ABSTRACT

FARLOW, SOPHIE ELIZABETH. A Study of Career Intentions and Career Adaptability among Extension Summer Internship Program Interns. (Under the direction of Dr. Joseph L. Donaldson).

This research investigated career adaptability and career choice among NC State Extension Summer Internship Program interns (N=15). A descriptive quantitative approach was used to study the interns’ perceptions, implementing the Career Futures Inventory-Revised in a one-group pretest-posttest design. Career choice and levels of interns’ adaptability were measured both before and after the internship program for comparison purposes. Analysis showed that interns increased their perceived career adaptability during the internship program with perceived improvements in career agency (29.3%), occupational awareness (15.5%), negative career outlook (20%), and work-life balance (28.3%). However, perceived support declined by 10%. Perhaps, this decrease was because the interns were college students pursuing internships away from their college campuses and friends. Approximately one-half of the interns were planning Extension careers prior to their internship, and the internship experience helped them identify specific Extension professional roles. The major implication of the study is that the Extension internship program enhanced most major constructs of interns’ career adaptability and helped them clarify Extension career intentions. This study documents career intention and career adaptability of Extension interns, as well as recommendations for the continued planning, marketing, and evaluation of the NC State Extension Summer Internship program. It is recommended that future interns complete the Career Futures Inventory-Revised to evaluate the internship program and further understanding of the extent to which the program contributes to career intentions and career adaptability.
A Study of Career Intentions and Career Adaptability among Extension Summer Internship Program Interns

by

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late grandfather, Max Farlow. Thank you for instilling in me the importance of agriculture, the value of hard work, and always encouraging me to follow my dreams. I miss you dearly.
**BIOGRAPHY**

Sophie Farlow grew up in the small town of Sophia, North Carolina. She attended North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina where she received her Bachelor of Science in Extension Education with a minor in Leadership in Agriculture and Life Sciences. Sophie was involved with the Agricultural and Extension Education Club and enjoyed cheering on the Wolfpack with her friends. During the summers of her undergraduate degree, Sophie served as a NC State Extension summer intern, working in Randolph and Guilford Counties. It was through these experiences that Sophie was able to combine her love of agriculture and serving her community. After graduating with her bachelor's, Sophie returned to NC State to pursue her Master of Science in Agricultural and Extension Education. Upon graduating, Sophie plans to enter the agricultural sector pursuing a career in the field of extension or industry.
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CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION

What would our daily lives look like without robust agricultural systems? Where would we find ourselves if future generations lost interest in agriculture? Our future depends on a qualified agricultural workforce that can meet the needs of a growing society. It is estimated there will be 59,400 agriculture and related technical job openings that require at least a Bachelor of Science degree, each year from 2020 to 2025, a 2.6% increase over the previous five years (USDA, 2020). Yet, the United States has consistently lacked enough graduates for the number of available job opportunities that require a college degree (Carnevale & Rose, 2011). If this trend continues, we will likely see a strained agriculture industry and a weakened society. As agriculturalists, we must find ways to increase the numbers of graduates wanting to pursue an agricultural career and adequately prepare them to do so. Our future depends on today’s young people taking an active role in food and agricultural pursuits, and the Cooperative Extension System is uniquely positioned to address the intersecting issues related to food, agriculture, and career awareness.

In North Carolina, N.C. Cooperative Extension provides nonformal education focused on food and agriculture in addition to 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and community development. The N.C. Cooperative Extension is located in all 100 counties and the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, accounting for more than 800 Extension professionals (Bradley & Glen, 2019). N.C. Cooperative Extension, a public agency, is a deliberate alliance of NC State University, North Carolina A&T State University, the United States Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA), and 101 local governments statewide. “NC State Extension generates roughly $300 million in economic impacts annually, through 13,000+ programs and over 1.9 million contacts with North
Carolinians” (Bradley & Glen, 2019). As a public agency, N.C. Cooperative Extension is concerned with community engagement that provides research-based programs to farmers, families, individuals, and communities. Further, N.C. Cooperative Extension is a vital part of North Carolina agriculture having a $2.1 billion economic value on the state (NC State Extension, 2018).

Every year, NC State University conducts an internship program in approximately thirty counties to potentially recruit and develop the next generation of Extension professionals. Internship applicants are required to be enrolled in, accepted for, or a recent graduate of an accredited four-year institution of higher education. Local County Extension Centers hosting interns for the coming summer select their applicant of choice. Once interns are selected, they complete a two-hour orientation seminar conducted via video conference and serve ten weeks as an intern in one County Extension Center. During the ten weeks, interns will “gain knowledge about Extension careers, develop rich job experiences, and help deliver solutions to address local needs” (Donaldson, 2021). The orientation seminar includes a presentation by NC State Extension’s Human Resource Manager, a presentation by the Associate Dean and Director of Extension, a presentation by the internship coordinator, and a presentation by a previous intern. County Extension Directors and other Extension professionals serving as supervisors receive a separate orientation seminar. In addition to the orientation seminars, institutional support includes an orientation fact sheet highlighting policies, expectations and procedures. Both the interns and supervisors receive this orientation fact sheet explaining the program and its expectations; see Appendix A. Notably, limited research is available on Extension internship programs and the extent to which these programs influence, if at all, the interns’ career choice and career adaptability.
N.C. Cooperative Extension internships are a vital part of developing Extension’s future workforce, and internships are essential for stakeholders and participants themselves. Grotta and McGrath (2013) surveyed Oregon State University Extension interns and found that internships provide participants with real world experience, build their professional network, and develop their career-essential skills. Internship experiences with Extension allow participants to bridge the gap between instruction and experience.

To begin to understand how interns make decisions about their careers, there must be an understanding social cognitive theory and social cognitive career theory. Social cognitive theory “focuses on the processes through which (a) academic and career interests develop, (b) interests, in concert with other variables, promote career-relevant choices, and (c) people attain varying levels of performance and persistence in their educational and career pursuits” (Lent & Brown, 1996, pg. 311). Social cognitive career theory is based on Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1986). Social cognitive theory spouses the expectations that an individual has for their future (Bandura, 1986). In addition to social cognitive theory, it is important to consider dispositional optimism which comes from Scheider and Carver (1985) focusing on behavior driven by goals. “Dispositional optimism relates to their self-regulatory model of goal seeking behavior, which examines how outcome expectancies affect goal-setting behaviors such as those required to achieve career outcomes” (Rottinghaus, 2004, pg. 46). Rottinghaus (2004) posits studying dispositional optimism and social cognitive theory together to understand and advance career development, especially in terms of adaptability and overall career intentions.

This research project aimed to study career choice and career adaptability among Extension interns. This study will establish levels of adaptability among Extension interns both before and after the internship program.
Statement of the Problem

Limited research is available on the N.C. Cooperative Extension internship program, specifically how the program influences, if at all, the interns’ career choice and career adaptability. These internships provide opportunities to prepare our next generations of individuals who will play an integral role in vital impacts of North Carolina and N.C. Cooperative Extension. An understanding of interns’ career choice and career adaptability may be used to improve the internship program and contribute to knowledge of effective career development programs in general.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research is to understand the extent to which the Extension Summer Internship Program influences interns’ career choice and career adaptability.

The specific research objectives are to:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of N.C. Cooperative Extension Interns.
2. Compare the interns’ intended career both before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.
3. Compare the interns’ career adaptability (career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance) both before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.
4. Describe ways the Extension Summer Internship Program may have contributed to career development beyond career intentions and career adaptability, if at all.
Implications (Significance and Stakeholders)

Results are to be shared with stakeholders to provide perspectives on the Extension Summer Internship Program and how the experience influences interns. NC State University invests considerable time, money, and other resources to facilitate these internships, and this research project will help to better understand the results produced from these investments. Not only will this research provide information to stakeholders within the university but others in the agriculture industry, N.C. Cooperative Extension and other potential employers about internships’ influence on students’ career choice and career adaptability.

Study results will be useful to N.C. Cooperative Extension administrators, other employees, and stakeholders in evaluating the Extension Summer Internship Program. Silliman and Edwards (2020) demonstrated that internships can have a lasting effect on participants, allowing them to carry skills and knowledge learned during their time as an intern with them into their future careers. With the growing public pressure on universities to produce graduates who are ready for the workforce (Wilkes, 2019), this research will help to provide answers regarding college students’ career intentions, optimism, and adaptability. Both optimism and adaptability are career skills identified as essential for success in contemporary work environments (Kivunja, 2015). Furthermore, both optimism and adaptability are particularly important to study now as a society as the COVID-19 Pandemic precipitates limitations that require these skills for success in a number of professional roles, including that of Extension intern.

N.C. Cooperative Extension has numerous internal and external stakeholders. This research project will compile results from all participating interns thereby creating a statewide picture of the internship program. From an internal perspective, it is anticipated that these results will be valuable to County Extension Agents, County Extension Directors, and District
Extension Directors, all of whom have a role in supervising and mentoring interns. Likewise, the results will potentially inform faculty who recruit students for Extension internships. From an external standpoint, this research may inform County Extension Advisory Council members, State Extension Advisory Council members, and others how local Extension centers are helping to prepare these future professionals. Also, the results will assist in planning future internship programs and intern professional development opportunities.

**Limitations and Assumptions**

**Limitations**

1. This study is limited to the 2021 N.C. Cooperative Extension Summer Interns, and findings may not be generalized to other groups.
2. Results are limited to questionnaire data.
3. Some interns may have different experiences within Extension offices, therefore answer questions differently.
4. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, experiences for students may vary, potentially impacting career choice, if at all.

**Assumptions**

1. The participants will answer the questions on the questionnaire honestly and with thought.
2. It is assumed that the scope of interns’ job responsibilities and the opportunities for career development are similar in different counties.
3. Each participant will complete the 10-week, 40 hour-per-week internship.
Operational Definitions

1. Optimism - Optimism will be defined as “a general tendency to expect the occurrence of good versus bad outcomes in life” (Scheier and Carver, 1985, as cited in Rottinghaus, 2004, p. 9).

2. Adaptability - Savickas (1997) defines career adaptability as being ready to manage predictable tasks related to work, as well as the unpredictable changes within one’s work. Savickas also notes three major components of adaptability, “planful attitudes, self and environmental exploration, and informed decision making” (Savickas, 1997, p. 254). Career adaptability will be measured using five factors: career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance (Park et al., 2019).

3. N.C. Cooperative Extension Summer Internship Program - A summer intern program where approximately thirty individuals are chosen to complete a 10-week, 40 hour-per-week internship at a county Cooperative Extension center.

4. Intern – While research and scholarship contain multiple definitions of an “intern” or “internship”, Merriam-Webster defines an intern as an individual gaining a firsthand practical experience to prepare them for a future career (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). In the context of this study, an intern refers to a participant in the NC State Summer Internship Program.

5. Academic Majors Sought – The Extension Summer Internship Program seeks students “whose academic background is relevant to Extension, especially: agronomy; animal science; horticultural science; youth development; nutrition; food science; family and consumer sciences; agricultural and resource economics; communications; biological and
agricultural engineering; agricultural and Extension education; and others” (Donaldson, 2019, 2020, p. 1).
CHAPTER TWO. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study sought to understand the extent to which the Extension Summer Internship Program influences interns’ career plans and career adaptability. The study research objectives aim to compare the N.C. Cooperative Extension Internship participants’ intended career and career adaptability both before and after the Summer Internship Program. The purpose of this chapter is to review literature that pertains to the research objectives.

This literature review will be divided into the following sections: internship programs, career intention, career optimism, career adaptability, social cognitive career theory, and effective internships. Social cognitive career theory will serve as the theoretical framework for this study.

Internship Programs

There are many definitions of experiential learning, but it is most commonly known as “learning by doing” or as defined by Hoover and Whitehead (1975) in which “experiential learning exists when a personally responsible participant(s) cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally process knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes in a learning situation characterized by a high level of active involvement” (p. 25). Experiential learning is vital for the development of students and is derived from the foundational works and efforts made by John Dewey and other early educators (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984). Internships allow participants to engage in experiential learning that provides participants with hands-on experience in a specific field of work. Some internships are paid, while others allow students to receive college credit, or are unpaid. Normally, interns work alongside experts to gain knowledge, skills, and networking abilities that can be used for future employment endeavors. Specifically, Extension internships
can provide valuable opportunities for both the agent and intern (Wilken et. al., 2008), by allowing interns to put into practice what they have learned in the college setting. In turn, agents can glean a “refresher course” in theory and practice from their interns (Wilken et. al., 2008). This was acknowledged in the N.C. Cooperative Extension internship program evaluation studies using self-report questionnaires from 2019 and 2020. In 2019, “73% of County Extension Directors reported that the Internship Program exposed them to new ideas and/or skills” (Donaldson, 2019), and in 2020 that percentage increased to 89% (Donaldson, 2020). Not only do these internships provide real-world application, but also increases interest towards a career in Extension and/or a graduate degree (Donaldson et al., 2020). One intern noted, “I gained knowledge on what a day in the life of an Extension Agent looks like…also knowing that you never know what the day might bring. I learned how to answer questions when out on a farm call and how to handle a situation when you are unsure of what is going on. I was able to learn real life applications” (Donaldson et al., 2020). N.C. Cooperative Extension internships provide participants with networking opportunities. As discussed in Seevers and Dormody (2010), looking to the future of Cooperative Extension, new agents are needed with timely training to be added to the workforce in order to continue on a successful path. An internship with N.C. Cooperative Extension provides participants with opportunities to gain a first-hand view of Extension careers, community engagement, and County Extension Center operations (Donaldson, 2019).

**Career Intention**

When choosing a career, there are many factors that go into making the decision. Some may base their choice on salary, interest or passion, ability, influence from others, and an
internship experience (Fizer, 2013). Additional factors may be geographic location, benefits, flexible work hours, and expected workload (Morin et al., 2020). Further, some individuals have an end career goal in mind from a very young age. Academic ability can have an effect on the major students choose (Beggs et al., 2008), and in the end, this has an effect on their career path. In addition, family has an impact on the career futures of individuals. Often families want their children to return home to take over the family business, follow in their footsteps to start their own business, or persuade them to pursue a specific career path (Beggs et al., 2008; Bloemen-Bekx et al., 2019). A significant amount of research focuses on the intersection of career intention and entrepreneurship (BarNir et al., 2011; Bloemen-Bekx et al., 2019; van Gelderen et al., 2008; Wilson et al., 2007). Entrepreneurship is at a high rate, creating independent opportunities for individuals in addition to personal growth and flexibility. Even though financial stability is a concern for many, influencing their career decisions, entrepreneurs look to the benefits of owning their own business (BarNir et al., 2011). Wildman and Torres (2002) explained that during their study focusing on the factors that influence major choice in agriculture, that experience related to agriculture was one of the most influential factors when choosing a major. Additionally, there are connections between role models and career intention. Role models play an important role, supplying support, encouragement, and supplying experiences, potentially influencing career choice (BarNir et al., 2011).

**Career Optimism**

Career optimism comes from Scheier and Carver (1985) where it is broadly defined as looking for the good instead of the bad in one’s life. Rottinghaus et al. (2005) defined career optimism where one can emphasize the positive aspects of their future career development and
comfort in career future planning. Scheier and Carver (1985) developed the Life Orientation Test (LOT) which was given to samples of male and female undergraduate students at Carnegie-Mellon University and the University of Miami. The Life Orientation Test (LOT) (Scheier & Carver, 1985) was able to measure what we know as dispositional optimism. Dispositional optimism is the expectations of good things happening in an individual’s life (Scheier & Carver, 1985). Before the development of the Career Futures Inventory, there were no instruments that focused on “expectations for future career development” (Rottinghaus et al., 2005, p. 6). Optimists are able to cope with stress and adapt to new situations, controlling their emotions and problem-solving (Aspinwall et al., 2001). Gollwitzer and Kinney (1989) present the idea that optimists can overprepare for performance in situations to gain control and mitigate the possibility of failing.

**Career Adaptability**

Much of the literature on career adaptability relates to Mark Savickas and his work with career adaptability and career construction theory. Adaptability is being able to change with given circumstances. Throughout a career, there will be changes that come along that are not predictable. There will also be circumstances that are predictable that one can prepare themselves for before jumping into the career (Savickas, 1997). Savickas (1997) suggested that career adaptability replace maturity as the central construct in Super’s (1955) inclusion of maturation in the career development of adolescents. This comes from the identification of adaption by Super and Knasel (1981) who originally defined career adaptability. To further this career adaptability piece, Savickas introduces the career construction theory which “asserts that individuals construct their careers by imposing meaning on their vocational behavior and occupational
experiences” (Savickas, 2005, p. 43). Savickas (1997) also presents four career adaptability resources, also known as adapt-ability resources. These resources fall within self-regulation of the career construction theory model. The four adapt-ability resources are concern, control, curiosity, and confidence. Concern is being aware of the future and how to prepare for possible situations. Control requires individuals to be responsible for preparing themselves and their surroundings for the future by using “self-discipline, effort, and persistence” (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). Curiosity allows for individuals to explore themselves in various situations, which in turn builds confidence for future success and achievement of life goals. Collectively, these resources allow individuals to navigate the career field and be prepared to face uncertainties.

Career adaptability is regarded as one of the most important workforce-essential skills to study. The Career Futures Inventory-Revised, the most contemporary instrument available for career adaptability, measures career adaptability using five factors: career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance (Park et al., 2019).

**Social Cognitive Career Theory**

Social cognitive career theory is a heavily researched theory and comes from Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1986). Social cognitive theory focuses on the connection between one’s interactions and experiences of environment, others, and behaviors. Social cognitive career theory brings in three aspects from social cognitive theory, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent et al., 2002). Of these, Lent, Brown, and Hackett (2002) identified self-efficacy as being the most studied. Self-efficacy is what an individual believes about their abilities and can be broken down into four ways of creating strong efficacy including a wide range of experiences (resulting in successes and failures); social pressure; following of social
models to gain skills and strategies, and decreasing stress reactions to situations (Bandura, 1997). Research conducted by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (2002) supported this theory that when individuals have both constructive career experiences and the aptitude to succeed in a particular career, they are likely to develop high efficacy assumptions leading to success in that particular career.

Social cognitive career theory reinforces the way that individuals make decisions about their career. Lent, Brown, and Hackett (2002) developed a model that helps to explain how an individual makes these decisions. It is the Model of Person, Contextual, and Experiential Factors Affecting Career-Related Choice Behavior. This model highlights a person’s inputs, background, learning experiences, and contextual influences (Lent et al., 2002). This model also includes the basic interest development model where the goal and actions are not just specific to careers. There are three parts to the choice process: “(1) Expression of a primary choice (or goal), (2) Actions, such as enrolling in a particular training program that is designed to implement one’s choice, (3) Subsequent performance attainments (successes, failures) that form a feedback loop, affecting the shape of future career behavior” (Lent et al., 2002, p. 273).

Irene Gianakos (1999) used the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale (Taylor & Betz, 1983) to study the relationship between career choice development patterns during early adulthood and career decision-making self-efficacy. For Gianakos research study, 172 undergraduates enrolled in psychology courses at a Midwestern university were given the Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy Scale (Taylor & Betz, 1983) was used as the instrument. Findings from this study showed that individuals who had a stable or multiple trial pattern had greater levels of career decision-making self-efficacy than those who had a conventional or unstable pattern. Individuals who had a stable pattern were also more apt to discuss professionals
in their fields showing the networking aspects of those who are engaged (Gianakos, 1999). Gianakos defined a stable pattern as when a person’s career choice remained the same from late teenage years to early adulthood, conventional pattern being that career choice changed from later teenage years to early adulthood, multiple-trial pattern being the same as stable only acting on that career decision and pursuing a second career, and unstable pattern being those that were uncertain about a career (Gianakos, 1999).

**Effective Internships**

In a study conducted by Zuo, Weng, and Xie (2020), findings suggest that students should pursue an internship that aligns with their major, but non-major internships could be beneficial in career exploration for undergraduate students. First impressions during an internship program can have a major impact, both negatively and positively on intern’s career choice. These impressions can come from industry experiences, but most importantly, relationships between employees and supervisors. These social experiences allow interns to become less anxious about their future career within the industry (Kim & Park, 2013). Kim and Park (2013) suggest creating practical training courses for interns with existing employees to allow them the opportunity to develop communication skills and to build their network. Further, that the duration of an internship should be long enough for interns to have the opportunity to immerse themselves into the organization, creating social opportunities that will allow interns to gain an insight of what it would be like to work in the industry (Kim & Park, 2013). Length of an internship program also allows interns more time to improve skills and abilities (Petrillose & Montgomery, 1997). Effective internships provide students exposure to career skills learned during their education in a more timely and related way (Gault et al., 2000). Financial support for
students who pursue an internship program have shown positive results such as higher satisfaction, greater levels of commitment, dedication to social opportunities, and overall allows participants to focus on the experience (Ali & Kohun, 2006; Henneberry & Radmehr, 2020; Weidman & Stein, 2003). Factors that should be considered when designing and implementing internship programs include “job arrangements, mentorship and employability benefits, learning context, academic supervision, and bureaucracy and accessibility” (Goia Agoston et al., 2017, p. 57). Structure should exist within the organization for interns such as a clear schedule and expectations, a set location, and an introduction to the internship. Feedback should also be provided to interns by supervisors at the organization and institution level. Internship tasks should be related to interns’ majors and the knowledge gained at their institution. Evaluations of the internship program is needed to determine successes and failures of the internship program (Goia Agoston et al., 2017).

**Literature Review Summary**

Being prepared to enter the workforce is critical not only to the future agricultural industry, but for the individuals in the workforce themselves who gain their livelihoods and satisfaction from being in a career that aligns with their aptitude and desires. While much is known about internship programs, career intentions, career optimism, and career adaptability, there is a scarcity of such research in the lens of Cooperative Extension Internship. Career choice outlines the ways in which individuals made decisions concerning their career and is imbedded in social cognitive career theory. Career optimism is expecting positive outcomes within one’s career. Career adaptability is being prepared to deal with predictable and unpredictable changes within the workplace (Savickas, 1997). Social cognitive career theory incorporates ideas from social cognitive theory being self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent et al.,
2002). This theory concentrates on career development as well as career choice. Social cognitive theory comes from Albert Bandura (1986) and focuses on interactions and experiences between one’s environment, others and behaviors. The Career Futures Inventory-Revised is a contemporary instrument that reflects current research on career adaptability using five constructs: career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance. There are various characteristics of an effective internship that ultimately make it successful, providing individuals an opportunity to implement the knowledge they have in a real-world setting.
CHAPTER THREE. METHODOLOGY

This research study was designed to understand the extent to which the Extension Summer Internship program influences interns’ career choice and career adaptability.

The specific research objectives are to:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of N.C. Cooperative Extension Interns.
2. Compare the interns’ intended career both before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.
3. Compare the interns’ career adaptability (career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance) both before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.
4. Describe ways the Extension Summer Internship Program may have contributed to career development beyond career intentions and career adaptability, if at all.

This chapter presents the study methodology, and it contains the following sections: research design, participants, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and chapter summary.

Research Design

This research used a one-group pretest-posttest design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). The design is represented as follows:

\[ O_1 \quad X \quad O_2 \]

Whereby:

\( O_1 = \) Pretest. This is the questionnaire administered prior to the internship start date.

\( X = \) Internship. This is the actual, 10-week Extension Summer Internship Program experience.
O2 = Posttest. This is the same questionnaire administered on the final day of the internship experience.

This research involved a census of interns, and it represented a descriptive quantitative project. During their orientation, interns were given a questionnaire measuring their level of career adaptability and career intention before their internship. After their internship, interns were given the same questionnaire to compare the extent to which their level of career adaptability and career intention had changed, if at all.

**Participants**

The participants in this research project were 2021 summer NC State Extension interns. Students from various colleges and universities were encouraged to apply. Out of these applicants, 26 individuals were initially chosen for the 26 intern positions across North Carolina. Prior to the internship start date, two interns had to drop the internship program, resulting in 24 interns for the 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program. Selected interns were chosen after a review of application materials and potentially interviews by County Extension Directors. The selection process was not random. Interns were not chosen based on any demographic criteria, such as a set proportion of interns in a certain gender, college major, or level (undergraduate or graduate). Interns were invited to participate in this study, and a consent form was shared with each intern. After interns reviewed the consent form, they chose to either participate or not participate in this study. Only those who chose to participate, and marked their participation on the consent form, participated in the study. Data collection procedures included two questionnaires administered to participants. Study participants completed the pre-test and post-test online. The pre-test was completed on the day of the Extension Summer Internship
Program orientation seminar (April 24, 2021). The post-test was completed on the final day of employment as an Extension intern (July 30, 2021 or later). Interns held their position for a total of 10 weeks and, because of scheduling, the weeks may not have been consecutive. While the interns’ schedules may have allowed for different employment end dates, all internships were completed before the first day of NC State’s fall semester in August. One sampling error that needed to be accounted for is confidentiality of interns taking their post-test at a place of work. Ensuring that they were able to take this without fear of their responses getting back to their coworkers or supervisors may have helped to increase response rate and provide for accurate responses. The consent form stated that study participants may complete the online questionnaires at a local library or their home, if they chose, to increase privacy. Additionally, the consent form stated that individual names and other identifiers like location were only to be seen by the researchers and were not disclosed in any capacity.

**Instrumentation**

Development of the Career Futures Inventory-Revised occurred from 2014 to 2019 and has been used extensively in career counseling and career development programs (Park et al., 2019; Rottinghaus, 2004; Rottinghaus et al., 2005; Rottinghaus et al., 2012; Rottinghaus et al., 2017). The instrument used to test for participants’ levels of career adaptability, career goals, and career futures was the Career Futures Inventory-Revised. The Career Futures Inventory-Revised is a 28-item questionnaire that measures an individual’s levels of career adaptability (career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance). Participants used a 5-point Likert scale to express their level of agreement with the questions: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree. A
sample question measuring career agency is, “I get excited when I think about my career”. A sample question measuring occupational awareness is “I am good at understanding job market trends”. A sample question measuring negative career outlook is “I doubt my career will turn out well in the future”. A sample question measuring support is “Friends are available to offer support in my career transition”. A sample question measuring work-life balance is “I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as worker, family member, or friend”. The full Career Future Inventory-Revised can be found in Appendix B. Appendix C shows the correspondence between the questions and their construct. The following table outlines the constructs (career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance) to the Career Futures Inventory-Revised question.

**Table 1. Career Futures Inventory-Revised Constructs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Item Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Agency</td>
<td>1, 3, 6, 10, 14, 16, 19, 22, 26, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Awareness</td>
<td>5, 7, 15 (RS), 17, 21, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Career Outlook</td>
<td>2, 8, 11, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>4, 13, 18, 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Life Balance</td>
<td>9, 12, 20, 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Career Futures Inventory is a valid and reliable scale developed by Patrick J. Rottinghaus and two vocational psychologists who assisted in item choice and phrasing (2004). Rottinghaus demonstrated reliability “by computing Person product-moment coefficients to determine the three-week test-retest stability” (Rottinghaus, 2004, p. 42). Additionally, reliability was further demonstrated by having a subset of the sample to complete the Career Futures Inventory twice over a three-week interval. The sample of 36 undergraduates resulted in estimates of .85 for career optimism, .63 for career adaptability, and .69 for perceived knowledge (Rottinghaus,
Rottinghaus used a combination of statistical methods to test for construct validity. He used Person product-moment zero order and partial correlation coefficients (Rottinghaus, 2004). Within construct validity, Rottinghaus also tested for convergent, discriminant and incremental validity. To demonstrate convergent and discriminant validity, the Career Future Inventory scales were expected to “relate to existing measures of personality, problem-solving styles, positive and negative effect, optimism, and self-efficacy in systematic ways” (Rottinghaus, 2004, pg. 57). Incremental validity was evaluated using hierarchical regression analyses. The results from the study supported the validity of the Career Futures Inventory. The instrument was validated with students who were enrolled in a cross-section of colleges at Iowa State University, including Agriculture and Family and Consumer Sciences colleges, ones that align with Extension job requirements (Rottinghaus, 2004). The Career Futures Inventory-Revised is a valid and reliable scale. The Cronbach’s alpha internal consistency ranged .78 to .90 (Rottinghaus et al., 2017). Structural and convergent validity was supported by previous research (Rottinghaus et al., 2012; Rottinghaus et al., 2017; Rottinghaus, et al., 2017 as cited in Park et al. 2019).

Additionally, participants were asked to share demographic information, specifically their academic classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate student), gender, and intended career. The participants included their name only to match the pretest and posttest, and once the pretest and posttest were matched, their participant names were removed from the data file and replaced with a participant number.

Previous program evaluations have shown that interns developed major competencies including digital technology, career management, professionalism/work ethic, oral/written communication skills, critical thinking/problem solving, leadership, and teamwork/collaboration
(Donaldson, 2020). Based on those prior evaluations the question “In the past, interns have discussed major competencies they developed during their internship including critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communications, teamwork/collaboration, digital technology, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, career management, and global/intercultural fluency. Reflect on these competencies. In what ways, if any, did you benefit from your internship placement? (For example, what knowledge, skills, and experiences did you gain that you feel will be useful in your future coursework and/or career?)” was included. A final, open-ended question on the posttest asked, “Would you like to share something about the Extension Summer Internship program that will help us understand and evaluate the program? If so, please type it in the box below.” This question was for evaluative purposes only (program evaluation) and was not intended to contribute to the present research study.

**Data Collection**

Before contacting and beginning any research with participants, permission was granted by NC State Institutional Review Board (IRB). The data collection process began with an initial email on April 24, 2021, informing interns of the research study, an invitation to participate, and the questionnaire link. This email also included information regarding their confidentiality and contact information for IRB and the researcher (see Appendix I). During interns’ internship orientation, the researcher further explained the research opportunity. Interns were then directed to the invitation email to find the link to the questionnaire. For easier access, the researcher also put the link in the Zoom chat box. Interns had the opportunity to take the pretest while on break during the internship orientation, or after it concluded. At the conclusion of their internship, an email was sent on July 27, 2021, to participants, inviting them to complete the posttest. A link to
the Qualtrics questionnaire was also included. Both pretest and posttest questionnaires were deployed via the Qualtrics Research Suite.

Nonresponse was handled through follow-up emails to participants following Dillman’s Tailored Design Method (2007). Three reminder emails were sent to participants for the pretest, and three for the posttest (Appendix K-P). Reminder email dates are as follows: Pretest (April 30, May 7, and May 14, 2021), Posttest (August 2, August 6, and August 13, 2021). Each email explained the importance of each participant’s response (Dillman, 2007). Once a participant completed the questionnaire, their email was removed from the reminder list, and they were thanked for their participation (Dillman, 2007). To aid in reduction of nonresponse, County Extension Directors and internship supervisors were made aware that participants were asked to complete a posttest, and if the participant chose, it could have been completed at their workplace during work hours. This is a customary practice with evaluative surveys of the Extension Summer Internship program in previous years. Ultimately from these efforts, 24 responses were received (100% response rate) for the pretest, and 18 responses were received for the posttest (75% response rate). Of the completed received responses, 15 respondents agreed to participate in the research study. Participant information remained confidential throughout the study with only the researcher knowing identifiers.

Data analysis

Data from both questionnaires was exported from Qualtrics Research Suite to IBM SPSS Statistics (Statistical Product for the Social Sciences) to be analyzed. Descriptive statistics were used including frequencies, means, and percentages – to describe the parameters of the 2021
intern population for all quantitative components of the instrument. Responses to the open-ended questions were recorded into a Word file and coded by the researcher, revealing key themes.

The Career Futures Inventory-Revised was designed for item 15 to be reverse scored. In the results section and discussion section of the study conducted by Park et al. (2019), items two, eight, 11, 15, and 25 were reverse scored because these items were negatively worded. Likewise, to accurately compare pretest and posttest means in the present study, items two, eight, 11, 15, and 25 were reverse scored. Any time means were compared, these items were reverse scored. Reverse scored items have reverse polarity whereby disagreement is the positive response.

Cronbach’s alpha was calculated post hoc, and the results were consistent with previous research (Park et al., 2019; Rottinghaus et al., 2017). The pretest had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.797 and the posttest 0.881.

**Methodology Summary**

This study focusing on interns’ career choice and career adaptability used a one-group pretest posttest design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) involving a census of 2021 summer interns. The Career Futures Inventory-Revised (Park et al., 2019; Rottinghaus, 2004; Rottinghaus et al., 2005; Rottinghaus et al., 2012) was used as the instrument. Demographic information and open-ended questions regarding interns’ experience and career development were also included. Reminder emails were sent to non-respondents to improve the response rate. The response rate was 100% for the pretest and 75% for the posttest, resulting in 15 interns participating in this research study. IBM SPSS Statistics was used to calculate descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, percentages). Responses to the open-ended question on the posttest regarding career development was coded by the researcher to evaluate key themes.
CHAPTER FOUR. RESULTS

This chapter is organized into the following sections: (a) purpose of the study, (b) demographics, (c) interns’ intended career, (d) interns’ career adaptability, (e) career development, and (f) summary of key findings.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to understand the extent to which the Extension Summer Internship Program influences interns’ career choice and career adaptability. The specific research objectives are to:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of N.C. Cooperative Extension Interns.
2. Compare the interns’ intended career both before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.
3. Compare the interns’ career adaptability (career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance) before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.
4. Describe ways the Extension Summer Internship Program may have contributed to career development beyond career intentions and career adaptability, if at all.

Objective 1 Results: Demographics

Regarding gender, eleven respondents (73.3%) indicated female and four indicated male (26.7%). Slightly more than one-half of respondents were classified as seniors (53.3%), followed by graduate students (20%) and sophomores (20%). The 15 respondents reported 12 different
academic majors, and the mode was two for Agricultural Science, Agroecology, Agricultural and Extension Education, and Plant Biology (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Demographic Profile of Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Classification</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Major</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Production Systems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agroecology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Nutrition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental and Natural Resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural and Extension Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Biology&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>One Plant Biology major was also majoring in History
Objective 2 Results: Career Intentions

Participants were asked to share their intended career before and after the internship program. Out of the fourteen respondents (one non-response), a little over half (53.6%) noted an intended career with Extension, specifically, two (13.4%) as Extension 4-H agents, five (33.5%) as Extension agents, and one (6.7%) as an Extension assistant concentrating on forest health. Respondents also had intended careers with agricultural, horticultural, and nutritional outreach and communication; agriculture teacher; developer; elementary teacher; paramedic; and registered dietician (see Table 3).

Of the eight interns planning Extension careers prior to their internship, none deviated from those plans on the posttest. However, the internship program did help them identify specific Extension professional roles such as Extension family and consumer sciences agent, or Extension 4-H agent. One participant that did not identify an intended career on the pretest noted that they wanted to pursue being a farmer and/or horticulturalist on the posttest. Perhaps the most noteworthy change in intended careers was the respondent who changed from a paramedic to a horticulturalist (see Table 4).

Table 3. Intended Career of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Career Before Internship</th>
<th>f (15)</th>
<th>% (100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural, Horticultural, and Nutritional</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach and Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension Assistant (Forest Health)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paramedic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Intended Career Pre</th>
<th>Intended Career Post</th>
<th>Academic Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Registered Dietician</td>
<td>Registered Dietician</td>
<td>Applied Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Agricultural,</td>
<td>Agricultural and</td>
<td>Agroecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Horticultural, and</td>
<td>Horticultural Education/Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nutritional Outreach and Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Environmental and Natural Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Paramedic</td>
<td>Horticulturalist</td>
<td>Plant Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension or anything agriculture or in natural resources</td>
<td>Agricultural Production Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension Livestock Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural and Extension Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension Family &amp; Consumer Science Agent or Extension Livestock Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent or Extension Agriculture Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural and Extension Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. *Intended Career of Respondents Before and After Extension Summer Internship*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Intended Career Pre</th>
<th>Intended Career Post</th>
<th>Academic Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Registered Dietician</td>
<td>Registered Dietician</td>
<td>Applied Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Agricultural,</td>
<td>Agricultural and</td>
<td>Agroecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Horticultural, and</td>
<td>Horticultural Education/Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nutritional Outreach and Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Environmental and Natural Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Paramedic</td>
<td>Horticulturalist</td>
<td>Plant Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension or anything agriculture or in natural resources</td>
<td>Agricultural Production Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension Livestock Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural and Extension Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Extension Family &amp; Consumer Science Agent or Extension Livestock Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Extension 4-H Agent or Extension Agriculture Agent</td>
<td>Agricultural and Extension Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Field of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Elementary Teacher</td>
<td>Elementary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Farmer/Horticulturalist</td>
<td>Plant Biology, History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Agriculture Teacher</td>
<td>Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Extension Assistant (Forest Health)</td>
<td>Forestry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Extension Agent</td>
<td>Agroecology &amp; Sust Food Sys – BS Urban Horticulture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Objective 3 Results: Interns’ Career Adaptability

The findings for career adaptability are presented by first showing the overall career adaptability pretest and posttest scores of individual respondents. Next, the findings from the five career adaptability subscales (career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance) are delineated for the respondents as a group. For this discussion, the “agree” and “strongly agree” responses have been collapsed to show agreement and the “disagree” and “strongly disagree” responses have been collapsed to show disagreement. Finally, the composite means from each of the five subscales and the overall career adaptability scores are shown.

**Individual Respondents’ overall Career Adaptability**

Regarding interns’ career adaptability, most respondents had an increase in career adaptability (9 of 15) from pretest to posttest, and increases ranged from +11% to 57%. One participant remained the same in overall career adaptability. Five participants decreased in...
overall career adaptability, and decreases ranged from -4% to -64%. Of the respondents who indicated their intention to pursue an Extension career (participant numbers 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, and 15), four had a decrease in overall career adaptability and three had an increase in overall career adaptability. Of the respondents who indicated their intention to pursue careers outside of Extension, all reported increases except two; one respondent remained the same (participant 3) and another decreased by -4% (see Table 5).

Table 5. *Intern’s Individual Overall Career Adaptability*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Mean Pre</th>
<th>Mean Post</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>+ 0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>+ 0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>+ 0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>+ 0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>+ 0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>- 0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>- 0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>+ 0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>- 0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>+ 0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>+ 0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>- 0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>- 0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>+ 0.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Indicates respondent’s Extension career intention.
**Career Agency**

On the pretest under the career agency subscale, the number of respondents who agreed with the statement, “I can perform a successful job search” increased by three (from 10 pretest to 13 posttest). Likewise, the number of respondents who agreed with the statement, “I can adapt to change in the world of work” increased by four (from 10 pretest to 14 posttest); see Table 6.

**Occupational Awareness**

On the occupational awareness subscale, the number of respondents who agreed with the statement, “I am good at understanding job market trends,” increased by three (from 5 pretest to 8 posttest). The number of respondents who disagreed with the statement, “I do not understand job market trends,” increased by six (from four pretest to 10 posttest). See Table 7 for occupational awareness frequencies.

**Negative Career Outlook**

Regarding the negative career outlook subscale, disagreement is the positive response as all subscale items were negatively worded. For the statement, “It is unlikely that good things will happen in my career,” the level of disagreement decreased by two (from 10 pretest to 12 posttest). Likewise, the number of respondents who disagreed that, “I lack the energy to pursue my career goals” decreased from 10 pretest to eight posttest (see Table 8).

**Support**

On the support subscale, the number of respondents who agreed with “others in my life are very supportive of my career” increased by one (from 11 pretest to 12 posttest). The number of respondents who agreed with “my family is there to help me through career challenges” decreased by two (from 14 pretest to 12 posttest). See Table 9 for support frequencies.
Work-Life Balance

On the work-life balance subscale, the number of respondents who agreed with “balancing work and family responsibilities is manageable” increased by four (from 8 pretest to 12 posttest). The number of respondents who disagreed with “I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as worker, family member, or friend” increased by three (from 0 pretest to 3 posttest); see Table 10.
Table 6. Career Agency Frequencies of Interns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Organized by Factors</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions (N=15)</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Pre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can perform a successful job search.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can establish a plan for my future.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of priorities in my life.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can overcome potential barriers that may exist in my career.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can adapt to change in the world of work.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of my strengths.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand my work-related interests.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand my work-related values.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will successfully manage my present career transition process.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am in control of my career.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7. Occupational Awareness Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Organized by Factors</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand how economic trends affect career opportunities available to me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am good at understanding job market trends.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*I do not understand job market trends.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep up with trends in at least one occupation or industry of interest to me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep current with job market trends.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I keep current with changes in technology.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Items with an asterisk have reverse polarity whereby disagreement is the positive response.
Table 8. *Negative Career Outlook Frequencies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Organized by Factors</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions (N=15)</td>
<td>Pre Post</td>
<td>Pre Post</td>
<td>Pre Post</td>
<td>Pre Post</td>
<td>Pre Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I doubt my career will turn out well in the future.</em></td>
<td>2 7</td>
<td>10 6</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>2 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Thinking about my career frustrates me.</em></td>
<td>2 5</td>
<td>6 4</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>3 4</td>
<td>2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I lack the energy to pursue my career goals.</em></td>
<td>5 5</td>
<td>5 3</td>
<td>3 4</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>0 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>It is unlikely that good things will happen in my career.</em></td>
<td>5 6</td>
<td>5 6</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Items with an asterisk have reverse polarity whereby disagreement is the positive response.
### Table 9. Support Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Organized by Factors</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptions (N=15)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others in my life are very supportive of my career.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family is there to help me through career challenges.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive encouragement from others to meet my career goals.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends are available to offer support in my career transition.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10. *Work-Life Balance Frequencies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Organized by Factors</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions (N=15)</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Pre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily manage my needs and those of other important people in my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancing work and family responsibilities is manageable.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I am very strategic when it comes to balancing my work and personal lives.</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as worker, family member, or friend.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Items with two asterisks may not total 100.0 due to one non-respondent**
Composite Overall Career Adaptability

Table 11 shows each item on the career adaptability instrument with the percentage of pretest and posttest responses for each of the five scale points. Looking at the overall mean for the career adaptability scale, interns collectively increased their career adaptability by 14.5% from pretest to posttest. Respondents showed an improvement in career agency (29.3%), occupational awareness (15.5%), negative career outlook (20%), and work-life balance (28.3%). Interns showed the largest improvement in career agency (29.3%), followed by work-life balance (28.3%). Interns perceived a decrease in support (10%); see Table 12.

Table 11. Percentage of Responses per Item to Determine Participants Career Adaptability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceptions (N=15)</th>
<th>% Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>% Disagree</th>
<th>% Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
<th>% Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can perform a successful job search.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. *I doubt my career will turn out well in the future.</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I can establish a plan for my future.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Others in my life are very supportive of my career.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 (continued).

<p>| | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I understand how economic trends affect career opportunities available to me.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I am aware of priorities in my life.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I am good at understanding job market trends.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>*Thinking about my career frustrates me.</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I can easily manage my needs and those of other important people in my life.</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I can overcome potential barriers that may exist in my career.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>*I lack the energy to pursue my career goals.</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Balancing work and family responsibilities is manageable.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>My family is there to help me through career challenges.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>33.3</th>
<th>6.7</th>
<th>46.7</th>
<th>53.3</th>
<th>20.0</th>
<th>40.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. I can adapt to change in the world of work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. * I do not understand job market trends.</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I am aware of my strengths.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I keep up with trends in at least one occupation or industry of interest to me.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I receive encouragement from others to meet my career goals.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I understand my work-related interests.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. **I am very strategic when it comes to balancing my work and personal lives.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I keep current with job market trends.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I understand my work-related values.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Friends are available to offer support in my career transition.</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
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</table>
Table 11 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>0.0</th>
<th>20.0</th>
<th>13.3</th>
<th>6.7</th>
<th>66.7</th>
<th>33.3</th>
<th>20.0</th>
<th>40.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24. I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as a worker, family member or friend.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. *It is unlikely that good things will happen in my career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I will successfully manage my present career transition process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I keep current with changes in technology.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I am in control of my career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Row percentages may not total 100.0 due to rounding.

*Items with an asterisk have reverse polarity whereby disagreement is the positive response.

**Items with two asterisks may not total 100.0 due to one non-respondent

Scoring Key: Career Agency: 1, 3, 6, 10, 14, 16, 19, 22, 26, 28.

Occupational Awareness: 5, 7, 15 (RS), 17, 21, 27.

Negative Career Outlook: 2, 8, 11, 25.

Support: 4, 13, 18, 23.

Work-Life Balance: 9, 12, 20, 24.

RS: Item #15 is reverse scored: (1=5; 2=4; 3=3; 4=2; 5=1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Adaptability Items</th>
<th>Mean Pre</th>
<th>Mean Post</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Agency</td>
<td>3.980</td>
<td>4.273</td>
<td>29.3% ↑</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Awareness</td>
<td>3.389</td>
<td>3.544</td>
<td>15.5% ↑</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Career Outlook</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>2.133</td>
<td>20.0% ↓</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>4.250</td>
<td>4.150</td>
<td>10.0% ↓</td>
<td>Decrement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Life Balance</td>
<td>3.750</td>
<td>4.033</td>
<td>28.3% ↑</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Career Adaptability</td>
<td>3.615</td>
<td>3.760</td>
<td>14.5% ↑</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective 4 Results: Career Development

In their posttest interns were asked, “In the past, interns have discussed major competencies they developed during their internship including critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communications, teamwork/collaboration, digital technology, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, career management, and global/intercultural fluency. Reflect on these competencies. In what ways, if any, did you benefit from your internship placement? (For example, what knowledge, skills, and experiences did you gain that you feel will be useful in your future coursework and/or career?)” Their responses were coded, resulting in five themes: (a) improved oral and written communication skills, (b) learned Extension operations, (c) learned how to work within the community, (d) developed knowledge and skills in technology, and (e) developed relationships with coworkers. The following quotes represent the themes as above:

“I gained communication skills, more knowledge of agriculture, how to work with the community, balance work and home life, and how to work with people’s interests” (Participant No. 7).

“Teamwork and collaboration, digital technology and relevant NC State Cooperative Extension software, career management” (Participant No. 8).

“I benefited by learning how an office is ran as far as day-to-day operations. I also learned how to maintain an honest and open relationship with my employer and coworkers” (Participant No. 9).

“Through my internship placement I have gathered valuable knowledge and skills relating to the extension job market, training, and inner workings” (Participant No. 12).
“I increased my ability to work with unfamiliar technology (e.g., Canva, 4-H Online, etc.)” (Participant No. 14).

“I learned a lot about extension that I did not know before I started my internship. Learning how to deliver presentations to different audience I found useful and how to provide answers to plant and farming questions to different growers and homeowners” (Participant No. 15).

Participants also described how they gained time management skills, learned how to establish a healthy work-life balance, refined skills that they already possessed, gained confidence in the job market, learned how to navigate a professional workplace, and gained a network of professionals. Encoding for individual response are themes as shown in Appendix Q.

Summary of Key Findings

The following is a summary of the key findings of this study, organized by research objective.

Demographics

Participants for this study included eleven females (73.7%) and four males (26.7%). There were eight seniors (53.3%) making up slightly more than half of respondents, followed by graduate students (20%) and sophomores (20%). One respondent was a junior. The 15 respondents reported 12 different academic majors, and the mode was two for Agricultural Science, Agroecology, Agricultural and Extension Education, and Plant Biology.
**Interns’ Intended Career**

Respondents reported on the pretest nine different intended careers, slightly over half (53.6%) recorded an intended career with Extension. Respondents also reported intended careers in Agricultural, Horticultural, and Nutritional Outreach and Communication, Agriculture Teacher, Developer, Elementary Teacher, Paramedic, and Registered Dietician. All interns that were planning Extension careers prior to their internship identified specific Extension professional roles such as Family and Consumer Science, or 4-H on the posttest.

**Interns’ Career Adaptability**

Interns collectively increased their career adaptability by 14.5%. Analysis showed that interns increased their perceived career adaptability during the internship program with perceived improvements in career agency (29.3%), occupational awareness (15.5%), negative career outlook (20%), and work-life balance (28.3%). However perceived support declined by 10%. Individually, analysis showed nine participants increased their career adaptability, five decreased, and one remained the same.

**Career Development**

Through coding of written responses, researchers gained further understanding related to how the Extension Summer Internship Program contributed to interns’ career development beyond career intentions and career adaptability. Reoccurring themes included developed knowledge and skills in technology, improved oral and written communication skills, learned Extension operations, learned how to work within the community, and how to develop meaningful relationships with coworkers. Additional career development competencies reported included developed time management skills, developed leadership skills and working within a team, learned healthy work-life balance, networking opportunities, learned Extension programming, and refined skills that interns already had.
CHAPTER FIVE. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the research study and to present conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research and practice.

Summary of Study

To develop the next generation of Extension professionals while supporting current Extension operations, NC State University conducts the annual Extension Summer Internship Program by placing selected college students in approximately thirty counties. The purpose of this research was to understand the extent to which the Extension Summer Internship Program influenced interns’ career choice and career adaptability (inclusive of career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance).

This study used a one-group pretest posttest design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) involving a census of 2021 summer interns. Interns completed the Career Futures Inventory-Revised (Park et al., 2019; Rottinghaus, 2004; Rottinghaus et al., 2005; Rottinghaus et al., 2012) before and after their internship to determine the extent of changes, if at all, in career adaptability and career intentions. In addition to the Career Futures Inventory-Revised, the questionnaire included two open-ended questions.

Of the 24 interns in summer 2021, 15 agreed to participate in the research study and completed the pretest and posttest questionnaires. After data collection, the researcher analyzed all quantitative data in IBM SPSS Statistics, calculating means, frequencies, and percentages for all quantitative components of the instrument. All responses to open-ended questions were recorded into a Word file, coded by the researcher, and studied to reveal key themes.
Conclusions and Discussion

The study has eight conclusions, and herein, the conclusions are organized by research objective.

Objective 1 Conclusions: Demographics

Research objective 1 was to describe the demographic characteristics of N.C. Cooperative Extension Interns.

Conclusion. The vast majority of respondents were female undergraduates having achieved senior academic standing.

Support and Discussion. Results showed that eleven respondents (73.3%) were female and four were male (26.7%), consistent with Donaldson (2020) who found that the majority of Extension interns in a previous year were female. Further, there were more seniors than any other classification, followed by graduate students and sophomores. Only one participant was a junior.

Conclusion. The academic majors of the respondents were diverse and mostly matched the academic majors listed on NC State Extension Summer Internship Program recruitment material.

Support and discussion. Respondents reported 12 different academic majors with two interns each majoring in Agricultural Science, Agroecology, Agricultural and Extension Education, and Plant Biology. Notably, Agroecology and Plant Biology were not listed on the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program recruitment material.

Objective 2 Conclusions: Career Intentions

Research objective two was to compare the interns’ intended career both before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.
**Conclusion.** Most of the respondents were planning an Extension professional career before the onset of their internship, and the internship experience helped them to make specific plans for their Extension professional career.

**Support and Discussion.** Out of the fourteen respondents who answered both the pretest and posttest, slightly more than one-half (53.6%) reported an intended career with Extension on the pretest: two as Extension 4-H agents (13.4%), five as Extension agents (33.5%), and one as an Extension assistant concentrating on forest health (6.7%). No participants planning an Extension career prior to their internship deviated from those plans on the posttest. The internship, however, did help interns identify specific Extension professional roles such as Extension family and consumer sciences agent, or Extension 4-H agent. The findings indicate that the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program helps participants make decisions regarding their careers. This reasoning is consistent with literature showing internships allow participants to make connections between course concepts and ultimately positive career connection opportunities for them (Galbraith & Mondal, 2020). Furthermore, internship experiences help participants realize if they are pursuing the right career choice, deciding what they like and do not like (DeCenzo et al., 2013; Galbraith & Mondal, 2020). There are many factors that go into selecting an agricultural academic major, and Wildman and Torres (2002) have delineated that experience related to agriculture is one of the most influential factors. This translates to career choice where individuals are able to gain experience within a field that ultimately influences their career decisions. In the case of this research, the Extension Summer Internship Program allowed interns to gain experience with Extension, helping to guide and confirm their choice of career. This experience provided interns with comfort in career future planning and emphasized the positive
aspects of future career development, important mental processes outlined by Rottinghaus, et al. (2005).

**Objective 3 Conclusions: Intern’s Career Adaptability**

Research objective 3 is to compare the interns’ career adaptability (career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, support, and work-life balance) both before and after the Extension Summer Internship Program.

**Conclusion.** Most interns increased their overall career adaptability during their internship experience.

**Support and Discussion.** Regarding interns’ individual career adaptability, most respondents had an increase in career adaptability (9 of 15) from pretest to posttest, increases ranging from +11% to +57%. One participant’s overall career adaptability remained the same. Five participants decreased in overall career adaptability, decreases ranging from -4% to -64%. Of the respondents who indicated their intention to pursue an Extension career, four had a decrease in overall career adaptability and three had an increase in overall career adaptability. Of the respondents who indicated to pursue a career outside of Extension, all reported increases except two; one respondent remained the same, and one decreased by -4%.

**Conclusion.** Overall, interns’ self-perceptions of four of the five major career adaptability constructs improved during the internship experience: career agency, occupational awareness, negative career outlook, and work-life balance.

**Support and Discussion.** Respondents showed an improvement in career agency (29.3%), being the largest increase when compared to other subscales. For example, results showed that the internship program helped interns understand their work-related interests and work-related values (increased from 10 pretest to 13 posttest). Respondents improved in occupational
awareness an average of 15.5% from pretest to posttest. Regarding the negative career outlook subscale, disagreement is the positive response as all subscale items were negatively worded. Interns decreased their negative career outlook by 20% which is an improvement. The internship program helped interns in realizing that good things will happen in their career (decrease from 10 pretest to 12 posttest) and that they do have energy to pursue career goals (decrease from 10 pretest to 8 posttest). Work-life balance is defined as “ability to understand and manage responsibilities to others across multiple life roles” (Rottinghaus et al., 2017). Respondents showed an increase in work-life balance (28.3%), being the second largest increase among the subscales behind career agency. The internship program helped participants learn to balance work and family responsibilities (increased from 8 pretest to 12 posttest). This aligns with a study conducted by Galbraith and Mondal (2020) in which participants realized how to manage time between job and life responsibilities, making it easier to create a healthy work-life balance when starting a career.

**Conclusion.** Overall, interns’ self-perceptions of the support construct of career adaptability decreased during the internship experience.

**Support and Discussion.** Support is described as “perceived emotional and instrumental support from family and friends in pursuing career goals” (Rottinghaus et al., 2017). Support decreased for participants by 10%. Even though there were individuals who agreed that they felt supported by their family and friends towards their career, others decreased their agreement to “my family is there to help me through career challenges” (decreased from 14 pretest to 12 posttest).

The above results align with the study conducted by Rottinghaus et al. (2017) in which all of the participants increased career adaptability among all subscales. The only difference between these two studies is that Extension interns did not increase in the support subscale. From
the results of this study, it can be concluded that the Extension Summer Internship Program helped individuals increase their career adaptability.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has affected people in numerous ways. In looking at the support scale with a 10% decrease, this could have occurred due to interns being away from their campuses, families, and friends for the summer. Additionally, families could have realized the demands of an Extension career (nights, weekends, etc.) and supported it less. The continuing COVID-19 pandemic and the precipitating social limitations could have further exacerbated the distance between interns and their support systems. Interns may have not felt comfortable being around family or friends, due to the ongoing public health crisis. Not only could COVID-19 have been a contributing factor for the decline in support, but it may have contributed to the increase in overall career adaptability – the COVID-19 pandemic has required substantial adaptation in all facets of life.

Objective 4 Conclusions: Career Development

Research objective 4 is to describe ways the Extension Summer Internship Program may have contributed to career development beyond career intentions and career adaptability, if at all.

Conclusion. The Extension Summer Internship Program helps interns to expand career development skills that can help them be successful in their future careers.

Support and Discussion. On the posttest interns were asked to share any knowledge, skills, and experiences they may have gained that would be useful in future coursework and/or career. Their responses were coded, resulting in five themes: (a) improved oral and written communication skills, (b) learned Extension operations, (c) learned how to work within the community, (d) developed knowledge and skills in technology, and (e) developed relationships with coworkers. Additionally, participants also described how they gained time management skills, were able to
learn how to establish a healthy work-life balance, had the chance to refine skills that they already possessed, gained confidence in the job market, learned how to navigate a professional workplace, and gained a network of professionals. This aligns with previous internships in which interns gain important career development skills that they can use for their future education and careers (Donaldson 2019; Donaldson, 2020; Donaldson et al., 2020). It can be concluded that the Extension Summer Internship Program helps interns to develop career development skills that can help them be successful in their future careers.

**Conclusion.** The Extension Summer Internship Program underscores social cognitive career theory.

**Support and Discussion.** On the open-ended item on the pretest, participants were asked to share any knowledge, skills, and experiences they may have gained that would be useful in future coursework and/or career. The five identified themes that resulted are all contributory to social cognitive career theory - specifically self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals. The internship program is a constructive career experience highlighting the interns’ aptitude for an Extension career (consistent with Lent et al., 2002).

**Implications**

Previous studies have found that there are many benefits of an internship program. These benefits to participants include gaining experiential learning experience, developing skills, networking abilities, and gaining knowledge within the field (Hoover & Whitehead, 1975). Specifically for Cooperative Extension internships, interns gain a first-hand view of Extension careers, community engagement, and County Extension Center Operations (Donaldson, 2019). Internships not only are beneficial for participants themselves, but also for the agents and County
Extension Directors involved. Agents and County Extension Directors are able to glean a “refresher course” in theory and practice from their interns and are exposed to new ideas and/or skills (Donaldson, 2019; Donaldson; 2020; Wilken et. al., 2008). Internships with Cooperative Extension further help to combat the need of new agents with timely training to add to the workforce in order to continue on a successful path (Seevers & Dormody, 2010). Due to the lack of detailed research available on the N.C. Cooperative Extension internship program, this study serves to add to research surrounding Cooperative Extension internships, career choice, career adaptability, and internships as a whole. Findings from this study showed that interns overall increased their career adaptability and the internship program assisted them in identifying specific roles within Extension. Further, interns were able to grow in career development competencies, a crucial part in securing our future workforce.

Data collected from this research study focused on the career intentions and career adaptability of Extension Summer Internship Program interns. The results of this study can be used by stakeholders both within NC State University and N.C. Cooperative Extension to evaluate the success of this program, allowing for continued support and program longevity. Results can also be used by faculty, staff, and administrators for marketing future internships to potential participants. Furthermore, the data, findings, and conclusions from this study serve to inform similar statewide agricultural internship programs on how to assess interns’ career adaptability and career intentions.

**Recommendations for Practice**

1. It is recommended that future Extension interns complete the Career Futures Inventory-Revised to evaluate the program. Additionally, internship program coordinators should
track the support subscale for interns over time. This is important to understand the extent to which the support competencies are influenced by the internship experiences and/or due to social distancing and other safety measures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the support subscale, researchers should track the work-life balance subscale over time. In this study, work-life balance increased while individual skill decreased. By tracking this scale over time, researchers can evaluate the extent to which the work-life balance competencies are influenced by the internship experience, due to the presence of support, and/or interns learning more about the job. This will be important for understanding retention for Extension professionals.

2. It is recommended that future Extension interns are asked to share additional demographic information including race and ethnicity. This study only collected demographics concerning interns’ gender, classification, and academic major. Race and ethnicity data may be beneficial in recruiting diverse student populations and further serve as valuable information for Extension administrators.

3. It is recommended that academic majors sought for the Extension Summer Internship Program are amended to include Agroecology and Plant Biology. Both of these majors were represented in the 2021 internship program, and recruitment materials do not specifically name those majors.

4. To strengthen the support interns receive, it is recommended that internship coordinators ensure resources surrounding support at the university and Extension level are shared with participants. Additionally, it is recommended that a panel discussion is added to the internship orientation, allowing participants to ask previous interns questions they may have.
Recommendations for Future Research

1. To strengthen our understanding of career adaptability and career intentions, a qualitative study is recommended to gain a better understanding of career adaptability competencies among typical agriculture majors. This study was limited to individuals who were hand-picked for this internship program, and the selected interns likely demonstrated high levels of these career competencies.

2. Additional research using the Career Futures Inventory-Revised is warranted. A time-series study is recommended whereby participants complete the Career Futures Inventory-Revised at different points in time to determine how different career development and career experiences may influence career adaptability competencies. It may be beneficial to focus on individuals who were recently hired, comparing their pre-career versus career scores to evaluate different career development and career experiences.

3. Additional research is needed on the N.C. Cooperative Extension internship program and all other internship programs in food, agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences. Additionally, research is needed to understand and improve other internship programs in the food, agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences. Research would help to identify best practices for enhancing such programs.

4. It is recommended that future researchers conduct post internship interviews to further evaluate decisions made by interns. These interviews may help researchers to better understand career intentions of interns. For example, one intern in this study noted an intended career of paramedic on the pretest and horticulturalist on the posttest.
5. It is recommended that future research utilizes the theoretical framework of this study, social cognitive career theory (Bandura 1986; Lent et al., 2002) to further understand how interns make decisions about their careers and/or interns’ goals for participating in the program.
REFERENCES


Galbraith, D., & Mondal, S. (2020). The Potential Power of Internships and The


New York, NY: Springer.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: INTERNSHIP PROGRAM ORIENTATION FACT SHEET

2021 Summer Internship Program
Important Information for County Extension Directors and Interns

The Summer Internship Program exposes students to the challenges and rewards of community engagement, and it provides County Extension Centers with capable and confident college students who are ready to serve. This fact sheet has been prepared to address common questions that County Extension Directors, supervising agents, and interns have about the program.

Expectations
The intern's work must reflect the highest standards of NC State University. The Program's major expectations are in three broad areas:

Access, equity, and opportunity – NC State University promotes equal opportunity and prohibits discrimination and harassment based upon one's age, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation and veteran status.

Policies, regulations, and rules – The intern's work must adhere to NC State's policies, regulations, and rules. This fact sheet highlights major administrative functions for the internship program; it does NOT substitute for policies, regulations, and rules. Visit: https://policies.ncsu.edu.

Quality and excellence in all things – It is expected that Extension personnel will provide interns with a quality learning experience, and interns will provide quality learning experiences and excellent customer service to all North Carolinians. The internship should benefit the intern, the Extension organization, and North Carolinians.

Objectives
Extension provides research-based information and education in local communities. The internship helps interns to consider careers in agriculture, food systems, nutrition, youth development, community development, family and consumer sciences, natural resources, and environmental science. Interns will:
- Gain knowledge about Extension careers
- Develop rich job experiences
- Help deliver solutions to address local needs

Extension Programming
A successful internship provides interns with exposure to Extension efforts in agriculture and food, health and nutrition, and 4-H youth development programs.

Job Shadowing
Interns can expect to job shadow Extension professionals and directly teach Extension clientele.
I-9 and E-Verify

A new employee must show documents verifying identity and eligibility to work in the United States. NC State MUST examine the documents and record the information on the I-9 form. Prior to your start date, it is imperative that you contact the University Onboarding Center to complete your I-9. The Onboarding Center can be reached at 919-513-1278.

Documents must establish both identity and employment authorization. For example, a passport establishes both. If you do not have a passport, a driver’s license establishes identity and a Social Security card establishes employment authorization. For the list of acceptable documents for the I-9 and E-Verify process, visit: https://te.fcs.nctu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2015/12/I9document5.pdf

Background Checks

Background checks are very important as anyone working with youth now requires background checks through the university. County Extension Directors and/or Supervisors will work with their district office to run the background check.

Academic Credit

Academic credit is available for students who satisfy all requirements through NC State’s Agricultural and Extension Education academic program for AEE 423 – Practicum in Agricultural Extension/Industry (3 credit hours). AEE 423 also has a co-requisite seminar class, AEE 491 – Seminar in Agricultural and Extension Education (1 credit hour). Contact Dr. Donaldson if you would like to learn more about course requirements.

Other NC State departments and other universities may also provide credit. Interns are encouraged to check with their academic advisors. Some departments and universities require an agreement between the student and agency to receive academic credit. Students should complete any required paperwork and submit it to their County Extension Director for signature.

Academic Minor

NC State offers an undergraduate minor in Extension Education. Contact Dr. Donaldson for more information.

Compensation & Wolftime

Interns are compensated $12 per hour and work 40 hours per week. Please note:

- If interns work more than 40 hours per week, they must be paid one-half overtime pay ($18 per hour for every hour over 40 per week).
- Wolftime requires time punches.
- The intern is responsible for entering time accurately, and it is the County Extension Director’s responsibility to make approvals and corrections.
- To learn about direct deposit, tax forms, bi-weekly payroll, time sheet deadlines, and pay days, visit: https://cocontroller.cfa.ncsu.edu/payroll/fer-students/
- To learn how to clock in/out, visit: https://wifree.com/ezlab/analyze/facets/attendance

First Impressions

Interns will want to make a great first impression. Interns should call their County Extension Director prior to the start of the internship to confirm the following:

- Start date and time
- Appropriate dress
- Parking information
- Guidance regarding the County Center’s COVID-19 operating procedures

State Vehicles

Only university employees are permitted to drive state-owned University vehicles for state and University business. University employees are defined as individuals working for the university for wages and salary. Employees must receive a university payroll check and be at least 21 years of age. Students (21 years of age and older) who are employed by the university and receive a salary or a payroll check may drive vehicles while performing duties within the scope of the job for which they are being paid. Students, such as those on scholarship or fellowship, who are not employed by the university, are not allowed to drive state vehicles. For additional policy questions, consult NC State Fleet Services.

Timeline

- April 21 – Required Internship Orientation (video conference)
- May 19 – Internship Start Date
- May 31 – Memorial Day Observed (administrative closing)
- July 5 – Independence Day Observed (administrative closing)
- July 30, 2022 – Internship End Date

Housing

Interns are responsible for their own housing.

Rural Works!

NC State students serving as interns in the state’s Tier I and II counties are part of the NC State Rural Works! Program. This program seeks to expose students to the needs, history, and culture of rural North Carolina, and Extension’s community-based programming is a perfect fit! This program is a partnership between the Division of Academic and Student Affairs, the Office of Outreach and Engagement, and NC State Extension. The state’s Tier I and II counties with interns this year are:

- **Northeast**: Currituck, Edgecombe, Nash*, and Pitt* Counties
- **Southeast**: Bladen*, Duplin, and Wilson Counties
- **South Central**: Cabarrus, Cumberland*, Iredell, Lee*, Montgomery, and Rowan Counties
- **North Central**: Chatham, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford*, Orange, and Randolph Counties
- **West**: Burke*, Caldwell, Cherokee, Cleveland*, McDowell*, Rutherford*, and Transylvania Counties

When interns, who are NC State students, return to campus in the fall, they may engage the services of NC State’s Rural Outreach Coordinator who can help them shape their future for a career in rural North Carolina.

*Note that only interns who are NC State students participate in the Rural Works! Program. In 2021, the following counties are welcoming Extension interns from other institutions: Caldwell, Cherokee, Davie, Duplin, Edgecombe, Forsyth, Montgomery, Randolph.
Tools
- NC State Extension District Map
  https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/cooperative-extension-district-map
- State Student Liability Coverage Request
  https://irm.ehps.ncsu.edu/home/other_insurance/student-liability-coverage-request/
- NC State Extension Programming Models
  https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/extension-programming-models
- NC State Brand
  https://intrane.ces.ncsu.edu/brand/

State Orientation
Interns are required to attend the Internship Program Orientation on Saturday, April 24 from 2 to 4 pm via video conference. A link will be shared via email. This is a requirement for employment. Dress is business casual.

Travel Reimbursement
To the extent possible, interns travel with Extension professionals. When interns do incur travel expenses for work, they should submit travel reimbursements paid from state funds. Contact county and district administrative assistants for assistance.

Overnight Events
With our response to COVID-19, it is unlikely that interns will participate in overnight events. However, if overnight events are conducted, the following guidance is important. It is acceptable for interns to work an overnight Extension camp or conference. If an intern stays overnight, they are effectively on call overnight. County Extension Directors and interns must stay in close communication regarding the intern’s work schedule. Again, for budgeting considerations, County Extension Centers that go over $4,800 will be invoiced accordingly.

District Contacts
Direct questions to your County Extension Director and/or your assigned supervisor first. They may direct you to your District Extension Director and/or District Extension Administrative Associate.

North Central District
Susan Kelly, District Extension Director
susan_kelly@ncsu.edu
919-992-8217
Lori Davis, District Admin. Associate
ladavis@ncsu.edu
828-687-0570

Northeast District
Art Bradley, Jr., District Extension Director
art_bradley@ncsu.edu
919-515-8430
Evelyn Stahling, District Admin. Associate
Evelyn_stahling@ncsu.edu
919-515-8431

South Central District
Clint McRae, District Extension Director
clinton_mcrae@ncsu.edu
919-515-8433
Leigh Watkins, District Admin. Associate
leigh_watkins@ncsu.edu
919-515-8430

Southeast District
Keith Walters, District Extension Director
keith_walters@ncsu.edu
919-515-8437
Suzanne Hugus, District Admin. Associate
Suzanne_hugus@ncsu.edu
919-515-8439

West District
Kelley Hemstra, District Extension Director
kahiemi@ncsu.edu
828-687-0570
Carol Horne, District Admin. Associate
Carol_horne@ncsu.edu
828-687-0570

Unity ID
As an intern you will receive a “Unity” ID that will give you access to University systems, including the MyPack Portal where you will log your daily hours. If you are a NC State student, your intern ID is the same as your student ID. If you are not a current NC State student we will provide you with your ID. Please contact your district administrative associate for your ID.

Work Schedule
County Extension Directors and interns must stay in close communication regarding the intern’s work schedule and total hours worked.
- Interns work more than 40 hours per week must be paid time-and-a-half overtime pay ($18 per hour for every hour over 40 hours per week) per the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- The University work week runs from 12:01 a.m. on Saturday to 11:59 p.m. on Friday.
- Interns, County Extension Directors, and others supervising interns will need to manage the intern’s weekly hours to make sure the total pay ($4,800) is not exceeded.
- Interns may not work on holidays.
- The internship start date and end date are negotiated with the County Extension Director to accommodate the student’s schedule.
- Each internship has been allocated $4,800 ($12/hour x 400 total hours).
- For budgeting considerations, County Extension Centers must not go over $4,800.
- County Extension Centers that go over $4,800 will be invoiced accordingly.

Information Technology
The following overview of Extension IT resources and needs is provided by Rhonda Conlon, Director, Extension Information Technology. If an intern needs a loaner laptop to complete their work assignments, they should first seek guidance from their County Center. The County Center may have laptops for them to use.

The computer resources in the following counties are managed by local government: Cabarrus, Cumberland, Rowan, Chatham, Forsyth, Guilford, McDowell and Transylvania. As an intern in one of these 8 counties, discuss any IT needs with your County Extension Director who can assist you to access local resources.

All other counties with summer 2022 interns receive either full or partial technology support from Extension IT. In each county managed by Extension IT, one Extension staff member is the “Computer Contact.” Often, this person is an administrative assistant. The “Computer Contact” will know how to contact Extension IT to create an account for the intern on Extension IT-managed computers.
County Orientation

County Extension Directors or their designee should provide the intern with a county-specific orientation. Orient the intern to the County Extension Center and the specific job assignments. The following is a checklist for County Extension Directors and/or their designees when orienting interns.

Before the First Day
- Confirm start date and time with the intern
- Explain dress code
- Provide the intern with parking/building information
- Provide guidance about the COVID-19 operating procedures

First Day of Work
- Introduce intern to co-workers (during a tour of office/facility OR video conference)
- Show intern their work area
- Show facilities including restrooms and breakrooms
- Discuss basic terms of work, policies, and procedures. Be sure to include:
  - Start/End time of work
  - Length of lunch break
  - Dress code
  - Rules about using Wolfsline for time entry
  - Use of telephone, copier, computer networks, printers
  - Parking and accessing building (keys or security code)
  - Safety procedures
  - Travel

Background Information
- Explain administrative and support staff roles, responsibilities, and procedures
- Explain affirmative action plan
- Discuss Extension publications
- Introduce Extension professionals in the county and those serving the county
- Explain major Extension programs in the county
- Discuss internship goals and objectives
  - Be clear what your expected outcomes are for the internship
- Share helpful information about the county/community including grocery stores, farmers' markets, restaurants, banks, and health care

Statewide Contacts

Dr. Joseph L. Donaldson, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences, coordinates the Extension Summer Internship Program.
- Phone: 919-515-1912 (work)
- Office: 202 Ricks Hall
- Email: joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu

Ms. Rebekah Dunstan, Rural Outreach Coordinator, provides expertise and coordination for the NC State Rural Works! Initiative.
- Phone: 919-515-1975
- Office: Pullen Hall 214SE
- Email: rfdunsta@ncsu.edu

Ms. Nikki Kurdy, HR Manager, NC State Extension provides leadership for compensation, benefits, and other HR functions.
- Phone: 919-515-1382
- Office: 210 Patterson Hall
- Email: nikki_kurdy@ncsu.edu

Dr. Hannah A. Burack, Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, serves as the Platform Leader for Education and Outreach for the North Carolina Plant Sciences Initiative.
- Phone: 919-513-3614 (work)
- Office: Unit 1 Method Road
- Email: hjburrack@ncsu.edu

Ms. Desiree Mallon, Administrative Support Specialist, Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences, provides administrative support for recruiting and orienting summer interns.
- Phone: 919-515-2359
- Office: 213 Ricks Hall
- Email: dmmallon@ncsu.edu

Ms. Rose Vaughan, Administrative Student Assistant, Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences, provides administrative support for recruiting and orienting summer interns.
- Phone: 919-515-2359
- Office: virtual
- Email: rvaughna@ncsu.edu

Learn More
- NC State Extension
  https://www.ces.ncsu.edu/
- Agricultural and Human Sciences
  https://cals.ncsu.edu/agricultural-and-human-sciences/
- College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
  https://cals.ncsu.edu
- Extension Summer Internship Program
  www.ces.ncsu.edu/internships/
- RuralWorks!
  https://careers.dasa.ncsu.edu/rural-works/

NC State University and N.C. A&T State University are collectively committed to positive action to secure equal opportunity and prohibit discrimination and harassment regardless of age, color, disability, family and marital status, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, political beliefs, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation and veteran status. NC State, N.C. A&T, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Authors: Joseph L. Donaldson, PhD, Nikki Kurdy, Rebekah Dunstan, Desiree Mallon, Rhonda Conian, and Rose Vaughan

April 29, 2021

The information contained in this fact sheet is the latest information we have available as of the date listed. It is subject to change given the response to COVID-19 and changes to policies, regulations, and rules. Visit: policies.ncsu.edu, ncsu.edu/coronavirus/ OR https://covid19.ces.ncsu.edu

NC STATE UNIVERSITY
APPENDIX B: CAREER FUTURES INVENTORY-REVISED

Please answer the following items as honestly as you can. Do not spend much time thinking about each one. There are no right or wrong answers. Please read each statement carefully then use the following scale to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

5 = Strongly Agree
4 = Agree
3 = Neutral
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree

1. I can perform a successful job search
2. I doubt my career will turn out well in the future
3. I can establish a plan for my future career
4. Others in my life are very supportive of my career
5. I understand how economic trends affect career opportunities available to me
6. I am aware of priorities in my life
7. I am good at understanding job market trends
8. Thinking about my career frustrates me
9. I can easily manage my needs and those of other important people in my life
10. I can overcome potential barriers that may exist in my career
11. I lack the energy to pursue my career goals
12. Balancing work and family responsibilities is manageable
13. My family is there to help me through career challenges
14. I can adapt to change in the world of work
15. I do not understand job market trends
16. I am aware of my strengths
17. I keep up with trends in at least one occupation or industry of interest to me
18. I receive encouragement from others to meet my career goals
19. I understand my work-related interests
20. I am very strategic when it comes to balancing my work and personal lives
21. I keep current with job market trends
22. I understand my work-related values
23. Friends are available to offer support in my career transition
24. I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as a worker, family member, or friend
25. It is unlikely that good things will happen in my career
26. I will successfully manage my present career transition process
27. I keep current with changes in technology
28. I am in control of my career
Please answer the following items as honestly as you can. Do not spend much time thinking about each one. There are no right or wrong answers. Please read each statement carefully then use the following scale to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

5 = Strongly Agree
4 = Agree
3 = Neutral
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree

Abbreviation Key:
CA: Career Agency
OA: Occupational Awareness
NCO: Negative Career Outlook
S: Support
WLB: Work-Life Balance
*: Reverse Scored

1. I can perform a successful job search (CA)
2. I doubt my career will turn out well in the future (NCO)
3. I can establish a plan for my future career (CA)
4. Others in my life are very supportive of my career (S)
5. I understand how economic trends affect career opportunities available to me (OA)
6. I am aware of priorities in my life (CA)
7. I am good at understanding job market trends (OA)
8. Thinking about my career frustrates me (NCO)
9. I can easily manage my needs and those of other important people in my life (WLB)
10. I can overcome potential barriers that may exist in my career (CA)
11. I lack the energy to pursue my career goals (NCO)
12. Balancing work and family responsibilities is manageable (WLB)
13. My family is there to help me through career challenges (S)
14. I can adapt to change in the world of work (CA)
15. I do not understand job market trends (OA)*
16. I am aware of my strengths (CA)
17. I keep up with trends in at least one occupation or industry of interest to me (OA)
18. I receive encouragement from others to meet my career goals (S)
19. I understand my work-related interests (CA)
20. I am very strategic when it comes to balancing my work and personal lives (WLB)
21. I keep current with job market trends (OA)
22. I understand my work-related values (CA)
23. Friends are available to offer support in my career transition (S)
24. I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as a worker, family member, or friend (WLB)
25. It is unlikely that good things will happen in my career (NCO)
26. I will successfully manage my present career transition process (CA)
27. I keep current with changes in technology (OA)
28. I am in control of my career (CA)
APPENDIX D: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD LETTER OF EXEMPT APPROVAL

Date: March 30, 2021

Title: A Study of Career Intentions and Career Adaptability among Extension Summer Internship Program Interns

IRB#: 23938

Dear Joseph Donaldson and Sophie Farlow,

The research proposal named above has received administrative review and has been approved on March 22, 2021 as exempt from the policy as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (d.2). Provided that the only participation of the subjects is as described in the proposal narrative, this project is exempt from further review. This approval does not expire, but any changes must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

NOTE:

1. This committee complies with requirements found in Title 45 part 46 of The Code of Federal Regulations. For NCSU projects, the Assurance Number is: FWA00003429.

2. Any changes to the research must be submitted and approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

3. If any unanticipated problems occur, they must be reported to the IRB office within 5 business days.

Please forward a copy of this letter to your faculty sponsor, if applicable.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Ofstein
IRB Director
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
north.carolina.stateuniversity.edu
919.515.8754
North Carolina State University
Fwd: NCSU Survey Registration Form

To: sefarlow@ncsu.edu

Hello Sophie,

Thank you for submitting the Survey Registration Form. Good luck with your project.

Best,

Nancy

-------- Forwarded message --------
From: <noreply@qemailserver.com>
Date: Tue, Apr 20, 2021 at 7:52 PM
Subject: NCSU Survey Registration Form
To: <nancy_whelchel@ncsu.edu>

New Survey Registration Form submission

Recipient Data:
Time Finished: 2021-04-20 19:51:01 EDT
IP: 71.69.166.166
ResponseID: R_2bWrtP0A3UuMq7q
Link to View Results: Click Here
URL to View Results: https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/CP/Report.php?SID=SV_4VL1jLoqOOpOo1m&R=R_2bWrtP0A3UuMq7q

Response Summary:

Which of the following best describes the survey project?
'Local' survey (e.g., A survey developed and/or administered by someone at NC State to NC State students, alumni, faculty and/or staff for their own purposes, including program assessment, research, etc.)

NC State Project Leader
First Name  Sophie
Last Name  Farlow
Unit/Department or Campus Organization: Agricultural and Human Sciences
Phone Number: 3364607421
Email Address: sefarlow@ncsu.edu

Project leader's primary status at NC State:
Master's Student

Descriptive name of the survey (e.g., "Graduating Senior Survey," "Faculty Satisfaction Survey") (T... 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Survey

Summary of the topics included on the survey:
This pretest survey will be used for program evaluation, as well as to gather research for a research project, "A Study of Career Intentions and Career Adaptability among Extension Summer Internship Program Interns." This survey will be taken before the start of the internship program. It will include questions related to career intentions and career adaptability.

Primary reason(s) for the survey (Mark all that apply)
Program evaluation
Master's thesis

Please indicate by name, title, and/or office the NC State administrator(s)/instructor(s)/advisor(s)... Dr. Joseph Donaldson, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences

Which of the following best describes the status of your project with respect to approval from NC State's Institutional Review Board (IRB)?
NC State's IRB determined that the project was "Exempt"

Please provide a copy of the documentation you received from NC State's IRB indicating your project was approved or exempt. Note: Just attach just a copy of the letter/email you received from IR... https://ncsu.qualtrics.com//WRQualtricsControlPanel/File.php?F=F_2ahpQVzCVC8THX

How will the survey be administered? (Mark all that apply)
Online

On what date do you anticipate the survey 'going live,' and when will it close? (This information w... First day (MM/DD/YYYY) 04/24/2021
Last day (MM/DD/YYYY) 07/30/2021

Which of the following groups of people at NC State are included in the survey population? Please... Other (Please describe) -- Summer Extension Interns

Will the survey be administered to a sample of the other group(s) meeting the criteria as described... All will be invited to participate

Please indicate the estimated number of the other group(s) meeting the criteria as described above t... 26

All information provided in this Survey Registration Form will either be posted directly to the NC S...
I would like to request that my survey project be EXCLUDED from the Survey Activities Calendar.

Please use the space below to explain why information about this survey project should NOT be posted...

This project should not be posted to the Survey Activities Calendar due to the fact that this survey is only open to NC State Extension Summer Internship Program interns. I already have all of the contact information for the 26 interns who will be invited to participate in the survey.

Embedded Data
ResponseID R_2bWrtP0A3UuMq7q
APPENDIX F: CONSENT FORM

Adult Consent Form

Title of Study: A Study of Career Intentions and Career Adaptability among Extension Summer Internship Program Interns (eIRB # 23938)

Principal Investigator(s): Dr. Joseph Donaldson, joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu, 919-515-1758
Sophie Farlow, sefarlow@ncsu.edu, [Redacted]

Funding Source: None

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are invited to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate, and to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of this research study is to understand how the Extension Summer Internship Program influences, if at all, interns’ career choice and career adaptability. We will do this through asking you to participate in two online surveys.

You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in this study. Research studies also may pose risks to those who participate. You may want to participate in this research because the results of this study could potentially benefit other students participating in internship programs offered by NC State Extension, other higher education institutions, and/or other employers.

Specific details about the research in which you are invited to participate are contained below. If you do not understand something in this form, please ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If, at any time, you have questions about your participation in this research, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above or the NC State IRB office. The IRB office’s contact information is listed in the What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant? section of this form.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of the study is to understand how the Extension Summer Internship Program influences, if at all, interns’ career choice and career adaptability.

Am I eligible to be a participant in this study?

There will be approximately 30 participants in this study.

In order to be a participant in this study, you must agree to be in the study, at least 18 years of age or older, a 2021 NC State Extension summer intern, and have signed the consent form to agree to your participation.

You cannot participate in this study if you do not want to be in the study or are not 18 years of age or older, a 2021 NC State Extension summer intern, or have not signed the consent form to agree to your participation.

What will happen if you take part in the study?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to do all of the following:

1. Take an online survey before your internship about your demographics, intended career, and career adaptability. We expect that the survey should take you 30 minutes to complete.
2. Take an online survey after your internship about your intended career, career adaptability, and internship experience. We expect that the survey should take you 30 minutes to complete.

The total amount of time that you will be participating in this study is 60 minutes.

Risks and Benefits

There are minimal risks associated with participation in this research. There are no direct benefits to your participation in the research. The indirect benefits are that this study could potentially benefit other students participating in internship programs offered by NC State Extension, other higher education institutions, and or other employers.

Right to withdraw your participation

You can stop participating in this study at any time for any reason. In order to stop your participation, please contact Sophie Farlow, sefarlow@ncsu.edu, [Redacted] and/or Dr. Joseph Donaldson, joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu, 919-515-1758. If you choose to withdraw your consent and to stop participating in this research, you can expect that the researcher(s) will redact your data from their data set, securely destroy your data, and prevent future uses of your data for research purposes wherever possible. This is possible in some, but not all, cases.

Confidentiality, personal privacy, and data management

Trust is the foundation of the participant/researcher relationship. Much of that principle of trust is tied to keeping your information private and in the manner that we have described to you in this form. The information that you share with us will be held in confidence to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Protecting your privacy as related to this research is of utmost importance to us. There are very rare circumstances related to confidentiality where we may have to share information about you. Your information collected in this research study could be reviewed by representatives of the University, research sponsors, or government agencies (for example, the FDA) for purposes such as quality control or safety. In other cases, we must report instances in which imminent harm could come to you or others.

How we manage, protect, and share your data are the principal ways that we protect your personal privacy. Data that will be shared with others about you will be de-identified.

De-identified. De-identified data is information that at one time could directly identify you, but that we have recorded this data so that your identity is separated from the data. We will have a master list with your code and real name that we can use to link to your data. When the research concludes, there will be no way your real identity will be linked to the data we publish.
**Future use of your research data**

To help maximize the benefits of your participation in this project, by further contributing to science and our community, your de-identified information will be stored for future research and may be shared with other people without additional consent from you.

**Compensation**

There is no compensation for participating.

**What if you are an NCSU student?**

Your participation in this study is not a course requirement and your participation, or lack thereof, will not affect your class standing or grades at NC State.

**What if you are an NCSU employee?**

Your participation in this study is not a requirement of your employment at NCSU, and your participation or lack thereof, will not affect your job.

**What if you have questions about this study?**

If you have questions at any time about the study itself or the procedures implemented in this study, you may contact the researcher, Sophie Farlow, sefarlow@ncsu.edu, [Redacted] and/or Dr. Joseph Donaldson, joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu, 919-515-1758

**What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact the NC State IRB (Institutional Review Board) Office. An IRB office helps participants if they have any issues regarding research activities. You can contact the NC State IRB Office via email at irb-director@ncsu.edu or via phone at (919) 515-8754.

**Consent To Participate**

By electronically signing this consent form, I am affirming that I have read and understand the above information. All of the questions that I had about this research have been answered. I have chosen to participate in this study with the understanding that I may stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I am aware that I may revoke my consent at any time.

☐ Yes, I consent to participating in this research study

Name_____________________________________________

Today’s Date ________________________________

☐ No, I do not consent to participating in this research study.

Thank you for your consideration.
**APPENDIX G: PRETEST QUESTIONNAIRE**

2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Pretest

This questionnaire assesses critical factors for people considering career transitions. You will be asked a series of questions regarding your current thoughts and feelings about how you plan your career. Please answer the following items as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers. Read each statement carefully, then use the following scale to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

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<th></th>
<th>1. I can perform a successful job search</th>
<th>2. I doubt my career will turn out well in the future</th>
<th>3. I can establish a plan for my future career</th>
<th>4. Others in my life are very supportive of my career</th>
<th>5. I understand how economic trends affect career opportunities available to me</th>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>(2) Disagree</td>
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<td>(3) Neutral</td>
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<td>(4) Agree</td>
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<td>I am aware of priorities in my life</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>I am good at understanding job market trends</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Thinking about my career frustrates me</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>I can easily manage my needs and those of other important people in my life</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>I can overcome potential barriers that may exist in my career</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>Balancing work and family responsibilities is manageable</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>My family is there to help me through challenges</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>I can adapt to change in the world of work</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>I do not understand job market trends</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>I am aware of my strengths</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>I keep up with trends in at least one occupation or industry of interest to me</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>I receive encouragement from others to meet my career goals</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>I understand my work-related interests</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>I am very strategic when it comes to balancing my work and personal lives</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>I keep current with job market trends</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>I understand my work-related values</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Friends are available to offer support in my career transition</td>
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</table>
24. I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as a worker, family member, or friend

25. It is unlikely that good things will happen in my career

26. I will successfully manage my present career transition process

27. I keep current with changes in technology

28. I am in control of my career

Name?

Email address?

Gender?
Your Classification?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Recent graduate of an undergraduate program
- Graduate Student
- Recent graduate of a graduate program

Your Academic Major?

____________________________________

What is your intended career?

____________________________________
APPENDIX H: POSTTEST QUESTIONNAIRE

2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Post-test

This questionnaire assesses critical factors for people considering career transitions. You will be asked a series of questions regarding your current thoughts and feelings about how you plan your career. Please answer the following items as honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers. Read each statement carefully, then use the following scale to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1) Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>(2) Disagree</th>
<th>(3) Neutral</th>
<th>(4) Agree</th>
<th>(5) Strongly Agree</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I can perform a successful job search</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>I doubt my career will turn out well in the future</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>I can establish a plan for my future career</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Others in my life are very supportive of my career</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>I understand how economic trends affect career opportunities available to me</td>
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<td>I am aware of priorities in my life</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>I lack the energy to pursue my career goals</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Balancing work and family responsibilities is manageable</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>My family is there to help me through challenges</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>I can adapt to change in the world of work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I do not understand job market trends</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I am aware of my strengths</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I keep up with trends in at least one occupation or industry of interest to me</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I receive encouragement from others to meet my career goals</td>
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<td>[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I understand my work-related interests</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I am very strategic when it comes to balancing my work and personal lives</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I keep current with job market trends</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I understand my work-related values</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Friends are available to offer support in my career transition</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
24. I am good at balancing multiple life roles such as a worker, family member, or friend

25. It is unlikely that good things will happen in my career

26. I will successfully manage my present career transition process

27. I keep current with changes in technology

28. I am in control of my career

Q29. Name?

Q30. Email address?

Q31. In the past, interns have discussed major competencies they developed during their internship including critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communications, teamwork/collaboration, digital technology, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, career
management, and global/intercultural fluency. Reflect on these competencies. In what ways, if any, did you benefit from your internship placement? (For example, what knowledge, skills, and experiences did you gain that you feel will be useful in your future coursework and/or career?)

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________

Q32. Would you recommend this county for future NC State interns?
- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q33. Please rate your interest in the following areas AFTER and BEFORE your internship. Rate your interest in each area AFTER (on the left) and BEFORE (on the right).

| Enrolling in a college Extension Education course. (6) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| AFTER your internship           | BEFORE your internship |
| Not at all interested (1)       | Not at all interested (1) |
| Slightly Interested (2)         | Slightly Interested (2) |
| Moderately Interested (3)       | Moderately Interested (3) |
| Very Interested (4)             | Very Interested (4) |
| Extremely Interested (5)        | Extremely Interested (5) |

- O
| Pursuing an academic minor in Extension Education. (5) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Pursuing a graduate degree in Extension Education. (4) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Working in a rural North Carolina county. (3) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Pursuing a career in Cooperative Extension. (2) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Pursuing a graduate degree from NC State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. (1) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
Q34. What is your intended career?

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

Q35. One last question: What suggestions do you have, if any, for planning and conducting future Extension internships?

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX I: RESEARCH STUDY INVITATION

Dear Extension Intern,

I invite you to participate in a research study entitled: A Study of Career Intentions and Career Adaptability among Extension Summer Internship Program Interns. I am currently enrolled in the Agricultural and Extension Education Master of Science program at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina, and am in the process of writing my Master’s Thesis. The purpose of this research is to understand how the Extension Summer Internship Program influences, if at all, interns’ career choice and career adaptability.

The electronic survey has been designed to collect information on intern’s demographics, intended career and career adaptability both before and after the internship program, and overall internship experience.

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You may decline altogether, or leave blank any questions you do not wish to answer. There are no known risks to participation beyond those encountered in everyday life. Your responses will remain confidential. Data from this research will be kept under lock and key and reported only as a collective combined total. No one other than the researchers will know your individual answers to this survey.

If you agree to participate in this project, please answer the questions on the survey; https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_82hvRr1DkyBKX8a.

It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please make sure you submit your answers.

If you have any questions about this project, feel free to contact Sophie Farlow, Graduate Research Teaching, Assistant, and student at sefarlow@ncsu.edu, [Redacted] and/or Dr. Joseph Donaldson at joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu, 919-515-1758. Information on the rights of human subjects in research is available through the NC State’s Institutional Review Board at North Carolina State University Administrative Services III, Suite 240 Wolf Village Way Raleigh, NC 27606, website: https://research.ncsu.edu/administration/compliance/research-compliance/irb/.

Thank you for your assistance in this important endeavor.

Sincerely yours,

Sophie E. Farlow
APPENDIX J: POSTTEST SURVEY INVITATION

Dear Participant,

I invite you to complete an assessment of your internship experiences as part of the study, *A Study of Career Intentions and Career Adaptability among Extension Summer Internship Program Interns*. The purposes of this study are to: (a) understand how the Extension Summer Internship Program influences, if at all, interns’ career choice and career adaptability, (b) evaluate the effectiveness of the internship program. Please complete the post-survey at this link: [https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b2sOEWNcuphk9gO](https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b2sOEWNcuphk9gO).

If you have any questions about this project, feel free to contact Sophie Farlow, Graduate Research Teaching, Assistant, and student at sefarlow@ncsu.edu, [Redacted] and/or Dr. Joseph Donaldson at joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu, 919-515-1758.

Thank you for your assistance in this important endeavor.

Sincerely yours,

Sophie E. Farlow
Dear Extension Intern,

On April 24th I contacted you asking for your help evaluating the career intentions and career adaptability of the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Interns, as well as the 2021 Intern Orientation. You are receiving this email because our records indicate you have not completed the survey.

I want to accurately evaluate the 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program. Your input is needed to ensure the results are as representative and precise as possible.

The survey will only take you about 30 minutes to complete. You can find the survey at the following link: [https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_82hvRr1DkyBKX8a](https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_82hvRr1DkyBKX8a).

Responses will be kept confidential and no one other than the researchers will know your individual answers to this survey. Your responses are important. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me ([Redacted] or sefarlow@ncsu.edu) or Dr. Joseph Donaldson (919-515-1758 or joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu). We recognize that this is a very busy time for you and thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Sophie E. Farlow
APPENDIX L: SECOND REMINDER EMAIL FOR PRETEST

Dear Extension Intern,

About three weeks ago on April 24th I contacted you asking for your help evaluating the career intentions and career adaptability of the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Interns, as well as the 2021 Intern Orientation. You are receiving this email because our records indicate you have not completed the survey.

Other interns have already responded, sharing about their experience and career intentions. Your response is valued and appreciated.

I want to accurately evaluate the 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program. Your input is needed to ensure the results are as representative and precise as possible.

The survey will only take you about 30 minutes to complete. You can find the survey at the following link: https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_82hvRr1DkyBXX8a.

Responses will be kept confidential and no one other than the researchers will know your individual answers to this survey. Your responses are important. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me ([Redacted] or sefarlow@ncsu.edu) or Dr. Joseph Donaldson (919-515-1758 or joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu). We recognize that this is a very busy time for you and thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Sophie E. Farlow
APPENDIX M: THIRD REMINDER EMAIL FOR PRETEST

Dear Extension Intern,

Over the past several weeks I have contacted you asking for your help evaluating the career intentions and career adaptability of the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Interns. You are receiving this email because our records indicate you have not completed the survey.

With the start of your internship, we are sending this final contact in hopes that you will help us evaluate this program. Your response is valued and appreciated.

Because we want to accurately evaluate the 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program, your input ensures the results are as representative and precise as possible.

The survey will only take you about 30 minutes to complete. You can find the survey at the following link: https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_82hvRr1DkYBKX8a.

Responses will be kept confidential and no one other than the researchers will know your individual answers to this survey. Your responses are important. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me ([Redacted] or sefarlow@ncsu.edu) or Dr. Joseph Donaldson (919-515-1758 or joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu). We recognize that this is a very busy time for you and thank you for considering this request. Best of luck as you start your internship!

Sincerely,

Sophie E. Farlow
APPENDIX N: FIRST REMINDER EMAIL FOR POSTTEST

Dear Extension Intern,

On July 27th I contacted you asking for your help evaluating the career intentions and career adaptability of the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Interns, as well as the effectiveness of the internship program. You are receiving this email because our records indicate you have not completed the survey.

I want to accurately evaluate the 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program. Your input is needed to ensure the results are as representative and precise as possible.

The survey will only take you about 30 minutes to complete. You can find the survey at the following link: https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b2sOEWNcuhk9gO.

Responses will be kept confidential and no one other than the researchers will know your individual answers to this survey. Your responses are important. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me ([Redacted] or sefarlow@ncsu.edu) or Dr. Joseph Donaldson (919-515-1758 or joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu). We recognize that this is a very busy time for you and thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Sophie E. Farlow
APPENDIX O: SECOND REMINDER EMAIL FOR POSTTEST

Dear Extension Intern,

About a week and a half ago on July 27th I contacted you asking for your help evaluating the career intentions and career adaptability of the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Interns, as well as the effectiveness of the internship program. You are receiving this email because our records indicate you have not completed the survey.

Other interns have already responded, sharing about their experience and career intentions. Your response is valued and appreciated.

I want to accurately evaluate the 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program. Your input is needed to ensure the results are as representative and precise as possible.

The survey will only take you about 30 minutes to complete. You can find the survey at the following link: https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b2sOEWNcuphk9gO.

Responses will be kept confidential and no one other than the researchers will know your individual answers to this survey. Your responses are important. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me ([Redacted] or sefarlow@ncsu.edu) or Dr. Joseph Donaldson (919-515-1758 or joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu). We recognize that this is a very busy time for you and thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Sophie E. Farlow
APPENDIX P: THIRD REMINDER EMAIL FOR POSTTEST

Dear Extension Intern,

Over the past couple of weeks I have contacted you asking for your help evaluating the career intentions and career adaptability of the NC State Extension Summer Internship Program Interns, as well as the effectiveness of the internship program. You are receiving this email because our records indicate you have not completed the survey.

With the start of the semester, we are sending this final contact in hopes that you will help us evaluate this program. Your response is valued and appreciated.

Because we want to accurately evaluate the 2021 NC State Extension Summer Internship Program, your input ensures the results are as representative and precise as possible.

The survey will only take you about 30 minutes to complete. You can find the survey at the following link: https://ncsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b2sOEWNcuphk9gO.

Responses will be kept confidential and no one other than the researchers will know your individual answers to this survey. Your responses are important. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me ([Redacted] or sefarlow@ncsu.edu) or Dr. Joseph Donaldson (919-515-1758 or joseph_donaldson@ncsu.edu). We recognize that this is a very busy time for you and thank you for considering this request. Best of luck on your next endeavor!

Sincerely,

Sophie E. Farlow
APPENDIX Q: ENCODING FOR PARTICIPANTS CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESPONSES

In their Post survey interns were asked, “In the past, interns have discussed major competencies they developed during their internship including critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communications, teamwork/collaboration, digital technology, leadership, professionalism/work ethic, career management, and global/intercultural fluency. Reflect on these competencies. In what ways, if any, did you benefit from your internship placement? (For example, what knowledge, skills, and experiences did you gain that you feel will be useful in your future coursework and/or career?)”

Codes:

1: Developed knowledge and skills in technology (N=3)
2: Improved oral and written communication skills (N=4)
3: Learned Extension operations (N=4)
4: Time management (N=1)
5: Develop leadership skills/working within a team (N=2)
6: Work and home-life balance (N=1)
7: How to work within the community (N=3)
8: Develop relationships with coworkers (N=3)
9: Refining skills (N=2)
10: Community leadership (N=1)
11: Networking (N=1)
12: Extension Programming (N=2)
13: Women in agriculture (N=1)
14: Gained confidence in job market (N=1)
15: Professional workplace (N=1)

Their responses are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Number</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Through my internship placement I benefited from many aspects. One of these would be my skill in digital technology. Through Extension I have improved and built upon my existing skills in technology as well as gained new knowledge and skills related to my role. My work with Extension has introduced me to many aspects and various fields and provided me with real-world problems I could find solutions to. The growing need for technology, especially with everyone separated and meeting virtual, has led to many challenges. I believe that throughout the Summer I have gained an understanding of the technological difficulties people have and have tried to find, learn, and educate easier and more efficient methods of overcoming these obstacles.”</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>I have also been able to improve on my oral and written communications skills. My role in Extension involved producing a weekly radio spot to promote and event or provide information on programs offered. This allowed me to work on my communication skills by producing effective media. I also learned the importance of providing accommodations including offering closed captioning, including transcripts of videos, and even resizing hard to read text to make it more legible. This past Summer I have greatly improved my job skills and will be able to apply these towards my future career. This job with Extension is something I can look back upon in the future for inspiration and guidance”</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>“Increased familiarity with Extension tasks, goals, and methods. Improved knowledge of Extension-public communication. How to evaluate Extension programs. Coordination with community partners”</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>“Time management was a huge factor that came into play when this job started. I had to learn how to make sure I had time for the livestock agent and the 4H agent. Both were very time consuming”</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>“Working successfully in a leadership role, and using every individuals strengths to bolster an entire team”</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“I gained communication skills, more knowledge of agriculture, how to work with the community, balance work and home life, and how to work with people’s interests”</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>“I gained a general overview of what Extension does day to day and all the reports that are required. I also learned the involvement with local government and how that is key to Extension’s success”</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>“Teamwork and collaboration, digital technology and relevant NC State Cooperative Extension software, career management”</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>“I benefited by learning how an office is ran as far as day-to-day operations. I also learned how to maintain an honest and open relationship with my employer and co-workers”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>“I came to this internship with about seven years of work experience. So for skills such as critical thinking/problem solving, oral/written communications, and teamwork/collaboration it was less about gaining new skills and more about finding new ways to implement and enhance the skills I have developed over the course of my career. I do feel like I gained a significant level of skill in community leadership and development. For example I participated in tourism advisory board meetings and local food council meetings that helped me get a better appreciation and understanding of the role extension plays in facilitating community connections. It was also a fantastic networking opportunity and I was able to connect with many people within and outside of my county placement who could potentially help me with a future career in extension”</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>“Through this internship I was able to strengthen some of the skills I already had, as well as gain many new skills.”</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I was able to work with people who had both similar and different personality and leadership types. One of my favorite opportunities I had through the internship was being able to plan and help with programing for people of all ages and families”</td>
<td>9, 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>“Through my internship placement I have gathered valuable knowledge and skills relating to the extension job market, training, and inner workings.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>More specifically, I have been able to get a feel for the gender placements in extensions and the changing attitude towards women in ag.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I have also developed my oral/written communications, professionalism, and critical thinking/problem solving skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I feel much more confident in my ability to learn fast and compete in the job market”</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>“When given the opportunity I was able to interact with individuals and make visits with the other agents in the office”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>“I increased my ability to work with unfamiliar technology (e.g., Canva, 4-H Online, etc.).”</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I also gained the ability to think critically about program planning in relation to children and the different levels of comprehension and understanding they are capable of.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I experienced one of the most professional and compassionate work places/environments I have ever been a part of. I was met with kindness from everyone I had the opportunity to work with, and gained valuable experience through farm visits, educational video production, job shadowing, etc. I feel more prepared now than I did before to enter into a career related to extension”</td>
<td>8, 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>“I learned a lot about extension that I did not now before I started my internship. Learning how to deliver presentations to different audience I found useful and how to provide answers to plant and farming questions to different growers and homeowners”</td>
<td>2, 7</td>
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