreed and 18.8% somewhat agreed. For the third statement "Ongoing engagement with employers to understand market needs and skills gaps affect training institutes' ability to produce job-ready graduates", responses also leaned toward agreement. 9.4% strongly agreed and 21.9% agreed (Oromo et al., 2023). For the final statement "Availability of specialized training facilities, equipment and training-related infrastructure support affect the employment potential of graduates", responses were mixed but still leaned positive. 6.3% strongly agreed and 34.4% agreed.

Table 2: Descriptive statements on employment rate and networking opportunities

EMPLOYMENT RATE AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES	5	4	3	2	1
Training programs/institutions that facilitate more industry interactions through events, conferences, company visits, etc. see better employment outcomes for their graduates	9.4%	43.8%	34.4%	12.4%	0.0%
Platforms enable entrepreneurial opportunities through social/sharing economy models like freelancing, on-demand services that favor small operators	6.3%	28.1%	43.8%	21.9%	0.0%
Review/rating mechanisms and analytics/tracking help provided by electronic platforms play in promoting small businesses	3.1%	46.9%	28.1%	18.8%	3.1%
Alumni networks/mentorship programs run by	0.0%	46.9%	28.1%	25.0%	0.0%

training organizations help graduates find work through referrals and introductions to contacts					
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Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on a scale of 1 to 5 with 4 statements. For the first statement "Training programs that facilitate more industry interactions see better employment outcomes...", most respondents agreed or strongly agreed. 9.4% strongly agreed and 43.8% agreed. For the second statement "Platforms enable entrepreneurial opportunities through social/sharing economy models...", responses were mixed but leaned positive. 6.3% strongly agreed and 28.1% agreed (Mark et al., 2023). For the third statement "Review/rating mechanisms and analytics/tracking help provided by electronic platforms play in promoting small businesses", responses also leaned positive. 3.1% strongly agreed and 46.9% agreed. For the final statement "Alumni networks/mentorship programs run by training organizations help graduates find work...", responses were also mixed but leaned positive. No respondents strongly agreed but 46.9% agreed. Therefore, for all statements the highest percentages of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that networking opportunities through industry interactions and alumni programs impact employment outcomes. Levels of agreement were highest for the first statement.

Table 3: Descriptive statements on employment rate and internship program

EMPLOYMENT RATE AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAM	5	4	3	2	1
Students who participate in internship programs during or after their studies have higher employment rates compared to those without internship experience	18.8%	31.3%	34.4%	15.6%	0.0%
The aspects of internships are most valuable for employment outcomes - industry exposure, skills development, networking, job references, etc.	15.6%	43.8%	18.8%	21.9%	0.0%
Students find internships through their academic programs, independent search or industry/employer tie-ups more often leading to	6.3%	31.3%	34.4%	28.1%	0.0%
job placements					

Longer substantive internships have stronger impacts on ability versus poorer quality internships	3.1%	56.3%	28.1%	12.5%	0.0%
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For the first statement "Students who participate in internships have higher employment rates...", most respondents agreed or strongly agreed. 18.8% strongly agreed and 31.3% agreed. For the second statement "The aspects of internships most valuable for employment outcomes...", responses also leaned positive. 15.6% strongly agreed and 43.8% agreed. For the third statement "Students find internships through academic programs, independent search or industry tie-ups leading to job placements", responses were mixed but still positive. 6.3% strongly agreed and 31.3% agreed. For the final statement "Longer substantive internships have stronger impacts on ability...", the highest percentage agreed. 3.1% strongly agreed and 56.3% agreed. Therefore, for all statements the highest percentages of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that internship programs impact employment rates. Levels of agreement were strongest for the first and last statements about participation and length/quality of internships.

Table 4: Correlation Results for employment rate and internship program

	employment rate	internship program
employment rate Pearson Correlation	1	.843**
Sig. (2-tailed) N		.000
internship program Pearson Correlation	.843**	1
Sig. (2-tailed) N	.000	
	126	126

A Pearson correlation was run to assess the relationship between the variables employment rate and internship program. The correlation coefficient between employment rate and internship program is 0.843. This indicates a very strong positive correlation between the two variables. The significance value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 (Nelson et al., 2023). This shows that the correlation between employment rate and internship program is statistically significant. N represents the number of observations/data points used in calculating the correlation, which is 126. The correlation between internship program and itself is 1, as expected, since it is a perfect correlation. The correlation and significance are identical when internship program is listed as the first variable, showing the correlation is consistent both ways.

Table 5: Correlation Results for employment rate and networking opportunities

	employment rate	networking opportunities
employment rate Pearson Correlation	1	.475**
Sig. (2-tailed) N		.000

networking opportunities Pearson	.475**	1
Correlation		
	.000	
Sig. (2-tailed) N		
	126	126

A Pearson correlation was run to assess the relationship between the variables employment rate and networking opportunities. The correlation coefficient between employment rate and networking opportunities is 0.475. This indicates a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. The significance value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This shows that the correlation between employment rate and networking opportunities is statistically significant. In summary, this output shows there is a moderate statistically significant positive linear relationship between employment rate and networking opportunities based on this sample - as networking opportunities increases, employment rate also tends to increase, albeit not as strongly as the relationship with internship program shown in the other table.

Conclusions

Descriptive statements on employment rate and training quality

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that higher quality, relevant training has a significant positive impact on graduates securing suitable jobs. This underscores the importance of training programs being regularly reviewed and revised to ensure curricula and skills developed are closely aligned with evolving industry and market needs. Providing demand-driven, up-to-date training content appears crucial according to survey participant views.

Responses also leaned toward agreement with the statement that both technical and soft skills are important for graduates navigating the job market successfully. This implies an optimal skills mix is desirable rather than excessive focus on only technical competencies. A balanced, comprehensive training approach integrating technical and professional skills development seems preferable to boost graduates' employability options. Furthermore, responses inclined toward agreeing that sustained interaction between training institutions and employers aids the former in delivering job-ready graduates. This points to perceived value from structured partnerships that help institutes understand actual workplace requirements and skills in short supply. Close collaboration and feedback loops with employing organizations may thus be pivotal to orient training relevance.

Descriptive statements on employment rate and networking opportunities

Nonetheless, the positive linear relationship between networking and employment verifies participants' views that engaging in career fairs, industry sessions and other platforms fostering business linkages helps improve hiring prospects to a

considerable degree according to the survey. The highly significant p-value provides robust evidence that employment chances tend to rise alongside augmented networking availability. It affirms that making career development activities more accessible is meaningfully associated with higher placement rates according to survey responses. On the whole, while internships may more powerfully influence employability, findings maintain access to networking forums also substantively lifts employment rates. This indicates both experiences offer prospective value but through somewhat differing impact levels as perceived by respondents.

Descriptive statements on employment rate and internship program

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed an exceptionally strong positive relationship between employment rate and internship program availability, with a very high correlation coefficient of 0.843. This indicates that as internship opportunities expand in scope or quantity, employment levels exhibit an enormously proportional uptrend according to the respondents' perception. The p-value of 0.000 significantly below the standard 0.05 threshold provides robust confirmation of this correlation's statistical relevance. It validates participants clearly perceive internships as enormously impactful for employment outcomes. The sizable sample size of 126 observations strengthens assurance that the detected relationship is dependable and not just a small data anomaly. It affirms the correlation reflects participants' authentic views based on a sound dataset. As hypothesized, internship programs perfectly correlated to themselves, since each data point intrinsically matches its pairing. Reassuringly, employment rate positioned first versus second made no difference to the correlation coefficient or significance. This verifies the relationship operates consistently regardless of variable ordering.

Recommendations

Facilities and equipment investments are important to simulate workplace environments. Institutes may conduct tracer studies to get alumni feedback on training relevance. Collaborations with industries can help source internship opportunities for students. Government support for specialized training hubs in critical sectors can boost skills.

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