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Research Paper

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# The Effect of Internships on Career Preparedness as Perceived by Criminology Students

Arsamil A. Asta, Shandelle Rave P. Balmores, Jo-Ann P. Tindoy and Mechelle C. Gempesao, MSCJ

College of Criminal Justice Education, University of Mindanao, Philippines

ABSTRACT: Internships seek to develop a sense of professionalism, integrity, and adaptability in students, preparing them for various obstacles they may face in their future jobs. The study aimed to evaluate the impact of internships on the career preparedness of criminology students. The researcher seeks to identify significant patterns in collecting real-world expertise, measure internship preparedness through a survey and performance assessment, and determine the program's effectiveness in equipping students for profitable jobs and the criminal justice system. A total of 196 criminology interns previously enrolled in BAGSIK-TIKAS Class of 2023 at the University of Mindanao were surveyed using a total population technique since all population members were used as samples. The researchers used a correlational research method and obtained statistical data through quantitative research methods such as surveys and experiments. Data were analyzed and interpreted using the Mean and Pearson's r to fulfill its objectives. The study found that internships have a significant impact on the career readiness of criminology students. The correlation between these off-campus experiences and valuable professional networks, applicable classroom learning, and new talent pipelines for employers is very high. The study guides the University, criminology students, and intern coordinator to improve career choices and teaching methods for students to enhance their skills.

**KEYWORDS** - sense of professionalism, integrity, adaptability, real-world expertise, profitable jobs, criminal justice system, Criminology, Philippines

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Many lower-year students question the importance of internships, particularly those in their lower years, if the internship is essential to them, particularly in terms of job preparation, or if it is simply an extra course added to their units. They frequently ask whether internships impact them academically and in future employment. This study focused on previously enrolled criminology interns and their personal, academic, and future employment impacts (Hora, Chen, Parrott, & Her, 2019). Internships are extremely valuable for students transitioning from academic research to employment. They help develop practical skills, self-awareness, and the flexibility to excel in various professions within criminology (Wang & Lee, 2019). Off-campus experiences provide students with valuable professional experience, while networks offer teachers a platform to apply classroom knowledge to practical settings and give employers access to new talent. This often results in a mutually beneficial scenario known as the "win-win" situation

(Bailey, Hughes & Barr, 2000; National Association of Colleges & Employers, 2018a).

Following the relevant laws and regulations, specifically Republic Act 7722, also known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994," and the Commission en Banc (CEB) Resolution No. 849-2017 dated November 7, 2017, the "Revised Guidelines for Student Internship Program in the Philippines (SIPP) for all Programs" have been adopted. This document amends the previous CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 23, s. 2009, "Guidelines for Student

Internship Program in the Philippines (SIPP) for All Programs with Practicum Subject." The internship program is designed to allow students to supplement their academic learning with practical understanding, abilities, and appropriate behaviors. It also aims to help students gain hands-on expertise in a recognized Host Training Establishment.

On-the-job training is a valuable technique for skill expansion, particularly for jobs that require locally owned facilities and equipment and are relatively easy to learn. Effective communication among learners is crucial for productivity improvement in the workplace. Structured instruction methods with various units are used to enhance job performance abilities. Excellent student-tostudent communication is essential for skill expansion and job-specific competency development. This type of training is highly satisfactory for learners, who

gain respect and build lasting relationships with peers and superiors through facilitated learning. Thus, this kind of educational experience is also largely seen as being profitable to learners, educators, and employers as the benefit of internship programs is generally regarded as making them a significant kind of work-based education (McHugh, 2017; Rose, 2013; Silva, P., Lopes, B., Costa, M., Melo, A. I., Dias, G. P., Brito, E., & Seabra, D., 2018). The link between the independent variable, internships, and the

dependent variable, career preparedness, lies in the notion that the practical experience gained during internships can significantly contribute to students' overall readiness to enter the job market and succeed in their chosen careers (Galbraith, D. & Mondal, S., 2020). Offering an internship is one strategy to help students get ready for a job once they graduate, and it may give them the career development abilities they need to switch from being students to practicing professionals (Matthew, S. M., Taylor, R. M., & Ellis, R. A., 2019).

On the other hand, studying career preparedness is necessary to understand the ever-changing job market industry trends for life learning and adaptability (Fidan & Tuncel, 2019). Developing trends and talent gaps will enable academic institutions and employees in their procedures to modify programs and job hiring (Lock & Kelly, 2023).

Moreover, seeking a successful career provides valuable skills and knowledge, allowing individuals to be competitive in industries that involve new technologies. Achieving career preparedness will contribute to providing relevant education and training for decision-making in networking for career success and meeting the demands of the job (Bullen, Kordecki & Carpenter 2018).

A career involves multiple employment opportunities that lead to job satisfaction, while career information guides individuals toward the right career path. It involves a combination of personal skills, interests, and market needs, which shape the trajectory toward personal growth and contribution to society. Self-knowledge and awareness of industry trends are necessary to navigate the modern job market. Individuals can embark on meaningful professional journeys by weaving together education, experience, and flexibility. However, students often need more awareness of the many career options and the state of the labor market when choosing their jobs. A successful career, however, mainly depends on meticulous career planning, which entails logically selecting a career path and job from the available possibilities and implementing the proper career readiness measures (Md. Roknuzzaman & Shahanaz Akter, 2021).

However, career planning will be critical in acquiring the required skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies for long-term goals (Marciniak, J., Johnston, Steiner, & Hirschi, 2022). Students with successful careers are prepared with knowledge and abilities for professional development. These competencies come into play as students transition from classroom to workplace, allowing them to create value for companies (Carabali, J. Angel, M.F., & Velasco, M.I., 2023). Career decision-making involves a step-by-step process, including gathering information, choosing a career, and securing education and employment. Making informed choices is vital to achieve success in career selection. The process provides crucial information to shape the career path within a specific timeframe. Thus, it is essential to consider that career decision-making will result in time constraints and rational and intuitive significant decisions (Duru, 2022).

Internships play a crucial role in the education of criminology students. They bridge the gap between theory and practice, providing practical knowledge of crime and justice. Internships offer a unique experience that goes beyond what is taught in textbooks, developing practical skills that are highly sought after in the field. Graduates with internship experience are equipped with academic knowledge and practical skills essential for a criminology career.

They can navigate crime scenes, analyze data, and communicate effectively. This program also allows students to share their perspectives, explore the connections between their academic preparation and fieldwork, and collaborate with others to complete their internships. This teaches you to meet deadlines, work with others with different ideas, and evaluate your strengths and weaknesses (Careerlabs, 2023).

In-depth discussions on workplace culture, employee interactions, and leadership structure are all possible during an internship, preparing students for an easier transition into their first professional career (Maio, 2018). Internships can develop valuable transferrable skills like communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and adaptability, which are highly valued across industries. Additionally, internships can demonstrate a commitment to education experience and increase the likelihood of employment opportunities within the company. Thus, it will connect to open doors for job opportunities, allowing the students to gain practical knowledge in their resume (Wolfgran & Ahrens, 2022).

This study is mainly anchored by Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which is highly relevant when examining the impact of internships on the career preparedness of criminology students, supported by the human capital theory of Adam Smith and the experiential theory of David Kolb.

Social Learning Theory suggests that individuals learn from their social environment through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1977). Internships, as social learning experiences, expose criminology students to a professional community where they observe and model behaviors, receive feedback, and witness the consequences of actions. Internships are valuable for criminology students as they provide practical understanding and career preparedness. By observing and modeling experienced professionals'

behaviors, students can learn communication, decision-making, and procedural skills. The feedback received during internships helps students refine their skills and adjust their behaviors based on real-world assessments. This constructive feedback contributes significantly to the development of professional competencies.

Moreover, Adam Smith's Human capital theory is about the idea of humans increasing their productivity and efficiency through a greater focus on education and training (Smith, 1776). Participating in internships is a valuable investment for criminology students, providing practical skills, industry-specific knowledge, and handson experience (Almendarez, 2011). These experiences increase students' human capital, making them more competitive in the field and preparing them for successful criminal justice careers. This theory highlights the importance of internships as educational and career-building experiences.

Additionally, it is a form of on-the-job training for criminology students, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. This handson experience enhances their productivity and makes them more valuable contributors, offering criminology students the chance to build professional networks by interacting with practitioners, supervisors, and peers (Badoer, E., Holings, Y., & Chester, A., 2021). These connections become valuable assets in their future careers, contributing to the accumulation of social capital within the criminal justice community. In that context, education is deemed an investment, equipping individuals with knowledge and skills that improve their employability and productive capacities, thereby leading to higher earnings in the future (Trostel, Walker, & Woolley, 2002).

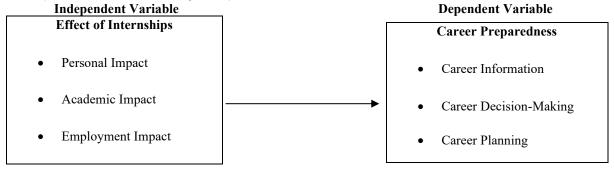


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. The independent variable is the Effect of Internships, and the dependent variable is career preparedness.

Furthermore, it is crucial to fill this study gap because it not only recognizes the unique difficulties experienced by criminology students but also illuminates the possible advantages and difficulties associated with their internship-based job preparation. Creating focused measures to improve criminology graduates' professional integration requires a thorough understanding of how these experiential learning opportunities affect their preparation in a setting where their profession is less valued. This study can provide educational institutions, law enforcement organizations, and policymakers with information on the particular abilities, capacities, and assistance systems required to close the gap and guarantee fair opportunities for criminology graduates looking to make a significant contribution to law enforcement.

The primary objective of this research was to assess the effect of internships on the career preparedness of criminology students. The second was to evaluate the career preparedness of criminology students by measuring the quantifiable indicator using a survey and performance assessment. Lastly, to ascertain the significant correlation between the effect of internships and the career preparedness of criminology students.

Furthermore, the formulated null hypothesis was tested at the level of significance of 0.05. It assumes no significant relationship exists between the effectiveness of internships and career preparedness.

The study aimed to evaluate the impact of internships on the career preparedness of criminology students. The researcher aims to identify significant patterns in collecting real-world expertise, measure internship preparedness through a survey and performance assessment, and determine the program's effectiveness. Also, the study guides the University, criminology students, and intern coordinator to improve career choices and additional support for practical knowledge of internship across the workplace.

#### II. Methods

#### 2.1. Research Respondents

The respondents of this research were criminology interns previously enrolled in BAGSIK-TIKAS Class of 2023 at the University of Mindanao. It has a total number of 196 criminology students. Thus, the total population sampling technique was applied since all population members were used as samples

(Sugiyono, 2017).

#### 2.2. Materials and Instruments

The researchers utilized an adapted survey questionnaire from the studies (Jackel, 2011; Cabling, n.d). Two materials that researchers employed were distributed. First, the survey questionnaire has been modified to assess respondents' perspectives before deciding what data needs to be gathered.

On the other hand, the respondent's level of agreement with the statements or questions posed would be determined through a Likert scale from one (1) to five (5): one (1) being firmly in disagreement, two (2) being in disagreement, three (3) being moderate, four (4) being in agreement, and five (5) being firmly in agreement. Notably, the questionnaire would be validated by three experts.

Furthermore, the study scaling was as follows to investigate the impact of internships on criminology students' job preparation. A mean of 4.20-5.00 is very high, which implies the effectiveness of internships on the career preparedness of criminology students is observable, while 3.40-4.19 is high, which implies as often observable, 2.62-3.39 is moderate, which implies as sometimes observable, and 1.80-2.59 is low, which implies as observed seldom. Lastly, 1.02 1.79 is extremely low, meaning that the effectiveness of internships on criminology students' professional readiness cannot be observed.

#### 2.3. Design and Procedure

This study used a quantitative research design. The researchers have utilized a correlational method of research. Statistical data are obtained through quantitative research methods like surveys and experiments, which collect data via specified instruments (Cresswell, 2003). In particular, collecting numerical data and drawing generalizations to various groups or explanations of particular phenomena is the purpose of quantitative research (Babbie,2010). This approach allows this study to provide more precise and comprehensive data regarding the effectiveness of internships on the career preparedness of criminology students.

Additionally, the study followed steps in gathering data. The first step in the data gathering was asking permission to conduct the study by writing a letter to the Dean of Criminal Justice Education written by the researchers regarding the approval of the title. Furthermore, the respondents were administered the research instrument after the experts confirmed the questionnaire. After the approval, the researchers personally administer the survey to the criminology intern students at the University of Mindanao. Later, the data were tallied and analyzed with the proper statistical tools and the statistician's help.

The Mean and Pearson's r were employed in the study to fulfill its objectives. Mean was used to determine the effect of internship and the level of career preparedness among criminology interns. Pearson r was used to determine the significant relationship between the two variables.

Moreover, this study was carried out in full compliance with the ethical protocols and requirements of the College of Criminal Justice Education Research Coordinator. The researchers sincerely requested department officials' permission to conduct the study. An appropriate authorization and agreement were also acquired from the study's sample.

#### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 3.1 Effect of Internship on Career Preparedness

Table 1 presents the findings regarding the effect of internships among criminology students. The highest mean acquired was 4.67, with a standard deviation of .389. While the lowest mean was 4.60, with a corresponding standard deviation of .406.

Furthermore, the overall mean score obtained was 4.60, and the standard deviation was .406, with a descriptive equivalent of very high, which means that internships strongly affect criminology students. Moreover, internships offer valuable preparation for future careers, helping students clarify their career goals and build networks within the industry (Hiller, Salvatore & Taniguchi, 2018).

**TABLE 1.**Effect of Internship

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Personal Impact	.389	4.67	Very High
Academic Impact	.466	4.60	Very High
Employment Impact	.406	4.60	Very High
Overall	.406	4.60	Very High

#### 3.2. Level of Career Preparedness

Table 2 shows the level of career preparedness among criminology students. The highest mean rating acquired was 4.58, with a standard deviation of .421. On the other hand, the lowest mean was 4.56, with a standard deviation of .474. Overall, the findings signified a promising aspect of a high level of career preparedness manifested by the criminology interns, with a mean rating of 4.57 and a standard deviation of .396. Thus, it suggests that internships significantly contribute to the career preparedness of all criminology interns. The result is supported by Social Cognitive Career Theory (Wang, D., Liu, X., & Deng, H., 2022); this emphasizes how you can make well-informed professional decisions that are in line with your strengths by evaluating your self-efficacy, expectations for the outcome, learning experiences, and personal drive-in career development

**TABLE 2**Career Preparedness

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Career Information	.474	4.56	Very High
Career Decision-Making	.421	4.58	Very High
Career Planning	.436	4.57	Very High
Overall	.396	4.57	Very High

#### 3.3. Correlation between the Effect of Internship and Career Preparedness

Table 3 shows the significant relationship between the effect of internship and career preparedness and the significant relationship between independent and dependent variables.

The Effect of Internship has an overall mean of 4.60 and a corresponding standard deviation of .406. At the same time, Career Preparedness has an overall mean of 4.57 with a standard deviation of .396. This means a significant relationship exists between the effect of internship and career preparedness among criminology students. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

The overall result shows the correlation between the effect of internship and career preparedness. Together, the present findings confirm an overall computed R-value, which means that the effect of internships has a high correlation to career preparedness with 77.8%. Agreed with the outcome, Smith (1776), in Human capital theory, states that internships are not just educational experiences but investments in criminology students' skills, knowledge, and networks. By participating in internships, students increase their human capital, making them more competitive and prepared for successful careers in the field of criminology.

**TABLE 3**Correlation between the Effect of Internship and Career Preparedness Effect of Internship

Career Preparedness	Personal	<b>Academic Employment Decision</b>			
	Impact	Impact	Impact	on Ho	
Career Information	.599** .000	.709** .000	.564** .000	Reject	
Career Decision-Making	.657** .000	.439** .000	.424** .000	Reject	
Career Planning	.546** .000	.661** .000	.556** .000	Reject	
Overall	.809** .000	.675** .000	.592** .000	.778**	
				.000	

#### P<0.05

### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter formulates the conclusions and recommendations of the researchers following the results. Through the evaluation of the data and findings of the study, the researchers concluded that internships significantly impact criminology students' preparedness for their future careers. The data and findings indicate a strong correlation between internships and students' career readiness. Internships offer practical exposure to students, enabling them to apply their academic knowledge to real-life scenarios. A successful internship requires academic preparedness, a positive attitude, and self-motivation. Organizational factors like challenging assignments, clear task guidelines, adequate supervision, and fair compensation are crucial for a meaningful internship experience (Bawica, 2021).

Furthermore, the University of Mindanao could use this study to provide or add more agencies for internships to explore, such as the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the National Police Training Institute, and the Philippine Port Authority. This ensures

students develop professional skills, confidence, and knowledge and enhance their career opportunities. Partnering with industry agencies can help the University ensure that student internships align with their learning objectives and meet the needs of the industry. These collaborations can also foster valuable partnerships and cooperative projects, which can enhance the overall academic environment of the University.

Criminology students may also use this study as a guiding tool for their upcoming internship, as this significantly affects their personal, academic, and employment prospects and will enhance the development of career choices regarding the satisfaction of unlocking new skills. Set clear goals by communicating with your internship supervisor - seek their advice to align expectations and maximize your learning. Build your professional network by actively engaging with colleagues, mentors, and industry professionals during the internship - this will help expand your connections.

Lastly, the intern coordinator can use this study to provide more specific support for interns. The coordinator should also foster a collaborative work environment where interns can work with colleagues, participate in team meetings, and contribute to company initiatives. Additionally, they should acknowledge and celebrate the interns' achievements throughout the internship. The coordinator can offer guidance and support to help interns navigate their roles effectively.

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#### **Research Instrument**

## THE EFFECT OF INTERNSHIPS ON CAREER PREPAREDNESS AMONG CRIMINOLOGY STUDENTS

Dear Respondents,

The undersigned undergraduate students of the University of Mindanao is currently conducting a research study entitled: "THE EFFECT OF INTERNSHIPS ON CAREER PREPAREDNESS AMONG CRIMINOLOGY STUDENTS".

As a Criminology Intern of the University of Mindanao, the undersigned researchers wishes to include you as one of the respondents of the study. Rest assured that your answers will be kept confidential.

Thank you so much and God bless!

	Respectfully yours,
	The Researchers
Name (Optional): Unit Assignment:	

Rating Scale for answering the instruments:

Using the scale below, please indicate the degree to which participation in your internship experience or strengthened your abilities, attitudes, awareness, or understanding in each of the areas identified.

1= Not all 2= Slightly 3=Moderately 4=Quite a Bit 5= A great deal

	Personal Impact							
As a result of my participation in the sociology/criminology internship								
		5	4	3	2	1		
1. I have a sense of satist worthwhile.	faction in doing something							
2. I believe in my ability to n	nake a difference.							
3. I am open to new experien	ces.							
4. I have gained the capacity	to be more productive							
5. I can recognize my person	al strengths							
6. I can recognize my person	al weakness							
7. I have a sense of personal	achievement							
8. I have the ability to persev	ere in difficult tasks.							
	Academic Impact							
1. I have acquired knowled performed.	lge from the job duties I							
2. I have broadened my cr problem-solving.	itical skills, reasoning, and							
3. My GPA improved								
4. I desire to stay in college of								
5. I have the ability to work a								
6. I felt my classroom learning	g was enriched.							
	et academic subject matter to							
the real world.								

	Employment Impac	et		
1.	I developed specialized technical skills for a specific			
	job function.			
2.	I feel my vocational development was enhanced			
3.	I broadened my future employment possibilities.			
4.	I received an opportunity to explore a specific career.			
5.	I developed realistic ideas about the work world.			
6.	I narrowed my future possible choices.			

Career Information					
	5	4	3	2	1
I am aware of the related occupations in the field I am interested in.					
2. I obtain information about career possibilities by using the library or other sources of information (inquiries, reading, relevant literatures).					
3. I know what a typical work day will be like in the occupation I am considering.					
4. I have the knowledge about the working requirements of various jobs or works.					
5. I have an idea of the possible works that suits me.					
6. I know what study courses to take to prepare for myself for the occupations I am considering.					
7. I have an idea what salaries people earn in the occupational field I am interested in.					
8. I know what to do to obtain more information on possible occupations I have in mind.					
9. I usually research for possible careers in demand in the community.					
10. I have an idea of the possible trainings to undergo with regards to the career I am interested.					
Career Decision Making	[				
I have a clear goal in mind with regards to my future profession.					
2. I am aware of possible alternatives which I can consider in my chosen career field.					
3. I can usually think of ways to solve important problems in my daily life.					
4. I am motivated to take the necessary career decisions that are expected of me at this stage.					
5. I can usually decide on priorities with respect to things that are important to me.					
6. I can make decisions for myself especially with important matters such as choosing a career.					
7. I am an effective decision maker.					
8. When I start something, I can usually see it through.					
9. I know how to make a planned decision.					
10. I've made up my mind when it comes to choosing a career track.					

	Career Planning			
1.	I have a clear idea of what steps to take in planning my career.			
2.	It is clear to me what I have to do to reach my career goals.			
3.	I have already made plans to reach my career goals.			
4.	I have already discussed my career plans with an adult whom I know very well.			
5.	I have planned what study courses to take or what occupations to choose.			
6.	I have a pretty good idea of the career I want to enter and how to go about it.			