

## An Implementation of Internship Program to Enhance Teaching Experience for Learners in Schools

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explores a school implemented twelve-week full-time internship subject designed to enhance preservice primary teachers first experiential placement at school. This subject is specifically focused on preparing preservice teachers through orientating them in key facets of a school, thereafter contextualizing the theory studied at University within classroom practice, and ultimately developing further competencies in their teaching and learning methodology. Three stages of activities were implemented by the authors to compile the activity report which includes the Preparation phase, Implementation and Evaluation phase. The program was designed to be cumulative in nature, building on the learning, practice and reflection developed in the previous week and learning activities will be scaffolded to incorporate both independent and collaborative and peer learning. The results showed that an implementation of an internship experience improved a sense of readiness of intern teachers, confidence in classroom management, and general teaching ability. Although well-supported as a critical experience, internships take considerable time and effort to organize and execute. Measures of quality support the need for an intense focus during the internship.

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## INTRODUCTION

Internship programs for pre-service teachers have played an integral role in teacher education programs internationally. Exceptions aside, for a large portion of the 20th century, Australian pre-service teacher internship programs aligned with an apprenticeship model of in-service teachers ‘fronting’ large groups of pre-service teachers to ‘show them the ropes’ (Ledger & Vidovich, 2018). By the late 20th century, internship programs had become a relatively less common feature of pre-service teacher programs in Australia. In response to a resurgence of interest in internship programs, and to canvass opinions regarding the adoption of internships as a component of teacher education in Australia, focus group interviews were conducted with a diverse range of stakeholders, building a snapshot of the Australian internship landscape in pre-service teacher education programs (Ismaeel & Al Mulhim, 2022; Masood et al., 2022).

In addition to specific policy framing discussion, it was recognised an examination of the literature was needed to inform the development of a conceptual framework for the analysis of key issues in education policy. The review sought to answer questions of policy and interpretational framing in the light of what is ‘known’ from the literature to date. Subsequent publication efforts resulted in questions being asked about the broader research impacts (Paul & Barari, 2022). However, both frames of inquiry draw attention to important methodological considerations regarding thinking through the diverse and potentially divergent ways that impact might be thought about in this contested field (Fatima & Elbanna, 2023).

Engaging in an internship within a classroom can provide a space for the aspiring teacher to practice actual teaching in a regular, in-depth, extended, supervised, and supportive environment. Internships put the university graduate into real life situations that would be made for the specific vocational field the university graduate had earned a degree for. The actual job situations allow for the graduate to become acclimated in the surroundings and in how the job is supposed to be done. Within these job experiences there is a time when the person fresh out of college makes bad decisions, however, making decisions and learning from experience in real life are the best ways to learn how to do a job and education internships are an integral part in the process.

An internship could allow for many pre-profession tasks to be done before entering the classroom such as learning to work a photocopier, fax machine and tools that may be useful in teaching English. They also allow for a kitchen sink approach to teaching to be taken in that they can learn different methods and how to work the methods around what works best for each individual. Interns are better prepared for teaching situations that arise in the classroom.

## METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

In this internship program, descriptive qualitative methods were implemented where this research is carried out and compiled to determine the existence of independent variables without comparing the variables themselves and looking for their relationship with other variables, in this method the data results are made in the form of descriptions not values, it can be concluded that descriptive qualitative method is a research method that explains or describes what exists and occurs in the field. In writing this research report, the author carries out three stages of activities that help the author to compile a PPL activity report which includes the Preparation phase, Implementation and Evaluation phase, these three stages are carried out in an organized manner following the concepts and rules of PPL activities that have been determined by the assignment institution, namely Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. In the assignment of PPL students, they will carry out the three stages of activities, namely:

### a. Phase 1 Preparation

In this phase PPL students conduct a preparatory period before directly plunging and starting teaching and learning activities, the preparatory period is to take part in debriefing activities for PPL students carried out by Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, in this debriefing activity students are equipped by the University on how PPL tasks and activities while in the placement school starting from the basics to the core here students are given basic provisions as a student teaching practice, After the debriefing activities carried out at the university, the second preparatory

activity followed by students is field observation or placement school observation in this activity, the implementation is no longer in the university environment but at the school where PPL students are placed, in this activity students immediately go to the field to see the structure and conditions of the placement school, how the environment is, given an explanation of the history and structure of the school, extracurricular or school organization, school administration, curriculum used at school to the introduction of classes and teachers who will be student mentors in the field or placement school.



**Figure 1. Meeting between students and principals with teachers from SMA Negeri 4 Pematangsiantar for briefing and guidance**

b. Phase 2 Implementation

In this phase, students have carried out teaching and learning activities, of course, students do not immediately go to class and teach but students are first equipped by their supervising teachers regarding what material must be prepared during the student teaching practice process, after which students prepare teaching materials, teaching methods, and assessment rubrics where this is an important and main thing before starting the lesson in order to make it easier for teachers and students to know the achievements and objectives of carrying out learning and so that teaching and learning activities are well organized according to the modules or teaching materials that have been prepared previously and in compiling this lesson plan, of course, students have been equipped with the curriculum used in the placement school so that students are able to make and assemble lesson plans.

c. Phase 3 Evaluation

In this phase is the phase of the results of teaching and learning activities, in this activity, of course, students can collect problems or weaknesses and shortcomings during teaching and learning activities, such as problems in dealing with students who have different personalities, school infrastructure that may be a barrier to the learning methods they want to use, and so on, in this phase students can make it a lesson by finding solutions to some of the problems faced and making it an evaluation within themselves to make improvements to themselves in the future to make themselves into professional prospective educators.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Successful Implementation of Internship Programs in Schools**

An internship is a practical teaching experience that offers preservice teachers an opportunity to strengthen theory–practice links and to immerse in the social context of schools. This paper reveals examples of courses developed to align teacher education theory with teacher mentoring and school contexts. The design and outcomes of the internship programs are influenced by the unique teacher education and partnership models developed in each locale. The location and nature of these programs have enabled them to develop successful practices and build sector capacity while adapting to policy changes, over time. The complex partnerships underpinning these programs offer

productive “workarounds” to industry-based policy pressures and offer innovations in teacher mentoring, support, training and supervision.

## 2. Key Components of Effective Internship Programs

There are several key components to effective internship programs in schools to give pre-service teachers supervised teaching experiences. A large number of interns statewide are placed by colleges and universities in partnerships with schools. The training agreement between the district and the college or university should outline the partnership for the specific program year. The general agreement should include, but is not limited to, the confidential information and contractual agreement for participating school sites, the provision of substitute teachers, and the funding of this agreement (develop a job description for potential classroom assignments).

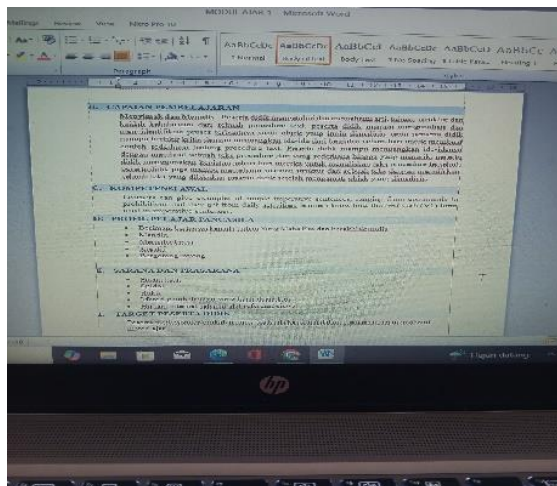
It is a good start to establish expectations for interns. The internship program should have clearly defined guidelines for site level participation and expectations in a handbook, such as using running records. There should be an orientation for interns. An effective orientation, scheduled at the beginning of the school year, provides important information about policies, procedures, and general operations of a school site. This orientation is especially important for interns who are placed at school sites other than their own training base. Give consideration to how the intern and any formal program can work with the coach (Lafinhan, 1977). A high-quality mentor is to be selected. mentor participates in intern training, mentors are responsible for providing interns with experiences to reinforce theories learned at the university, which include participating in assignments that would develop the ability to understand and apply broad concepts to practical classroom situations. mentors are active participants in problem solving, reflection, and evaluation. mentors may be involved at the university level in assisting in college course development and evaluation. mentors receive training related to their specific responsibilities. Mentoring is crucial in understanding the internship’s effectiveness.

Simply having a mandate to create a comprehensive internship program is not enough. Develop a formal internship program. This one uses the Intern Partnership Program clearly defined in the Florida Statutes. This also cites standard operating procedure creating the internship program. Work with administrators, program design, intern curiosity, mentor training, materials, and equipment justifying internships, business partnerships, intern selection, parent/student communication, create the internship schedule, implement the tracking/monitoring system, advertise the internship program, budget the internship program, how the school will benefit from the program, and a form with the program annual indicators (Ledger & Vidovich, 2018). To address the specific areas the school district should be encouraged to meet the statutory requirements, selected statutes should provide a framework for the internship program to exist, and a memorandum of understanding should be developed.

## 3. Benefits of Internship Programs in Education

One of the most important internships in the field of education is an internship program for education or teaching students. There is a variety of debates and interests in this subject regarding the benefit and the structure of those internship programs. Some universities and colleges of education have internship programs and have put their students in schools either when they are in university or after they graduated from the university with a knowledge of theory side. The aim is to get a knowledge of practice in the field of learning and teaching. The internship program for students of education, particularly for those of the teacher training program, might enable them better to face the real professional world of teaching. By joining the internship program, students of teacher training program get effective and efficient ways of learning how to teach in schools. Furthermore, the internship program provides the chance to practice their theoretical knowledge in the ‘real’ classroom. These facts will result in enriching their minds of teaching strategies and techniques which they can implement in their new school. They will also get valuable feedback that will contribute to improving their teaching styles. The biggest ultimate goal, by joining the internship program for institution is developing the quality of its prospective teachers. Students of teacher training program are the potential human resource for the institution that will contribute to the educational service the institution will render to the community. With those rich experiences after

having their internship programs, they will be better prepared teachers. Internship program will facilitate their way of becoming professional teachers. There are several benefits can be gained by involving in teacher internship program. Some of the most view-able benefits that come from the institution, internship students, and the pupils of the school come as follows (Wheeler & Waite, 2023; Mantel et al., 2024).



**Figure 2. Designing lesson plans in the form of teaching modules following the curriculum used at SMAN 4 Pematangsiantar**

#### 4. Challenges and Solutions in Implementing Internship Programs

A successful internship program requires focused attention to sustainability and systematic design. However, evidence suggests that internships in educational settings are often limited by a lack of cohesive structures, meaning that interns are offered varying, largely uncoordinated, and sometimes limited experiences. Another common challenge is under-prepared or overburdened mentoring staff who receive inadequate training and supervision to provide learning experiences of high quality. Often this means that interns receive limited direction and support. Additionally, interns are sometimes required to perform menial tasks that do not relate to their academic or career goals (Blue Chavis, 2017; Helms et al., 2021; Savvides et al., 2021).

Schools must have a clear expectation about interns' goals, purpose, and terms of training, and be able to meet those expectations efficiently. There are other supports schools can develop to help with participation, including partnering with a university to design, implement, and evaluate a tailored, sustainable training experience for sponsoring mentoring staff. Likewise, schools can provide online resources and toolkits that focus on promising practices, and detail how schools around the nation can adapt them into their internship offerings. Schools may support the competition of relevant certifications on topics such as project-based learning, or provide professionally led workshops at schools to further strengthen the educational programming. Furthermore, schools need to convene communities of practice that bring school staff together to share learning, challenges, and resources. Finally, schools may engage in federal advocacy that protects the ability for school districts to receive high-quality, direct funding, making schools better positioned to provide valuable experiences, supports, and outcome required of the internship.



**Figure 3. Implementation of teaching and learning activities in class X at SMA Negeri 4 Pematangsiantar**

### 5. Impact and Evaluation

A variety of evaluative measures and data analysis is currently employed in light of the need to scrutinize teacher candidates' readiness for entry to the profession. It is important to evaluate systematically the impact of internship programs. A number of programs regarding the enhancement of the teaching experience of pre-service teachers in schools are in operation. A program began in 1995 which was designed to increase the length of internships for primary and secondary pre-service teachers in their final year. Surveys and qualitative feedback provide the key tools for measuring interns' perceptions of their intern experience. However, this section goes beyond such evaluations by examining the anecdotal and quantifiable impact of participation by Australian and international interns some years after the experience. Interns are undergraduate and postgraduate pre-service teacher candidates who from 1995 to 2015 completed a two-term internship on completion of their formal studies.

This section also measures the quantified impact of internship participation on teaching efficacy. Interns' improvements in all five areas of efficacy about various aspects of work environment and task competency as compared with their first internship showed a meaningful correlation to participation in internships. In addition to anecdotal and subjective evidence, data on teaching efficacy are presented to document a significant correlation between internship participation and enhanced teaching efficacy. It is also means to explore the long-term impact of internships on future career trajectories. Some interns' accounts provide firsthand insight into how an internship influenced employability. Finally, evaluation criteria underscore the need for reflection in the hope of maximizing the benefits of internships in schools (D. Brandt et al., 2023). From its inception, a strong emphasis is placed on the need for continuous program development to build on past experience and feedback evaluations so that the general scope and focus of the following year or years' programs change as a consequence of reflections. Broad evaluation criteria are utilized from 1995 to 2000 on 1) host school and intern needs; 2) institutional and administrative support; 3) program flexibility in order to make recommendations designed to improve the internship program. external evaluators are employed to systematically analyze data. This goes beyond existing evaluations. A well-designed evaluation should serve to inform practice and assure stakeholders that investments of time and resources bring a relevant return. Worthwhile programs can collapse if they are not adequately documented, and a consciousness of trends that work best is lost. Since the overall number of interns increases annually it is possible to reflect on increasing numbers over an extended period of time. Conversely, the number of international interns participating in the program starts to dwindle for various reasons post-2005. This section provides an in-depth, reflective examination of multiple facets of the impact of the experience of internships in schools upon pre-service teachers, teacher educators, schools and students (Ledger & Vidovich, 2018). It is hoped the careful analysis can act to inform future programs for the benefit of all stakeholders involved in such an experience.

## CONCLUSION

The need for a structured, sequenced approach to internships pertaining to teaching experiences is critical for development of future educators who have the capacity to effectively meet the demands of a modern reform-based classroom. The findings of this study are successful case studies and identified best practices in the design of a sequential, four semester internship experience and from this information, recommendations for internship directors. The economic landscape has changed dramatically starting in the 21st century. There is no longer a great demand for unskilled labor and previously stable manufacturing jobs have been shipped overseas (Blue Chavis, 2017). Vocational technology programs have responded to changes in the economic landscape by placing a greater emphasis on rigorous academics, technical certifications, and internships with local businesses and industries. The partnership between schools and businesses is a new and innovative approach to enhancing the college and career readiness of high school students.

The importance of internship experiences is widely recognized in preparing students for the workforce. Internships are structured, skill-based opportunities for students to gain workplace experience in the field in which they are seeking employment. It is a competitive job market today and individuals are expected to have professional experience before applying to jobs. Internship experience has become a valuable asset for her students as they vie for a limited number of job positions and they are highly sought after by postsecondary institutions of higher learning as reported Certificates One and Two are dual-enrolled in one of three colleges local to her school which permits them use of a laptop and paid stipend to write research-based analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the internship experience. There is a class titled Gen IV, which is intended to address research-based action recommend on how to modify and improve the internship program.

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