THE ROLE OF THE INTERNSHIP IN CAREER DECISION-MAKING FOR TRSM STUDENTS

By

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To all of my past, present, and future students who are pursuing their passions through their career
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My experiences writing this dissertation, and the road that led me to it, have taught me that the proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child" applies to academia as well. Completing this massive undertaking would not have been possible without the help of a lot people along the way. First, I must acknowledge my family, who always supported and challenged me, but above all encouraged me to not settle for average. My mother, Nelia, who never missed one of my baseball games and gave me a work ethic and set of principles that I will never let go. My father, Alex, who taught me the value of an education by earning his college degree almost two decades into his career to set an example for my brother, sister and me. My grandparents, Hortensia and Luis, who were as important as my parents in raising me as they took me to school and baseball practice when my parents were both working. My sister, Erika, who always set a good example for me and was always proud of anything I accomplished. And my brother, David, who values family above all else.

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The internship has become ubiquitous within the TRSM industry (King, 2009) and educational curriculum (Eagleman & McNary, 2010). Although the internship experience is generally recognized for their educational and career-related benefits (Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010), scholars are beginning to question the merit and expected benefits of undergraduate internships in TRSM (King, 2009; Schneider & Stier, 2006). Recent research has even found evidence that the internship experience may negatively influence TRSM students’ intent to enter the profession (Cunningham, Sagas, Dixon, Kent, & Turner, 2005). This troubling finding has ramifications for TRSM students, educators and practitioners as all depend on the internship to a varying extent. The purpose of this dissertation was to examine how the decision-making process of TRSM students is influenced by the internship experience and to determine to what extent certain characteristics of the internship influence students’ intent to enter the profession. Study 1 applied image theory (Beach, 1990) and the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) through pre and post internship interviews to capture the composition of 11 TRSM students’ decision frame prior to the internship and any changes that may have occurred during the time of the internship. The findings of Study
reveal varying levels of uncertainty in students’ career plans both before and after the internship; most of the participants claimed the internship helped them learn more about what they did and did not want to do during their career, though some came away with even less certainty about their future. Study 2 used pre and post internship questionnaire data collected from (n=153) TRSM interns at two universities. Results indicate that challenge, supervisor support and role conflict are significant predictors of internship satisfaction while role ambiguity and learning opportunities are not. Internship satisfaction was a significant predictor of affective commitment to the vocation, which in turn influenced students’ intent to enter the profession. This provides substantial evidence that the internship experience has a meaningful influence on students’ career decision-making. Shocks, or specific critical events that occurred during the internship, appeared to be responsible for minor changes in students’ decision-making in Study 1, but only a certain type of shock (i.e., discontinuation) was found to be a significant predictor of intent in Study 2.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Internships

For centuries, people have learned a trade or vocation through direct work experience relationships such as apprenticeships. In the 20th century, the internship became common practice in fields such as medicine and business where an organization (e.g., hospital, accounting firm) would train, develop and test prospective employees in their respective profession. It is common today for educational institutions to offer or require students to complete an internship with an organization in order to graduate (Eagleman & McNary, 2010). This arrangement creates a symbiotic relationship between the intern (i.e., a student), educational institution, and professional organization. In this relationship, the educational institution engages their students in experiential learning (Clark, 2003), interns receive practical experience, networking opportunities, and increased marketability (Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010; Gault, Redington & Schlager, 2000), and the professional organization is able to evaluate and recruit new employees while benefitting from low-cost labor (Coco, 2000; Williams, 2004).

Internships in Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management

From the educational perspective, the internship has become especially ubiquitous within tourism, recreation, and sport management (TRSM) undergraduate degree programs. For example, Eagleman and McNary (2010) report that 77.5% of undergraduate sport management programs in the United States require students to complete an internship, while an additional 3.5% offer it as an elective. Senior-level sports industry professionals recognize the value of internships, proclaiming that
Internships are the most important element of a sport management student’s education (King, 2009). Moreover, the Council on Accreditation for Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions requires the inclusion of an internship in the curriculum of accredited programs (COAPRT, 2010). In general, educators feel the hands-on, experiential learning experiences that allow students to gain some “real world” experience are necessary in order to develop certain skills (D’Abate, Yount, & Wenzel, 2009; Verner, 1993).

The history of internships within these curricula extends over two decades (Beggs, Ross, & Knapp, 2006; Parkhouse, 1987). Throughout this time, several authors have expressed concern about the educational value of TRSM internships and offered suggestions of how to improve the students’ experiences (Beggs et al., 2006; Cunningham, Sagas, Dixon, Kent, & Turner, 2005; Hurd & Schlatter, 2007; Sutton, 1989). In 2004, the Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance released a two-part feature titled “Adding Rigor to the Sport Management Internship.” This feature included perspectives and best practices regarding the educational institution, agency that employs the interns and the students participating in the internship (Cuneen, 2004). The first three articles in the feature focus on components of the process that can help or hinder the educational value of the internship including the structure of the program (Young & Baker, 2004), selection criteria for internship sites (Verner, 2004), and supervision and accountability on the part of the educational institution (Kelly, 2004). In the same issue, Stratta (2004) found that the needs and concerns of students during their internship revolve around two areas: their personal and professional development. Finally, Williams (2004) offers perspective for educators and students about the role of
the agencies in the internship process, and issues that the agencies face when recruiting and managing interns.

From the student perspective, internships are seen as a key element to a successful career (Stratta, 2004). This notion is supported by findings that business students with internship experience were found to obtain their first job faster, receive better compensation, and higher job satisfaction than business students who did not intern (Gault et al., 2000). This is further substantiated by findings that employers favored business students with internship experience than without (Gault et al., 2010). Moreover, practitioners in independent studies in the sport and recreation fields have asserted that internships play a vital role in the education process (DeSensi, Kelly, Blanton, & Beitel, 1990; King, 2009). The underlying reason internships are thought to be so impactful for students’ career success in both business and TRSM contexts is that they provide an opportunity to develop new skills, and create a professional reputation and network in the field that can make them more attractive job candidates (Gault et al., 2000; Stratta, 2004).

From the agency perspective, employing interns can be very advantageous. Internships are often seen as a low-cost, low-risk method of previewing prospective candidates for full-time positions (Coco, 2000; Williams, 2004). Since students tend to have limited work experience, employers are able to receive a better picture of a student’s potential as an employee from their work as an intern. Similarly, internships serve as a preview for students of work-life within the organization and a particular vocation. The internship experience has been shown to help crystalize a student’s vocational self-concept (Brooks, Cornelius, Greenfield & Joseph, 1995; Taylor, 1988).
and clarify career choices (Neapolitan, 1992), thus helping them decide if working in that particular organization and/or field is right for them. In this sense, internships are similar to realistic job previews. Realistic job previews have been shown to have a modest, yet significant negative impact on turnover (Earnest, Allen, & Landis, 2011), which would add another benefit for employers to use internship programs as a hiring tool.

**Internship Structure**

The structure and characteristics of TRSM internships can vary greatly based on many factors such as duration and scope of responsibilities (Sutton, 1989; Williams, 2004). This creates issues for the educational institution seeking consistency in the educational experience for students. Although no explicit and universal guidelines exist for internships across all disciplines and schools, all previous research refers to undergraduate students in TRSM as completing their internship for academic credit during their final semester before graduating (Cunningham et al., 2005; Dixon, Cunningham, Sagas, Turner, & Kent, 2004; Stratta, 2004). Coinciding internships with the academic semesters could lead to vastly differing experiences even at the same agency. For example, tourism students interning for a hotel chain will have a different experience if they happen to be interning during the off-season as opposed to when the hotel is at its peak occupancy. Similarly, most professional sports leagues’ seasons last longer than each academic semester, consequently, interns working for a professional sports team would not have a complete experience if they left after the semester was completed. Because of this, many internships last longer or go beyond the requirements of the educational program. Nevertheless, it is generally understood that internships for academic credit require students to be immersed full-time (40 hours a week) with the
agency for the approximate length of a semester (Cunningham et al., 2005; Williams, 2004).

In general, internships in TRSM differ from those in other disciplines in that most programs require all students at the undergraduate level to complete an internship in order to graduate, internships are monitored by the educational institution, and internships tend to vary greatly in structure and focus based on the agency. Various medical professions require internships, but these degrees are at a far more advanced level of study. Moreover, internships offered in many business fields are not facilitated by the educational institution and thus may include people who are far removed from college, and more likely interested in using the internship to enhance their career. In TRSM, many students are completing internships that they might not have otherwise pursued if it were not required. For example, students who are interested in pursuing graduate school, or already have an entry level job lined up, would still have to complete the internship; these students would likely have a different approach than a business intern trying to get hired by the agency. Moreover, due in part to the abundant supply of interns in TRSM, many agencies appear to have moved away from using internships as an educational or developmental tool, and have instead begun using it as a source of labor (Schneider & Stier, 2006). Finally, the fields of tourism, recreation, and sport management are often housed in the same educational body (i.e., program, department or college) and typically require internships that share many of the attributes that have been discussed that distinguish them from internships in other fields.
**Influence of the Internship**

Although this three-way symbiotic relationship can produce benefits for the student, agency, and the educational institution, the exchanges between them may not necessarily be evenly reciprocated. Reports of mistreatment, physical and verbal abuse, and sexual harassment are overwhelmingly prevalent for medical school interns according to Daughtery, Baldwin, and Rowley (1998). While such egregious offenses as sexual harassment have not been suggested to be commonplace in TRSM, there are ways that TRSM students are being abused in the internship process.

The primary goal of the internships in the TRSM curriculum is the education of the students involved (Beggs et al., 2008; Kelly, 2004; Parkhouse, 1987; Young & Baker, 2004). However, according to recent perspectives on TRSM internships, interns are often used as cheap (or free) labor to perform routinized tasks (Cunningham et al., 2005; King, 2009; Schneider & Stier, 2006). In addition to the low educational value, this appears to directly violate explicit and unambiguous legal standards dictating that internship arrangements cannot benefit the employer, and interns cannot replace the work of an employee (Schoepfer & Dodds, 2010). Further similar trends in TRSM internships include the reduction of paid internships and concerns about the quality of the professional development interns receive during their internship (King, 2009; Williams, 2004). This apparent systematic exploitation, and perception of TRSM interns as free labor, can undermine the intended benefits of the internship and possibly lead to negative effects on the intern.

Indeed, the absence of an educational focus for interns can be manifested through the experiences of the interns. In a recent study of interns in the retail sector, Liu, Xu and Weitz (2011) found that learning and mentoring had a positive effect on job
satisfaction, which in turn had a positive effect on affective commitment towards the agency, and towards the industry as a career. Similarly, Cunningham and colleagues (Cunningham et al., 2005; Cunningham et al., 2004) using samples of sport management interns also found support for the connection between the internship experience (e.g., role clarity, job satisfaction, and supervisor support) and affective occupational commitment and intention to enter the sport management profession. Moreover, Dixon et al. (2004) found significant correlations between work experiences (i.e., challenge, supervisor support, and role stress) and interns’ attitudes towards the agency in TRSM interns.

Together these studies illustrate the effect that the structure and characteristics of an internship can have on the career path of students. However, Cunningham et al. (2005) astutely asserts that it is not necessarily a sign of dysfunction that career attitudes and intentions change after experiencing an internship; many students will realize that this vocation or industry simply does not suit them. Still, the relationship between negative experiences and decreases in attitudes and intentions gives cause for concern that students’ career paths are being affected by specific systematic traits of the internships rather than their accurate preview of work-life in the vocation.

Importance of Internships to TRSM

The continual development of quality training for TRSM students is of extreme importance to the survival and progress of the collective TRSM field. A survey of recreational sports directors revealed that less than half preferred a job candidate with a degree in recreation or sport management (Stier, Schneider, Kampf, Wilding, & Hanes, 2006). Similarly, of a sample of sport practitioners the majority favored job candidates with a business degree (48%) while much fewer preferred a sport management degree
(34%; King, 2009). If the demand for graduates with a degree in TRSM is not high, then the degree risks losing students and becoming irrelevant. Although this cross-sectional data is limited, it is evident that there is much ground to be gained. Since the internship is a core part of the TRSM curriculum, and it is an experience that hiring managers value (King, 2009), internships can be a means for increasing the relevance of the degree.

In addition to the importance internships serve as an educational tool, internships provide students with a preview of what their work-life will be like in the field. Previews of work environments have been shown to affect turnover (Earnest et al., 2011), and internships in TRSM have been shown to show a change in students’ attitudes towards the career and intention to pursue a career in sport (Cunningham et al, 2005; 2004). Hence, if the internship experience is giving an inaccurate preview of work-life in the TRSM field it may be causing otherwise qualified and talented job candidates to pursue a career elsewhere. These highly talented students are more attractive job candidates and will therefore have more options if they chose to leave the TRSM field. This outflow of talent could harm the TRSM field in the end. Thus, it is in the interest of the educator and the practitioner to understand how the internship can play a role in whether a student decides to enter the profession.

**Statement of Problem**

Several notable studies have examined the experience of students on their internship in TRSM. While these studies have greatly contributed to the literature of interns in TRSM, they possessed some limitations that must be addressed in order to proceed in furthering knowledge in this area.
Limitations of Previous Studies

Cunningham et al. (2004) was the first to examine the connection between the internship experiences and career-related attitudes and intentions in TRSM. Their study included prominent and common measures of work experiences from the organizational psychology literature with minor changes to fit the context of interns. The relationships between these work experiences and affective occupational commitment, and the intent to enter the sport management profession were estimated. A two-part repeated measures design was used where interns were surveyed after the first week of their internship, and again after the completion of their internship. After the first week, the results showed that affective occupational commitment mediated the relationship between work experiences and intent to enter the profession; however, this mediation was not supported for the data collected after the internship. Interestingly, tests to examine the week 1 versus post-internship means for affective occupational commitment and intent to enter the profession revealed decreases in both. While some of the findings from Cunningham et al. (2004) were informative, the study was limited by the sample size, absence of a control group, and a reliance on work experience variables that were designed for full-time employees.

A subsequent study by the same authors addressed some of the shortcomings of the previous study while focusing on the occupational attitudes and intentions of sport management interns (Cunningham et al., 2005). Using a control group of upper level students not on their internship, the authors were able to show marked differences in the interns’ affective occupational commitment, anticipated career satisfaction, and intent to enter the sport management profession. As the authors note, their study was limited because no variables specific to the internship experience were measured; thus,
they were not able to speculate as to any specific characteristics of the internships that could have triggered the changes in attitudes and intentions.

Finally, like Cunningham et al. (2004), Dixon et al. (2004) used measures derived from the organizational psychology literature (i.e., challenge, supervisor support, and role stress) to examine their effects on affective organizational commitment for interns towards their internship site. Though strong zero-order correlations were found, the data only supported a relationship between job challenge and affective organizational commitment, but not for supervisor support or role stress, in the full model (Dixon et al., 2004). Altogether, these variables explained 35% of the variance in organizational commitment (Dixon et al., 2004). Thus, job challenge, supervisor support and role stress represent conceptually and statistically significant constructs for interns but still leave a significant gap in understanding interns’ job attitudes.

Together these studies establish that even in a relatively ephemeral context, work characteristics can influence attitudes and behavioral intentions. However, there are two major limitations to these studies that must be addressed in order to advance knowledge in this area. First, these studies failed to address any external factors that may have contributed to changes in affective occupational commitment and intent to enter the profession (e.g., personal circumstances, lack of job offers). Although Cunningham et al.’s (2005) use of a control group consisting of upper level students served as a useful comparison, the utility of the control group is limited since students in this group still had to complete an internship and were thus farther away from graduation and entering the job market. It is possible that the differences between the two groups was somewhat attributable to the fact that the interns were also applying for
jobs and graduate school and much nearer to the point where they had to decide their next career step. Second, these studies were not rooted in a strong theoretical framework to explain why interns would change their attitudes and behavioral intentions or how they arrived at their decision.

**Research Questions**

The literature gaps and shortcomings discussed set the stage for the research questions in the present study.

RQ1: What influence does the internship experience have on students’ career decision-making during their internship?

RQ2: What influences do shocks, whether internal or external to the internship, have on the career decision-making of students during their internship?

RQ3: What specific characteristics in the internship influence career-decision making?

**Conceptual Framework**

In order to advance understanding of how students are influenced by their experiences during their final-semester internship, a holistic approach grounded in image theory (Beach, 1990) and the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) is adopted by the present study. Although originally developed to explain organizational turnover of employees regardless of career stage (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), the present study applies the unfolding model to vocational turnover for students who are considered to be in the entry stage of their career. This framework allows for the inclusion of factors internal and external to the internship that may influence a student’s decision to remain in the vocation.
The unfolding model presents several distinct paths an individual may take when exposed to a jarring event, or shock, that may enact a preprogrammed script or evaluation of alternative actions. The basis for the unfolding model is image theory (Beach, 1990; Beach & Mitchell, 1987), which is a generic decision making theory stating that individuals construct images about their values and projected self that is used to make decisions when confronted with new information or shock. Image theory states that individuals possess three related images that guide decision making: (1) a value image which consists of the individual's general set of values, ideals, and standards; (2) a trajectory image which consists of a set of goals that guides and directs behavior; and (3) a strategic image which consists of behavioral tactics considered to be effective for goal accomplishment (Beach, 1990; Beach & Connolly, 2005). Drawing from image theory allows the decisions of students to be framed in terms of their goals, the underlying principles that drive the goals, and their plans or scripts for achieving those goals, and capture how potential shocks (i.e., personal or professional events) that occur during the internship can influence decisions to remain in the vocation.

Within the unfolding model, instances where no shock occurs can still result in an accumulation of dissatisfaction, which either leads to a search for alternatives or a deliberation stage that can still result in turnover. Here, the influence of specific internship experiences are analyzed for their influence on career-related affect and behavioral intentions. Factors that have been shown to influence changes in attitudes or behavioral intentions in interns are analyzed, including challenge, supervisor support, role stress (Dixon et al., 2004), and learning opportunities (D’Abate et al., 2009). Incorporating image theory and the unfolding model to study TRSM interns allows for a
more comprehensive analysis of TRSM internships. More specifically, since TRSM interns are transitioning into their career, their decision frame and anything that may affect their trajectory image are particularly salient and relevant to understand why vocational turnover happens.

Furthermore, specific internship experiences (i.e., challenge, supervisor support, learning opportunities, and role stress) are included in the present study in order to gain insight into their influence on overall internship satisfaction, which can shape career attitudes and behavioral intentions. Challenge and supervisor support, as used by Dixon et al. (2004), are defined as the “excitement and stimulation associated with a particular task set” and “the degree of consideration, information, and task assistance provided by an individual’s supervisor,” respectively. Learning opportunities refers to the frequency and quality of times when the interns were able to learn during the internship. Role stress incorporates both role ambiguity (i.e., task clarity) and role conflict (i.e., conflicting instructions) as operationalized by Iverson, Olekalns, and Erwin (1998) via Dixon et al. (2004).

The influence of the perceived similarity between the internship and the student’s planned career is also examined; when similarity is low, the information interns receive during the internship is not relevant to their career. This factor has been suggested as a moderator in previous research (i.e., Taylor, 1988) but a significant relationship was not found. The present study employs an alternate method of analysis to examine the role this concept plays in connecting internship experiences to career decision-making. Thus, the conceptual framework of this study combines what is known about attitude
and behavioral change in interns with a comprehensive turnover model grounded in a
generic decision-making theory.

**Significance of Present Study**

The present study builds and expands on the previous work on the career
attitudes and intentions of TRSM interns and in doing so makes several theoretical,
methodological and practical contributions to the literature. The theoretical contributions
of this study are primarily centered on the application and increased understanding of
the unfolding model and image theory, but also include contributions unique to the
internship context. To date, the unfolding model has not been applied in an early career
setting. Moreover, although Lee and Mitchell (1994) discuss the use of retrospective,
simulated and prospective data collection with respect to investigating turnover using
the unfolding model, the majority of previous research has largely relied on
retrospective (Jones, Ross & Sertyesilisik, 2010; Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel & Hill,
1999; Lee, Mitchell, Wise and Fireman 1996; Maertz & Campion, 2004; Morrell, Loan-
Clarke, Arnold, & Wilkinson, 2008) accounts, and simulated scenarios. The present
study is the first to combine prospective and retrospective data to be analyzed using
both qualitative and quantitative analysis. In addition, the results of this study serve to
inform all members of the symbiotic relationship (i.e., educational institution, student,
and the agency) on the influence of the internship experience and personal and
professional events on the career attitudes and intentions of TRSM students.

This study provides an unprecedented look at the internship process through the
lens of the unfolding model. By employing a pre-post longitudinal design, this study
captures the full influence of the internship experience on career attitude and intention.
Though previous researchers have examined this context, the use of the unfolding
model provides a stronger theoretical basis that helps increase the variance explained of intent to enter the profession. Furthermore, the perceived similarity between the internship and students’ desired career is examined for its potential utility in psychologically connecting the internship experience to attitude towards the vocation. A final theoretical contribution is made through examining both the students’ value, trajectory and strategic images before the internship, and changes in images after the internship, including the students’ own description of how and why that image changed.

Methodologically, the present study is the first to jointly adopt a quantitative and qualitative analysis career-decision making of students. This approach, as well as the longitudinal design, allows for a better understanding of the relationships between variables and the decision-making process in general. The pre-post interviews offer particularly deep insight into how and why students edit their decision-frame, and to what extent those changes are attributable to specific events, the internship in general, or a particular part of their internship experience.

Finally, the practical contributions of this study are derived from the analysis of both the interviews and the questionnaire data. Educational institutions will benefit from knowing the various paths that can lead to vocational turnover during the internship process; this will allow them to evaluate internship agencies more accurately before sending students. Similarly, agencies employing interns will benefit from keeping interns committed to pursuing a job in the profession, which will improve the likelihood their former interns go on to successful careers, thus making themselves a more attractive site for future interns. For students, this study will show the importance of a quality internship experience as well as career-related decision-making process.
Dissertation Structure

Each section of this study is presented within its own chapter. The first chapter provides a general introduction to describe the context of the study, as well as a statement outlining the issues the study will address. The second chapter provides an extensive theoretical framework and literature review of the concepts involved in this study. Next, chapter three contains the entirety of Study 1, including the methodology, findings, analysis and discussion. Within chapter three, the description of the semi-structured interviews is provided, as well as the guide for coding and analyzing the interviews. The fourth chapter contains the methodology, results, analysis and discussion for Study 2. This chapter explains the procedure for the administration of the questionnaire and subsequent statistical analysis. Finally, chapter five concludes the study by incorporating a general discussion of the contributions of the dissertation to literature, implications for research and practice, limitations, and suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Image Theory

Image theory states that individuals make decisions based on the possession of three interrelated, hierarchical images: value, trajectory and strategic (Beach, 1990). The value image contains an individual’s set of principles, while the trajectory image is the set of goals that are generated based upon the value image, and strategic image is a set of tactics and plans used to carry out the trajectory image. Individuals create a decision frame from value, trajectory and strategic images relevant to a particular context or part of their life (Beach & Connolly, 2005). This decision frame is used to make adoption and progress decisions. That is, whether to make additions to or deletions from the decision frame (i.e., adoption decisions), and evaluations of whether acceptable progress is being made towards goal achievement or if changes must be made (i.e., progress decision; Beach & Mitchell, 1987).

Individuals decide between options (e.g., job offers, different courses of action), through two mechanisms, a compatibility test and a profitability test (Beach & Connolly, 2005). The compatibility test is a screening process whereby options that violate images from the decision frame are screened, whereas a profitability test is an evaluation of competing options that have survived the compatibility test (Beach & Connolly, 2005). These tests that represent mental deliberations can vary greatly based upon whether the individual has confronted similar situations in the past, and the clarity of the images within the decision frame (Beach, 1990).
Images and the Decision Frame

Students in the final semester of their undergraduate education form a decision frame consisting of their relevant value, trajectory and strategic images for their career. As they gain new relevant information, job offers, career guidance, and/or graduate school acceptance, they will make compatibility and profitability decisions regarding their options. In order to understand how students will make career-related decisions, a thorough understanding of their decision frame is necessary. The decision frame consists of an individual’s value, trajectory and strategic images that are relevant for the decision being made.

An individual's value image is their set of guiding values, principles, ethics, and ideals (Beach, 1990). This image acts as a set of standards or beliefs about how things should be or how people should behave (Beach, 1990; Beach & Connolly, 2005). The value image is manifested in part by the goals individuals set for themselves. Stevens (1998) describes how the value image can be a strong influence on occupational choice or goals, as individuals will be driven towards occupations that match the values or principles they are seeking from their career. For example, an individual's preference for wealth and prestige will guide the types of jobs they decide to pursue (i.e., jobs with high salaries and social status).

Trajectory images are the goals an individual has decided to pursue (Beach, 1990). In the occupational choice context, the trajectory goal can refer to a specific accomplishment (e.g., earning a graduate degree, being promoted), a state (e.g., being happy with work), or selecting a specific occupation (Stevens, 1998). Since the value image guides the formation of goals, the trajectory image must not conflict with the
value image. Thus, an individual’s value image can be inferred to a certain extent by their trajectory image.

Strategic images are the plans, policies, tactics and forecasts that individuals use to achieve their goals (Beach, 1990). An individual’s plan is their overall strategy of anticipated events that will lead to goal achievement. Policies are scripts, or specific preexisting versions of plans that an individual enacts in familiar or anticipated situations (Beach, 1990). Individuals rely on these scripts when possible; in other cases they rely on plans (Beach, 1990). Tactics are the behavioral components of plans or policies, which refer to specific actions, in an almost systematic fashion. Finally, a forecast is an individual’s projection of the future used to evaluate the likelihood of goal attainment based on their current course of action (Beach, 1990). In all, strategic images must fit with the trajectory image (i.e., they are used to move towards goal achievement), and with the value image (i.e., the means by which an individual achieves their goals cannot violate his or her principles or values).

Images within a decision frame are dependent on one another. Beach (1990) clarifies that the trajectory image refers to the question of ‘what,’ while the value image refers to ‘why,’ and the strategic image refers to ‘how’ a goal will be achieved. Lee and Mitchell (1994) observe that the images can change. They state that images operate sequentially, in that strategic images are most likely to be changed, followed by trajectory and finally value images (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Beach and Connolly (2005) expand by suggesting that change in trajectory and strategic images are far more likely than in value image.
Students’ career-related decision frame includes their value image of what they want to gain from work, a trajectory image about what job they want, and a strategic image consisting of a plan for landing that job. As they learn about job openings, familiarize themselves with certain organizations, and receive feedback from jobs they have applied for, they will screen their options based upon the images in their decision frame through a compatibility test (Beach, 1990). Within this test, the student will go through a screening process whereby job/career options that violate images from the decision frame are screened. TRSM students in their last semester will be in a similar position to other students nearing graduation. However, since TRSM students are required to complete an internship, they will be taking in more relevant information about their vocation than the average student. The internship exposes TRSM students to a full-time work environment, and thus provides more information that could be used to inform how the students form or change their decision frame, which will in turn affect how they make occupational decisions.

**Decision Making Mechanisms**

Adoption decisions involve screening or choosing among candidate principles, goals, or plans for inclusion, while progress decisions are decisions to abandon or revise an existing principle, goal, or plan, or adopt a new principle, goal, or plan, based on forecasts about future events (Beach & Mitchell, 1998). For progress decisions, these forecasts are evaluations or predictions of the likelihood of goal achievement if the current plan is continued; if the individual feels they can still achieve their goals, they will not change their plans, otherwise they will make adjustments such as abandoning or revising their goals or plans, or adopting new tactics (Beach, 1990).
Both adoption and progress decisions are made using compatibility and/or profitability tests (Beach, 1990; Beach & Mitchell, 1998). The compatibility test is an evaluation of candidate principles, goals, or plans for adoption (e.g., job offer, new job search strategy). When a candidate principle, goal or plan contradicts, negates, or prevents an existing image, it is termed an image violation (Beach, 1990). An individual will form a rejection threshold, or limit, to the number of violations a candidate can possess before it is rejected (Beach, 1990). If within a decision-making context, an individual evaluates one and only one option to be compatible, then the decision making process is over. For example, if a student’s trajectory image is to work for a professional football team and she has received only one job offer fitting this image, she will not have to weigh the decision any further. However, when multiple candidates survive the compatibility test, a profitability test must be carried out to make the final decision.

Unlike the compatibility test, the profitability test is not a straightforward evaluation. Beach (1990) links the profitability test with previous literature on the selection of decision-making strategies, that is, how individuals choose how they will make decisions. More specifically, Beach (1990) refers to Beach and Mitchell’s (1978) strategy selection model that classifies decision-making strategies as being non-analytic, unaided-analytic, and aided-analytic. Plainly, decision makers may adopt different strategies based on characteristics of the decision problem (e.g., familiarity, ambiguity, and complexity), decision environment (e.g., irreversibility, significance, and time/money constraints), and decision maker (e.g., ability, motivation; Beach, 1990; Beach & Mitchell, 1978). Deciding which career path to take is a major life decision that
is likely not decided by a flip of a coin (i.e., by non-analytic means) but can vary on the other characteristics.

**Decision Making for Interns**

For students, career-related decisions can be an adoption or progress decision based on their preexisting goals, or lack thereof. For college students, earning their degree is part of their strategic image, and thus moves them toward accomplishing their career goals. They may also be making progress towards these goals in other ways, such as through volunteering, shadowing and other career-related activities. However, many students change majors, often coinciding with changes in career goals, while others may remain undecided on their career goals through the completion of their degree. For students with existing career goals, the decision to remain in that vocation can be classified as a progress decision, which is open to revisions and abandonment of goals and plans. Conversely, students who are not considered to have ongoing plans and are “starting from scratch,” are making adoption decisions regarding their career goals, and plans.

TRSM students are required to complete an internship that is generally intended to be used as part of a plan to make progress toward a career goal. This full-time semester-long internship is meant to continue the student’s education while serving as a starting point for their career. However, many students may complete their internship with an agency that does not fit with their vocation (i.e., does not align with their career strategic image). This could be due to a number of reasons such as the student not being accepted for the internship they wanted, the lack of an available internship in their vocation, or a lack of a clear career goal. Moreover, some students may simply complete the internship to satisfy the graduation requirement and then move on to a
different career path. For example, a student may have the career goal to work for a winter resort but their final semester of school (i.e., when they must complete their internship) coincides with the resort’s off-season when they do not take interns. Rather than delay their graduation and risk not being accepted for the internship, the student may decide to take an internship in an unrelated area in order to graduate and attempt to find a job for the next season. Thus, while many students embrace the internship as a key part of their strategic image, others will look past it.

During the internship, students will be continually exposed to information and feedback that can be used to make progress decisions by assessing how their plan is advancing towards reaching their career goal. On the other hand, students who do not view their internship as part of their plan will not be similarly affected. Moreover, for students who do see the internship as part of their strategic image, the amount of information and feedback may be limited due to the structure of the internship. For example, a student who wants to work in ticket sales and interns at a ticket department may be tasked with mundane and routine tasks such as filing papers and making coffee. So while the student’s internship will progress their career forward and gives him or her a better chance of achieving their career goals, the tasks he or she is given are severely limited compared to a scenario where the student is given experiences that more closely reflect work life in that vocation. In this situation, since the student is not given a true preview of the vocation, he or she is exposed to much less information and feedback that is relevant for making career-related decisions. Therefore, for students whose internship is similar to their desired vocation, the internship will provide opportunity for progress decisions, while students who have unclear career goals or are
in internships that are less similar to their desired vocation will be minimally or not affected.

**Internship Experiences and Vocational Turnover**

Internships have been widely praised for giving students “real world” experience (D’Abate et al., 2009; Verner, 2003), and for providing an important transition for students entering the workforce (Stratta, 2004). While some attention has been given to the benefits of completing an internship (Gault et al., 2010; Gault et al., 2000; King, 2009), few researchers have tried to tie specific experiences within the internship to later outcomes. However, the existing literature does support the relationship between internship experiences and attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (Cunningham et al., 2005; Cunningham et al., 2004; Dixon et al., 2004; Liu et al., 2011). More specifically, evidence for the relationship between internship experiences and internship attitudes (i.e., affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction) has been found (D’Abate et al., 2009; Dixon et al., 2004; Liu et al., 2011), as well as evidence for the relationship between internship attitudes and career or occupation attitudes (Cunningham et al., 2004; Liu et al., 2011), and the relationship between career or occupation attitudes and intention to enter the profession (Cunningham et al., 2005). The application of image theory can help connect these concepts and increase understanding of how the career attitudes and intentions of TRSM interns can change in this early career stage.

Internships can serve as a major component to a student’s career strategic image; image theory can serve to explain how specific internship experiences can lead to changes in the trajectory image (i.e., career goals) via progress decisions and compatibility tests. This change in career goals has been previously referred to as intent to enter the profession (Cunningham et al., 2005) and can be seen as vocational
turnover. For students who value the internship as a component of their strategic image, a negative experience can prompt them to consider revising or abandoning their career goals (i.e., their trajectory image). However, the compatibility test typically includes the presence of multiple options, in this case alternate career paths, which may not be clear to the student during the internship. The unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) can explain this process of vocational turnover in instances with or without the presence of alternatives.

**The Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover**

The unfolding model of voluntary employee turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), which is grounded in image theory, proposes four paths to explain how an individual may decide to leave an organization. The decision path an individual follows is guided by the presence or absence of shocks (i.e., a jarring event), scripts (i.e., preprogrammed plan of action), and alternatives (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Three of the four paths begin because of a shock, which prompts the individual to evaluate their situation and make a decision of whether they will remain in the organization or turnover. Not all shocks are unplanned or unpredicted, and some may have happened before to the individual. In these cases, an individual may have a script that they will enact, or preprogrammed plan of action that is part of their strategic image. If no script exists, and the individual has not experienced the shock before, the individual will deliberate his or her options through a compatibility test (Beach, 1990; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The set of options will vary, and a search for alternative employment may take place, thus the length of the various decision paths range from automatic decisions to lengthy deliberation (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The compatibility test and subsequent deliberations may also start without the presence of a shock. In this fourth path described by the unfolding model, an
individual simply decides to evaluate their situation and decides to turnover or not (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

Although image theory provides a solid foundation for examining decision making for interns, including the perspective of the unfolding model helps improve understanding of the process of vocational turnover even further. Specifically, while image theory has been conceptually applied to the decision to choose an occupation (Stevens, 1998), the unfolding model adds the concept of shocks, and illustrates the specific decision paths that an individual may take to decide to leave an organization or, in this case, vocation.

**Decision Paths**

The four decision paths within the unfolding model are characterized by the presence or absence of a shock, a script, and alternatives (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Harman, Lee, Mitchell, Felps, & Owens, 2007). A shock is a jarring event that may be personal or professional in nature, planned or unforeseen, and positive, negative or neutral (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Scripts are a part of an individual’s strategic image and can be enacted, revised or abandoned based on the particular shock (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Finally, alternatives are options that survive the screening of a compatibility test from which an individual may decide to choose one (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). These paths integrate image theory to explain the potential routes an individual will make to exit an organization.

The first path is begun by a shock that triggers a preprogrammed script or plan the individual will follow. For example, Lee and Mitchell (1994) give the example that a woman may possess a script to quit her job if she became pregnant. In this example, since the shock (i.e., pregnancy) was something for which she had a plan for, it was
simply a matter of carrying out that plan. This scenario would also apply to situations
where an individual was presented with a shock that was the same or similar to
something they had experienced before and had developed a rule or script in case they
had encountered it again. Thus, in the first path, the decision to turnover is automatic
and does not include a deliberation or compatibility test.

The second path also begins with a shock. However, in this case, the individual
does not possess a detailed script. Instead, the individual will perform a compatibility
test to assess the presence of violations between the new situation and his or her
decision frame (i.e., value, trajectory and strategic images). Lee and Mitchell (1994) see
turnover in the second path as a fairly automatic decision. That is, if the new set of
circumstances resulting from the shock surpasses the individual's rejection threshold in
terms of violations, he or she will quit without searching for alternatives.

This contrasts with the third path of the unfolding model in which the individual
confronted with a shock will perform the compatibility test, and then search for
alternatives before deciding to quit (Harman et al., 2007; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Hence,
the decision to turnover is deliberate rather than automatic. The search for alternatives
may produce several options for the individual, and therefore may necessitate a
profitability test to decide among the options. With regard to vocational turnover, a
TRSM intern may begin to explore alternate career paths whilst continuing to pursue a
career in the vocation they were originally trained in.

Unlike the first three paths, the fourth path does not begin with a shock. Instead,
this path begins with an unprompted evaluation of the individual's present situation.
According to Lee and Mitchell (1994), this reassessment may be routine or random and,
if the individual ultimately feels dissatisfied with their job, it may lead to a decision to quit. Moreover, two sub-paths are proposed by Lee and Mitchell (1994) based on whether the decision to quit is fairly automatic similar to decision path 2 (path 4a), or if the reassessment prompts a search for alternative before quitting such as in decision path 3 (path 4b).

The presence of these four decision paths was tested by Lee et al. (1996) using a sample of nurses who had recently quit their job. The authors were successfully able to classify all of the leavers by interviewing the nurses retrospectively and noting what characteristics (e.g., scripts, search for alternative) were missing from the accounts of their turnover. Lee et al. (1999) extended this study by using survey items to identify the presence of certain features (shocks, scripts, image violations, job satisfaction, search, evaluation and job offers) to classify former accounting employees who had recently quit their job. The authors were able to classify 93% of the sample using this method (Lee et al., 1999).

Application to the Vocational Context

Although the unfolding model was originally designed to explain why individuals leave organizations, its utility can be expanded to help explain why individuals may leave a vocation. The main components of the unfolding model, (i.e., shocks, scripts and search for alternatives) can be conceptualized at the vocational level just as they are at the organizational level; and in many cases the process is identical. For example, a personal shock, such as the example of the pregnant woman, can result in the woman resigning from the organization as well as the vocation. Similarly, a person can change vocations from a personal shock, such as an unsolicited job offer in another vocation. This shock could either prompt a preprogrammed script to accept the job if it is
something the person had already considered (path 1), or some level of deliberation and weighing of alternatives (paths 2 or 3). A professional shock, such as a shift in the industry’s operating standards, could also prompt an individual to change their vocation through any of the first three paths.

Furthermore, an individual can reassess their career progress and decide to change their vocation without a shock (path 4). If an individual was dissatisfied with their vocation instead of or in addition to the organization in which they work, they may quit with or without searching for alternatives (paths 4a and 4b); this may be especially true for people in their early career stages such as students during or after their internship. Thus, making it increasingly relevant to understand the factors involved in the decision making process of interns within this path.

Although students have studied several years earning a degree to enter a particular vocation, this investment is not as great as for someone who has invested years of their life working a full time job and possibly attempting to climb the ladder toward a managerial position. Thus, as TRSM students endeavor to complete their internship they may be exposed to information about the reality of the vocation. At the same time, TRSM interns are likely searching for jobs within their chosen vocation and receiving information and feedback (e.g., job offers and rejections) that may prompt them to reassess their situation and change their career goals (i.e., trajectory image).

A noticeable gap exists in the literature to explain how interns may make the decision to remain or turnover from the vocation. Although some of this may be directly attributed to the internship experience (Cunningham et al., 2005; Liu et al., 2011), the role of personal and professional shocks has not been explored. Furthermore, the types
of value, trajectory and strategic images that TRSM interns possess, and what changes in these images may occur as the result of their first major career experience has also not been investigated.

TRSM students represent the future workforce for the industry, and the internship is the final step in their education before they enter the workforce. If the internship experience is causing the future labor pool of talented employees for the TRSM industry to shrink, it could have potentially negative ramifications across the industry. A person-centered approach is necessary to examine if the potentially ill effects of the internship on the career attitudes and intentions of TRSM students so that necessary adjustments can be made. Therefore, the application of image theory and the unfolding model to explain vocational turnover for TRSM students is warranted.
CHAPTER 3
STUDY 1

The purpose of Study 1 is to (1) provide insight into the career-related decision frame for TRSM students prior to their internship, (2) examine if and how that decision frame is applied or altered over the time of the internship and (3) search for themes or trends in the shocks or general internship experiences that may emerge as relevant to the vocational turnover decision. This study applies the unfolding model of voluntary turnover to the vocational context for TRSM students during their career entry stage, that is, as the students complete their internship prior to graduation. Previous studies that have utilized the unfolding model have primarily used a cross-sectional, retrospective design (e.g., Jones et al., 2010; Lee et al., 1999; Lee et al., 1996; Maertz & Campion, 2004; Morrell, Loan-Clarke, Arnold, & Wilkinson, 2008). One notable exception was Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Glomb, and Ahlburg (2005), who used a longitudinal design to examine the antecedents to turnover including shocks. In their study, participants evaluated critical events, or shocks, as continuation, discontinuation, or neutral in terms of whether the event made them more or less likely to quit, or if it had no effect (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2005). The results revealed that 12% of the participants experienced a discontinuation event (i.e., a negative shock) prior to turnover, and that those who experienced a discontinuation event had higher commitment, satisfaction and engagement than those who quit without reporting an event (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2005). However, this study did not fully examine the decision frame, or the various paths participants may have taken within the unfolding model.
Study 1 expands upon previous research by providing a more descriptive account of the voluntary turnover process from a prospective and retrospective view. Lee and Mitchell (1994) suggest that of the three methods to examine the unfolding model (i.e., prospective, retrospective, and simulated), the prospective approach is either as appropriate or preferred over the retrospective or simulated approaches. The advantage of the prospective approach is its ability to capture the complexity of decisions that may occur, as well as avoid biases and fallibility of memory if a participant is asked to recount a deliberated decision to quit (i.e., decision paths 3, 4a and 4b; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). However, retrospective accounts still possess utility for instances where automatic, or fairly automatic, decisions to leave are made (i.e., decision paths 1 and 2; Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

**Research Design**

Study 1 employs a longitudinal design that, in Phase 1, assesses the images, scripts, and any vocational alternatives that students possessed prior to the internship, as well as how the internship fit into their strategic image. The second Phase of Study 1 involved post-internship interviews assessing the occurrence of any shocks (personal, professional, or at the internship) during the internship, as well as any changes in attitude as a result of the internship. There are several advantages to this design including (1) the ability to examine the decision frame of students prior to their internship (2) the ability to examine accounts from the same individual before and after the shock (for those who experience a shock), and (3) the ability to discover any additional internship experiences or characteristics that can influence vocational turnover (for all participants).
Sampling

The population of interest is TRSM students who are preparing to complete their required internship during the last semester of their undergraduate studies. The sample for Study 1 was derived from a sampling frame of 58 such students completing a 13-week internship during the summer semester at a single university’s TRSM program. Convenience samples from a single institution have been used in prior studies examining the unfolding model (Jones et al., 2010; Lee et al., 1996). A key characteristic of the population of interest is that the internship is their first major step into their first career, which would be undermined by non-traditional students who are starting a second career; thus, non-traditional students (i.e., considerably older and/or starting a second career) were screened. Of the remaining students in the sampling frame, participants were strategically selected in order to yield a sample that included students in various vocations (i.e., tourism, recreation, and sport management) and organization types (e.g., hotels, professional sports teams, and non-profit organizations). Fitting with the method used in Study 1, students were solicited for participation until a point of saturation was reached. Saturation in responses was reached when participants’ responses became repetitive and it was felt that a larger sample would not yield significantly richer data. That is, in the pre-internship interview, once no new value, trajectory, or strategic images emerged, no further participants were sought.

The point of saturation was reached at 12 participants, including six male and six female students. One male participant did not complete his internship due to academic issues that were unrelated to the study or his career expectations. Since this participant was not able to complete a significant portion of his internship, and his responses did
not introduce any new insight or themes, he was eliminated from the study, leaving a final sample of 11 participants. These participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identity.

The sample included five male and six female participants, with ages ranging from 20 to 23. Most of the participants had an events-oriented internship such as Leslie, who interned at a private resort and wedding venue, Ann, who was an event planning intern for a university career resource center, Wendy, who was a public relations intern for an events company producing a marathon, Tom, who was an intern at a local community sports facility, and Andy, who interned at a recreational golf course that hosted tournaments. Two participants interned for a sport governing body: April, who was an athletic services intern at a non-profit state athletic association and Jerry, who was a player relations intern for a tennis governing body. The remaining participants included Tammy, who interned with the director of football operations for a prestigious college football program, Donna, who was a communications and marketing intern at a large sports broadcasting company, Ron, who interned for an upstart basketball headhunter and career consulting firm, and Ben, who completed his internship at a sports marketing and sponsorship agency.

**Method**

Lee and Mitchell (1994) recommend the use of semi-structured interviews to assess the presence of scripts, images, alternatives, and to generally describe the turnover process due to the absence of well-developed measures for these constructs and the complexity of the decision paths. Lee et al. (1996) used a semi-structured interview design to assess the presence of shocks, scripts, image violations, and other criteria in order to classify leavers by the various decision paths of the unfolding model.
Study 1 adapted this method in the pre-internship phase to collect data relevant to student’s career decision frame, including the presence of any scripts the students possessed, and their intent to enter the profession (see Appendix A for interview guide). All pre-internship interviews (i.e., Phase 1) were performed in the two weeks prior to the participants’ internship start date.

Phase two of Study 1, which included the post-internship interview, assessed any changes in the participants’ intent to enter the profession, as well as shocks (personal or professional), and specific internship experiences (positive or negative) that may have influenced their intent to pursue a career in the vocation. Questions were adapted from Lee et al.’s (1996) study in order to capture the effects of any shocks and internship experiences on vocational turnover vocation (see Appendix B for interview guide). Post-internship interviews were collected within the two weeks following the completion of the internship.

The interview data collected prior to the internship was audio recorded with the participants’ permission, transcribed verbatim and coded using Atlas.ti version 6. This software allowed the researcher to highlight and group the data according to predefined codes (i.e., concepts of interest), as well as create new codes for emerging themes as needed.

Data Analysis

Coding

Drawing from Lee et al. (1996), coding of the pre and post-internship interview data was performed by three independent researchers who identified the participants’ value, trajectory, and strategic images, as well as any shocks that occurred from the participants’ transcripts. However, since this study employed previously developed and
tested procedures, the three coders only coded the transcripts from five participants chosen at random. Each researcher made decisions based on the pre and post-internship coding guide (see Appendices C and D). This guide, derived from Lee et al. (1996) assisted the researchers in making judgments about the existence of images and scripts.

Similar to Lee et al. (1996), the three independent coders compared their judgments for discrepancies. Had significant discrepancies been found between coders after the first five participants’ interviews are coded, all three would have continued coding the rest of the interviews together. However, the three coders had high agreement, thus, only the primary coder continued coding the remaining transcripts.

Inter-rater agreement was considered high since a comparison of all three coders’ sheets revealed that they identified similar passages as value, trajectory and strategic images. In most cases, the raters identified varying lengths of the same passage as a particular image. For example, the first coder may have indicated a participant’s value image from a single sentence, whereas the other two coders may have highlighted the entire passage (e.g., a paragraph) containing the same sentence. Upon further discussion, it was apparent that all three coders were consistently identifying the same portions of the transcripts as the respective participants’ images.

A larger discrepancy was found however, between the coders’ interpretation of whether or not a shock had occurred. Of the five participants that all three coders analyzed, initial agreement happened for three. However, upon further discussion, it was apparent that there was some disparity as to whether a series of events could qualify as a shock or if a shock was strictly defined by an event that occurred in a single
moment. The primary researcher decided to be conservative and use a looser standard for what qualified as a shock. In order to prevent this from affecting the results, the shocks are described in detail in the findings section. After completion, the coding was summarized into a single document for analysis.

Analysis

The collection of data relevant to students’ decision frame (i.e., their value, trajectory and strategic images) before and after their internship allows for an analysis of how these images might have been applied or changed during a critical career juncture. Thus, the first step of the data analysis was to examine any changes that occurred and, if possible, determine the reason for the change (e.g., personal or professional shock that triggers image violation).

Once the analysis for each participant was completed, they were classified into the various decision paths of the unfolding model. Unlike previous studies applying the unfolding model, assessing the actual behavior was not possible for all participants since many had not completed their job search or were still in the interview process. The product was a mapping of the decision paths for students completing their internship including any shocks they may have experienced. This analysis makes it possible to examine how students change their trajectory image (i.e., vocational turnover) as a result of the internship and, if applicable, as a result of any major events that occurred in their lives during the time of the internship. Moreover, this analysis gives extensive insight into the scripts that students possess as they enter their senior internship prior to graduation and how adoption and progress decisions are made.
Findings

Of the eleven participants, three (Tammy, Donna and Wendy) were accepted into graduate school prior to or during the internship and plan to attend immediately after the internship. Although this appears to undermine job search component of the internship experience, the three did not differ greatly from the other participants with regard to their decision frame. In light of this, the three participants were not excluded from the analysis. Among the other participants, Ron accepted a full-time position with his internship site, while Leslie, Tom and Andy are working on a temporary basis with their internship site while searching for a new job. As previously mentioned one participant, Chris, was interviewed in Phase 1 but did not complete his internship due to university-related administrative issues and was therefore removed from the analysis. The rest of the participants (i.e., April, Ann, Ben and Jerry) were unemployed and searching for a job at the time of the post-internship interview.

Composition and Changes within Interns’ Decision Frame

A primary purpose of Study 1 was to examine how students at this point of their career (i.e., end of undergraduate studies, beginning of career) form a decision frame. The three components of a decision frame, value, trajectory and strategic image are discussed. Overall, the participants’ varied widely in their ability to articulate their value, trajectory and strategic image. Not surprisingly, due to the hierarchical nature of the decision frame, those who had difficulty articulating a value image also had difficulty articulating their trajectory and strategic image. Similarly, those who did not appear to possess a clear trajectory image did not have a clear strategic image. Although it appears that many students in this period of transition do not possess a fully developed decision frame, much can still be learned from examining their value, trajectory, and
strategic images before and after the internship experience. As such, this section scrutinizes the composition of the decision frames assessed in the study. Moreover, this section comments on how individual participants’ altered their decision frames.

According to image theory, individuals make two types of alterations to their decision frame: progress decisions (i.e., abandoning or revising components of existing images) and adoption decisions (i.e., screening candidate principles, goals or plans for adoption into their respective images; Beach, 1990). For TRSM interns, the internship and concurrent job search present a scenario where they are being exposed to a great deal of information leading to progress and adoption decisions regarding their career-related values, goals and plans that can result in changes to the person’s decision frame. This section closely examines instances where participants’ decisions frames changed from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

**Value image before the internship**

When participants were asked questions meant to reveal their value image regarding their future careers, seven participants mentioned being happy at work; several gravitated toward generic statements on the subject: “career success is generally being happy and waking up every day doing something that you love” (Donna). Two participants, Ann and Andy, specifically said they were seeking a sense of accomplishment from their work: “[I am looking for] a certain level of accomplishment, so I can look back 5 years from now and look back and see how far I’ve come” (Ann).

In addition to the intangible job outcomes mentioned, the majority of the participants brought up money and financial stability. Donna, Tammy, Ron and Ben referred to money as a significant consideration for their future job. For example, Ron remarked, “as long as I’m not living pay check to pay check I would consider my career
to be a success." Conversely, April, Tom, Andy and Jerry specifically mentioned that they did not consider money as part of their definition of career success, but instead favored the work itself. "If you wake up everyday kind of excited to go to work… I guess that’s more important than how much money you’re making" (Andy). April acknowledged the importance of money but saw enjoyment of work to be more important:

Yes, money makes the world go round, but if you’re not happy doing it what’s the point of doing it? So in the long run I just want to make sure I have the opportunities to grow and overall enjoy my career. (April)

Finally, several participants (i.e., April, Ann, Tom, Jerry) expressed location would be a criterion they would use to evaluate job opportunities after the internship. Some of the preferences were rather broad, referring to a region such as the Southern United States (Tom) or the Western United States (Jerry). Others were more specific to a particular including April who was planning to seek opportunities in Denver, and Ann who wanted to find event management work in Atlanta.

Changes to value image

At the core, participants’ value image at Time 2 (i.e., after the internship) were very similar to Time 1 (i.e., before the internship), however, many adopted new values. Notions of financial stability, being happy at work, and accomplishing personal goals remained present. Value image adoptations generally consisted of new desires for the work environment (e.g., to have good coworkers), or the circumstances of their future job (e.g., required hours per week, flexible scheduling, location). Location was once again a factor, with two notable changes. In her post-internship interview before returning for a temporary position with the same wedding company, Leslie spoke to how the distance from her family affected her and how it might ultimately influence her
decision to remain with the organization after her temporary position is over as she has begun searching for alternatives.

Well something I also realized is that [my internship site] is very far from home. And I don’t really like being so far from home, but I’ll go where I have to go. But I’ve also tried to make contact with people in my area [back home]. Because there [are] a few hotels down here…I still have to [stay at my internship site for a] few months after [my break], but my other option is to come back [home]. (Leslie)

In contrast, Ann, who had previously been adamant about where she wanted to work, was now open to moving to a different city.

…it just shows that there are a lot of opportunities in different cities. So just saying that, I would love to go anywhere because the location is new, there’s just so much opportunity. And I think that’s so exciting, so I didn’t want to limit myself to Atlanta. (Ann)

These are likely the result of immersion in a full-time work environment and, for Leslie, being far from home for the first time. These changes (i.e., progress decisions) did not appear to be attributable to a particular characteristic of the internship.

**Trajectory image before the internship**

Participants’ career goals, or trajectory image, varied greatly. On one end of the spectrum, Leslie expressed her lifelong dream of buying a historic home in order to host and plan weddings at the home. Similarly, Tammy expressed multiple long-term goals including owning the Chicago Bulls, working at a high profile sports agency, and holding a management position within a professional sports franchise; Tammy clarified that these were all things she hoped to accomplish but in no specific order. Ann had plans to move to Atlanta and search for a position within an events company. Wendy was less certain than other were, but nevertheless had some ideas of what she did and did not want to pursue:
I don’t want to work in youth level sport, I don’t know if I even want to work in college sport. I want to work with the agency side of [sports]. Which is more like what I’m going to be doing this summer, marketing agency, PR agency that kind of thing. (Wendy)

Meanwhile, Tom had a narrow set of possible paths in high school and college sport administration. Ron desired to stay working at his internship site and had already discussed the possibility with his supervisors. Ben also expressed interest in rather specific lines of work,

I want to work in something, pushing international marketing. Managing like marketing efforts of an entire region for an entire agency. I don’t know, being a director in that sense, where you’re responsible for all the marketing and sponsorship efforts for a region for an agency. (Ben)

On the other end of the spectrum, April, Donna, Andy and Jerry did not have any specific career goals. Donna, who was in the application process for graduate school was particularly indefinite, “I’m not really sure. I really don’t know what I want to do in the long term, or the short term.” When probed further for information on potential career goals she was almost equally as uncertain “Probably something in marketing. If I had to pick right now I really don’t know. I really don’t know, I’m really not prepared for a job search.” Andy and April’s responses, in contrast, were able to express some sense of where they might begin a job search:

I just know I want to do something in sports. But I don’t have a particular job where, if I don’t get that, I feel like I’m going to be going for [it] for the rest of my life. It’s just kind of like, I’m just taking things as they come, but there’s not really a specific job necessarily that I’m like wanting to do, I’m just kind of like feeling different things out and hoping that I’m going to stumble into something. (Andy)

I don’t want to be in sales. I want to find a position that fits me whether it’s in marketing, operations or possibly in communications…overall my criteria is I don’t want to settle for a career in the beginning… I just want to make sure whatever career I choose, even in the beginning is something that is not going to burn me out quickly. So my criteria is that it’s a job I want to do for at least a couple years. (April)
April went on to explain her intention to move to Denver, a city that is home to several professional sports franchises and universities with large athletic departments. Thus, while Andy and April expressed interest to seek jobs in certain areas or organizations, they were still as undecided as Donna. Jerry too was undecided, although he was exploring the possibility of accomplishing some personal goals prior to finding a job:

Right now I’m applying to volunteer for like a month in Africa teaching over there. And that’s kind of the start there to kind of do some volunteer work and get a feel for what kind of not necessarily volunteer work but do I want to work for a non-profit. Do I want to move to another country and work? Do I want to stay here and work? Just start to find things out. (Jerry)

**Changes to trajectory image**

The career goals of the participants changed in a number of ways. Some participants solidified their trajectory image, stating that the internship reinforced what they wanted to do for their career. This included Ron, who had been hired in a full-time, permanent capacity with his internship site, as well as Leslie, Tammy, and Tom. Ann remained interested in working in events, but was much more specific about the possibilities that she was pursuing, and no longer carried any geographical constraints.

Others, including April, Wendy, Ben, and Andy, edited their pre-internship trajectory image, stating the experience gave them more insight on what they did not want to do than it informed them about what career suited them best.

I know I don’t want to do major [events]…[this event] was great but like, the fact that I basically worked 36 hours straight, I’m not still recovering from that. I’ve been sick for a week, you have no time. So I don’t want to do any ridiculous events per se, but maybe smaller events. (Wendy)

I don’t want to be in a career that’s just going to take everything out of me…I don’t want to work in an industry where you’re expected to work 50-60 hours a week and come home exhausted and miserable… I want to work in a location where I’m always going to be happy…I came away from this internship and I’m more confused than when I came into it. I could see
myself working a variety of things so my career goals have become more vague after this. (Ben)

I started to think that I enjoy golf but I want to keep it as something I enjoy doing, instead of it becoming like work...because normally when I had days off I would golf, but it became like I don’t even want to see a golf course. (Andy)

April’s response differed from the other participants as she changed her mind regarding what she should be applying for at this stage of her career.

I thought I wanted to work in a certain kind of position and work in a certain industry, and I have definitely become more focused on the fact that I need to start my [career] by getting in somewhere, as opposed to just finding the position that I think that I want, and jump into it. I’ve learned a bit more of what i would qualify for with a bachelor’s, and I have a different perspective on what I’m going to pursue in my career. (April)

Donna and Jerry, who had previously been very unclear on their future, did not show much difference after the internship. Donna, whose internship was divided between the communications and marketing departments of a sports radio company, said she had now ruled out communications as a career path, but was somewhat interested in the work she did on the marketing side. Nevertheless, she still felt that this upcoming year in graduate school would help more than anything in deciding her career path. Jerry had also not developed any long-term plans but had postponed his aspirations to volunteer abroad as he realized that he could not financially afford to do so. He was currently searching for a job within similar parameters as he had planned prior to the internship.

**Strategic image before the internship**

Participants’ strategic image, or plans, tactics and scripts, before the internship were generally vague even for those with clearly defined trajectory images (i.e., career goals). Not surprisingly, most of the participants’ strategic image included the internship;
most planned to use the internship to gain skills, experience and endorsers who could help them find a job after the internship. Some of the participants alluded to job search strategies, but only those who were accepted into graduate school prior to the internship (i.e., Tammy, Wendy) and Ron, who planned to stay with the organization after the internship, had definitive plans for after the internship.

Leslie’s strategic image was fairly clear. Given her long-term aspirations to own a historic home for hosting weddings, she knew she had to learn some new skills and gain experience in certain areas. Her strategic image prior to the internship was to work planning weddings for other companies until she could save enough money to start her business. Similarly, Tom had a particularly clear set of career goals (i.e., to become an athletic director) and used his understanding of the profession to develop a rough idea of what positions he would need to hold before gaining enough experience to reach his goals.

Ben and Andy, who had less concrete trajectory images compared to Leslie and Tom, had similar strategic images. Both planned to gain more insight into their career paths through their internship, as well as gain mentors or endorsers to help them land in a favorable position after the internship. Ben’s response reflects this strategy, “this is my first big time internship working in America. I feel like my network that my bosses are going to know are really going to help me out open doors for working in sports.”

April, Ann, Donna, and Jerry’s strategic image prior to the internship were far less articulate than the other participants were. April saw the internship as playing a role in helping her find her career path:
Ultimately, I just want to know if this is a field that I want to be in... I want my internship to show me that I do or do not like this part of the field. Almost like a process of elimination. (April)

Ann takes a different approach to the internship and her strategy for career goal accomplishment, stating that she will take it “just one step at a time.” Donna is equally as vague, but comments that the internship may open new doors through learning new skills and exposing her to an area of the industry she had not considered before. Finally, Jerry’s strategic image only includes the possibility for doing volunteer work abroad in the short-term, and applying for entry-level jobs in the long-term.

**Changes to strategic image**

In Phase 2, participants were again asked how they would reach their career goals.Responses were largely similar for all the participants with the exception of participants who were already employed (i.e., Ron) or enrolled in graduate school (i.e., Tammy, Donna, Wendy) at Time 2.

The remaining participants, who were still in the job search, responded by discussing their current job search strategy; it was apparent that their current job search was either the major component or the only component in their strategic image after the internship. These search strategies tended to be aimed at entry-level positions and were derived from their trajectory image (e.g., Tom wants to work in high school or college athletic administration and was searching for jobs with high school athletic departments). Variance existed, however, in the criteria used to search for a job. For example, Leslie, who was intent on working in the wedding planning industry, was only considering jobs in that industry. In contrast, April, who had recently moved to a city in the Western United States and did not have a well-defined career path, was searching for jobs in and out of sport, with a preference for jobs in sport, or that can help her
develop skills to eventually work for a sport organization (e.g., marketing). Furthermore, it was evident that those with more precise trajectory images (i.e., Tom and Leslie) also had more detailed strategic images than those who did not (i.e., April, Ann, Ben, Andy and Jerry).

**Scripts**

Scripts are preprogrammed plans of action that is part of an individual’s strategic image (Beach, 1990; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Previous research has examined scripts as being developed from previous experience and enacted as a response to a familiar shock (e.g., unpleasant new boss; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Scripts are an important part of the decision-making process as they can guide behavior when the shock is encountered. TRSM interns are entering the workforce for the first time and thus would not possess a script from previous experience; however, it is possible for them to have developed a backup plan for the event (i.e., shock) of not finding employment upon ending their internship and graduating.

In Phase 1 of the study, participants were also asked if they had any backup plans if they were unable to find work in TRSM upon graduation (those already accepted into graduate school were asked the same question referring to their graduation from their graduate program). Two of the participants mentioned job opportunities available to them through their family (Ron) or from previous work experience (Ann) that could serve as an alternate career path. The remaining participants’ responses included acquiring temporary work in another field that could help them develop skills applicable to TRSM, explore graduate school in order to get back to TRSM, and working in a corollary sector of TRSM such as in the marketing department of a business that sponsors athletes or sports leagues. It was unclear how distant these backup plans were in the minds of the
participants; aside from Ron and Ann, the participants all took considerable time to think before presenting these alternatives. It was also unclear how much thought had gone into their backup plans. Again, aside from Ron and Ann, few details were included and it did not seem as though the participants had any sense of how viable these backup plans might actually be if they needed to use them.

None of the participants looked favorably upon the prospect of a career outside of TRSM, and many commented that the thought of working outside TRSM had not occurred to them. This would largely explain the absence of a preprogrammed script for most of the participants; if they had not considered the possibility of not working outside of TRSM then they would not have developed a backup or contingency plan prior to the job search process.

In Phase 2, the enactment of the previously stated scripts was assessed. Since at the time of the Phase 2 the participants were already hired as planned (i.e., Ron), attending graduate school (i.e., Tammy, Donna, Wendy) or still in the job search process, none had not resorted to enacting any scripts or backup plans.

**Decision Making**

Since many of the participants had not completed their decision making process at the time of the Phase 2 interview, it was not possible to assess the influence of the internship on their career decision-making process through to complete entry or exit from the vocation (i.e., accepting a job in TRSM or elsewhere). Nevertheless, much insight was gained from assessing the participants’ current outlook having just completed the internship. First, the role of shocks (i.e., significant personal or professional events) that occurred during the internship was also assessed. Next, the vocational turnover intentions were examined at Phase 1 and 2 and compared in order
to gauge change. Finally, although few participants had reached the culminating point in their decision-making process, those expressing turnover intentions or vocational dissatisfaction were classified based on their progression through the various paths outlined in the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

**Shocks**

Participants were asked to recall any significant personal or professional events during the second interview. These critical events, or shocks, can differ in their impact on the decision-making process depending on several factors including 1) if they are likely to lead to the individual to consider quitting (i.e., discontinuation event), consider staying (i.e., continuation event), or neither (i.e., neutral), 2) whether they were of a personal nature, professional nature or if it occurred at the internship, and 3) whether they were expected or unexpected. Seven participants (i.e., April, Ann, Donna, Wendy, Ron, Andy, Jerry) reported experiencing one or more shocks during the internship. Four (April, Wendy, Andy, Jerry) experienced a discontinuation event, while two (Donna, Ron) experienced continuation events and Ann experienced two neutral events. One participant (April) experienced a neutral event in addition to the discontinuation event.

April experienced these two shocks almost immediately following the internship but before the second interview was conducted. Although the aim of this study was to examine shocks during the span of the internship, these two shocks must be included since their influence is inexorably tied to the participants' decision-making process. April's first shock was her relocation from Florida (i.e., where she is originally from, and where the internship and university were located) to a city in the Western United States. This event was coded as neutral, personal and expected as the decision to do so materialized from personal reasons during the internship. She commented that she was
exploring job openings with sport organizations in her new location but that they were similar to opportunities she would have explored in Florida. The second shock came in the form of a job offer from a friend near her new location. This event was coded as discontinuation, professional-away from the internship, and unexpected. The position would have moved her away from the TRSM industry, thus making it a discontinuation event, but she did not believe taking the job would end her long-term aspirations in TRSM.

It would be a position under her and it would be running a new apartment complex in [this city]. And it would be a sole job in marketing, advertising and leasing... I definitely think in my mind it’s temporary to get experience, meet people, and find a way to network more here. But if it’s something that I enjoy and something I can foresee in the long run then I will take something outside of sports. (April)

This job offer may have predicated the change in her strategic image where she may postpone entering the TRSM industry to gain additional work experience in order to make her a more attractive candidate when she chose to enter the TRSM industry.

Donna was accepted into graduate school during the internship. This critical event was coded as expected, professional-away from the internship and continuation. At Time 1, Donna was confident that she would be accepted into the graduate business program at the same university she had been attending, making it an expected event. Although the graduate degree is not in TRSM, and she did not have a very well defined decision frame in Time 1, she claims that she will use her time in graduate school to explore her options within TRSM and develop a career path, thus making this a continuation event.

On the other hand, Wendy experienced an unexpected, professional-at the internship, discontinuation event. During the internship, she was exposed to the work
schedule needed to run a large-scale participant event, a realization that led to her reconsidering her future in that area of work.

I think a week before the [triathlon], the beginning of July. Everyone was going crazy. They were having deliveries at like 4 am. No one was getting any sleep… the whole week leading up to it I would be in the office from 8 am to 8 pm, and if I left at 8 [pm] that was considered early. That's crazy. They would stay until midnight. I would be getting emails at midnight but I need to sleep that's the most important thing or I’ll get sick. (Wendy)

This case illustrates a compatibility test that resulted in Wendy revising her decision frame. More specifically, the work schedule associated with large-scale events conflicted with her personal values of getting sufficient rest (i.e., value image) and resulted in her revising her career goals to no longer include working in large-scale events (i.e., trajectory image).

Ron experienced a positive, professional, continuation event: he was offered and accepted a full-time capacity at his internship site. This shock was expected, as he mentioned the possibility of this event during the Phase 1 interview.

Approximately half way through his internship, Andy experienced a negative, unexpected shock in the form of a conversation with a supervisor at his internship during which he learned what it would take to reach his potential in the golf industry.

I thought about golf but after the internship… the problem is I don’t know if there is a real possibility for growth unless you go get your PGA card so then you can become the head pro or something. But without the PGA card you’re kind of limited so I don’t know if that’s something I really want to do. I thought about it, but now I kind of think I want to do something with a sports organization. (Andy)

The new information Andy gained caused him to start considering alternative career paths. Andy went on to give more insight into his decision to no longer consider golf as a future career:
It’s like that halfway point where you’re starting to think like you’re at the halfway point and you’re starting to get to the finishing stretch. I guess you start to think about your future plans, whereas at the beginning you’re focused on learning the ropes, and figure out everyone’s name and figure out what’s going on. So I say around the midpoint you start to think about ok is this something I want to do long-term or is this just for my internship and then I’m going to do something else. (Andy)

Although still interested in working in sport, Andy’s experience is classified as a discontinuation event since it led him to abandon a career option.

Ann received two job offers from agencies in the same vocation and city as her internship. She ultimately turned down both offers, perceiving poor job fit in one and insufficient pay in the other. This was classified as a neutral event as it did not appear to encourage or discourage her from her pursuit of a job in the vocation.

Finally, Jerry was extended an unsolicited job offer as a bank teller during the internship. This shock was classified as a positive, professional-away, discontinuation event. Jerry had already been searching for jobs in and out of the sport vocation, and he now sees this offer as a potential option. However, in discussing his job search strategy during the Phase 2 interview, he considered the bank teller job as a backup plan, and a job in sport his first priority.

**Vocational turnover**

At the time of the Phase 2 interviews, none of the participants had decided to abandon their career goals of pursuing a career in the TRSM industry. However, for the participants that had not secured employment at the time of the interview, it was not clear whether they would ultimately decide to enter the profession or not. Therefore, to assess how the internship affected vocational turnover, their current intent to enter the profession was assessed by asking questions meant to reveal their career options at
that moment and their perceived likelihood that they would enter the TRSM industry or not.

For Ron, who was already employed in the TRSM industry, and Tammy, Donna and Wendy, who were enrolled in graduate school and they were not actively searching for employment, this discussion was brief. These four participants were still adamant about pursuing a career in the TRSM industry and their current positions reinforced that.

Vocational turnover appeared more imminent for April, Ben and Jerry than for the other participants that were in the job search process. April had commented that she had been offered a job at an apartment complex that she was considering while awaiting responses from job applications at local sport organizations. Moreover, April had recently moved to a new city and was feeling financial pressure to secure employment soon; this pressure appeared to influence her to open her options and consider jobs outside of her intended vocation. Jerry was in a similar situation having received a job offer at a bank while still actively searching for jobs outside the TRSM industry. Likewise, Ben was searching for jobs in and out of sport. In contrast to April and Jerry, Ben’s proximity to vocational turnover seemed to result from his experiences during the internship rather than financial pressure or other job offers.

When I saw you can have an awesome job that deals with sports without actually working in the industry, I thought why am I working for an organization that is going to overwork me to death and pay me so little when I could work with sports but not directly in the industry? (Ben)

Despite this, April, Ben and Jerry were still considering options in the TRSM industry at the time of the second interview.
Decision making path classification

As mentioned, none of the participants at the time of the Phase 2 interview had reached the point of voluntary vocational turnover. However, much insight into the career decision-making process of TRSM interns can be gained from studying their current state at the end of the internship. Therefore, although none of the participants had completely “unfolded,” their decision-making can still be mapped out.

Of the eleven participants, one participant was considered to have progressed through path 2 of Lee and Mitchell’s unfolding model (1994) toward voluntary vocational turnover, while three were considered to have progressed through path 3, two additional participants had progressed through path 4b, and the remaining five participants did not move toward vocational turnover.

Wendy experienced a shock that caused her to reconsider her career path, ultimately resulting in an edited trajectory image. This was considered an incomplete progression through path 2 of the unfolding model as she experienced a shock but did not begin searching for alternatives, nor did vocational turnover occur. April was considered to have progressed through path 3 of the unfolding model since the results of the two shocks (i.e., moving to a new city, receiving a job offer outside of TRSM) compelled her to consider options and search alternatives to her original career plan. Likewise, Andy edited his trajectory image and was searching for alternatives at the time of the Phase 2 interview, and Jerry had received a job offer outside the vocation and was considering options in and out of the vocation.

Leslie and Ben did not experience shocks but were nevertheless considering alternatives to their original trajectory image shown by changes from their Phase 1 decision frame seen in Phase 2. Leslie’s internship experience, which took her far from
her family, made her consider alternate career paths that would keep her closer to her home. Although she has not ultimately made a decision on her future, she is considering location in her job search. Ben had become weary of the demands and work schedule of the sports industry and had learned of opportunities outside of the sports industry that will still satisfy much of his value image. According to his Phase 2 interview, this appeared to be a slow accumulation that grew throughout his internship. Still, Ben was searching for jobs both in and out of the sport industry, many consistent with his original trajectory image, thus not qualifying for vocational turnover.

Tammy, Donna, Ann, Tom and Ron gave no indication that they were considering not pursuing a career in TRSM and were therefore not considered to have progressed through any paths of the unfolding model.

Additional Themes

In addition to the shocks during the internship, a number of other factors appeared to be present that influenced the decision making of the participants and that should be accounted for in future research. The first factor was the possibility of graduate school following the internship, which was not accounted for in previous studies on interns. Second, the perceived similarity between the internship and the participants’ planned career, which could influence whether interns’ internship experiences influence their attitude toward their future career. Finally, a number of specific characteristics about the work environment and the internship consisting of factors studied in previous research on interns were explored.

Graduate school

Three of the participants (i.e., Tammy, Donna and Wendy) entered graduate school following completion of the internship. For Tammy and Wendy, the internship
entailed experiences similar to what they wish to have in their future career, while Donna had no concrete plans. Of these participants, only one (i.e., Wendy) experienced a shock during the internship other than being accepted into graduate school, thus not allowing for a thorough examination of how this might have influenced them differently.

However, as to the primary goal of the study of how the internship affected the career decision-making, the three participants headed to graduate school did not appear to differ from the other participants. Tammy experienced no change to her decision frame, while Wendy edited her trajectory image, and Donna was able to eliminate one career option though remaining undecided about where she did want to work.

**Perception of similarity between internship and future career**

Taylor (1988) proposed that the similarity between the tasks interns encounter during their internship experience could influence their career-related outcomes. Although no significant relationship was found in her study, the proposition was nevertheless explored in the present study through the lens of decision-making theory and using a qualitative rather than quantitative approach.

Participants were asked in both interviews how similar the work they would encounter, or had encountered, during their internship is to what they expected to encounter during their career. The responses from both the Phase 1 and Phase 2 interviews varied widely. This is not surprising given that the participants all varied widely on how concrete their career goals (i.e., trajectory image) and many experienced changes between Phase 1 and 2. Moreover, participants chose to respond to the question on different dimensions. That is, some chose to compare and contrast the specific tasks, or job duties, and others responded in terms of the context of the
organization. The one exception was Ron, who was entering his internship with the expectation of working full-time for his internship site after graduation.

It was not possible for meaningful patterns to emerge regarding the role of similarity between the internship and future career from 10 participants who were inconsistent in their phrasing of the concept. Nevertheless, the participants’ responses shed light into how this concept can be further developed to examine how students’ perception that their experiences reflect what they expect to encounter in their career affect their career-related decision making.

**Before the internship.** In the Phase 1 interview, April, Tammy, Donna, Tom and Ben referred to the specific tasks they would be working during their internship. Although Donna was still unsure of her future career goals and still largely unsure of what she would be doing during her internship, she was rather confident in expressing there were some potential similarities.

During my interview [my supervisor] kept mentioning a lot of marketing things. And even though it is a radio station and the main duty is the broadcasting side of it there is still some sport marketing. I don’t know what I will be doing but if there is marketing involved it will be similar to what I want to do. (Donna)

Like Donna, Ben and Tammy, who had a much clearer trajectory image, referred to the specific tasks, or job duties, when comparing their internship to future career. However, they mentioned similarity would exist because they would be in a variety of roles during the internship. Because of this, a part of their internship will be similar to their future job duties, but the rest will not.

Well right now, I’m doing a little bit of everything… I’m helping out on the operations side, I’m helping out on the event management side, I’m helping out on the administration side. But I think the job that I get, I’m not going to do one that does all of those, I will work in one of those. So I will experience
and I will be familiar with what my job is going to be but I’m not going to be
doing everything that I was doing in my internship. (Tammy)

Cause you’re working in a variety of things, you do a little bit of everything.
To be honest I’m not sure what exactly I want to do but I do like sales,
marketing and sponsorship. So I’m not going to be doing the same thing all
day. I don’t want to limit myself in one department. (Ben)

April and Tom additionally spoke to the skills they would be using to express the
similarity of the tasks. April felt that the skills she would be honing during the internship
were universal in the area of work she wanted to enter.

I really feel like it will be, in what I want to do and what I am doing, I would
say it’s pretty close…. I definitely believe that whatever career I get in, pro
or high school or college, it will be very similar in that you have to cut up
certain documents and there’s a lot of office work in relation to putting on
the event. And making sure all of the sporting events go smooth and a lot of
travelling. (April)

On the other hand, Leslie, Ann, Wendy, Andy and Jerry phrased their comparison
of the internship and their career in terms of the context of the organization. Leslie,
spoke to the fact she wanted to work in weddings, thus making her internship very
similar. Ann expressed that there was only some similarity since she would be seeking
employment in the event services industry, but likely in a different sector of that industry.
When asked why she thought there was some similarity, Wendy commented that she
did not feel very confident about her answer since she was still somewhat undecided
about her future and that her plans could change.

I don’t know… I want to be working on the agency side of things, like a
sport marketing agency and that’s what I’m doing. But I don’t know if it’s the
right fit for me, I don’t know yet. This is a smaller company and I want to be
in a bigger company and I don’t know yet but it can change. (Wendy)

Andy and Jerry were both less certain and had difficulty answering the question.
Ultimately, they also began to compare the context of their internship to their potential
options.
I’m not exactly sure, I’m pretty sure it’s something in sports, more specifically I’d imagine it would be something in golf. So to get an opportunity to get to work in one of the nicer clubs, it is kind of like a step in the right direction (Andy)

Jerry’s response was similar, however he expressed that he was less likely to work in a job in a context similar to his internship.

**After the internship.** In the Phase 2 interview, the participants were again asked to compare their internship experience to their future career. Responses in Phase 2 differed slightly in that the participants appeared more confident in their answers, presumably because prior to the internship they were basing the comparison on their expectations for the internship and their expectations for their future job. For this second phase, they were comparing their experiences over the last 13 weeks to their future career. These responses tended to skew toward comparing their internship and their future career on the basis of tasks that will be performed. Only two participants used the context to comment on similarity, while seven used the tasks from the internship, and one spoke to both. Ron was not asked since he had accepted the position with the same organization, making the topic moot.

Leslie, April, Tammy, Ann, Donna, Wendy and Tom used the tasks to compare the internship to their future career. This marks a change for Leslie, Ann and Wendy who had used the context during Phase 1 to make the comparison. However, this change may be a function of their commitment to working in their respective fields. For example, Leslie was being asked to continue working in temporary capacity with the wedding company and was searching for jobs in that vocation.

It’s still dealing with brides and I got a lot of experience dealing with brides and their family and everything. And that’s what I want to do but maybe not the way the Biltmore did it. But I do want to stay with planning and organizing and day-of stuff in weddings. (Leslie)
Similarly, Ann was searching for event jobs and even received two job offers in the event industry and Wendy was attending graduate school but remained committed to working in her chosen vocation.

For the rest of the participants, task similarity was discussed and in a few cases elaborated upon. For example, Tom spoke to what nuances existed between his tasks as an intern compared to where he expects to be working next.

If you were to go to a high school or college level, you would do the same thing I was doing like scheduling sports on a number of fields, and sponsorship. I just think there is [a bigger] scope on high school or collegiate because everyone is watching you. Especially if you go to a big DI school everyone is paying attention to what you’re doing, any little mess up can cost you your job. So I think it’s very similar, but it’s just the scale. (Tom)

Andy and Jerry were the only two participants to refer to the context in the Phase 2 interviews.

Just because I ended up doing this internship and I’m realizing that maybe I don’t want to work in golf but I rather work for a sports organization. So I guess that’s kind of different. (Andy)

I’m not really sure where I’m going to end up. However, I really liked working for [them], it’s a very European style organization. It’s like get there in the morning at a decent time, no one is looking over your shoulder all the time, you come and go as you please as long as you get your work done. (Jerry)

In Andy’s case the context appeared particularly salient since he had a change of heart regarding that part of his trajectory image; that is, he no longer wished to work in the golf industry. In Jerry’s case, he was still very unsure of where his future would lead him, but he spoke to the work environment and type of organization from his internship as one he would like to work in.
The internship experience

Previous research on interns suggests that the levels of learning opportunities, supervisor support, job challenge and role stress can influence internship satisfaction, which can in turn influence career-related outcomes such as affective vocational commitment and intent to enter the profession (Cunningham et al., 2004; D'Abate et al., 2009; Dixon et al., 2004). Although these concepts are presumed to play an important role in the internship experience, they have only been examined through questionnaire items adapted from the broader management literature. This study sought to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics behind these issues in the internship context. Ergo, in Phase 2 of the present study, the participants were asked about their learning opportunities, the dynamics of their supervision during the internship, the extent they felt challenged by the work in the internship, and any role stress (i.e., conflict or ambiguity) they may have experienced.

Learning. The internship, an academic experience in partial fulfillment of the undergraduate TRSM degree, is meant to facilitate some degree of learning. To better understand this process, participants were asked to sum up what they learned during their 13-week internship. Responses appeared to fall under three categories: knowledge, job-specific skills, and transferable skills. Tom, April, Ann, Tammy and Wendy all spoke to the knowledge they gained including learning the governance, structure and procedures of the particular area of their internship. Leslie commented how she gained a deeper understanding of an area she had already some experience in,

I learned a whole lot about food and beverage and the hotel inside and how to make a profit on these weddings…and I learned a lot about high scale hospitality, which I think is really important. (Leslie)
On the other hand, Ann mentioned she was pushed by her supervisor to attend event management functions and seminars in order to gain exposure to new areas, “sometimes it was repetitive and sometimes it would introduce things that I haven’t really considered.”

Although learning of industry-specific knowledge was mentioned by a handful of participants, all of them attested to the learning of skills during the internship. Some variation existed regarding the type of skill learned; that is, some spoke to learning or developing skills specific to the line of work, or even just specific to the internship, while most claimed to gain or hone certain skills that are more transferrable between professions. Examples of the latter, Tom, Ron, Andy, Jerry, April and Wendy spoke to their gained confidence and social skills that they felt were relevant and transferrable to their career,

I definitely did gain people skills a little better because one of those things we did a lot of the time was greet people as they showed up, so you kind of get used to interacting with people you’ve never met before and carry on a small conversation with them. (Andy)

Wendy was more specific, referring to learning to handle disgruntled patrons, “I learned how to deal with meeting people who weren’t happy with the race.” Moreover, Ron commented on how he was taught how to network, a key to the industry he was in. However, Ron also contributed through skills that others in the organization did not have,

…they had all gone to college and studied theater [for example], and not business. And they were all in shock at some of the things that I could do, which surprised me cause it was stuff that struck me as easy like adding up numbers on excel or creating a listserv. So I had to slow down and kind of explain and effectively communicate with others. (Ron)

And April was able to learn basic computing skills she believed would benefit her,
I definitely had to brush up on a lot of skills just based on the computer. It was actually pretty nice just being able to sit and create databases and things that I never had to do in school. I got a lot more acquainted of how to work in an office setting. As much as I know about computers, there are a lot of things I’ve never had to do like a mail merge, that I will probably use down the road. (April)

Ben’s experience yielded a mix of learned skills that could be transferrable to certain professions, “The biggest thing I learned is just how persistent you had to be with sales. They didn’t really stress that in my sports sponsorship class and the whole [undergraduate] education.” Ben went on to tell how in his sport marketing internship he was taught how to create a sales pitch based on brief conversations with clients, a somewhat transferrable skill. Tammy gave perhaps the best example of an internship-specific learning, “a lot of what I learned was very specific to that company,” although Andy and Leslie also felt some of their learning was for the purpose of succeeding in the internship and would not transfer well to future positions.

Overall, only one participant, Andy, felt that his internship experience was hindered by a lack of learning. Andy admits the dearth of learning opportunities may have affected his decision to no longer want to work in golf, “I wanted to get out because it got really monotonous and started doing the same things and it just because you’re gaining knowledge and learning the routine as opposed to like learning skills.”

**Supervision.** Previous perspectives regarding the role of the site supervisor for internships suggests that there exists some ambiguity over the responsibility of the supervisor (Stratta, 2004). The role of the supervisor has been speculated to be associated with some “quality control” issues in the internship experience for the student (Kelly, 2004), and is therefore relevant to the development and influence of the internship. In light of this, participants in the present study were asked about their
relationship with their supervisor, and whether they felt the relationship hurt or helped their experience.

With little exception, the interns spoke highly of their site supervisors, many stating their supervisors were supportive of their development beyond the internship.

If I was struggling he wouldn’t just sit over there, he would come help me. He taught me how to treat your employee, like sometimes you can be hard on them but not always…. He definitely helped me towards my future professional goals (Tom)

Anything that I wanted to do…she said ‘ok ill set it up.’ Anytime I ever had any problems, questions or anything she was totally open…. I could call her, text her, whatever…. She was very helpful and accommodating and understood a lot about what I was trying to learn and what I was going through and what I’m going through now (Leslie)

Many of the participants felt the level of support they received was helpful for their development beyond the internship. Andy, Ann and April specifically acknowledged their supervisors wanted to make the internship an educational experience that would benefit the student beyond their time in the organization, “she was really big on professional development outside of what was going on as far as my projects go” (Ann).

Some of the interns or volunteers just need an internship and don’t want this as their career goal, but I was one of them that wanted to work in sports and especially administration. So he would say here’s the staff manual, and he would explain it, what they use it for. He made it educational because he knew that’s potentially where I wanted to [work]. (April)

Although most of the participants reported positive and close relationships with their supervisors, there were some supervisory arrangements that were much different. For Ron, Ben, April, and Wendy, their supervisor listed on their school’s paperwork played a relatively minor role in their internship. These participants were either given responsibility with little oversight or, more commonly, were shared among multiple supervisors. Ron mentioned his experience reflected the nature of the work,
The thing is they travel a lot. So they would always go to different places so there wasn’t always the same people in the office. And so, it got to the point they, my supervisors would just be the people I’m working with. (Ron)

He acknowledged this was expected since he came into the internship with a high likelihood he would continue working for the same organization,

I wasn’t treated like an intern I was just a part of the company. It was more that I didn’t want to let anybody down, is the feeling I had. So I wouldn’t say that having multiple people seeing what I’m doing had any effect. (Ron)

Ron eventually mentioned he had three “main” supervisors. Ben, April and Wendy mentioned having multiple supervisors and gave similar accounts as to the positive and negative outcomes they felt it had on their experience.

I worked under six and they were all a little different which was pretty cool. I had very simple relationships with some of them like ‘here’s your task and here’s the deadline.’ And I had others who sat me down and showed me how to do a task… Overall I got along very well with all my supervisors. They gave me free reign to do what I wanted on deadlines. Which was good for me because I got to learn how to manage projects. (April)

I think it helped because I got to know all of them. And like see how hard they work. I think it was good to experience different aspects and different things in relation to the internship. (Wendy)

It was a little difficult because everyone was my supervisor… The [school] appointed one had little to no impact on me whatsoever, he was just the office manager. But all the corporate sales team, there was like four of them. Every single day it would shift to who would be supervising me…It wasn’t very consistent supervision. I learned pieces and I was supervised a little bit from each and every one of them. Which is good because you’re getting different perspectives but you’re not getting the individual attention of one person. (Ben)

This “shared” supervision is contrary to school’s internship policies that require a single site supervisor to evaluate and mentor the student throughout the 13 weeks. This also illustrates a contrast in design between internships that are structured learning experiences, where interns have specific roles, to those where interns are called upon when needed. From the data gathered in this study it is difficult to draw conclusions
regarding how these supervisory styles might affect the student. However, since this "shared" style came from varying sectors of the sports industry (i.e., sponsorship, events company, state governing body, and consulting firm), it is clearly not unique to a particular sector and may be an area that needs to be addressed by school internship supervisors and researchers.

**Challenge.** Another area of interest was the nature of the tasks interns were given. This is more difficult in light of the vastly different experiences reported from the interns, however, the scope of the questions were intentionally kept broad to allow the participants to answer as they saw appropriate. Earlier perspectives on the TRSM internship stress the importance of challenging tasks for interns (Dixon et al., 2004; Kelly, 2004). Although these previous studies hint at instances where students may be given routinized and mundane job duties rather than engaging, challenging work, little perspective in the words of the interns has been recorded.

When asked whether they felt their internship was challenging, participants in the present study were unanimously responded “yes,” but responses varied greatly regarding the type of challenge and how challenged they felt. For example, Ron admitted being challenged but not in an unreasonable way,

> I wouldn’t say it was the hardest challenge of my life. I put a lot of time into it. It was a very time consuming internship and I was never doing busy work. So I wouldn’t say that I was completely challenged where I was getting physics problems for homework like the internship was over my head. But it was good because it was all work that I could accomplish. (Ron)

Likewise, Donna said she never felt bored on her internship but “that if it were a little more challenging I would’ve been more enriched by the experience. I still feel that I
enjoyed myself and gained but it could’ve been more.” Andy responded similarly, that he felt challenged at first and learned much about the golf industry but fell into a routine, I think it got to the point where you start to get everything figured out and it’s like there’s not really enough...I don’t know, I just rather do something that requires a little more thinking and kind of keeping your brain stimulated day to day, as opposed to falling into a routine when you’re doing the same thing on a day to day basis. (Andy)

For the rest of the participants, challenges ranged from learning to deal with red tape in the specific job (i.e., Tom) to learning the norms of how to act and speak in certain situations (i.e., Leslie). Also noteworthy, April had to overcome a personal challenge, “I always have anxiety calling people... I think overcame that fear and I think that came with having a title and being able to communicate and present myself.”

In all, only one participant claimed to be in a position where he was asked to do routinized tasks with little variety. However, relating to the earlier issue of supervision and the structure of the internship, some of the participants in less-structured internships mentioned if they had not pursued challenges or volunteered for tasks they would have had a much less fulfilling experience.

**Role stress.** Finally, the role stress experienced during the internship was assessed among the participants. Previous studies have commented that many internships lack structure and consistency, a trait that may hinder the experience of the student (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2004; Dixon et al., 2004). Role stress, is any stress associated with conflicting instruction, information or resources, (i.e., role conflict) or situations where duties and responsibilities are unclear (i.e., role ambiguity) (Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970). Participants were asked if they experienced any role conflict or ambiguity during their internship.
Responses were varied with no interns reporting role conflict. Even in cases where the intern was supervised by multiple people in the organization, no one mentioned role conflict as a problem. On the other hand, many of the participants cited lack of clear or sufficient instructions as a source of ambiguity. That is, participants knew what had to be done, but were at time unclear as to how to accomplish their tasks. Leslie gave a statement similar to many others “They would say ‘here go do this,’ but I don’t know how to do it. But if I ever had any questions or anything I could go ask anyone and it wouldn’t be a problem.” For the most part, participants said they were well supported and knew who to ask when they needed clarification; only Ben and Wendy mentioned being given tasks with ambiguous instruction and little or no support.

At various times, Ben said it was up to him to seek out tasks and/or he was given tasks with few instructions.

There were a ton of times where I didn’t have any assignments so I had to figure something to keep me busy. Luckily, I had this one task the entire time where if I wasn’t doing anything I would be prospecting leads. But there were plenty of times where they would give me an assignment and said ‘I need you to edit this proposal’ and they would leave and go on vacation for like 5 days, and what am I supposed to do you didn’t give me any information? (Ben)

Ben said he responded to this by taking his best guess and accepting responsibility for any deviations from what was expected; however, he mentioned his work was always received with appreciation, and no one was upset with his efforts.

Wendy faced a similar challenge in her role at the event management company. Several interns were tasked with designing and running small events peripheral to the main event the company was contracted for. These were events the company used interns to run in the previous year(s), yet a set of instructions or guidelines were not available for her to use causing her much stress.
And last year’s intern who did it left me zero instruction. And everyone in the office yes will sit down and explain things but at the same time they are so busy that they only have three minutes and they have to go to a conference call or a meeting. So a lot of times we had to take our own initiative, and do everything on our own and sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn’t (Wendy)

Although she did not seem very frustrated by this, she felt her difficulties were preventable and her lack of support was justified since the experienced staff members were busy with their preparations.

In all, the role ambiguity present for these interns appears similar to that experienced by newcomers in any organization. That is, some level of ambiguity is expected when someone enters a new environment. Of the interns who experienced role ambiguity, none spoke it about it detracting from the overall experience or influencing their feelings toward the profession.

Discussion

The purpose of Study 1 was to (1) provide insight into the career-related decision frame for TRSM students prior to their internship, (2) examine if and how that decision frame is applied or altered over the time of the internship and (3) search for themes or trends in the shocks or general internship experiences that may emerge as relevant to the vocational turnover decision. The findings in this study showed that students’ decision frames can range from concrete to vague and unspecific. That is, while some students had well-developed goals and plans to achieve those goals, others were still undecided and hoping their internship would help them find their way. Also of note, many of the decision-making mechanisms outlined in image theory (Beach, 1990) were present through the students’ decision-making process, and as were the various paths of the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), thus supporting and
extending these two theories by applying them to the area of vocational-level decision making. Finally, the influence of specific factors during the internship, such as supervisor support and role stress was examined, revealing some useful insight about the internship experience.

**The Decision Frame**

The present study illustrates the utility of applying image theory and the unfolding model to the career-decision making of TRSM students completing their senior internship. When participants were asked questions meant to reveal their decision frames, all gave answers that corresponded with Beach’s (1990; Beach & Connolly, 2005) framework that individuals carried a value, trajectory and strategic image for making decisions in a particular context. The responses affirmed Beach’s (1990) assertion that the images operate hierarchically. That is, participants that value images were more important and more concrete than trajectory images, and strategic images were dependent on the participants’ trajectory image. This was particularly evident in Phase 1 responses where participants who had vague or unclear trajectory images (i.e., their career goals were ambiguous) did not have a clear strategic image.

The longitudinal design of this study also helped support this point as changes in participants’ images corresponded with a change or adjustment in the lower-tiered images. For example, Leslie became homesick and added ‘proximity to her hometown’ to her value image. This meant that her career goal of owning a historic home to host weddings (i.e., trajectory image) now had location restrictions, as did her criteria being used in her ongoing job search (i.e., strategic image).

The hierarchical nature of the images was also observed as a response to image violations. Ben’s internship experience, for example, revealed to him that work at a
sports marketing agency was more stressful and taxing that he had imagined. He foresaw that making the decision to continue working in this area would be a violation of his value image, and thus began revising his trajectory image (career goals) to preserve his value image.

Moreover, the paths of the unfolding model (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) were applied to the participants’ in the study. Although none of the participants “turned over,” or made a final decision to leave the vocation during the study, several exhibited thoughts of leaving the vocation based on their present circumstances during the Phase 2 interview. The incomplete paths through the unfolding model were able to be charted based on the guidelines presented by Lee et al. (1996), though nearly half (5) did not enter into any portion of the model since they did not encounter any negative experiences or thoughts of leaving the vocation.

Furthermore, the data presents support for examining external shocks and circumstances when examining the effect of the internship on career decision-making. While some participants’ decision-making was influenced by their internship, such as Andy who learned that he did not want to work in golf (i.e., edited his trajectory image), some participants were influenced by external events such as Leslie who became homesick and now wanted to search for a job closer to her hometown (i.e., edited her value image). This perspective supports previous studies’ approach (e.g., Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2005; Jones et al., 2010; Lee & Mitchell, 1996; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2008) to incorporating individuals’ personal life, and other external events when examining decision making through the unfolding model.
The Role of Shocks

The characteristics of shocks put forth by Lee and Mitchell (1994) were evident through the data in this study. Shocks were coded as positive, negative or neutral, and coded on whether they occurred in the participant’s personal or professional life, or at the internship. Finally, the shocks were able to be determined as continuation, discontinuation or as having no effect, based on the influence it had on the participants’ decision-making process.

In all, seven of the eleven participants reported experiencing a shock during the internship, many of which predicated changes in the participants’ decision frame. Unlike previous studies where the influence of shocks was measured only in those who made the decision to quit (i.e., Lee et al., 1996), or was done through quantitative measures (i.e., Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2005), the present study incorporated shocks of varying effects and results, and included valuable insight in the words of the participants. This approach allowed the participants to give detailed descriptions of what influence the shock had. For example, Wendy edited her goal to work in events to not include large-scale events after experiencing the long hours and stress of the culminating event during her internship. While she did not altogether abandon her goal of working in events, it was significantly altered because of this critical event.

This example also illustrates the importance of considering shocks during the internship, as well as the type of influence they may have. Interestingly, despite a number of discontinuation shocks, no participant in this study experienced a single event that moved him or her to completely abandon his or her desire of working in TRSM. However, since many of the participants altered their decision frame because of a shock, perhaps a more detailed focus of outcomes should be considered. That is,
rather than focusing on the general concept of intention to pursue a career in TRSM, the influence of the internship and shocks can be examined for more subtle changes that might steer students in different directions within the TRSM industry.

**Similarity**

Taylor's (1988) hypothesis, that the more alike the intern feels their internship experience is to their future career, the more the experience will shape their attitude toward their future career was examined. The participants' perceptions of similarity between their internship and their future careers revealed that the concept of similarity between the internship and future career is more complex than initially thought. By adopting qualitative analysis, the findings of the present study offer an explanation as to why Taylor’s hypothesis was not supported.

When asked about this concept, the students each identified what elements of their internship might be familiar to their future career. Most of the responses compared the specific tasks the students had during the internship to what a full-time employee would be doing. The students’ comparisons included judgments of how their role as an intern would vary in scope from what they would be doing as an employee. That is, some said they had a variety of tasks as an intern but an employee would have to focus on a narrow set. Others said the opposite, that as interns they were given a narrow set of tasks, whereas full-time employees in the same context would have a greater set of responsibilities. These comments reflect the current inconsistencies in structure between internship experiences even by students receiving the same academic credit from the same educational institution.

A handful of the students chose to describe their perception of similarity based on the context of their internship. These students compared their internship to their desired
future careers in terms of the nature of the organization, commenting on the similarities and differences between the two. Ann, for example, compared her internship experience in one sector of the events industry to another. Andy felt there were some similarities since he still wanted to work in the sports industry; however, there were some differences since he did not want to work in golf, the area of his internship. These responses show an inconsistent conceptualization of the TRSM industry and reflect the uncertainty present in the students’ trajectory images (i.e., career goals).

Perhaps more directed questions could have guided the students to speak to their perceptions on dimensions that are more specific rather than what first came to their mind. It is now evident that Taylor’s (1988) approach may have been flawed. In addition to the lack of specific dimensions for which to compare the internship to the students’ future career, Taylor (1988) and the present study failed to account for the students' lack of a clear career path. Moreover, it is becoming more common for careers to unfold across several organizations and job roles (Arthur, 1994; Aurthur & Rousseau, 1996). Therefore, asking students to compare their internship to their future career path may not adequately provide a concrete target for the comparison, since it may be very similar to part but not all of it, even if they had a good idea of what it would be.

The perception of similarity between the internship experience and desired future career path may be found to be a relevant and important link in understanding the influence the internship has on the professional development and career decision making of students. However, the issues presented here suggest that more understanding of how students perceive their internship and career in order to examine whether the experience influences career decision-making.
Career Conceptualization

In all, the findings provide insight into the decision-making process for students completing their internship while showing how the internship experience, and other external factors, can play a role in that process. The pervasive sense of uncertainty most students had before their internship persisted for many. Only one of the participants had acquired a full-time position, three had enrolled in graduate school, and the rest were in the job search process and graduating without steady employment in hand. Students were not void of backup plans and temporary employment opportunities (three remained working for their internship site in a temporary capacity). However, the strategic images (or plans for goal achievement) were still very vague at the time of the second interview for most of the participants, with the common theme that their current job search would largely determine their future direction.

This finding may reflect a changing paradigm in career progression. Arthur (1994; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) presented the concept of a boundaryless career, proposing that individuals are becoming less likely to remain working at one organization for the majority of their career and more likely to change jobs and organizations several times during their career. The students in this study were largely unsure of how to conceptualize their career when asked, which is not surprising given the trend towards career paths becoming fluid and boundaryless. Several students stated the possibility of working in a similar or related field before returning to TRSM if they were not able to reach their short-term goals. This can be troubling given the objective of gauging future intentions of working in the TRSM industry. Specifically, what do students consider to be part of the TRSM industry? As Ben mentioned after the internship, he favored a job in a sports-related marketing department within a non-sports entity. Should this be
considered part of the TRSM industry? This and previous studies have not addressed jobs or organizations that exist on the periphery of the TRSM industry. These types of questions demand attention when addressing issues of career-related research in the TRSM industry and when educating future practitioners. Hence, while this study does not endeavor to draw the boundaries of professions in the TRSM industry, it does emphasize the need for future studies to consider that the decision-making process of TRSM students may include thoughts of leaving the TRSM industry before possibly returning later in their career.
Table 3-1. Participants’ Internship site, pre-internship plan, and post-internship status.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Internship Site</th>
<th>Graduate school</th>
<th>Pre-internship Plan</th>
<th>Post-Internship Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leslie</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Hotel/Wedding Planning</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Use internship to gain experience</td>
<td>Working PT for internship site, while job searching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>State Athletic Association, Athletic services intern</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Use internship to preview this line of work</td>
<td>Searching for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>University Football Team, Assistant to Director of Football Operations</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Earn M.S. degree, possibly MBA or JD as well.</td>
<td>Enrolled in graduate school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Career resource center, event planning intern</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Work hard and get noticed</td>
<td>Searching for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Sports broadcasting company, communications and marketing intern</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Broaden skills set through internship</td>
<td>Enrolled in graduate school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Marathon company, public relations intern</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Work hard and use network to open doors</td>
<td>Enrolled in graduate school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Community sports facility</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Gain experience at the local level and ascend</td>
<td>Working PT for internship site, while job searching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Basketball headhunter and career consulting firm</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Stay with internship site as full-time</td>
<td>Working FT for internship site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Marketing and sponsorship agency</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Use network to open doors</td>
<td>Searching for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Golf course</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Assess situation after the internship</td>
<td>Working PT for internship site, while job searching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Tennis governing body, player relations intern</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Volunteer in Africa, search for jobs in Europe or Western US</td>
<td>Searching for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Shock</td>
<td>Expected or Unexpected</td>
<td>Continuation or Discontinuation</td>
<td>Path</td>
<td>Decision frame revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4b inc.</td>
<td>Desires to have job closer to family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Yes 1) Moved to another state 2) Offered a job outside of TRSM</td>
<td>1) Expected 2) Unexpected</td>
<td>1) Neutral 2) Discontinuation</td>
<td>3 inc.</td>
<td>Change of location and offer has her considering leaving TRSM, even if only temporarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendy</td>
<td>Yes, working long hours makes her not want to work in large-scale events</td>
<td>Unexpected</td>
<td>Discontinuation</td>
<td>2 inc.</td>
<td>Still desires to work in events, but now only in small-scale events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>Continuation</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Was hired as full-time employee with internship site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>No, accumulating dissatisfaction</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4b inc.</td>
<td>Exhausting work, doesn’t fit values, began searching outside of TRSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Yes, learned what it would take to reach top level in golf management</td>
<td>Unexpected</td>
<td>Discontinuation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lost desire to work in golf industry, still pursuing work in other sectors of sport industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry</td>
<td>Yes, offer to be bank teller</td>
<td>Unexpected</td>
<td>Discontinuation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Was already searching for jobs outside TRSM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4
STUDY 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to examine the influence of specific internship experiences and other events that occur during the internship of TRSM students on their career attitudes and intentions. To accomplish this, a structural model was tested using a sample of undergraduate TRSM students completing their required internship in the final semester prior to graduation. The structural model included specific internship experiences drawn from previous research (i.e., D’Abate et al., 2009; Dixon et al., 2004 and Liu et al., 2011) as well as measures of internship satisfaction, affective commitment toward the vocation (i.e., TRSM), and intent to enter the profession to test relationships proposed by previous studies (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2004; 2005).

The present study built upon previous research by adopting a theoretical lens based in decision-making (i.e., image theory, Beach, 1990) and turnover (i.e., the unfolding model of voluntary turnover, Lee & Mitchell, 1994). This theoretical perspective allowed for a better understanding and more accurate measure of the internship experience on the career decision-making of students at this critical stage in their educational and professional life. Specifically, measures of critical events (i.e., shocks) internal or external to the internship were included, as well as accounting for whether a student was enrolling into graduate school following the internship. The results present the influence of these shocks and specific internship experiences including job challenge, supervisor support, learning opportunities and role ambiguity, role conflict.
Hypotheses

The hypotheses for Study 2 were derived from the findings of previous studies examining interns but expanded upon by the application of the unfolding model of voluntary turnover. First, previous researchers have found significant relationships between intern attitudinal outcomes and challenge, supervisor support, and role stress (Dixon et al., 2004), as well as learning opportunities (D’Abate et al., 2009). Dixon et al.’s (2004) study of challenge, supervisor support, and role stress are valuable indicators of the internship experience since criticisms of some internships is that students are given simple, routinized tasks, or lack clear objectives (Cunningham et al., 2005; King, 2009; Schneider & Stier, 2006). D’Abate et al. (2009) found that supervisor support and learning opportunities had a significant effect on overall satisfaction with the internship in a sample of business students. Since the purpose of internships is to continue the student’s education, learning opportunities are proposed to be a key influence on overall satisfaction with the internship. Consistent with previous literature, the internship experience variables are hypothesized to be associated with internship satisfaction.

H1a: Challenge will be positively related with satisfaction with the internship.

H1b: Supervisor support will be positively related with internship satisfaction.

H1c: Learning opportunities will be positively related with internship satisfaction.

H1d: Role ambiguity will be negatively related with internship satisfaction.

H1e: Role conflict will be negatively related with internship satisfaction.

The internship is the first major work experience for most students. Experiencing the reality of work life in the vocation can serve to strongly influence students’ previously held attitudes towards the vocation. Thus, the more satisfied the student is with their
internship, the better their attitude will be towards the vocation. Moreover, as found by Cunningham et al. (2004) and Liu et al. (2011), interns’ experience during the internship correlates with changes in their commitment and intent to remain in the vocation. Hence, hypotheses 2 and 3 were put forth.

H2. Internship satisfaction will be positively related to affective vocational commitment

H3. Affective occupational commitment will be positively related to the intent to enter the profession

Next, following the process of Cunningham et al. (2005; 2004) and Liu et al. (2011), the relationship between internship experiences and affective vocational commitment will be mediated by internship satisfaction. Similarly, the relationship between internship satisfaction and intent to enter the profession will be mediated by affective vocational commitment.

H4. Internship satisfaction will mediate the relationship between internship experiences and affective vocational commitment

H5. Affective vocational commitment will mediate the relationship between internship satisfaction and intent to enter the profession.

Shocks can trigger the execution of a script or a deliberated action such as leaving a job (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Previous studies have found evidence for the role that shocks play in the turnover process (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2005; Lee et al., 1999). The present study applies the same principle at the vocational level. That is, shocks are hypothesized to prompt one of the first three paths of the unfolding model that can lead to a decision to leave the vocation. For example, if a person does not land the job with
the organization they wanted, they may decide to look for a job in a different industry rather than pursuing another job in the same vocation.

However, the presence of a shock alone does not lead to a turnover decision; in fact, the same shock can be interpreted, and thus acted upon, differently by two different people. For example, if one person becomes pregnant they may have a script to quit their job to take care of their child, while for another person, becoming pregnant will force them to remain in the job to support their growing family. To address this, Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2005) had respondents evaluate critical events (i.e., shocks), as a continuation event the event made it more likely they would stay, discontinuation event if the event made it likely they would quit, and neutral if there was no effect. Therefore, shocks are hypothesized to influence a person’s intent to enter the profession based upon how the shock is interpreted by the respondent.

H6. Shocks evaluated as a discontinuation will be negatively related to intent to enter the profession.

H7. Shocks that are evaluated as a continuation event will have a positive relationship with the intent to enter the profession.

Method

A longitudinal design was adopted in order to account for pre-internship levels of affective vocational commitment and intent to enter the profession. This design is similar to Liu et al. (2011) in that some of the constructs will be measured after the internship, while a few, namely attitudes and intentions, will be measured before and after the internship in order to interpret time 2 outcomes while holding Time 1 levels constant. In the present study, identical scales were used to measure affective vocational commitment and intent to enter the profession at Time 1 (i.e., before the internship) and
Time 2 (i.e., after the internship), while the rest of the variables were collected at Time 2.

**Sampling**

The sample for Study 2 was obtained by soliciting students from two TRSM programs completing their senior internship to volunteer for the study. The curriculum for both programs required students to complete a full-time, semester-long internship with a professional organization in their final semester before graduation. Both programs are prominent TRSM programs within large research universities in the southern United States. As in Study 1, students over the age of 25 were screened since the primary focus of the study concerned students beginning their career.

Data was collected from School 1 in the fall 2012 and spring 2013 semesters using online questionnaires that were e-mailed two weeks prior to the internship for Time 1 and immediately after the internship in Time 2. Multiple reminder e-mails were sent to encourage participation. The sampling frame from School 1 consisted of 189 students across both semesters. Of these, 159 students completed the Time 1 questionnaire. Time 2 questionnaires were only sent to the 159 that completed Time 1; of these, 137 responded to the Time 2 questionnaire. A total of 18 participants were removed due to screening based on age or a substantial amount of missing data. The final sample from School 1 was 119, providing a final response rate of approximately 62%.

School 2 data was collected using in-person paper and pencil questionnaires. Time 1 data was collected approximately three weeks prior to the internship in a pre-internship class, while Time 2 data was collected in a post-internship meeting two weeks after the internship. All 46 students interning at School 2 completed the Time 1
questionnaire. Of these, 40 completed the Time 2 questionnaire. Four participants were screened based on age, while two were removed because their Time 2 questionnaire could not be matched with their Time 1 questionnaire, providing a final response rate of approximately 74%. A final sample size of 153 was achieved from the two programs for the present study with a combined response rate of 65%.

Demographically, the sample derived from School 1 included 56 male versus 61 female students. The majority of the students were white (n=87), with several black (n=13), Hispanic (n=17) and Asian students (n=5). The sample from School 2 included 21 male and 14 female students, with one student who did not indicate a gender. The majority of the students were white (n=29), with a handful of black (n=3) and Asian (n=3) students, and one who identified as ‘other.’

All latent variables were compared by estimating a one-way ANOVA using SPSS 21 to determine if the data could be combined for analysis. The results (Table 4-5) demonstrate that mean scores between schools were not significantly different.

Measures

Internship experiences

The specific factors used to capture the internship experiences in this study (i.e., challenge, supervisor support, role ambiguity and conflict, and learning opportunities) were derived from Dixon et al. (2004) and D’Abate et al. (2009). Challenge is felt anxiety that stimulates an individual and gives the opportunity for growth, mastery, or gain (Dixon et al., 2004; Boswell, Olson-Buchanan, & LePine, 2004); it was measured using three items for felt job challenge from Meyer and Allen (1988). Scale reliability for this measure was $\alpha = .901$. 

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Supervisor support is the consideration, assistance and mentoring a supervisor or manager gives to their subordinate (D’Abate et al., 2009; Dixon et al., 2004). Three items for supervisor support were adopted from D’Abate et al. (2009); a sample item includes “my supervisor acted as a mentor to me while I was interning.” Scale reliability for this measure was $\alpha = .884$.

Role stress consists of two separate dimensions: role ambiguity and role conflict. Role ambiguity measures how often the student experienced low task clarity, while role conflict measures any inconsistent or conflicting instructions regarding assigned tasks (Dixon et al., 2004). As in Dixon et al.’s (2004) study, six items from Iverson et al. (1998) were adopted. However, in light of studies demonstrating the discriminant validity of the measures (i.e., Netemeyer, Johnston, & Burton, 1990), and the higher degree of scrutiny desired for the present study, role ambiguity and role stress are measured as separate variables, rather than a composite role stress measure. A sample item for role ambiguity is “I typically receive a clear explanation of what is to be done;” a sample item for role conflict is “I did things that were likely to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.” Scale reliability for these 3-item measures were $\alpha = .782$ for role ambiguity and $\alpha = .795$ for role conflict.

Learning opportunities measure the level of facilitation for learning that was available for the students during their internship. Three items developed by D’Abate et al. (2009) were used to measure learning opportunities. A sample item is “my internship provided me with a chance to learn a lot about the field, profession, or business.” Scale reliability for this measure was $\alpha = .831$. 
Internship satisfaction

The overall measure of internship satisfaction were compiled using two items from D'Abate et al. (2009), which were adapted from Hackman and Oldham (1975), as well as five items from Liu et al. (2011) that were adapted from Brayfield and Rothe (1951). Sample items include “most days I am enthusiastic about my work” and “I was generally satisfied with the kind of work I did at my internship every day.” Scale reliability for this measure was α = .927.

Shocks

The presence of shocks will be assessed following the methods used in Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2005) and Lee et al. (1999) with adjustments made to reflect the interest in vocational rather than organizational turnover. Respondents were given a description of types of critical events that were positive, negative or neutral, and that may have occurred in their personal or professional life. They were then asked if they had experienced any major events during the time of their internship. Following Kammeyer-Mueller et al.’s (2005) procedure, the respondent was asked whether the shock made them more likely to continue working in the vocation (i.e., continuation), less likely (i.e., discontinuation), or made no difference (i.e., neutral). Participants were also allowed to report a second shock that may have occurred during the internship using the same measurement.

In School 1, 36 students reported experiencing a continuation shock, while 5 reported a discontinuation shock, and 38 reported a shock that had no effect on their decision-making; this includes 4 students who reported both a neutral and continuation shock. In School 2, 17 students reported experiencing a continuation shock, with only 1 reporting a discontinuation shock and 12 reporting a shock with no effect; this includes 2
students who reported a neutral and continuation shock, and 1 student who reported a neutral and discontinuation shock.

**Affective vocational commitment**

Affective vocational commitment was assessed using items adapted from Cunningham et al. (2005). This scale is designed to capture the emotional attachment to the vocation (i.e., TRSM). A sample item for the scale is “I dislike being in the TRSM profession” (reverse coded). Scale reliability for this measure was $\alpha = .712$ in Time 1 and $\alpha = .825$ in Time 2.

**Intent to enter the profession**

Similarly, the measure for intent to enter the profession was adapted from measures created in Cunningham et al. (2005). The three-item scale was created to measure the student’s intent to enter the profession. A sample item includes “It is unlikely that I will take a position as a sport manager following graduation” (reverse coded). Scale reliability for this measure was $\alpha = .889$ in Time 1 and $\alpha = .893$ in Time 2.

**Results**

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis was performed using structural equation modeling using MPlus version 7. First, the latent variables were included in a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model, or measurement model, in order to establish a baseline for comparison of more complex models. The initial fit indices for this measurement model included a $\chi^2$ statistic of 933.05 (482). Additional fit indices including the root-mean-squared error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) are reported in Table 4.1.
Several steps were taken in order to improve model fit. First, 2 items from the internship satisfaction scale were dropped as the initial analysis due to their poor factor loadings. This resulted in a more parsimonious measure with 5 indicators rather than the original 7. Next, the residuals of two items in the affective vocational commitment measure were correlated, followed by a similar step for two items in the job challenge scale. Although these decisions were data-driven, they were examined for their theoretical merit. In both cases, the correlated residuals were justified because the measures contained similar vocabulary and were worded in the same direction (i.e., both reverse coded). The changes resulted in a revised model with a \( \chi^2 \) statistic of 733.85 (417). A model comparison test \( \chi^2 \) (65) = 199.19, \( p < .05 \), which demonstrates a significant model improvement, while maintaining similar values on other fit indices.

The hypothesized model, shown in Figure 4-1, was then fitted including dummy coded variables for grad school (i.e., whether or not the respondent was enrolling in graduate school after the internship; \( n = 31 \)), continuation shock (i.e., if they reported a shock they said influenced them to continue pursuing a career in TRSM, \( n = 53 \)), and discontinuation shock (i.e., if they reported a shock they said influenced them to not continue pursuing a career in TRSM; \( n = 6 \)). The \( \chi^2 \) statistic for the model was 901.07 (525), with other fit indices showing marginally good fit (see Table 4-1); that is, they were at or near suggested levels according to commonly cited sources (i.e., Hu & Bentler, 1999; Marsh, Hau, & Wen, 2004).

R-square statistics for the three dependent variables were high for internship satisfaction (\( R^2 = .84 \)), affective vocational commitment (\( R^2 = .46 \)), and intent to enter the profession (\( R^2 = .68 \)).
Hypothesis Tests

The hypotheses were tested using a hybrid simultaneous structural equation model presented in Figure 4-2. Coefficients were considered significant if p-values were below the .05 level. The five internship experiences (i.e., challenge, supervisor support, learning opportunities, role ambiguity, and role conflict) were hypothesized to be significant predictors of internship satisfaction. The results showed significant paths between challenge ($\beta=.46, p<.05$), supervisor support ($\beta=.26, p<.05$), and role conflict ($\beta=-.12, p<.05$), thus supporting hypotheses H1a, H1b and H1e. The paths between both learning opportunities ($\beta=.25, p>.05$) and role ambiguity ($\beta=-.01, p>.05$) and internship satisfaction were found to be not significant, thus failing to support hypotheses H1c and H1d. The results also showed that internship satisfaction was a significant predictor of affective vocational commitment ($\beta=.51, p<.05$), and that affective vocational commitment was a significant predictor of the intent to enter the profession ($\beta=.75, p<.05$), thus supporting hypotheses H2 and H3.

Hypothesis 4 was analyzed by estimating the total direct and indirect effects between the internship characteristic variables (i.e., challenge, supervisor support, learning opportunities, role ambiguity and role conflict) on affective vocational commitment with internship satisfaction as a mediator. The results, listed in table 4-2, show that direct paths between these variables were not significant, indicating that internship satisfaction fully mediated the effects of the internship characteristic variables and affective vocational commitment and supporting hypothesis 4.

Similarly, hypothesis 5 was also tested by estimating total direct and indirect effects on the corresponding dependent variable (i.e., intent to enter the profession). The results, listed in table 4-2 indicated that the direct path between internship
satisfaction and intent was statistically significant ($\beta=-.18$, $p<.05$), however, the relationship is in the opposite from the hypothesized direction and is therefore dismissed as a not significant relationship. Therefore, affective vocational commitment fully mediates the relationship between internship satisfaction and intent, supporting hypothesis 5.

The direct effects of shocks categorized as continuation or discontinuation shocks on intent to enter the profession were estimated in the model. The results indicated that discontinuation shocks had a marginally significant influence on intent ($\beta=-.12$, $p=.05$), thus providing support for hypothesis 6. The influence of continuation shocks was found to be not significant ($\beta=.05$, $p>.05$), thus, hypothesis 7 was not supported.

**Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of the internship, including specific internship experience variables, and critical events on the students’ intent to enter the TRSM profession. Although not all hypotheses were supported, much was gained from this study. The contributions of Study 2 can best be seen when contrasted to previous efforts in the same context, specifically those by Cunningham and colleagues (i.e., 2004; 2005; Dixon et al., 2004). Among the improvements Study 2 provides over these studies, is the incorporation of all their concepts in a single structural model for simultaneous testing and the use of data from two schools in order to provide increased generalizability. Moreover, the inclusion of control variables (i.e., time 1 variables, graduate school) and critical events not previously used in previous studies allowed for a more accurate and theoretically-driven examination of students’ attitudes and intent to enter the profession just after completing their senior internship, and the internship experiences that influence this intent.
**Internship Experiences**

Contrary to previous studies in the internship context (i.e., D’Abate, 2009; Liu et al., 2011), learning opportunities did not have a significant relationship with internship satisfaction. It is possible that this finding is a result of testing in a different work context (i.e., business versus TRSM), or that the internships in the present study were required for academic credit and thus incorporated students that may have been reluctant to complete an internship. However, as suggested in Study 1, students’ perception of learning opportunities is likely more complex than what the current items are measuring. Perhaps separately measuring types of learning opportunities, such as learning new skills versus gaining knowledge about the field or profession, would give a better picture of how learning opportunities influence internship satisfaction.

Supervisor support was found to be a significant predictor of internship satisfaction as seen in previous studies (i.e., Cunningham et al., 2004; D’Abate 2009). This finding affirms other researchers’ assertions stressing the importance of the supervisor’s role in the internship (e.g., Hurd & Schlatter, 2007; Schneider & Stier, 2006).

Dixon et al. (2004) found that challenge significantly predicted commitment (relationship with satisfaction was not tested), while supervisor support and role stress did not. The present study tested these relationships using internship satisfaction as a mediator, finding challenge to be significant while supervisor support was not. Moreover, while Dixon et al. used the composite measure of role stress and found no significant effect, the present study separated the measure into its original components of role ambiguity and role conflict. Of the two, role conflict was found to have the hypothesized effect on internship satisfaction.
The finding that role conflict significantly influences satisfaction, while role ambiguity does not, may be reflective of how many internships are structured. First, role conflict, which occurs when a student receives conflicting instructions or tasks, may be related to the Study 1 finding that many internships involve multiple supervisors, thus creating an environment conducive to receiving conflicting instructions. Second, accounts from students in Study 1 suggested ambiguity was expected in their role as an intern since they were new to the organization, and was easily resolved. Considered together, it is possible that role ambiguity does not influence satisfaction because students may dismiss it as part of their adjustment into the workforce and because it is easily overcome. On the other hand, interns who receive instructions and tasks from multiple supervisors may become frustrated, hence lowering satisfaction.

**Shocks**

Results showed an uneven distribution of shocks; less than 6% of the shocks reported were discontinuation shocks, while 48.6% were reported as continuation shocks and 45.8% as having no effect on intent. However, these proportions do not differ greatly from Kammeyer-Mueller et al.’s (2005) findings using a similar instrument (12% discontinuation, 39% continuation, 49% neutral). While both studies used a longitudinal, prospective design to measure the influence of certain variables and critical events, Kammeyer-Mueller et al.’s (2005) followed participants over several years through several waves of data collection in a full-time work context, while the present study only examined students over a 13-week period.

Also consistent with Kammeyer-Mueller et al.’s (2005) findings, continuation events did not significantly influence the dependent variable predicting turnover (i.e., turnover hazard), while discontinuation events had a modest but statistically significant
effect. The repeated finding regarding continuation shocks hints that refinement of the theory or the measurement (i.e., classification) of the shock may be necessary. Furthermore, caution should be exercised when interpreting the results of the present study regarding discontinuation shocks. The significant relationship between discontinuation events and intent to enter the profession was based on only six participants who reported this type of shock out of the 153 in the study, and the significance level was at the limit (i.e., $p=.05$).

**Intent to Enter the Profession**

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the influence of the discussed variables on the students' intent to enter the profession. Much of the framework for the present study was built upon previous studies investigating intent and affective vocational commitment in the same context and through similar methods (i.e., Cunningham et al., 2004; 2005). Interestingly, results from this study regarding these two variables mirrored the drop in mean values from Time 1 to Time 2 for affective vocational commitment ($4.26 \rightarrow 4.06, p<.05$) and intent ($4.02 \rightarrow 3.82, p<.05$) illustrating that this effect is not unique to a single school. However, as Cunningham et al. (2005) acknowledged, this finding is neither surprising nor necessarily troubling. For many students the internship is their first full-time work experience, and thus their first time receiving a preview of work life in the vocation, which is why internships are seen as serving to help clarify vocational interests (Neapolitan, 1992).

The present study’s investigation of students’ intentions differs from Cunningham et al.’s (2005) approach in several ways. While both studies use structural equation modeling to predict intention via affective vocational commitment, Cunningham et al.’s (2005) model includes anticipated career satisfaction as the sole predictor of
commitment but does not focus on specific characteristics about the internship. On the other hand, Cunningham et al., (2003) includes internship experience variables (e.g., challenge, supervisor support), and the present study uses internship satisfaction and several internship experience variables (i.e., challenge, role stress, learning and supervisor support) in order to better understand what is influencing these relationships. Furthermore, the present study included measures of commitment and intent at Time 1 as control variables in order to interpret Time 2 measures more accurately. Previous studies also failed to account for whether the student was entering graduate school immediately after the internship, which may alter the students’ decision-making since they are not immediately searching for employment. Consequently, the present study puts forth a more comprehensive model predicting intent, which resulted in an increase in variance explained of over 20% from previous studies.
Figure 4-1. Proposed Structural Model of Voluntary Vocational Turnover for TRSM Interns
Figure 4-2. Structural model of the influence of the internship on students’ career decision-making. T1 = Time 1 variable; T2 = Time 2 variable; * p<.05, ** p=.05.
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*Note.* N=153. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker Lewis index; SRMR = standardized root-mean-squared residual; RMSEA = root-mean-squared error of approximation.
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Note. N=153. Relationships in italics were estimated in separate model to establish level of mediation. T1=Time 1 variable; T2=Time 2 variable; * p<.05.
| Variable                  | M   | SD  | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 8    | 9    | 10   | 11   | 12   | 13   | 14   | 15   | 16   |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|      |
| 1. School                | .24 | .43 | -    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 2. Compensation          | .70 | .46 | -.04 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 3. Gender T1             | .49 | .50 | -.10 | -.15 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 4. Graduate School T2    | .20 | .40 | -.05 | .08  | -.11 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 5. Continuation T2       | .35 | .48 | .15  | -.18 | .01  | .04  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 6. Discontinuation T2    | .04 | .19 | -.03 | .13  | -.07 | .07  | -.15 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 7. Commitment T1         | 4.26| .72 | -.18 | -.03 | -.08 | .10  | -.20 | .71  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 8. Intent T1             | 4.02| .86 | .14  | -.29 | .04  | -.22 | .17  | -.31 | .66  | .89  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 9. Learning T2           | 4.41| .74 | -.16 | .07  | .05  | -.04 | .29  | .13  | .83  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 10. Role Ambiguity T2    | 1.84| .62 | -.10 | .22  | .07  | -.06 | -.07 | -.25 | -.21 | -.43 | .78  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 11. Role Conflict T2     | 2.47| .92 | .08  | .08  | .00  | -.16 | -.06 | -.02 | -.21 | .08  | -.34 | .25  | .80  |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 12. Supervisor Support T2| 4.26| .90 | -.16 | .00  | .07  | -.07 | .24  | .12  | .62  | -.57 | -.44 | .88  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| 13. Challenge T2         | 3.95| .81 | -.15 | .11  | -.04 | .23  | -.09 | .16  | .05  | .70  | -.34 | -.16 | .40  | .90  |      |      |      |      |      |
| 14. Satisfaction T2      | 4.16| .75 | -.02 | -.14 | .03  | .04  | .19  | -.05 | .25  | .11  | .77  | -.51 | -.41 | -.68 | .67  | .93  |      |      |      |
| 15. Commitment T2        | 4.06| .84 | -.06 | -.15 | .02  | .03  | .15  | -.26 | .35  | .30  | .45  | -.33 | -.25 | -.32 | .50  | .53  | .83  |      |      |
| 16. Intent T2            | 3.82| .92 | -.04 | -.19 | .10  | -.16 | .17  | -.31 | .34  | .43  | .35  | -.25 | -.19 | .23  | .37  | .36  | .71  | .89  |      |

*Note. N=153. Coefficient alphas for composite variables are included on the diagonal. Commitment = Affective Vocational Commitment. Intent = Intent to Enter the Profession. T1=Time 1 variable; T2=Time 2 variable; Coefficients in italics signify p<.05.*
Table 4. Paired Sample T-Tests

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Note. N=153. * p<.05.
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Note. N=153. $T1=$Time 1 variable; $T2=$Time 2 variable; * $p<.05$. 
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

Internships in TRSM exist as a symbiotic relationship between the student, educational institution and agency. Each member of this relationship is meant to derive specific benefits from the others, particularly the student who is working for the agency in order to earn academic credit from their school. Amidst concerns about the detrimental effects the TRSM internship may have on students (King, 2009; Schneider & Stier, 2006; Williams, 2004), increased research had surfaced focusing on the influence of the internship on students’ decision to continue pursuing a career in TRSM (i.e., Cunningham et al., 2004; 2005).

The two independent studies incorporated in this dissertation provide extensive insight into the influence of the internship on the decision-making process. The findings show that the internship experience can have a sizeable impact on the career decision-making of students through revisions and/or additions to their decision frame and by influencing their overall commitment to the vocation and intent to enter the profession. Together, these studies are the most comprehensive empirical studies to date on the subject and provide considerable contributions to the extant literature focused on interns in TRSM.

Study 1 demonstrated the utility of image theory (Beach, 1990) as a theoretical lens for examining decision for students during this critical educational and developmental stage. The study provided insight into the composition of decision frames both before and after the internship and supported the hierarchical nature of the images within the decision frame. Clear changes within the images were observed, usually resulting from new information and experiences. In many cases, these changes
resulted from critical events, or shocks, and led to dissatisfaction and/or thoughts of leaving the vocation, consistent with the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

The application of the unfolding model to the vocational, rather than organizational, context also represents a theoretical advancement. By using a similar procedure to Lee et al. (1996), participants in the study were able to be categorized on whether they entered one of the paths of the unfolding model and how far they progressed through the model. Interestingly, only one student had made an employment decision by the conclusion of the internship, while three were attending graduate school and the rest were working temporarily or unemployed and searching for a job. Due to the focus of the study, intention to enter the profession (i.e., vocational turnover intention) was examined as the outcome rather than actual turnover. Thus, the ultimate decision the students made was not as important as how their decision-making process was affected by the internship experience and other external factors.

Study 1 set the stage for Study 2 by providing insight into the decision-making process and an understanding of the types of shocks students encounter during their internship and the functioning of the decision frame in this context. Study 1 also provided some qualitative support to the relationships measured in Study 2 in order to better understand how they are connected. Unlike Study 1, Study 2 included quantitative measures of the variables of interest as well as control variables (i.e., Time 1 measures of variables and graduate school enrollment). This model also included self-report measures of continuation and discontinuation shocks during the internship. While the addition of shocks in the model mark a theoretical advancement in this context, the
results of Study 2 fall short of providing definitive evidence that continuation or discontinuation shocks play a major role in influencing the intention to enter the TRSM profession. The relationship between continuation shocks and intent was not significant, and the relationship effect of discontinuation shocks on intent was only based on six reported discontinuation shocks and the significance value for the relationship was exactly at the cutoff level. Despite these issues, Study 2 demonstrates the influence of specific internship experiences on students’ satisfaction with the internship, which ultimately affects their affective commitment toward the profession, and intent to enter the profession.

**Decision Making**

As shown in Study 1, career decision frames can vary greatly from student to student. Many students could only speak to concrete value images, but had some difficulty expressing career goals (i.e., trajectory image) that they have committed to, much less their plans for achieving these goals (i.e., strategic image). After the internship, students’ decision frames appeared more developed but many students were still unclear about their future. Despite this, the internship experience clearly provokes changes to the decision frame. For the most part the changes were not drastic, but did influence the criteria students planned to use in their job search. These findings should help inform internship supervisors on the educational and agency side that differences exist among students and that their internship can shape their career path. This is a crucial point since the impact of the internship may not necessarily cause a student to leave the vocation, but may cause them to alter their initial goals.

Certainly, some level of change in the decision frame is expected from any internship. For the most part, internships are touted for their positive association with
career success (Gault et al., 2000; Stratta, 2004), and are a time for students to preview the workforce and possibly shape their future goals. However, much of the change is not associated with the student’s familiarization process with the vocation, but instead with specific characteristics of the internship as explored in Study 2. Role conflict, supervisor support and challenge were found to be significant contributors to overall internship satisfaction while role ambiguity and learning opportunities were not. As suggested by the findings in Study 1, learning opportunities may be a more complex factor than what is currently being measured and should not yet be dismissed as irrelevant. Nevertheless, the results provide strong evidence that students’ commitment to the vocation and intent to enter the profession is associated with certain aspects of the internship.

**Limitations**

Although Studies 1 and 2 resolve many of the issues from previous studies, several limitations were still present. The major limitations concerned the size and distribution of the sample in each study, the measurement of certain variables. The prospective design of these studies made it impossible to predict the amount and type of shocks that would be observed. This served as a limitation in both studies as Study 1 sample size prevented a thorough scrutiny of the influence of shocks since there were only a handful of students who experienced each type of shock. Nevertheless, the primary contribution of examining the decision-making process was achieved. Similarly, Study 2 was able to obtain a better understanding of the factors that influence intent but a skewed distribution of shocks made it difficult to substantiate the role of shocks.
Measurement may have been a contributing factor to this limitation. While independent coders classified shocks in Study 1, the participants in Study 2 classified them through self-report measures. As Study 1 illustrated, shocks can vary in terms of how much they influence career decision-making. Study 2 did not allow students to indicate to what extent they felt the shock was relevant to their decision-making. Measurement may have also served as a limitation for the other variables included in Study 2. The internship experience variables, internship satisfaction and commitment were all measured after the internship. Evidence from Odio and Walker (2012) suggests that intern attitudes and behaviors may fluctuate throughout the internship. Although, the net effect of these variables’ over the course of the internship is relevant, not measuring them during the internship may threaten the measures with a recency bias. Future studies should consider collecting data at multiple time points to address these concerns.

Finally, Study 1 illustrated that many students have still not solidified their career goals by the ending of their internship; the job search process may go on for a considerable length of time after the internship. Therefore, neither Study 1 nor Study 2 can definitively show the impact of the internship on the students’ final decision. However, the purpose of these studies was to examine the influence on the decision-making process and the students’ intent to enter the profession, which necessitated that the data collection occur as close as possible to the ending of the internship.

**Practical Implications**

The knowledge gained regarding students’ decision-making process, and the role of the internship, draws direct practical implications for all members of the symbiotic relationship created by the TRSM internship. Since the internship is considered a major
component of the TRSM curriculum, educators benefit by learning about how students view their career prior to starting the internship and how that vision is changed by their experiences. This knowledge could help mentor students through this process to better prepare them to transition into the workforce. Moreover, educators can gain from the finding that learning opportunities are more complex than previously conceptualized; when planning and evaluating internship sites, educators should account for student learning outcomes that include both new knowledge and skills separately.

Likewise, TRSM practitioners that employ interns should be aware that their supervision and mentorship of students can play a significant role in that students’ decision-making process. This is a particularly relevant finding for agencies that use the internship to evaluate students for potential employment. The results of Study 2 show that supervisor support, challenge and role conflict can influence satisfaction; combined with Study 1’s finding that having multiple supervisors can be detrimental, internship sites should carefully consider how they manage interns.

Finally, students can benefit from better organizing their career decision-making process. By becoming more aware about what factors are relevant for internship satisfaction, particularly the importance of a challenging internship with a supportive supervisor, can help them evaluate prospective internship opportunities.

**Future Research**

Several implications regarding theory and methodology can be drawn as well. The present study serves to expand the use of the unfolding model to the vocational level, and over a defined period. This modified, prospective approach could be applied to other levels and time periods, such as company mergers, or for career decision-making of people in other contexts such as event organizing committees or temporary workers.
Researchers using image theory should also note that additions and revisions to the decision frame could be minor yet impactful. Future research should address how to account and classify these revisions; they may be particularly relevant for capturing the effects of the internship. For example, a student who changes his or her career goal from working in large-scale events to only small-scale events did not leave the vocation, but has altered their trajectory image nonetheless.

Future research focused on internships should also compare the structure of internships, with close attention being paid to the relationship between the intern and his or her supervisor(s). Differences should be explored between internship experiences where interns are shared among multiple supervisors, and where single or multiple supervisors oversee multiple interns in similar roles. Similarly, further development in the measurement and classification of shocks is needed. The current measure, as used in this study, accounts for whether and how the shock influences decision-making (i.e., continuation, discontinuation), but does not account for the weight of the shock in the decision-making process.
APPENDIX A
PRE-INTERNSHIP INTERVIEW GUIDE

General
1. Describe your internship. Type of organization, tasks and responsibilities during the internship.
2. How old are you?
3. What relevant work/volunteer experience do you have?
4. What are your expectations for this internship?

Images
5. How do you define career success? (value)
6. What do you seek to gain through your career on a personal level? (value)
7. What are your long-term career goals? (trajectory)
8. How committed are you to these goals? (trajectory)
9. How do you intend to achieve these career goals? (strategic)
10. What role will the internship play in helping you achieve your career goals? (strategic)
11. Do you have a job lined up for after the internship? Will you attend graduate school? (strategic/script)
12. Tell me about your job search criteria. (strategic/script)
13. How committed are you to working in this vocation? (commitment)
14. If you do not receive any job offers matching these criteria immediately after graduating what will you do? (strategic/script)
15. Do you have any ‘backup’ plans for your career? (strategic)
APPENDIX B
POST-INTERNSHIP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Images
1. How do you define career success? (value)
2. What do you seek to gain through your career on a personal level? (value)
3. Did these change over the course of the internship? (value change)
4. What are your current career goals? (trajectory)
5. Did these change over the course of the internship? (trajectory change)
6. How committed are you to these (new) career goals? (trajectory change)

Shocks
7.* Can you describe the circumstances surrounding the time you first began to feel or think that you should leave the vocation?
8. Was there a particular event that caused you to think about leaving the vocation?
   Please describe that event and the circumstances surrounding that event.

Time to Decide
9.* How soon after you began thinking of quitting did you make up your mind to leave?

Search for Alternatives
10. Did you consider other job alternatives or options in making your decision to stay/leave?
11. Did you already have some job offers when you decided to stay/leave?
12.* Did you search for other jobs before or after deciding to leave the vocation?
13. Was the job search comprehensive? That is, how thoroughly did you gather information on other job options?

Fit Judgments
14.* Did you decide that you would fit better in one of these options? If yes, could you please describe why you would fit better?
15. How would you rate the compatibility between your personal goals (which can include professional) values and those of the vocation?
16. Is/Was your career progressing the way you expected it to?
17. Are/Were your personal goals progressing the way you expected them to?
18.* If you had stayed, would you have been able to achieve all of your career goals? Would you have been able to achieve all of your personal goals?

Internship Experience
19. How would you describe your internship experience?
20. Was there anything about the internship that caused you to reconsider working in this vocation? Be specific.

* Only to be asked if a change in image(s) is detected
APPENDIX C
PRE-INTERNSHIP CODING GUIDE

Note: Numbers in instructions correspond to the questions from the pre-internship interview guide.

Instructions:

1-4. will be used to assist pattern coding.

5-6. will establish the existence of value images.

7-8. Does the respondent have career goals? Yes/No
How clear are these goals? Strong/Moderate/Weak

9. Does the respondent have an articulate plan for achieving these goals? Yes/No
How reasonable is this plan? Reasonable/Moderate/Unreasonable

10. Does the respondent intend to use the internship to help achieve his or her career goals?

11. Does the respondent have a job lined up? Yes/No
Does the respondent intend to attend graduate school? Yes/No

12. Does the respondent have a clear sense of what they are looking for? Yes/No

13. How committed is the respondent to the vocation? Strong/Moderate/Weak

14-15. Does the respondent possess any scripts? Yes/No
APPENDIX D
POST-INTERNSHIP CODING GUIDE

Changes
1. Did the respondent change their value image? Yes/No
2. Did the respondent change their trajectory image? Yes/No
3. Did the respondent change their strategic image? Yes/No

Shocks
4. Was there a clearly distinguishable and jarring event? Yes/No
5. Was the event expected or unexpected? Expected/Unexpected/Not applicable
6. Was the event positive, neutral, or negative? Positive/Neutral/Negative
7. Did the event involve personal matters that were external to the job? Yes/No
8. Did the event involve personal matters that were job related? Yes/No

Time to decision
6. Were these mental deliberations quick? Yes/No
7. Did the respondent seem to believe that another job would be easy to get without a significant job search effort? Yes/No
10. Did immediate job opportunities play a significant role in the turnover event? Yes/No
11. Did the job search produce at least one acceptable alternative before leaving the hospital? Yes/No
12. Was the job search fast or easy? Yes/No
13. Was the job search long or laborious? Yes/No

Decision paths
14. Did decision path 1 occur? Yes/No
15. Did decision path 2 occur? Yes/No
16. Did decision path 3 occur? Yes/No
17. Did decision path 4a occur? Yes/No
18. Did decision path 4b occur? Yes/No

Image violations
19. Did the value image fit the vocation? Yes/No
20. Did the trajectory image fit the vocation? Yes/No
21. Did the strategic image fit the vocation? Yes/No
22. Did not-fit lead to staying? Yes/No
23. Did not-fit lead to job search? Yes/No
24. Did not-fit lead to leaving? Yes/No
25. Did a match occur? Yes/No

Script
26. Did scripted behavior occur? Yes/No

Internship experiences
27. Did any specific characteristics of the internship lead to a decision to continue or not continue pursuing a career in the vocation?
APPENDIX E
MEASURES FOR STUDY 2

Challenge (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   In general, the work I performed in this internship is challenging and exciting
   Overall, this experience tested me
   Overall, the internship was challenging

Supervisor Support (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   My supervisor helped make my internship a pleasant experience
   My supervisor acted as a mentor to me while I was interning
   My supervisor did not provide me with enough support while I was doing my
   internship (reverse coded)

Learning Opportunities (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   My internship taught me a lot of things that I would never have been able to
   learn in the classroom.
   My internship did not help me learn anything new (reverse coded)
   My internship provided me with a chance to learn a lot about the field, profession,
   or business

Role Ambiguity (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   I generally knew what my responsibilities were (reverse coded)
   I knew exactly what is expected of me (reverse coded)
   I typically received a clear explanation of what was to be done (reverse coded)

Role Conflict (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   I got conflicting requests from two or more people
   I did things that were likely to be accepted by one person and not accepted by
   others
   I had to do things that should have been done differently

Internship Satisfaction (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   Generally speaking, I was very satisfied with my internship
   I frequently thought of quitting my internship (reverse coded)
   I was generally satisfied with the kind of work I did at my internship
   Most days I was enthusiastic about my work
   Each day of work seemed like they would never end (reverse coded)
   I found real enjoyment in my work
   I consider my internship rather unpleasant (reverse coded)

Affective Vocational Commitment (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   I dislike being in this profession (reverse coded)
   I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career working in this profession
   I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to this profession (reverse coded)
Intent to Enter the Profession (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)
   Following graduation, I plan to enter this profession
   I plan on making a career in this profession
   It is unlikely that I will take a position in this profession following (reverse coded)

Shocks (Yes, No)
   Did you experience one or more significant events (personal, professional or at the internship) during the internship?

Continuation or Discontinuation (More likely, Less likely, Neither)
   As a result of the event, will you be more or less likely to continue working in the TRSM industry?
LIST OF REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Michael is originally from Miami, FL and is a second generation Cuban-American. He is a dedicated sport management scholar, who received all three of his academic degrees in the discipline, starting with a Bachelor of Science in sport management from the University of Florida in 2007, continuing with a Master of Science in physical education, sport management track, from Florida International University in 2009, and culminating in a Doctor of Philosophy in Health and Human Performance, majoring in sport management, from the University of Florida in 2013. As a doctoral student, he taught seven undergraduate courses and served in several student representative roles including Graduate Student Advisory Committee, Graduate Student Council, the College of Health and Human Performance Advisory Board, and the North American Society for Sport Management’s Student Initiatives Committee, Publicity and Promotions Committee and Executive Council.