Motivation in internship: working to learn and learning to work

Jelena Popov

View supplementary material

Published online: 07 Feb 2025.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 1066

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Motivation in internship: working to learn and learning to work

Jelena Popov ⬤

Education, Practice and Society, UCL, London, UK

ABSTRACT

Young people today often complete several internships before starting their full-time careers. Although there are various perspectives on internships based on different academic traditions, the specific topic of motivation in internships from a sociocultural perspective is rarely examined. This study explores the internship experiences of 18 students and graduates in the UK, using the concept of motive from cultural-historical activity theory. It identifies two main motivational orientations among interns regarding their work in internships (i) an orientation towards exploring professional practice to gain insights into personal aspirations and preferences, often described as 'tasters' or 'try before you buy' experiences; (ii) an orientation towards learning to work as a novice professional and preparing or competing for full-time roles, commonly referred to as 'a foot in the door' in a chosen profession. The study discusses the implications of these findings for vocational learning literature such as the limitations of the apprenticeship model of learning when researching young people's aspirations and internships.

Introduction

Curricular and extracurricular internships during a degree or after graduation have become common (McHugh 2017) and young people now pursue multiple internships before starting work (Wolfgram and Ahrens 2022). These trends are described as symptomatic of changes in the labour market where 'entry tournaments' for sought-after professions have become a norm (Lam and Marsden 2017) and there is an oversupply of graduates and inflation of university credentials (Brown, Hesketh, and Williams 2004; Tomlinson 2008). While there are now multiple scholarly perspectives on internships underpinned by different disciplinary traditions, the assembling of aspirations of young people in internship needs closer examination, particularly given the considerable attention it

---

CONTACT Jelena Popov ✉ jelena.popov.14@ucl.ac.uk

has received in educational and sociological literature (e.g. Archer and DeWitt 2017; Harrison and Waller 2018; Leonard, Halford, and Bruce 2016).

The focus in internship research has predominantly been on whether internships lead to improved labour market outcomes (Bittmann and Zorn 2020). Even scholars critical of human capital perspectives rarely challenge the assumptions of interns as rational agents highly motivated to pursue internships as a means of obtaining employment-relevant skills (O'Connor and Bodicoat 2017), gaining soft credentials (Tomlinson 2008), building their CV (Wright and Mulvey 2021) and signalling their motivation and capacity to employers (Weiss, Klein, and Grauenhorst 2014). Internships here are perceived instrumentally as a means of gaining positional value on the labour market (Brown, Hesketh, and Williams 2004) or as a resource to actively display through different phases of competing for and working in internship (Scherer 2011). In VET literature too, the underlying assumption is that professional motivation and aspirations of young people are rational, instrumental and stable features (Aldinucci et al. 2023; Baker 2017) leading some scholars to suggest that 'little is known about how TVET students *form their aspirations* in their transition to adulthood, and the meanings and *motivations they attach to these'* (Aldinucci et al. 2023, 789 my emphasis). However, given the existing studies on aspirations from youth research, it is evident that the exploration of young people's work and life experiences should be more frequently integrated, rather than approached as two separate areas of study (Leonard, Halford, and Bruce 2016)

In contrast to the focus on paid employment as the end goal, youth researchers suggest that pursuing internships can be driven by the need to *postpone* full-time work rather than accelerate it. In the context of the decline of traditional markers of adulthood, an important pursuit for young people is to develop and manage their various social identities and orientations towards the future, including their employment aspirations (Côté 2009; Du Bois-Reymond 1998). Educational and employment aspirations act as the 'backbone' for implementing aspirations related to 'family life, consumption and citizenship' (Heinz 2009, 4). Internships, from that perspective, can act as 'moratoriums on adulthood' or important periods of exploration for young people (Cuzzocrea and Cairns 2020) and places where personal identities and professional aspirations are developed (Popov 2020) during a life phase characterised by instability and in-betweenness (Arnett 2011). Rather than being constant, it was recognised, the motivation of interns ebbs and flows and only slightly over half of interns will look for work in the same sector and role as their internship (Rothman and Sisman 2016).

This suggests the importance of exploring internship experiences with a focus on motivation that animates them. This study foregrounds motivation as a dynamic concept that develops through relational engagement with practices of the internship workplace. It aligns with VET studies in exploring how motivation and aspirations are realised through work while with youth

studies it shares an interest in how motivation is assembled within the broader context of young people's aspirations and perception of the future. The question guiding this study is: What motivated students to select, compete for and partake in a particular internship? Has this motivation changed during and in the aftermath of an internship?

In what follows, I first introduce the analytical categories from cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) perspectives. Then, I show how these concepts relate to the empirical data from focus groups and interviews with 18 students and graduates. Finally, I describe two patterns of motivation in internships and discuss their implications for VET research.

Cultural-historical and activity theory perspectives on human motivation

Traditionally, a key concepts in Psychology, motivation refers to 'what moves people to action' (Markus 2016, 161) or what energises and directs human behaviour towards goals (Deci and Ryan 1985). Historically, psychological theories framed motivation as (a) innate physiological needs such as hunger and avoidance of pain and learnt behaviours that direct action towards the satisfaction of needs (Freud 1957; Hull 1943) as well as (b) innate psychological needs (e.g. play, curiosity) which can act as intrinsic motivators directing behaviour towards interesting and exciting activities (Harlow, Harlow, and Meyer 1950; White 1959). Cognitive psychology emphasises self-regulation and decision-making as means of directing behaviour towards (e.g. academic or work-related) goals (C. Dweck 2023). Contemporary models of motivation draw on and combine the above ideas (for a historical overview see Fiske 2008).

Although distinct, these accounts share tacit assumptions including, first, the unit of analysis in which people and contexts are dichotomies (Turner and Patrick 2008) and 'individual origins and nature of motivation' is emphasised (Walker et al. 2010, 35). Second, the conceptualisation of motivation as an innate and static entity vis-a-vis context gives insufficient attention to the development of motives over the life course (Nolen, Horn, and Ward 2015). Third, these theories tend to describe motivated actions in general terms and hierarchies regardless of their actual content situated in particular contexts (Nardi 2005).

To explore the motivation of interns, I follow a different lineage in psychology, that of cultural psychology (Cole 1996) and the work developed by the Soviet psychologists Vygotsky (1978) and Leont'ev (1978). They challenge the dichotomy between the individual and the social by offering important insights into how biological needs and motives transform into higher social motives through participation in social practices (e.g. the workplace) (Leont'ev 1978; Miettinen 2005). The socially rooted motives are not additions that exist alongside the biological motives but profoundly re-organise the volition of children (Vygotsky 1978). In what follows, I draw on the work in CHAT that has

motivation as its main object of inquiry (see Kaptelinin 2005; Miettinen 2005) and specifically on the cultural-historical work of Hedegaard (2008) and colleagues (Edwards 2010; Hedegaard and Edwards 2023), and activity theory perspectives of Nardi (2005).

Motive orientations in institutional practices

Hedegaard's concept of motivation is central to her framework (Table 1) and arose from empirical work with children and families in Denmark (2012a; Hedegaard 2012b, 2014). The three planes (societal, institutional, and individual) are considered interrelated and intersect at the activity-setting plane where societal and institutional motives meet the individual ones in a specific situation.

Hedegaard takes from Leontiev the idea that human needs develop into motives by becoming attached to social objects that direct their activity. This is developmentally important since a child 'becomes a personality through acquiring the object motives of society' – i.e. through participation in activity setting of different institutional practices such as family and daycare (Levitin 1982 in Hedegaard 2012a, 16). For coherence, I will refer to motives attached to different planes as societal, institutional/organisational and personal motives and describe them below separately while acknowledging that individual motive orientations as well as the demands they place on other participants need to be understood alongside the institutional demands directed at them (Hedegaard 2014).

Table 1. shows how the societal traditions and their underpinning motives set conditions for institutional and individual development. This can be, for instance, in the form of policies, labour laws and regulations regarding temporary work arrangements or integration of young people into the labour market. Institutional motives are associated with practices, traditions, commitments, values and professional knowledge. They refer to 'motive objects' - objectives or 'what matters' for different institutional practices and practitioners (Edwards 2010). This could refer to different recruiting practices and the value organisations place on qualifications, experience and performance in the internship. Within one institution, multiple motives can co-exist as a result of different requirements and conditions posed by societal traditions (e.g. the societal

Table 1. Three perspectives in Hedegaard's wholeness framework (adapted from Edwards 2010; Hedegaard 2008).

Society	Traditions	Conditions
Institution	Practice	Values, Motive Objects
Activity setting	Social situation of development	Motivation
Individual	Activity	Motives/Engagements/Intentions

demands and institutional motives around improving diversity can co-exist with hiring practices that priorities top-tier universities).

Individual motives refer to what is meaningful and important for the person across different situations (Hedegaard 2012a), such as the intentions people bring into a specific activity settings in internships that shape how they interpret the possibilities for engagement in practices. From the individual perspective, learning entails recognising and attending to these different institutional commitments and responsibilities that are made available in activity settings (e.g. at the meetings, through mentoring or feedback interns receive) and may lead to the development of new knowledge and skills of interns ('the social situation of development' in Table 1).

A person's motivation is elaborated with two additional concepts not visible in Table 1. Firstly, the concept of 'motive orientation' refers to how a person's motivation is *oriented* to the demands of institutional settings and *what they give attention* to in the setting (ibid). Motive orientations are where human agency is located since 'agency is evident when what matters to a person, their intentions and commitments, are realised in their responses to the demands they meet in practices' (Edwards, Chan, and Tan 2019, 204).

Secondly, individual motives extend beyond a specific situation (Hedegaard 2012b) as people pursue *projects* (i.e. interests, commitments, intentions) across different institutional practices. For Hedegaard projects are a 'special motive or an interest that transcends different activity settings or even practices' (Hedegaard 2008, 21). Each person as a result of participating in practices of communities (e.g. school, family) has several key motives and interests that will shape what they prioritise when they engage in activities with other people. The projects are not fixed, the motives which dominate the person's activities change through life course (Hedegaard 2012b).

The dynamic relationship between institutional and personal motives is best observed during a transition across different institutional practices (Hedegaard and Edwards 2014) such as in an internship. Drawing on Hedegaard's work, Lundsteen (2013) discussed the experience of internships in investment banking through the concept of alignment of personal and organisational motives. They argued it was important to attend to how interns were grappling with practice motives in internships and how they learnt to recognise what mattered in organisational activities. For interns to effectively work in the workplace they needed to align their motives with the organisational motives, knowledge and values. This alignment can be temporary or consequential. In the former case, although interns aligned with the practice motives this did not lead to a more long-term or stable change in interns' motives, and they decided to abandon the banking practice after the internship. In the latter case, aligning personal to organisational motives was an opportunity to construct a professional identity. Hence, they show that personal identities (i.e. person's projects that inform their motive orientations) shaped how interns construct their banking identity and

highlighted the importance of congruence between personal and practice motives for professional learning to occur.

The concepts introduced above are helpful analytical categories for examining the motivation in internship. However, by being developed for either young children entering institutional practices or seasoned professionals what is underemphasised is the uncertain and tentative character of interns' orientations towards the future that youth researchers have identified. To elaborate on this, I turn to Nardi's elaboration of two object-related processes: construction and instantiation.

Construction and instantiation of career aspirations in internship

Nardi's work is grounded in the field of human-computer interaction (HCI) and focuses on how humans act in the digital world. Following Leont'ev (1978), Nardi and colleagues contend human agents relate to the world through their activity or a 'purposeful, mediated, and transformative interaction between human beings and the world' (Kaptelinin and Nardi 2012, vi). In line with Leontiev, they argued that 'the motive is the object the subject ultimately needs to attain' (Kaptelinin and Nardi 2012, 30). However, Nardi and colleagues (Nardi 2005; Kaptelinin 2005; Miettinen 2005) made important extensions of the concepts of object and motive of activity. They proposed researchers could (a) analytically separate an object of activity (what is being worked on) from the motive (what is energising the activity) and (b) extend the concept of the object of activity to include two processes – construction and instantiation of an object. The latter distinction is of particular importance. People can work on *constructing* an object by engaging in deciding, negotiating and formulating or 'figuring out what it should be' (Nardi 2005, 40). Additionally, people can pursue motivated actions towards *instantiating* an established object of activity or '*achieving some realisation of the object, attaining an outcome*' (ibid.). This can refer to an expression of the object of activity that was previously stabilised.

As Miettinen argued (2005, 58) these two processes 'constitute distinct but complementary units of analysis'. In the former case, we are following the construction and creation of a specific object and foregrounding negotiations between people and their various aspirations, desires and motives that are co-configured during this process. In the latter, we are observing how an object of activity is expressed in practice within the constraints of a given situation or how people make sense of and work with an existing stabilised object of activity.

In Nardi's example, the construction of an object describes how in a pharmaceutical department the object of activity was constructed by the management, motivated by the financial reasons to maximise the profits of the company and reflected the power relations between the management and research department (Nardi 2005, 40). In the instantiation case, the object-related processes refer to the work of a research team that went into selecting

therapeutic genes in the research department such as conducting experiments, reading literature, talking to people, and making decisions.

The distinction between construction and instantiation of an object of activity is useful when considering motives that animate internship activity, particularly in relation to the special motivational 'projects' of interns. If by object of activity, we mean career-related aspirations and orientations of young people, the concepts of instantiation and construction of objects enable us to ask the question of whether in internships young people are predominantly instantiating/realising or assembling/constructing their career aspirations.

Methods and materials

I draw on focus group and interview data from a mixed methods study on internship experience (Popov 2019). In total 18 participants were recruited through the University Careers Service. Among them, sixteen participants participated in five focus groups and two participants were interviewed separately. The sample was varied in terms of the degrees, career aspirations and pathways of students at London universities (See Table A2 in annex). There was high attrition over the course of arranging a suitable date for focus groups. For gender, degree, internship sector and year of studies breakdown see Table A2 in the annex. Participants were 'self-selecting' for the study by responding to an email advertising the research, the other selection criteria were that: (i) participants had had experience of at least one internship in the UK they had independently secured and that (ii) they were either current students or recent BA or MA graduates. This provided a common basis for discussion or what is referred to in the literature as 'group homogeneity' (Bloor et al. 2001). Homogeneity of experiences vis-à-vis different degrees, universities, gender and student status was important to facilitate group interaction and ease with which participants could discuss the topic together.

The focus group discussions were 2 hours long and interviews were one hour. The discussion was semi-structured using a list of predetermined prompts for discussion. The study followed the ethical guidance (e.g. anonymity, confidentiality, verbal code of conduct) in line with the ethical principles of focus group and interview research (Bloor et al. 2001) and was approved by the student research ethical committee.

The following prompts guided the focus group discussion: reasons for deciding to do an internship, insights, understandings and questions that they took away about the work performed during the internship, and the effect the internship had on their plans. These prompts enabled participants to, first, actively reflect on the importance and value they assigned to their internship experience revealing their motivational projects (including construction and instantiation processes) and potential mis/alignment between organisational and personal commitments. Second, to elaborate on what was personally relevant for them, and the effects

the internship had on their degree and career plans revealing the dynamic between their motive orientations in institutional practices and their motivational projects.

The analysis was informed by the dialogical approach of Marková et al. (2007) which views focus groups as providing an opportunity to look at how societal opportunities and social knowledge are contextualised and manifested in the experience of individual participants. Focus groups are conceptualised as distinct communicative types of activity which enable researchers to investigate the circulation of varied societal ideas, discourses, and knowledge, to jointly construct a discussion topic. The dialogical focus group methodology provided an underpinning argument that focus groups are appropriate sites of group reflection on the experience of interns before, during and after the internship.

Data analysis followed the coding procedure suggested by Marková et al. (2007) which entailed reading through the transcripts, labelling the topical episodes or stretches of dialogue around a topic that emerged over the course of the discussion, and grouping the topical episodes under the same overarching 'theme'. To identify relevant topics I followed the recommendations on how to identify motives and projects that orient a person to an activity (Hedegaard 2008, 19) and selected those aspects of dialogue that referred to (i) *interns' motive orientations*: intentions, explanations and reasons they discussed as guiding their actions in an internship (ii) the overarching *motivational 'projects'* internships were part of such as descriptions of what was meaningful and important to them in their internship, career and studies (iii) *articulation and instantiation* of the objects of their internship activity – description of occupational aspirations and motivation as works in progress, malleable, and tentative and transforming over the course of internship (i.e. the articulation or construction of aspirations) or descriptions of occupational motivation as decided on, stabilised and driving concrete actions in internships (i.e. instantiation and realisation) (iv) *the mis/alignment* they experienced between their individual and organisational motives: the references they made to conflicts they experienced in internship, intentions that could not be realised and new insights and realisations in the aftermath of an internship

Results

This section is organised into two sub-sections that present illustrative cases of two types of motive orientations among interns. The selection criteria for the four cases were (i) the participants' account was as a 'typical case' representing well the overarching theme and (ii) within each theme the two cases were different with regards to at least two of the three criteria including gender, student status (home/international) or the type of degree.

Theme 1. Working to learn about oneself: internships as tasters

Hugo

Hugo was an international student in his final year of an applied economics degree. He had done three internships by the end of his second year: two short spring break weeks in the operations of a bank and a risk department of a corporate investment bank. Subsequently, he completed an 11-week internship with a hedge fund in the sales and marketing department.

A salient theme in Hugos' discussions was how he decided to abandon the idea of working in certain industries and organisations due to learning more about the motives that animated company values and ethos:

> One of the reasons why I didn't do the internship [after a spring week] was because they were always emphasising, you know, excellence, teamwork, and all of these, I'm sorry about the expression, BS kind of terms. The next thing I knew (…) they fired around ten per cent of the people working here in London alone, so most of the people that I had actually met and I had networked were not there any more.

What was meaningful and important to Hugo, his individual motive, was how an organisation approaches diversity. He was attentive to the misalignment between his personal commitments and professional values of the company.

> There was a networking session with a management consulting company, and they were like 'we accept people from all backgrounds, we have a fifty-fifty woman-man ratio' and stuff, 'all ethnic backgrounds, all, no matter what your sexual orientation is', and the next thing I thought about is okay, so it's this group of ten people who have come here to give the presentation, it's all white male, how do I believe your corporate stuff? (…) Values are very important for me, and I think the values are easy, to identify in a smaller company.

Reflecting on the value of internship Hugo highlights the importance of developing knowledge about industries and learning about one's preferences about what industry and career one wishes to pursue. A particular aspect of this is what kind of future a career path might bring:

> Especially with the short ones [internships], it's a really good opportunity if you can get an insight. It was a good idea to spend quite a lot of time to get a small insight into some of the industries which, then you know you don't want to get into. But yeah, so you go there, you look at the things, you see your career and, like what your career path is going to look like, how long it's going to be, then the money you're going to make, but that's not worth it, it doesn't compensate for what you're getting.

One of the main takeaways for him in addition to knowledge about the type of sector and organisation he would enjoy working was that he was capable of obtaining employment upon graduation and that he should focus on diversifying his learning and interests.

> [Universities are] putting pressure on students from the beginning to try to find an internship and need to get rid of this mentality that you're not going to get anywhere if

> you don't get an internship because this is devastating emotionally and psychologi-
> cally and it's taken a strain on me and a lot friends and peers

He explains how after doing three internships in his second year, he decided to spend time with family the following summer and focus more on learning about economics applied to development and environment rather than finance in his studies and free time. What became evident was that Hugo changed how he oriented towards his degree and work by moving away from the aim of becoming employable in the finance sector and getting a job offer and towards exploring and re-constructing what was meaningful and valuable to him, weaving this new knowledge into his long-term motivational projects and aspirations. He describes realising that he began to 'value my time more' by engaging in learning about what he liked.

Nina

Nina was a second-year undergraduate student of English Literature at the time of the interview. She was from the UK. Nina's budding career plans were still unfolding and being explored and constructed. While she did not have a clear picture of her direction, internships enabled her to try out different career paths open to her and it made her 'less anxious' about the future without having decided on the career she wanted to pursue.

She described how she did not want to commit to an internship that would potentially turn into an offer of employment. She intended to take time to experience different occupations. She found an internship suited for this goal. The background to this, she shared, was how studying a humanities degree in the current social and economic context tends to make her and her peers anxious about their employability upon graduation. Early on in the interview, she describes:

> I would say that the majority of my friends are worried about graduation, and all friends
> seem to apply for Masters and PhDs not because they're passionate about something
> and they want to do a Master in but because they just want to stay in the academic
> environment. They feel like the world of work is this oppressive impenetrable sphere
> that just doesn't want to employ them.

Her motivation for pursuing an internship was to prove to herself that she is capable of successfully contributing at work in general, and to make her less anxious about transitioning to work after graduation. Her first internship was in an environmental PR agency. She chose the internship because she was passionate about environmental issues, she grew up on a farm and was striving towards a carbon-neutral lifestyle, and the charity was welcoming and provided support. She thinks that came across clearly in the application and helped her get an internship offer from the agency. The other internships she considered were in traditional sectors such as broadcasting and journalism, but they were

during term time and hence inconvenient for her studies and seemed as if they were looking for a different type of candidate.

> They often want you to be a prepared package already, I find. They want you already to have a blog and want you to already have done everything. Why would you apply for internship if you're already doing that stuff? Whereas, this one wanted to teach you how to do those things

Nina noted that English graduates now have diverse career options beyond publishing and newspapers. It is '*all about making information appealing to its readers on whatever platform that is*'. After completing one internship, she applied for another at a gallery but left after the first 'taster' day due to a lack of support, high expectations, and workload. She felt this internship would be exploitative: '*I felt like I would be exploited in that internship and it would only really be another thing to put on to my CV but it would be quite a painful experience*'

Nina described how she has come to recognise there are two types of internships advertised to students: internships as entries into full employment and internships as short-term work engagements. She was looking for the latter, a taster internship in an industry whose values and commitments she cherished and which offered an opportunity to develop new skills. This enabled her to feel like she was developing capacities which are relevant to her long-term goals and aspirations and 'mutually beneficial' for her and the company she was interning for.

> It depends really on what you want, because if you wanted an internship that will turn into a job, there are a lot of internships like that, but there are also a lot of internships where it's just 'we've got some work that we would like help with, you want to find out more about working in this field, that's a mutually beneficial thing but we're not going to employ you afterwards'. It's two different spheres of internship (…) I don't think it's overt, but it's sort of the length of the internship would be an indicator and (…) the language that they use when they advertise the internships, where there's the hint of progression, or whether it's just you're doing a thing and that's this sort of isolated experience.

Upon completing the internship Nina decided to work as a journalist for a University newspaper. Describing her plans for transitioning to work she discussed building a portfolio of articles through the University newspaper and approaching several newspaper agencies about freelancing for them. She also discussed applying for more internships in the future:

> I haven't applied to any yet, but I definitely have in mind that I would like to do more. They're going to be a useful way of experimenting with the different kinds of avenues that I'm thinking of going down and just seeing whether in reality I enjoy them, and dipping my toe among the different pools and seeing how they feel'

Internships allowed Nina to extend and diversify the career options available to her upon graduation rather than pursue a particular career path.

Theme 2. Learning to work in a profession: internships as a-foot-in-the-door

Kirsten

At the time of the focus group, Kirsten was in the final year of her degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Kirsten was from the UK. Reflecting on her degree as a basis from which to make career choices she said she appreciated the broad scope of her degree because it enabled her to work in different industries. Being able to re-direct her trajectory according to her developing interests was, for her, an important strength of her degree in engineering. She argued that her motto has become '*No point in changing the degree, just change the parts at the end of it*'.

Kirsten had completed a 3-month internship for a large car manufacturer in the UK the year before. In the internship with the car manufacturer, she worked on a large-scale project in design feasibility. Kirsten describes the importance of internship in the initial phase of looking for work as internships can be 'tasters' of an occupation but later also of a particular organisation.

> Do an internship so you know what you're doing and you don't get stuck in a job eventually that's not what you want', because you need a taster of, there's so much option with engineering you've got to get a taster of what sort of area you're going to be working in. It's different everywhere.

Following that advice, in her manufacturing company internship, her intention was to receive a job offer by being efficient at work and taking on extra tasks. Kirsten positioned herself as a novice professional who aspires to become a full member of the profession and organisation and negotiated additional work with different departments which enabled her to gain varied experience within and outside the company. Given her personal motivation was already aligned with the professional motives, the most useful insight for her was learning about *the type of company* she preferred. She was disillusioned with the large company outsourcing 'real' engineering tasks and lamented she was working on a design that would then be sent off to some of the smaller partner suppliers and companies. She compares this experience with another company that inter-viewed her where you could hear 'things exploding' in the background which made her excited about the hands-on work going on. This suggests how her personal and professional identities were already aligned at the time of the internship.

Upon completing her internship, Kirsten accepted a graduate job with a signing bonus from the same company. She planned to take the job unless she found something more interesting and well-paid. She preferred working for a smaller company, possibly one of the suppliers but felt she could be 'more choosy' with her work now that she had internship experience. This suggests how long-term motivation projects although temporarily stabilised, continue to

evolve, extend and restructure with time even after obtaining a job offer in the industry of choice.

Stella

Stella was an international MA student in Economic Policy with a BSc in Economics. At the time of the focus group, she had completed two internships, one in the economic department of an Embassy and another one in a central Bank. Stella describes how she pursued a degree in Economics because she was interested in government, international corporations and NGOs. While she was happy with studying Economics because it enabled her to try out many different career paths, she laments that careers for graduates predominantly tend to be in finance, a sector she was not attracted to.

> You get into university in the UK and any graduate careers fair that you go to they give you (...) all sorts of financial institutions, I never even thought about finance before I came here but then you get here and you're like 'Maybe I should do finance, it's so much money, I shouldn't be doing the things that I want to do' and in my case I was genuinely not interested in finance

Since beginning her degree, Stella had two interests that informed her motive orientations during her studies and internships: economic journalism and diplomacy. The former she developed in middle school and high school when she was an editor-in-chief of the school magazine and the yearbook. She further developed this interest during her undergraduate degree where she was contributing and overseeing a University Economics magazine. She describes the experience of working for the magazine:

> I don't know why but it was so natural and I enjoyed it so much. I just like magazines, I like putting things together, I like writing, and only recently I started thinking that it would be great if I could do it professionally because it's something I enjoy It was like a hobby during my university years, I would have to study in the library but then in the evening I would get to go home and work on 'the magazine' which was really good (...)

Describing why she thinks she managed to secure two sought-after internships, she says, she thinks this is because 'It wasn't just something I did so I could put it on my CV I genuinely wanted to do these things'. She contrasts this experience with the feedback she got from being shortlisted for a position in a Bank, which said she was a good candidate but did not seem interested in Banking. This can be interpreted as Stella recognising that her personal motives and desires came through in the internship selection process and were recognised by the employers.

Stella was initially disappointed with her embassy internship due to uninteresting tasks, poor organisation, and lack of mentorship. The work was mundane and her work went unacknowledged. She later pursued an internship at a bank. Reflecting on her embassy experience, she realised the importance of aligning personal values with the overarching objectives of diplomatic service. She

understood that mundane tasks, like signing visa applications, gain meaning when situated within the context of institutional goals and values of diplomatic service.

> Maybe you don't get to be that person who gets to negotiate something, or maybe you end up as the person in front of a desk, giving people visas, but I think I would rather be surrounded by people than be cooped up in my office doing some maths. It's my personality as well. So yeah, even though it threw me off initially, now I think that is something I would like to do. I think any sort of job that you're doing what you have to bear in mind is the whole purpose of what you're doing, if it is net positive when you group it all together you are doing something of value

Her plans now involved applying for graduate programmes in economic journalism at top-tier newspapers and moving to her home country to pursue a career in diplomacy. This suggests that Stella has constructed her twofold career aims and is oriented towards putting this plan into action.

Discussion

The findings of this study suggest there are two dominant motive orientations shaping how interns select and partake in internships. These are: (i) an orientation towards joining a profession or industry ('learning to work' in an occupation) as in the case of Kirsten and Stella and (ii) internship as an occupational taster with an orientation to learn about the self and the occupational and career preferences and values ('working to learn') illustrated in the cases of Hugo and Nina.

In the former case, the occupational and career plans are, at least temporarily, stabilised and the direction of internship activity is towards realising and enacting these aspirations (e.g. becoming an electrical engineer or working in diplomacy). This meaning of internship is encapsulated in vernacular terms as 'a foot in the door' in a chosen profession (Sattler and Achen 2020) or as an activity of professional preparation for an occupation. The experience from interns' perspective can be described as a process in which the aligning of personal and workplace practice motives is smooth (Lundsteen 2013). The outcome of the internship can be understood as a confirmation of the occupational choice and/or as fine-tuning the trajectory by, for instance, learning about what kind of company one prefers within the sector as in the case of Kirsten. The notion of instantiation of an object of activity is a useful explanatory concept here since it reveals that by working on internship tasks in workplace practices interns are motivated to advance their career aspirations and attain a particular career-related goals (e.g. becoming more employable within a profession, receiving a job offer or expanding their professional network).

In the case of the latter, the professional and career plans and preferences are still being assembled. What motivates this type of internship activity is the quest

to articulate and clarify a desirable occupation and professional identity. In Nardi's (2005) terms the motivation that energises the internship activity is the need to figure out and construct what career and profession to aspire to. This pattern of participation in internships has some affinities with the idea that through internships there is a crystallisation of vocational self-concept (Taylor 1988) through 'testing the waters' (Rothman and Sisman 2016) and exploration of potential selves (Clegg 2018) whereby internships act as 'tasters' or 'try before you buy' arrangements (Coco 2000). This type of internship motive could explain findings that internships are a 'playful stage' (Erikson 1968) prolonging labour market entry as an 'occasion to 'pause' and 'look around', and find meaning that may help one understand their future orientations (Cuzzocrea and Cairns 2020). However, in this paper, internship experiences were described as learning activities *constitutive* of rather than strictly *delaying* the transition to work, evident in Hugo and Nina's motivation to learn about what matters to them through internships.

These two orientations in internship can be distinguished based on their underlying motives (becoming employed/employable in an industry vs. identifying occupational preferences) and objects of activity (competing for entry positions vs. developing insights into organisational motives and values). I suggest that these motive orientations can be seen as two different moments of a dynamic process of learning in transition, conceptualised here as constructing and instantiating aspirations. While some young people might draw on internships to both articulate and instantiate their career aspirations, others might construct an articulated occupational identity through their degree, other extracurricular activities or within their family.

Second, the two motive orientations express a common concern of young people for making sense of their future and adulthood. From a CHAT perspective, this transition involves (a) re-organisating motives as education as the dominant activity is gradually replaced by work as the lead activity (Leont'ev 1978), and (b) 'becoming a person' by appropriating cultural resources to explore 'possible futures' and identify occupational communities, values and traditions to connect and aspire to (Hedegaard and Edwards 2023). This aligns with the findings that young people's ethical and political values inform their work experience and employment choices (Leonard, Halford, and Bruce 2016).

Amid the uncertainty of youth labour markets, extracurricular experiences such as internships are enabling young people to gain additional resources, social networks and opportunities to move towards maturity and adulthood (Woodman 2011). This over-arching motive for planning for the future through extracurricular activities differs from the future orientation promoted by the employability discourse as 'ready and waiting to be filled with the competitive endeavours' (Clegg 2010, 349). Instead, it involves open-ended strategies such as 'keeping their options open' vis-a-vis the future (Woodman 2011), balancing between waged

work (as a marker of adulthood) and *holding out* for the right opportunities in a profession of their choice (Hoskins, Leonard, and Wilde 2018 my emphasis).

The significance of these findings for vocational literature is twofold. First, while some researchers argue that apprenticeship model of learning is a suitable analogy for understanding learning in internship (Davies and Sandiford 2014; Fuller and Unwin 2011; Virolainen, Stenström, and Kantola 2011), others contend internship is a distinct model of learning (Guile and Lahiff 2022) characterised by 'fractional' work engagement (Guile and Spinuzzi 2023) and potentially bringing about different forms of expertise (Popov 2024). The motivation of interns oriented at staying on or entering the occupation of the internship has affinities with Lave and Wenger's (1991,112) view that (i) the main motivation in legitimate peripheral participation is to 'increase participation' in the occupational community (p.112) and (ii) develop professional identity since 'identity/membership is strongly tied to a conception of motivation' (p. 122). However, the results show that the experience of interns oriented at assembling occupational aspirations and who identify as *visitors of* an occupational practice is different from the presuppositions of the apprenticeship model. Evidence from studies on internship experience in which motive orientations of interns were misaligned with organisational and occupational motives and values (Mirchandani and Bhutani 2023; Stam and Keskiner 2023) point in the direction of including frictions between professional and organisational motives, on the one hand, and individual motives and objects, on the other in frameworks of internship learning. Hence, when conceptualising interns' motivation it is important to attend to relational interdependency between the individual agency and social context (Billett 2006). From the relational interdependency perspective, situated cognition researchers do not sufficiently attend to life histories, identities and subjectivities of workplace participants' hence risking socially deterministic accounts of working and learning. This paper contends that in internship research this balance can be achieved by attending to negotiations, frictions and mis/alignments between interns' aspirations and workplace motives (Lundsteen 2013)

Second, for practitioners and researchers wishing to support young people's transition to work by increasing connectivity between educational and work practices (Kyndt, Beausaert, and Zitter 2022) the topic of different motive orientations and how these can be dynamically transformed over the course of internship(s) can be an important resource. For example, some students might benefit from shorter rotational 'taster' work opportunities, while others for the opportunities for an immersion in organisational practice that will enable them to develop capacities and network to compete for entry positions in the labour market. However, beyond the scope of this paper, there were clear indications in the data that like some insightful interns, employers too recognise the multiple functions of internships by offering shorter 'spring break' work

opportunities alongside longer and more selective summer internships that can lead to an offer of employment.

Conclusion

Examining motivation in internship using a CHAT lens enabled me to distinguish (i) two motive orientations in internships and (ii) conceptualise motivation in internship as a process of aligning motives, refining long-term projects and constructing and instantiating aspirations. This suggests that internships have a versatile function for young people that will presuppose different types of support and scaffolding by educational and workplace institutions. Additionally, the paper argues that the extent to which internship activity can be conceptualised using the analogy of the apprenticeship model of learning or as an 'apprenticeship in miniature' will depend on interns' motive orientations – or how interns orient towards the occupational and organisational goals and values.

Acknowledgements

Disclosure statement

Funding

ORCID

Jelena Popov ⓘ http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8820-075X

References

Aldinucci, A., O. Valiente, S. Hurrell, and A. Zancajo. 2023. Understanding Aspirations: Why Do Secondary TVET Students Aim so High in Chile?" *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 75 (4): 788–809. https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2021.1973543.
Archer, L., and J. DeWitt. 2017. *Understanding Young People's Science Aspirations: How Students Form Ideas About 'Becoming a Scientist'*. 1st ed. Oxford: Routledge.

Arnett, Jeffrey Jensen. 2011. "New Horizons in Research on Emerging and Young Adulthood." In *Early Adulthood in a Family Context*, edited by A. Booth, S. Brown, N. Landale, W. Manning, and S. McHale, 231–244. New York, NY: Springer.

Baker, W. 2017. "Aspirations: The Moral of the Story." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 38 (8): 1203–1216. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2016.1254540.

Billett, S. 2006. "Relational Interdependence Between Social and Individual Agency in Work and Working Life." *Mind Culture and Activity* 13 (1): 53–69. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca1301_5.

Bittmann, F., and V. S. Zorn. 2020. "When Choice Excels Obligation: About the Effects of Mandatory and Voluntary Internships on Labour Market Outcomes for University Graduates." *Higher Education* 80 (1): 75–93. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00466-5.

Bloor, Michael, Jane Frankland, Michelle Thomas, and Kate Robson. 2001. *Focus Groups in Social Research*. London, UK: Sage.

Brown, Philip, Anthony Hesketh, and Sara Williams. 2004. *The Mismanagement of Talent: Employability and Jobs in the Knowledge Economy*. Oxford, USA: Oxford University Press.

Clegg, S. 2010. "Time Future-The Dominant Discourse of Higher Education." *Time & Society* 19 (3): 345–364. https://doi.org/10.1177/0961463X10381528.

Clegg, S. 2018. "Extending the Analytical Scope of Theories of 'Possible selves'." *Possible Selves and Higher Education: New Interdisciplinary Insights*, edited by H. Henderson, J. Stevenson and A.-M. Bathmaker, 41–56. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315104591 .

Coco, M. 2000. "Internships: A Try Before You Buy Arrangement." *SAM Advanced Management Journal* 65 (2): 41.

Cole, M. 1996. *Cultural Psychology: A Once and Future Discipline*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard university press.

Côté, James E. 2009. "Identity Formation and Self-Development in Adolescence." In *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology*, edited by Richard M. Lerner and Laurence Steinberg, 266–304. Vol. 1. NJ, US: John Wiley & Sons.

Cuzzocrea, V., and D. C. Cairns. 2020. "Mobile Moratorium? The Case of Young People Undertaking International Internships." *Mobilities* 15 (3): 416–430. https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2020.1724611.

Davies, H. M., and P. J. Sandiford. 2014. "Legitimate Peripheral Participation by Sandwich Year Interns in the National Health Service." *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 66 (1): 56–73. https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2013.867527.

Deci, Edward L., and Richard M. Ryan. 1985. *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*. NY, US: Springer.

Du Bois-Reymond, M. 1998. "'I Don't Want to Commit Myself Yet': Young People's Life Concepts." *Journal of Youth Studies* 1 (1): 63–79. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.1998.10592995.

Dweck, Carol. 2023. "The Next Decade: Making Motivation the Foundation of Psychology Again." In *Motivation Science: Controversies and Insights*, edited by Mimi Bong, Johnmarshall Reeve, and Sung-Il Kim, 431–434. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197662359.003.0070.

Edwards, A. 2010. *Being an Expert Professional Practitioner: The Relational Turn in expertise*. London, UK: Springer science & business media.

Edwards, Anne, Jessica Chan, and Desmond Tan. 2019. "Motive Orientation and the Exercise of Agency: Responding to Recurrent Demands in Practices." In *Cultural-Historical Approaches to Studying Learning and Development: Societal, Institutional and Personal Perspectives*, edited by Anne Edwards, Marilyn Fleer, and Louise Bøttcher, 201–214. Taiko City, HK: Springer Singapore.

Erikson, Erik H. 1968. *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton.

Fiske, Susan T. 2008. "Core Social Motivations." In *Handbook of Motivation Science*, edited by James Y. Shah and Wendi L Gardner, 3–22. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Freud, S. 1957. "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, edited by J. Strachey, 117–140 Vol. 14. London, UK: Hogarth Press.

Fuller, A., and L. Unwin. 2011. "Apprenticeship as an Evolving Model of Learning." *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 63 (3): 261–266. https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2011.602220.

Guile, David, and Anne Lahiff. 2022. "Rethinking the Connective Typology of Work Experience: The Challenge of Learning Through Internship." In *Developing Connectivity Between Education and Work: Principles and Practices*, edited by Eva Kyndt, Simon Beausaert, and Ilya. Zitter, 15–34. Milton Park, UK: Routledge.

Guile, David, and Clay Spinuzzi. 2023. "'Fractional' Vocational Working and Learning in Project Teams: 'Project Assemblage' as a Unit of Analysis?" *Vocations & Learning* 17 (2): 193–218. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12186-023-09330-1.

Harlow, H. F., M. K. Harlow, and D. R. Meyer. 1950. "Learning Motivated by a Manipulation Drive." *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 40 (2): 228. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0056906.

Harrison, N., and R. Waller. 2018. "Challenging Discourses of Aspiration: The Role of Expectations and Attainment in Access to Higher Education." *British Educational Research Journal* 44 (5): 914–938. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3475.

Hedegaard, M. 2008. "Developing a Dialectic Approach to Researching children's Development." In *Studying Children: A Cultural-Historical Approach*, edited by Marianne Hedegaard and Marilyn Fleer, 30–45. Maidenhead, UK: McGraw-Hill Education.

Hedegaard, M. 2012a. "The Dynamic Aspects in children's Learning and Development." In *Motives in Children's Development: Cultural-Historical Approaches*, edited by Mariane Hedegaard, Anne Edwards, and Marilyn Fleer, 9–27. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hedegaard, M. 2012b. "Analyzing children's Learning and Development in Everyday Settings from a Cultural-Historical Wholeness Approach." *Mind Culture and Activity* 19 (2): 127–138. https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2012.665560.

Hedegaard, M. 2014. "The Significance of Demands and Motives Across Practices in children's Learning and Development: An Analysis of Learning in Home and School." *Learning, Culture & Social Interaction* 3 (3): 188–194. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2014.02.008.

Hedegaard, M., and A. Edwards. 2014. "Special Issue Transitions and Children's Learning." *Learning, Culture & Social Interaction* 3 (3): 185–187. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2014.02.007.

Hedegaard, M., and A. Edwards. 2023. *Taking Children and Young People Seriously: A Caring Relational Approach to Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heinz, W. R. 2009. "Youth Transitions in an Age of Uncertainty." In *Handbook of Youth and Young Adulthood, New Perspectives and Agenda*, edited by Andy Furlong, 19–29. Milton Park, UK: Routledge.

Hoskins, B., P. Leonard, and R. J. Wilde. 2018. "Negotiating Uncertain Economic Times: Youth Employment Strategies in England." *British Educational Research Journal* 44 (1): 61–79. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3318.

Hull, C. L. 1943. *Principles of Behavior: An Introduction to Behavior Theory*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Kaptelinin, V. 2005. "The Object of Activity: Making Sense of the Sense-Maker." *Mind Culture and Activity* 12 (1): 4–18. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca1201_2.

Kaptelinin, V., and B. A. Nardi. 2012. *Activity Theory in HCI: Fundamentals and Reflections*. Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-02196-1.

Kyndt, Eva, Simon Beausaert, and Ilya Zitter. 2022. *Developing Connectivity Between Education and Work: Principles and Practices*. Milton Park, UK: Routledge.

Lam, Alice, and David Marsden. 2017. "Employment Systems, Skills and Knowledge." In *The Oxford Handbook of Skills and Training*, edited by Chris Warhurst, Ken Mayhew, David Finegold, and John Buchanan, 466–490. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lave, J., and E. Wenger. 1991. *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leonard, P., S. Halford, and K. Bruce. 2016. "'The New Degree?' Constructing Internships in the Third Sector." *Sociology* 50 (2): 383–399. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515574456.

Leont'ev, A. 1978. *Activity, Consciousness, and Personality*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Levitin.

Lundsteen, Natalie 2013. "Internship: Navigating the Practices of an Investment Bank." In *Pedagogy in Higher Education, a Cultural Historical Approach*, edited by Anne Edwards, Wells Gordon, and Anne Edwards, 155–169. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Marková, Ivana, Per Linell, Michèle Grossen, and Anne Salazar Orvig. 2007. *Dialogue in Focus Groups: Exploring Socially Shared Knowledge*. Sheffield, UK: Equinox publishing.

Markus, H. R. 2016. "What Moves People to Action? Culture and Motivation." *Current Opinion in Psychology* 8:161–166. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2015.10.028.

McHugh, P. P. 2017. "The Impact of Compensation, Supervision and Work Design on Internship Efficacy: Implications for Educators, Employers and Prospective Interns." *Journal of Education & Work* 30 (4): 367–382. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2016.1181729.

Miettinen, R. 2005. "Object of Activity and Individual Motivation." *Mind Culture and Activity* 12 (1): 52–69. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca1201_5.

Mirchandani, K., and A. Bhutani. 2023. "Disparity Learning During Youth Internships in Singapore." *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 75 (1): 87–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2022.2123383.

Nardi, A. B. 2005. "Objects of Desire: Power and Passion in Collaborative Activity." *Mind Culture and Activity* 12 (1): 37–51. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca1201_4.

Nolen, S., I. Horn, and C. Ward. 2015. "Situating Motivation." *Educational Psychologist* 50 (3): 234–247. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2015.1075399.

O'Connor, H., and M. Bodicoat. 2017. "Exploitation or Opportunity? Student Perceptions of Internships in Enhancing Employability Skills." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 38 (4): 435–449. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2015.1113855.

Popov, J. 2019. "Graduate Transition to Work: From Qualifications and Skills Towards Horizontal Expertise." PhD diss., UCL (University College London).

Popov, J. 2020. "Boundary Crossing and Identity Re-Negotiation in Internships: The Integrative, Future-Oriented and Transformational Potential of interns' Identity Project." *Learning, Culture & Social Interaction* 24 (2020): 100383. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2020.100383.

Popov, J. 2024. "Learning in Unaccredited Internship as Development of interns''horizontal Expertise." *Vocations & Learning* 17 (1): 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12186-023-09333-y .

Rothman, M., and R. Sisman. 2016. "Internship Impact on Career Consideration Among Business Students." *Education + Training* 58 (9): 1003–1013. https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-04-2015-0027.

Sattler, L., and R. Achen. 2020. "A Foot in the Door: An Examination of Professional Sport Internship Job Announcements." *Sport Management Education Journal* 15 (1): 11–19. https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2019-0059.

Scherer, A. 2011. *Brilliant Intern: How to Get the Best Internships and Make Them Count*. Prentice Hall, Harlow, UK: Pearson.

Stam, T., and E. Keskiner. 2023. "The (Un) Making of Dutch 'Care girls': An Ethnographic Study on Aspirations, Internship Experiences and Labour Market Perspectives." *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 75 (2): 238–254. https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2020. 1834437.

Taylor, M. S. 1988. "Effects of College Internships on Individual Participants." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 73 (3): 393. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.73.3.393.

Tomlinson, M. 2008. "'the Degree is Not enough': Students' Perceptions of the Role of Higher Education Credentials for Graduate Work and Employability." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 29 (1): 49–61. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425690701737457.

Turner, J. C., and H. Patrick. 2008. "How Does Motivation Develop and Why Does it Change? Reframing Motivation Research." *Educational Psychologist* 43 (3): 119–131. https://doi.org/ 10.1080/00461520802178441.

Virolainen, Maarit Hannele, Marja-Leena Stenström, and Mauri Kantola. 2011. "The Views of Employers on Internships as a Means of Learning from Work Experience in Higher Education." *Journal of Vocational Education & Training* 63 (3): 465–484. https://doi.org/10. 1080/13636820.2011.580360.

Vygotsky, L. S. 1978. *Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Walker, Richard, Kimberley Pressick-Kilborn, Erica Sainsbury, and Judith MacCallum. 2010. "A Sociocultural Approach to Motivation: A Long Time Coming but Here at Last." In *The Decade Ahead: Applications and Contexts of Motivation and Achievement*, edited by Stuart Karabenick and Tim Urdan, 1–42. Bingley: Emerald.

Weiss, F., Markus Klein, and Thomas Grauenhorst. 2014. "The Effects of Work Experience During Higher Education on Labour Market Entry: Learning by Doing or an Entry Ticket?" *Work, Employment and Society* 28 (5): 788–807. https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017013506772

White, R. W. 1959. "Motivation Reconsidered: The Concept of Competence." *Psychological Review* 66 (5): 297–333. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0040934.

Wolfgram, M., and V. Ahrens. 2022. "'One Internship, Two Internships, Three Internships . . . more!': Exploring the Culture of the Multiple Internship Economy." *Journal of Education & Work* 35 (2): 139–153. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2022.2036713.

Woodman, D. 2011. "Young People and the Future: Multiple Temporal Orientations Shaped in Interaction with Significant Others." *Young* 19 (2): 111–128. https://doi.org/10.1177/ 110330881001900201.

Wright, Evan., and Benjamin Mulvey. 2021. "Internships and the Graduate Labour Market: How Upper-Middle-Class Students 'Get ahead'." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 42 (3): 339–356. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2021.1886051.