

Supervised Internship and Professional Training: Analysis of Expectations and Satisfaction of Graduates and Students of Administration Courses

Estágio Supervisionado e Formação Profissional: Análise das Expectativas e Satisfação dos Egressos e Discentes de Cursos de Administração

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ABSTRACT

The internship is an instrument used for the assimilation of the learning process and professional training by several Higher Education Institutions, which has provided an integration of the student in the market. Therefore, the objective of this research is to investigate the factors that influence the expectations and satisfaction of graduates and students of Administration courses with the supervision internship and to professional training during the pandemic period. For that, a descriptive and quantitative study was carried out, through a survey, with the application of a questionnaire, answered by 123 undergraduates and graduates of the Administration course of two Higher Education Institutions and the treatment of data due to descriptive statistics and exploratory factor analysis. The results show that satisfaction with the internship and the effectiveness of the professional training process is influenced by links to learning opportunities, guidance / guidance, as well as organizational support and participation and the challenges of these activities, contributing to improve the experience of interns in the workplace. In general, it is inferred that the aspects investigated in the research express student satisfaction with the internship and its production for professional training.

Keywords: Supervised Internship. Professional Qualification. Management.

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RESUMO

O estágio é um instrumento utilizado para a assimilação do processo de aprendizagem e formação profissional por várias Instituições de Ensino Superior, que tem proporcionado a integração do discente no mercado. Diante disso, o objetivo desta pesquisa consiste em investigar os fatores que influenciam nas expectativas e satisfação dos egressos e discentes dos cursos de Administração com o estágio supervisionado e a formação profissional no período de pandemia. Para tanto, desenvolveu-se um estudo descritivo e quantitativo, por meio de um levantamento, com aplicação de um questionário, respondido por 123 graduandos e graduados do curso de Administração de duas Instituições de Ensino Superior e o tratamento dos dados ocorreu mediante estatística descritiva e análise fatorial exploratória. Os resultados apontam que a satisfação com o estágio e a efetividade do processo de formação profissional é influenciado por variáveis ligadas a oportunidade de aprendizagem, supervisão/orientação, bem como o apoio organizacional e a participação e desafios destas atividades, contribuindo para melhorar a experiência dos estagiários no ambiente de trabalho. De modo geral, infere-se que os aspectos investigados na pesquisa expressam a satisfação dos estudantes com o estágio e a sua relevância para a formação profissional.

Palavras-chave: Estágio Supervisionado. Formação profissional. Administração.

Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are responsible for the process of educating and training students, enabling them to develop competencies, skills and values in order to enter the job market. Universities therefore make resources available to provide this training to students, in terms of personal and professional development, with supervised internships being one of the tools used to assimilate the teaching and learning process and professional training (GOMES; TEIXEIRA, 2016).

The primary function of internship activities in the Administration course is to promote the integration of students with the job market, enabling them to practice the theoretical knowledge acquired during graduation in an organizational reality (VIEIRA *et al.*, 2021b). In addition, the internship provides students with competitive advantages in the market, increasing curricular experience, developing skills that will enable new opportunities to arise, as well as the possibility of *networking* (FARIA *et al.*, 2012).

However, there are divergences between the objectives of internships in relation to the practice of these activities, as interns are inserted into this environment with the supposed intention of learning and experiencing an organizational reality, however, the principles are distorted, making them simply qualified labor at low cost to companies (REIS JÚNIOR, 2016). This situation has been periodically deteriorating with the changes and complexity of the current scenario, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, making the environment unpredictable, dynamic, changeable and causing consequences with regard to student expectations and satisfaction.

Considering the above and emphasizing that certain factors influence students' expectations and satisfaction with the supervised internship, this paper aims to answer the following research question: **What factors influence the expectations and satisfaction of graduates and students of Business Administration courses with the supervised internship and professional training during the pandemic?** To answer this question, the objective is to investigate the factors that influence the expectations and satisfaction of graduates and students of Business Administration courses with the supervised internship and professional training during the pandemic period .

This study is justified by the need to analyze expectations and satisfaction with the supervised internship at different universities and in different geopolitical contexts, as pointed out by Vieira *et al.* (2021b), since the factors attributed by the respondents may be different, which could modify the results of the research. Another factor that justifies the development of the research is to identify the gaps in the internship development process that compromise its effectiveness. In addition, the research makes theoretical and practical contributions to broadening discussions on the subject, given the lack of studies associated with the current pandemic.

In addition to this introduction, the structure of this study is made up of the following topics: the theoretical framework with the sections, the Business Administration course and the supervised internship, and the supervised internship and professional training, in addition, it will present the main methodological aspects, followed by the results and discussions found, the final considerations and finally, the appropriate references, appendices and annexes.

Literature Review

The theoretical framework is a general overview of relevant data related to the subject to be studied, through works, research and theories that have already been carried out. This study of the relevant literature is a way of planning the work, as it represents a source of essential information, allowing the state of the problem to be researched to be verified (LAKATOS; MARKONI, 2017).

THE ADMINISTRATION COURSE AND SUPERVISED INTERNSHIP

Management education began in the United States, the first country to offer finance and economics courses at the end of the 19th century. Furthermore, one of the first authors to write and discuss issues related to management was Frederick Taylor, who proposed optimizing production by rationalizing tasks in his theory of the factory floor (SILVA, 2007; OLIVEIRA; LOURENÇO; CASTRO, 2015; MORAIS, 2018).

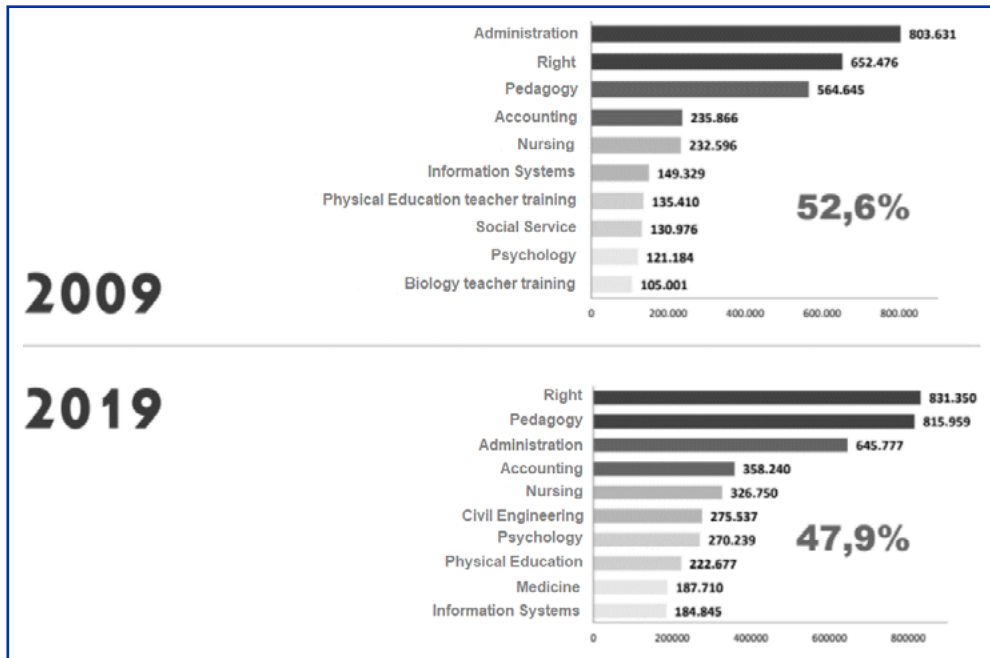
In Brazil, Business Administration courses have a very short history when compared to the North American scenario, with teaching activities in this area only beginning in the middle of the 20th century, when the first school of Public Administration in Brazil and Latin America was created (PENALVA, 2018).

Another important fact for the consolidation of Administration in Brazil was the officialization of the profession of administrator by Law No. 4.769/1965, making the practice exclusive to bachelors, as well as the regularization of the teaching of the profession, which legitimized courses and diplomas, giving greater reliability to the education process, through Opinion No. 307/66 (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2012; PINTO; MOTTER JUNIOR, 2012). In addition, curricular guidelines were created for undergraduate degrees in Business Administration, approved in 2005, with the aim of moving teaching away from the rigidity of the minimum curriculum, in order to guarantee the flexibility of pedagogical projects that facilitate the development of skills and competencies (OLIVEIRA; LOURENÇO; CASTRO, 2015).

After this period of consolidation, in which changes occurred in the Brazilian scenario, the areas focused on Administration spread on a large scale, increasing the openings of higher education courses in the country (VASCONCELOS; CAVALCANTI, 2018). This spread has meant that the Administration course has lasted for

several years with a significant share of total enrollment, even reaching first place in the ranking (INEP, 2020), as shown in the comparative graphs in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The top 10 undergraduate programs in terms of enrollment in Brazil in 2009 and 2019



Source: MEC/INEP (2020).

Business education attracts a large number of students because it is a generalist course (CFA, 2019). In addition, an undergraduate degree in Business Administration is one of the courses capable of preparing more dynamic, entrepreneurial professionals who are willing to innovate, develop strategies and processes that contribute to the efficiency of organizations and meet market demands (ARIAS; MACHADO, 2017). The development of these characteristics is facilitated in applied courses, a title that was attributed to Administration after the Industrial Revolution (VIEIRA *et al.*, 2021a).

In applied courses, the internship is indispensable, it is a necessary mechanism for establishing a relationship between the university, the company, the student

and society, in order to meet learning and professionalization needs (ALCÂNTARA *et al.*, 2020; VIEIRA *et al.*, 2021b). It is a tool capable of providing a connection between theory and day-to-day practice, as Henri Fayol proposed in his studies, by emphasizing the importance of knowing, accompanied by knowing how to do (MORAIS, 2018; OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2020).

Internships were created in 1977 to meet the needs of organizations that were finding it difficult to find qualified people to fill various roles. Before that time, these activities were carried out by students, but informally, treated as an exchange of favors between businessmen, in order to get their children into the job market (FARIA *et al.*, 2012; VIEIRA *et al.*, 2021a). The government began to regulate this relationship so that more students could experience these practices, instituting Law No. 6.494/77, a document that defines internships as a way of complementing the learning process, providing practical experience (FESTINALLI; CANOPF; BERTUOL, 2007).

The current internship legislation, Law No. 11.788 of September 25, 2008, defines that the internship must be part of the course's pedagogical project, aimed at learning the skills of professional activity, with the objective of developing the student for the job market, and also clarifies that the internship may be compulsory or non-compulsory, according to the curricular guidelines and the course's pedagogical project (BRASIL, 2008).

There are two types of supervised internship in higher education: curricular, which is compulsory, and extracurricular, which is not compulsory (CASSUNDÉ *et al.*, 2017). The curricular internship is an activity guaranteed by the course matrix and can be carried out in the public or private sphere, requiring the monitoring and guidance of the teacher (CRUZ, 2015). Extracurricular internships, on the other hand, are those carried out by students during the course and are not compulsory; they are an optional activity for students (MACHADO, 2017).

Regardless of the type of internship, this activity is a very important stage in the process of learning and developing skills. As well as providing benefits and financial resources, the organizational experience allows students to socialize with people from different areas, enabling *networking* and professional and personal maturity (TÁVORA, 2013). For the company, it is an opportunity to add value by exchanging knowledge (ALCÂNTARA *et al.*, 2020).

SUPERVISED INTERNSHIPS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The profile of the administrator required by the market is based on the concept of a participative and proactive individual, equipped with practical and comprehensive knowledge, with the skills to identify problems, and who can act critically in the face of emerging situations, in addition to other skills (SOARES; ALVES; TARGINO, 2017).

Given this scenario, the training of administrators should not only take place in the classroom, since this only guarantees initial and theoretical contact with scientific bases, and is not sufficient for the development of managerial skills (CASSUNDÉ *et al.*, 2017). From this perspective, the practical knowledge of the internship is fundamental in the training of administrators, as it offers students interaction with an organizational culture, the development of critical thinking and professional ethics, as well as insertion into the job market (VIEIRA *et al.*, 2021b).

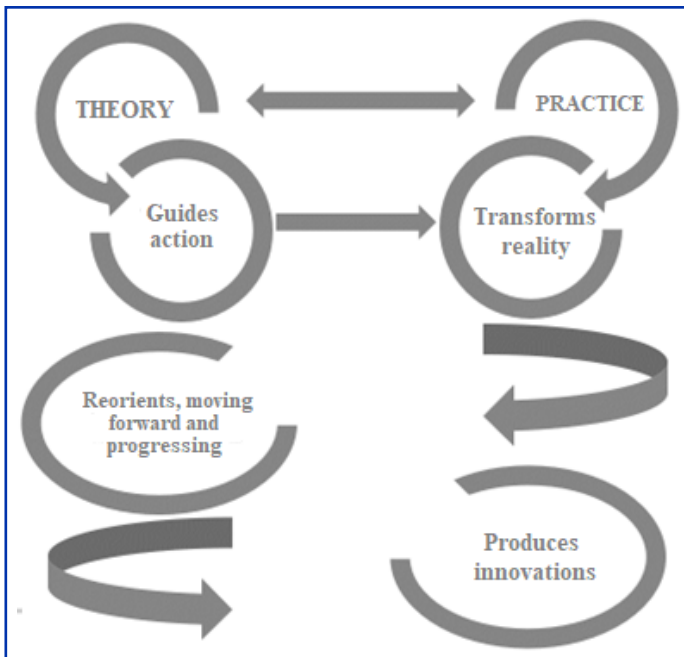
According to the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCNs) for the Administration course, established by Resolution No. 4 of July 13, 2005 by the National Education Council (CNE), the internship is aimed at consolidating the desired professional performance inherent in the student's profile, and can be reprogrammed and reoriented according to the theoretical and practical results obtained, provided that the competencies indispensable to the exercise of the profession are safeguarded (CNE, 2005).

In view of this and in an effort to promote the proper training of trainees and combat fraud, the Federal Council of Administration (CFA) instituted Normative Resolution 569/2019, which states that the supervision of the traineeship must be carried out by a higher education administration professional, registered and up to date with the obligations before the respective regional council (CFA, 2019).

The regulations take into account the importance of internships for learning the skills required for professional activity, with a view to developing students for life as citizens and for the workplace. In this way, the internship is considered a fundamental component for university students, it is a complementary activity that seeks to transform the theory absorbed in the academic sphere into practical actions within organizations, providing opportunities for the development of essential skills and competences for the future administrator, preparing them for the market (SANTANA; CARDOSO, 2018; MACHADO, 2017).

From this perspective, Almeida and Pimenta (2014) emphasize that during their undergraduate studies, students build up knowledge, skills, attitudes and attitudes, which will be re-signified during the internship period, based on personal experiences in contact with the organizational environment, and will be reconstructed in the exercise of the profession throughout their lives. In this way, according to Schwartz, Baptista and Casteleins (2001), theory and practice are inseparable and correlate to become a cognitive activity (knowing) and a theological activity (setting objectives; anticipating a reality that is desired but does not yet exist), helping students to gain knowledge about their future profession. The diagram in Figure 2 demonstrates the dynamic nature of this process.

Figure 2. Diagram of the dynamism present in the internship



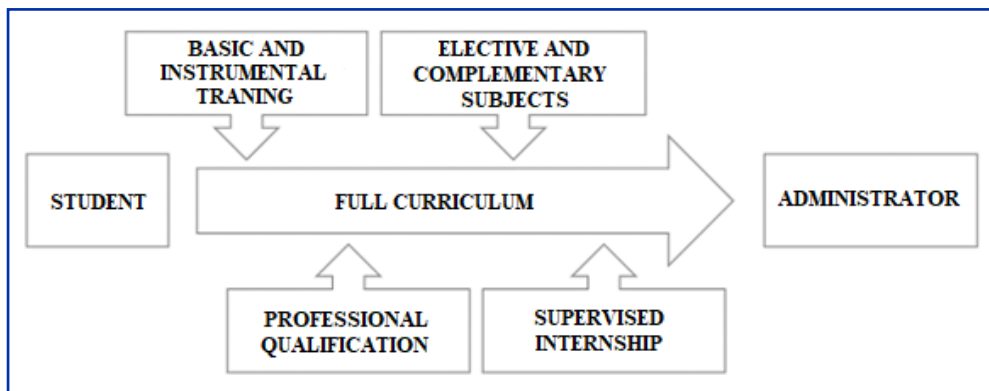
Source: Adapted from Schwartz, Baptista and Casteleins (2001).

However, some authors, Nicolini (2003), Faria *et al.* (2012), Gomes and Teixeira (2016) and Santana and Cardoso (2018), have questioned the real value of the internship for the training of administrators, which has become solely a formality on

the eve of graduation, in order to meet the legal requirements for obtaining a higher education diploma, deviating from its main objective of allowing the student to critically analyze the organizational reality (FARIA *et al.*, 2012).

In this sense, according to Nicolini's (2003) analogy, the internship is just part of the system used to mass-produce bachelor's degrees, with the student being the raw material that will be transformed along the assembly line (the full curriculum, which includes internship activities) into a product (the administrator), as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The Administrator's "production line" (training)



Source: Adapted from Nicolini (2003).

Cruz (2015) identified, in his research with business students, that the focus of universities is on academic development, leaving something to be desired when it comes to practical learning. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of companies offering tasks based on the knowledge acquired in the classroom, so that students can relate theory and practice, avoiding the detour of functions. In view of this, the internship must be linked to the process of training the administrator, taking into account the complexity and breadth of skills and competencies, combined with the number of specific fields of activity of this professional, who needs to develop a generalist profile (CASSUNDÉ *et al.*, 2017).

In this context, it is necessary to move away from total dependence on theories seen in classrooms to practice, so that the trained professional becomes a

transformer rather than a simple product (MORAIS, 2018). It is therefore hoped that all the agents involved in the internship process - the university as coordinator, the company as field and the student as subject - will play their part in helping to train these future professionals (SANTANA, CARDOSO, 2018).

Another important point for this discussion is the current business context, filled with chaos and uncertainty in the political, social and economic spheres of the world, caused by Covid-19. Given this scenario, it is necessary to analyze the main transformations with regard to the challenges caused in the process of inserting future administrators, bearing in mind that companies are increasingly demanding in relation to specific skills and competencies, and in this context, only a degree in the area is no guarantee of career success (REZENDE; DIAS; SILVA, 2021).

Methodology

This research aims to investigate the factors that influence the expectations and satisfaction of graduates and students of Administration courses with the supervised internship and for professional training during the pandemic, thus, the study is characterized in terms of its objectives, as descriptive, as it seeks to identify the characteristics of a certain population or phenomenon, as well as to establish possible relationships between variables (GIL, 2017).

In terms of procedures, the study is classified as a *survey*, which according to Gil (2017) is a type of research characterized by the direct questioning of individuals whose behaviour is to be known, using questionnaires. In addition, the research is quantitative in nature, which means translating information into numbers in order to analyse it, using descriptive statistics and factor analysis techniques in particular for this study (PRODANOV; FREITAS, 2013).

The target audience for this survey were students and alumni of Business Administration courses at the State University of Rio Grande do Norte (UERN) - Pau dos Ferros and Mossoró campuses and the Federal Rural University of the Semi-Arid (UFERSA) - Mossoró campus, who had contact with the compulsory curricular internship during the Covid-19 pandemic period, totaling 150 potential respondents and it was decided to choose these students and alumni due to the accessibility

of the data. Initially, the aim was to reach a total population of 150 respondents; however, during the period in which the questionnaire remained open for responses, from September 20 to October 11, 2021, 123 students and alumni returned.

A questionnaire was used as a data collection tool, drawn up using studies by Cruz (2015), Machado (2017), Santana and Cardoso (2018) and Vieira *et al.* (2021b), which includes aspects relating to the characteristics of students and graduates and the curricular internship process and professional training, as well as questions aimed at measuring satisfaction with the internship.

Section 1 consisted of six questions about the student's profile, while Section 2 presented 25 statements so that respondents could indicate their level of agreement on a 5-alternative *Likert* scale, as shown in Chart 1 below, with the aim of measuring aspects related to supervised internships and professional training. The last question was open-ended and sought to identify the grade obtained in the internship subject in order to relate it to other variables. The questionnaire thus consisted of 32 questions.

Chart 1. Scale of agreement

I disagree	Partially disagree	Indifferent	Partially agree	I agree
1	2	3	4	5

Source: Prepared by the authors (2021).

Once the questionnaire was finalized, it was included in *Google Forms* for a pre-test, bringing together a total of three people and after the *feedback* provided by the respondents, there was no need for modifications. The questionnaires were sent electronically (*e-mail*) and via social networks (*WhatsApp*, *Instagram* and *Facebook*) to potential respondents, given the current pandemic situation.

After collection, the data was processed using descriptive statistics techniques, allowing the data collected to be transformed into information by means of tables, in order to achieve the defined objectives, which according to Gil (2017), all surveys require statistical calculations in order to analyze the data. In addition, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used, a technique applied to define the latent structure between the variables in the analysis, seeking to identify groupings

between variables through the factor loadings presented, exploring the data and providing information on the number of factors needed to represent them (HAIR JUNIOR *et al.*, 2009).

Results and Discussion

This section presents, interprets and analyzes the findings of the research, after carrying out the aforementioned methodological procedures. The first part presents the profile of the respondents, then the data related to the model's descriptive statistics, and finally the results of the exploratory factor analysis. That said, Table 1 shows the profile of the research subjects.

Table 1. Profile of survey respondents

	Features	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	59	48%
	Female	64	52%
Age	Between 20 and 30 years old	89	72,4%
	Between 31 and 40 years old	31	25,2%
	Between 41 and 50 years old	02	1,6%
	Over 51	01	0,8%
Civil Status	Single	82	66,7%
	Married	24	19,5%
	Stable Union	14	11,4%
	Divorced	03	2,4%
	Widowed	-	-
Course in Progress	Internship I	29	23,6%
	Internship II	20	16,3%
	Graduate	74	60,2%
Home Campus	UERN Pau dos Ferros	48	39%
	UERN Mossoró	40	32,5%
	UFERSA Mossoró	35	28,5%

Internship Format	In person	75	61%
	Remote	11	8,9%
	Hybrid	37	30,1%
Total		123	100%

Source: Research data (2021).

Table 1 shows information on gender, age, marital status, subject being studied, *campus of origin* and internship format. The aim is to outline the profile of the 123 undergraduates and graduates who responded to the survey, whose identities have been preserved in order to guarantee greater autonomy in their responses.

According to Table 1, of the total number of respondents, 52% belong to the female gender and 48% to the male gender, of which the majority have a younger profile, represented by 72.4%, with an average age of between 21 and 30, and in addition, according to the marital status of the survey participants, 66.7% said they were single.

With regard to the compulsory internship course in progress, the majority have completed their degree, i.e. 60.2% have already taken the courses corresponding to the internship, while 23.6% and 16.3% are still taking the courses Internship I and Internship II, respectively. In addition, 39% of the respondents have completed or are currently studying Business Administration at the UERN campus in Pau dos Ferros and finally, 61% of the respondents carried out their compulsory curricular internship activities in person, despite the current pandemic situation, while the rest said they did so in a hybrid way, represented by 30.1%, and remotely, corresponding to 8.9% of the respondents.

The second part of the analysis consisted of using descriptive statistics to identify the mean and standard deviation of the variables analyzed, as shown in Table 2 below. To obtain this information, as presented in the methodology, respondents had to express their agreement or disagreement with the statements presented.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the model

V	Affirmative	Average	Standard Deviation
1	The internship supervisor has training or experience in the administrative area	4,56	0,860
2	The granting institution provided equipment and materials that enabled me to carry out my activities	4,15	1,033
3	The granting institution provided the necessary information to carry out the activities assigned to me	4,27	0,992
4	The granting organization offered means for professional development	4,02	1,204
5	I believe that the other members of the granting organization were attentive and helpful	4,14	1,074
6	The internship environment allowed interaction with different professionals and the exchange of knowledge and experiences	4,15	0,981
7	The activities carried out during the internship period were related to the course I am on	4,32	0,782
8	The internship adds new values to the future profession	4,45	0,802
9	The internship provides opportunities to help define your career (helps you confirm or rethink your professional choice)	4,37	0,881
10	Internship activities preferably meet the interests of the student in training	3,98	1,008
11	The internship allows you to apply the theoretical knowledge learned during the course	4,13	0,949
12	During the internship I had the opportunity to develop some projects	3,30	1,563
13	The internship made it possible to carry out a business diagnosis to improve organizational processes	3,65	1,460
14	It was easy to reconcile the activities developed in the internship with the study of the theoretical subjects of the course	2,90	1,533

15	It was easy to get an internship in the organizations in my region	3,30	1,515
16	The advisor is present at the proposed times	4,29	1,114
17	The supervisor met expectations during the internship	4,28	1,135
18	The course offers the monitoring and guidance needed to carry out the activities developed during the internship	4,07	1,095
19	The granting institution provided supervision, assisting in the development of activities	4,15	0,984
20	I believe that the tutor of the Supervised Internship course provided the necessary guidance for the internship to run smoothly.	4,36	0,879
21	The internship is relevant as a curricular component	4,39	0,826
22	The internship is not only a compulsory curricular activity, it is also provided for in the National Curriculum Guidelines.	4,39	0,731
23	During the internship, I applied the theoretical knowledge I had acquired during the course	4,20	0,997
24	The internship met my initial expectations	4,13	1,094
25	After completing the activities, I consider myself satisfied with the internship	4,15	1,076

Source: Research data (2021).

Table 2 shows the perceptions of the undergraduates and graduates who took part in the study regarding compulsory supervised internship activities and the student training process, as well as their expectations and satisfaction, and it is possible to identify the items with the highest averages.

Thus, for statement V1, there was a high level of agreement, with 4.56 agreeing that the internship managers/supervisors have training/experience in the administrative area covered by the internship. With regard to statement V8, 4.45 agreed that the internship is a way of adding value to the future profession. Variables V21 and V22, on the other hand, had an average of 4.39, showing that un-

dergraduates and graduates agree that the internship goes beyond a compulsory activity and is relevant to undergraduate business studies. In addition, variable V9 had an average agreement of 4.37, showing that the internship helps define the career choice.

The results highlight the importance of the compulsory curricular internship for students in Business Administration courses. It is an activity that guarantees the trainee acquires experience in the job market with trained and qualified professionals, adding value for the future professional, in addition, according to Vieira *et al.* (2021b), it is an opportunity to evaluate the market and delve deeper into areas of interest, helping to confirm/rethink the professional choice. In addition, the findings are similar to the study by Machado (2017), who considered the high relevance of the internship as a curricular component, considering it as a means of learning that goes beyond a mandatory activity, giving students the opportunity to practice in the organizational environment.

Following on from the analysis, with the aim of identifying the main variables that represent all the aspects observed, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was carried out in order to understand the factors related to curricular internships and professional training, and the following indices were developed prior to its application: *Cronbach's Alpha* , greater than 0.6; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (*KMO*), equal to or greater than 0.5; *Bartlett's Sphericity* , less than 0.5, highlighted in Table 3, and then *Communality* , equal to or greater than 0.5 (*HAIR JR. et al*, 2009).

Table 3. Results of the consistency tests of the observable variables for use in the EFA

Cronbach's Alpha	Bartlett's sphericity Sig.	KMO	Var. Explained (%)
0,922	0,000	0,810	72,2

Source: Research data (2021).

Based on the results in Table 3, after completing the tests to evaluate this model, *Cronbach's Alpha* was 0.922, showing high authenticity of the factors according to their relationship with the variables observed. *Bartlett's Sphericity* indi-

cated statistical significance and legitimized the use of the EFA and with regard to the *KMO*, the result of 0.810 proved that the research model complies with the admissible standards. Furthermore, the explained variance obtained a result of 72.2%, demonstrating a significant degree of explanation and relevance of the model. Finally, all the tests showed significant results, confirming the relevance of the research, as well as the contribution of the variables to satisfaction with the compulsory curricular internship and to professional training.

It should be noted that none of the 25 variables analyzed were extracted for the construction of the factors, since all of them had a *Communality* greater than 0.5 (Table 5), showing their importance in explaining the factors. Next, the total variance explained test was carried out to detect the number of factors generated based on the set of variables, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Total Variance Explained Test

Factor	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loads			Rotation sums of squared loads		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
	1	9,753	39,010	39,010	9,753	39,010	39,010	6.240	26.810
2	2.931	11.726	50.736	2.931	11.726	50.736	4.829	15.718	42.528
3	2,721	10,886	61.622	2,721	10,886	61.622	3,733	15.031	57.559
4	2.644	10.579	72.200	2.644	10.579	72.200	2,659	14.641	72.200

Source: Research data (2021).

As Table 4 shows, four factors were formed from the set of variables, which explain 72.2% of the total variability in the data. The completed factor composition and the respective satisfaction variables with compulsory curricular internships and professional training are shown below in Table 5.

Table 5. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Variables	Construct	Com.	F1	F2	F3	F4
7	Learning Opportunity	0,774	0,539			
8		0,762	0,701			
9		0,748	0,711			
21		0,853	0,667			
22		0,715	0,628			
23		0,690	0,595			
24		0,823	0,724			
25		0,795	0,691			
1	Supervision/ Orientation	0,549		0,725		
16		0,861		0,833		
17		0,886		0,837		
18		0,668		0,722		
19		0,666		0,579		
20		0,718		0,630		
2	Organizational Support	0,672			0,733	
3		0,731			0,800	
4		0,831			0,859	
5		0,671			0,800	
6		0,736			0,825	
10	Participation and Challenges	0,748				0,765
11		0,744				0,750
12		0,558				0,642
13		0,711				0,722
14		0,622				0,770
15						0,694

***Note:** Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation method: Varimax.

Source: Research data (2021).

The information shown in Table 5 shows that Factor 1 (F1) was called “Learning Opportunity”, since it brought together variables V7, V8, V9, V21, V22, V23, V24 and V25, since all these variables are related to the execution of compulsory curricular internship activities and the alignment of theory with practice. This understanding is supported by the researchers Santana and Cardoso (2018), Machado (2017) and Cruz (2015), who indicate that the curricular internship gives undergraduate students the chance to compare theory with practice, using the knowledge acquired in the classroom to carry out their duties.

Also according to F1, we can see the relevance of this process in helping with career choices, since the internship provides the student with a systemic view of different organizational areas, enabling them to learn in their area of interest or a chance to discover other areas of activity for their professional training, as corroborated by Machado (2017). In addition, it was found that this factor is still composed of variables that have less relevance in the learning process, with aspects related to deviations from function, identifying that many interns carry out activities that have little relation to their course, negatively influencing satisfaction and learning, concluding the internship without acquiring experience and with few development prospects, in line with the studies by Alcântara *et al.* (2020) and Vieira *et al.* (2021b).

Factor 2 (F2) was called “Supervision/Orientation”, formed by grouping together items V1, V16, V17, V18, V19 and V20, since all these variables point to the effective participation of the field supervisor, the advisor and the tutor of the curricular internship subject. According to Cruz (2015), the monitoring and guidance of the educational institution and the supervision of the company that receives the student will ensure that the curricular internship is well executed and better organized and, consequently, this student tends to be a better trained professional for the market.

This reveals that for F2, the supervisors were significant in demonstrating their willingness to help undergraduates carry out their duties, preparing students to perform their tasks and ensuring better use of the curricular internship. These results diverge from the studies by Santana and Cardoso (2018), in which they point out difficulties in coordinating internship activities with the availability of supervisors, demonstrating dissatisfaction and unpreparedness on the part of students to develop actions in organizations. However, it is confirmed that the presence of a professional to guide and correct, when necessary, is fundamental for the develop-

ment of the student, while poor quality supervision would harm the process, causing stress and possible demotivation of the student (ALCÂNTARA *et al.*, 2020; SANTANA; CARDOSO, 2018).

The next group, Factor 3 (F3), was named “Organizational Support” and was formed from the combination of elements V2, V3, V4, V5 and V6, since all these variables point to the help and encouragement offered by the organization for students to achieve their goals. These actions alleviate the difficulties pointed out in the studies by Cruz (2015), in which trainees have limited access to information, as well as the difficulty of requesting it. Furthermore, according to Law 11.788/2008, art. 90, which explains the obligations on the part of the grantor, organizations must offer facilities that are able to provide undergraduates with social, professional and cultural learning activities (BRASIL, 2008).

In general, it can be seen that for Factor 3, the internship-granting organization offered the means for professional development, in compliance with the current internship law and allowed interaction with different professionals and the exchange of knowledge and experiences, since the curricular internship allows this interaction, facilitating the student’s movement through different areas within the company, as pointed out in the studies developed by Alcântara (2020), Cassundé *et al.*, (2017) and Cruz (2015).

Finally, Factor 4 (F4), entitled “Participation and Challenges”, considering its grouping with variables V10, V11, V12, V13, V14 and V15, elements that represent obstacles faced by trainees in carrying out their duties, as they often find it difficult to reconcile internship activities with their studies, as well as finding a suitable place to carry them out, due to the lack of partnerships between the educational institution and local companies, making it difficult to associate theory with practice (VIEIRA *et al.*, 2021b; SANTANA; CARDOSO, 2018; LIMA, 2012). In addition, there are reports from trainees regarding the lack of opportunities to participate effectively in the development of projects, and the detour of functions, directly affecting the satisfaction of these trainees (VIEIRA *et al.*, 2021b).

Factor 4 shows that the respondents stated that it was easy to reconcile the activities carried out in the internship with the study of the theoretical subjects of the course and that the internship activities preferably meet the interests of the student in training, are determining factors for the satisfaction of the interns, demonstrating

the need to understand the complexity of the training of the administrator, in order to allow the reconciliation between internship and study, so that they can relate the knowledge of other disciplines in practice (LIMA, 2012). In addition, the internship is a valuable tool for professional development, which allows them to put into practice the knowledge acquired in the classroom, broadening their critical vision, to deepen their skills and experience in areas of interest, preparing them to diagnose and solve problems (CRUZ, 2015).

In general, the Exploratory Factor Analysis, in which 25 variables were grouped and divided into four factors (F1, F2, F3 and F4), showed that these factors are decisive for satisfaction with the supervised internship and for the professional development of the undergraduates and graduates of the higher education institutions analyzed in this study, contributing to improving the experience of interns in the work environment, defining the role of each subject in this training process and it was also possible to identify the main difficulties, making it possible to establish improvement actions in the process. In addition, the findings of the research showed the relevance of the compulsory internship for undergraduate business degrees, a generalist course which requires practice in its curriculum to develop the skills and abilities needed for professional performance in the market.

Final Considerations

Considering the objective of this study, to investigate the factors that influence the expectations and satisfaction of graduates and students of Business Administration courses with the supervised internship and its contribution to professional training during the pandemic period, it is concluded that, through the application of EFA, four determining factors were found for satisfaction with the curricular internship and for the professional training process of students of Business Administration courses, called “F1: Learning Opportunity”, “F2: Supervision/Orientation”, “F3: Organizational Support” and “F4: Participation and Challenges”, which explain all the variables indicated in the research.

Based on the findings of the research, in terms of the Learning Opportunity aspect, it can be seen that the internship provides undergraduate business students

with added values, experience and knowledge to exercise their future profession, helping them to define their career. This demonstrates the relevance of the subject as a curricular component, being a determining factor in the training process and in student satisfaction.

In the Supervision/Orientation aspect, the respondents highlighted the importance of the field supervisor having training/experience in the administrative area, to help them in this training process, through the exchange of knowledge and experiences. As for the Organizational Support aspect, the students pointed out that the organizations met the requirements of the current Internship Law, providing opportunities for social, professional and cultural learning, as well as providing the information needed to carry out the assigned activities.

As for the Participation and challenges aspect, the undergraduates and graduates emphasized that “The internship allows the application of theoretical knowledge learned during the course”, highlighting its importance for professional development and satisfaction in carrying out internship activities. In addition, this aspect had the lowest averages in the study, pointing to the need for greater participation by interns within the organization, in order to enable the development of essential skills and abilities for future managers.

In general, it can be inferred that the aspects investigated in the survey express the satisfaction of students and graduates with the internship and its relevance to professional training, corroborating other studies that demonstrate the importance of the internship in the Administration course. In addition, there were not too many discrepancies due to the pandemic period experienced, confirming that, even in atypical times, these aspects can guarantee the satisfaction of trainees, allowing them to develop professionally.

This research makes a contribution to highlighting the importance of student satisfaction with the internship, as well as demonstrating its contribution to professional development, taking into account the exceptional nature of the current situation. The study advances in the theoretical and practical spheres to fill the gaps in the discussions on curricular internships and professional training in atypical periods, presenting the perspectives and satisfaction of those who have experienced this process. The findings are relevant to perfecting the internship development

process and improving its effectiveness, as it was possible to identify aspects that compromise it, allowing both the educational institution and the granting organization to develop measures that increase student learning and satisfaction with the internship practice.

The study has limitations in terms of the fact that quantitative research uses objective questions, which only allow the respondent to agree or disagree with the proposed statements, hiding other perceptions not foreseen by the researcher. It is also limited by the fact that it was only carried out in Business Administration courses, which means that the findings cannot be generalized to other teaching areas; however, the static tests carried out showed significance and relevance. In this sense, as contributions to further studies, we recommend expanding the scope of the analysis to other courses and universities. In addition, a qualitative study could be carried out addressing the aspects mentioned above and checking whether the results converge with those of the quantitative analysis.

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