



SUPERVISED INTERNSHIP IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES: THE UNIQUENESS IN THE BACHELOR'S LEVEL INTERNSHIP IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES.

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ABSTRACT

The Supervised Internship I of the Bachelor's Degree in Religious Sciences at UFPB is presented in an unprecedented way in this field of knowledge. It is the first internship of its kind in Brazil for the aforementioned discipline, involving placement in an external organization outside the university. The theme explored during the internship was Literature and the Sacred, with a focus on expanding development through the Juarez Gama Batista Library, located in João Pessoa, Paraíba. Within the Supervised Internship, skills and competencies for the development of Religious Sciences were cultivated, emphasizing the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical application, guided by the theoretical framework of Law 11788/2008. The achieved objectives demonstrated the inseparability of theory and practice, shaping the identity of the Religious Scientist professional through the dynamic interplay between knowing and doing.

Keywords: Internship. Library. Practice. Religion. Theory.

INTRODUCTION

The Supervised Internship I (SI), external to the Higher Education Institution (HEI) for the Bachelor's degree in Religious Sciences (RS), is unprecedented. However, we understand the internship as an integral part of the training for the Religious Sciences bachelor, as it represents a unique importance as a practical stage in academic formation. In this sense, the opportunity offered to students in the course provides an irreplaceable experience in applying the theoretical knowledge acquired, leading them to specific skills relevant to the profession, as well as the exercise of professional competencies for performing as a Scientist of Religions.

We believe that the internship for Religious Sciences undergraduates is justified due to the training provided to the academic in formation, offering the opportunity to apply the acquired knowledge in practical settings, making

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learning significant and enriching. By allowing the experience of practical aspects, which are sometimes not achievable in the classroom, it is provided in this unique moment. Because it is an interdisciplinary science, it lacks practical experience in various religious contexts, which is partly gained during the internship.

Furthermore, in addition to the significant experience of combining theoretical knowledge with practice, in the sense of practicing our profession with expertise, we were evaluated by supervisors regarding our practical performance. They confirmed our strengths and listed areas for improvement, contributing to the affirmation of our professional identity in the field of Religious Studies. Moreover, it confirmed what the curriculum guidelines prescribe for undergraduate courses regarding the values of research, as well as internships and other activities related to extensions, in the quality education of students.

Therefore, the reflection on research and extension in higher education courses must be articulated towards constant updates, as was the case with our bachelor's degree program in the current year. It will undergo the necessary updates based on the results obtained from the field placement (ES), which is part of the training for professionals in Religious Sciences (RS) who will work in the job market, providing significant answers for societal development. The field placement is integral to the professional formation in its specific area, linked to the pedagogical political project of the course, aiming to meet the demands of society.

The effective development of student formation as citizens is regulatory, also aiming at work development. However, it should in no way be understood as a mere requirement tied to a technicist view of the job market. The internship should be understood as a component of education that aims to develop skills and competencies essential to citizen development, not limited to the rules and demands of the job market. According to Marran and Lima (2011), the objective of the internship is to prepare the student to produce through work, provided they are given the opportunity to learn competencies



related to the activity they will perform after completing their studies. This understanding, put into practice in the internship (ES I), confirmed the development in terms of learning the competencies of the Scientist of Religions.

The importance of field placement (ES) for the Bachelor's degree in Religious Sciences (CR) in the current context is considered indispensable; however, we maintain the understanding that an internship is not viewed as the sole element responsible for solving issues in academic society. The decision-making in this regard was in favor of the aspirations for education with a theoretical-practical foundation, which presented a conscious and productive effort without alienation from the formation of a mere executor of ideological tasks. We approached our pursuit based on the demand of two axes: the competence of the professional formed in CR and how they should meet the demands of the society in which they are inserted as a professional. These are relevant issues for defining the field placement; otherwise, the internship would lose its essence, which is the preparation of the student for professional performance in society.

In conclusion, it was demonstrated that theory, combined with practice, empowers the graduate with the freedom provided through the construction of acquired knowledge, leading to an understanding of the inseparability between theoretical education and practice. It is a moment when the Scientist of Religions considers themselves free to choose the job market that aligns with their identity. According to Buriolla (1999), the internship is considered a space for training and learning, as it is where action occurs through learning activities. It is the place where the student forges their professional identity, becoming qualified to develop their professional practices. For this reason, among others, the internship is organized and planned gradually so that all training is systematically conceived by the intern.

THE SUPERVISED INTERNSHIP IN RELIGIOUS SCIENCES

Supervised Internship, an integral part of the training for the Bachelor's degree in Religious Sciences, was of utmost importance as a practical stage in



academic formation. It provided us, as students, with the valuable experience of applying and enhancing our knowledge acquired during the course, as well as the development of specific skills and professional competencies relevant to our performance as Scientists of Religions. The mentioned internship, from the Bachelor's Degree in Religious Sciences at UFPB, occurred as stipulated in Law No. 11,788, dated September 25, 2008, justified by the provisions regarding student internships for those regularly attending Higher Education.

The purpose was the preparation of students for work, as stated in the first article, which pertains to the supervised educational act in the workplace to be performed after graduation, with the aim of preparing for productive work with expertise. Furthermore, the internship is an integral part of the course's pedagogical project, with the responsibility of learning and enabling competencies intrinsic to the professional activity. It also sought curricular contextualization with the goal of developing the graduate to be included in the community's work system.

Therefore, in accordance with Law No. 11,788, we find justification regarding student internships, with the aim of preparing students for work, as stated in:

Article 1: Internship is a supervised educational act, developed in the workplace, aimed at preparing students for productive work who are attending regular education in higher education institutions, [...].

Paragraph 1: The internship is part of the course's pedagogical project and integrates the formative itinerary of the student.

Paragraph 2: The internship aims at learning competencies specific to the professional activity and curricular contextualization, with the objective of developing the student for civic life and work (Brazil, 2008, p. 1).

Regarding compliance with the mentioned law, which aims at the development of the student's formation as a citizen and also for work development, it should not be confused as merely a requirement of the job market. The internship should be understood as a component of education that aims to develop skills and competencies essential to the development of the citizen, not limited to rules and demands of the job market, because:



This Law has as its objective for Supervised Curricular Internship the preparation for productive work of students, aiming at learning competencies specific to the professional activity and curricular contextualization. Its provision should be included in the pedagogical projects of undergraduate courses and integrate the formative itinerary of the student, therefore, in a provocation or pursuit of the student's instrumentalization in any modalities, stages, or levels (Marran; Lima, 2011, p. 4).

We understand that the Supervised Internship (SI) for undergraduates in Religious Sciences (CR) was justified by the training of the academic in formation, where the construction of theoretical knowledge translates into practical application through the internship, making the learning complete, enriching, and meaningful. This was the opportunity to work and experience practical aspects, provided at this moment of applying knowledge. In terms of its interdisciplinary nature, Religious Sciences require participation in practical experience within a variety of religious contexts, a moment offered by the internship.

Therefore, we complete the construction of knowledge as CR professionals, grounded in the theoretical knowledge acquired in combination with the practical experience provided by the internship. In this sense, with theoretical/practical training, we consider ourselves capable of performing our competencies with expertise, having been evaluated in practical performance by supervisors who issued documents about our performance—an important factor for the Scientist of Religions in affirming their professional identity. Additionally, as stated in Opinion No. 776/97, which guides the curriculum guidelines for undergraduate courses, in relation to the proposers' recommendations, principles such as "7) Strengthen the articulation of theory with practice, valuing individual and collective research, as well as internships and participation in extension activities" should be observed (Brazil, 1997, p. 2). Therefore:

The understanding of supervised curricular internship as a period dedicated to a teaching and learning process translates into the recognition that, although the education provided in the classroom is crucial, alone, it is not sufficient to prepare students for the practice of their profession (Marran; Lima, 2011, p. 7).



In this sense, we present the importance of the supervised internship (ES) for the bachelor's degree, according to the understanding of Marran and Lima (2011), who argue that it is not plausible for the internship to bear the sole responsibility for solving all the problems presented by society, given that the course and the internship are characterized by trans-disciplinarity. The decision-making in this regard pertains to the aspirations of a differentiated education, resulting in productive work without alienating the training of a mere executor of ideological tasks, considering:

The perspective of "productive work" brought by the mentioned legislation provides clues for questioning at least two axes present in the main demands of multilateral organizations, namely: "What kind of individual do we aim to educate?" and linked to this: "For what kind of society?" These questions are intrinsic when discussing supervised curricular internship in Brazil, especially in Higher Education, regarding the tendency toward teaching and the distancing from research and extension (Marran; Lima, 2011, p. 4, authors' emphasis).

We understand that the Supervised Internship (ES) has theoretical foundation; however, in the Bachelor's degree in Religious Sciences, the execution of the internship outside the university seems innovative, as stated by Azevedo (2015, p. 39), who emphasizes this need due to: "No student grows when content with the minimum. When engaged in research activities, it's as if they take a course within a course. It's a new world opening up to them. The experience is akin to the discovery of reading." Therefore, according to Azevedo's comparison, the internship is indispensable for the graduating student. In this sense, what is proposed by the rapporteurs in Opinion CNE No. 776/97 is that Higher Education Institutions should:

[...] 3) Avoid unnecessary prolongation of the duration of undergraduate courses; 4) Encourage a solid general education necessary for the future graduate to overcome the challenges of renewed conditions in professional practice and knowledge production, allowing various types of training and differentiated qualifications in the same program; 5) Stimulate practices of independent study, aiming for a progressive professional and intellectual autonomy of the student; 6) Encourage the recognition of knowledge, skills, and competencies acquired outside the school environment, including those related to professional experience deemed relevant to the considered training area; [...] (Brazil, 1997)

Therefore, after the completion of the Supervised Internship (ES) for the Bachelor's degree in Religious Sciences (CR), external to the Higher Education



Institution (IES), it demonstrates compliance with the current legislation by the Department of Religious Sciences at the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), through the Bachelor's Degree in CR. This observation shows that the HEI/UFPB prioritizes the comprehensive training of the professional Scientist of Religions.

Reflection on research and extension in Higher Education courses should be articulated in the sense of constant updating. In this regard, we will contribute with our published results at the conclusion of the ES, as CR undergraduates, to develop our skills in the job market, sharing knowledge that is measured by receiving meaningful responses through the development of society wherever we are inserted. Therefore, for Marran and Lima, "[...] supervised curricular internship cannot be a separate category from professional training; on the contrary, it must be linked to the course's pedagogical project, transversalizing it and resignifying it in response to societal demands" (2011, p. 12).

Furthermore, we understand that theory contextualized with practice has made us aware of the freedom provided by the acquired knowledge, to the point of understanding that theoretical and practical training are inseparable. Therefore, we feel empowered to choose our job market, which, according to Buriolla's understanding:

Internship is conceived as a training ground, a space for learning concrete practices [...], where a range of situations and professional learning activities manifest for the intern, considering their education. The internship is the locus where the student's professional identity is generated, constructed, and referred to; it is oriented towards the development of a lived, reflective, and critical action, and therefore, should be planned gradually and systematically (Buriolla, 1999, p. 13, author's emphasis).

In this sense, and according to Buriolla's understanding (1999), the training ground is part of the education of the Bachelor in Religious Sciences (CR) since it is the actual site where real situations to be faced manifest. Therefore, our space for learning practical skills was configured, which consequently led us to emancipation, as it is the place where the professional identity of the Bachelor in CR is generated. Regarding professional identity, it



pertains to the mastery of competencies inherent to the education, acquired through on-site internship activities, contextualized by the inseparability of theory and practice.

Concerning the chosen location for ES I, we affirm that it is legitimized by the conditions it presents, as well as its viability. The location, which features ample, secure, and reserved space, highlights dedicated furniture for the library system. The collection, our working tool, includes a significant number of works on religions to be explored. It is well-located geographically, convenient for those intending to use their transportation, with ample and free parking, as well as for those opting for public transportation, which has transport lines heading in various directions.

The internship was carried out at the Juarez da Gama Batista Library (BJGB), located in the José Lins do Rego Cultural Space in the city of João Pessoa, the capital of the state of Paraíba. Inaugurated in 1982, the José Lins do Rego Cultural Space is a facility that offers a variety of attractions. The site houses the Archidy Picado Gallery, Lutheria, Planetarium, José Lins do Rêgo Museum, Anthenor Navarro School of Music, Arena Theater, Paulo Pontes Theater, School of Dance, Science Station, mezzanines for exhibitions, Circus School, and the BJGB.

According to the Paraíba Cultural Space Foundation (FUNESC), the BJGB acts as a popular and democratic institution for education, culture, leisure, information, and knowledge. It has a spacious area equipped with study booths, communal tables, and individual study desks in an open space. Today, it is the largest public library in Paraíba, with one of the best collections in the Northeast. With 200,000 works, its goal is to reach a capacity of 250,000. It features a children's space and computers connected to the internet. It encompasses the State Public Library System and provides assistance to municipalities in the state with the implementation of libraries, training, and technical support.



The development of Supervised Internship I had Professor Dr. Vitor Chaves de Souza as the internship coordinator and Professor Dr. Kelly Thaysy Lopes Nascimento as the internship supervisor. We worked according to the Activities Plan elaborated and provided by the internship supervisor from the Department of CR, UFPB, as well as the Preliminary Internship Plan elaborated by this intern. The Activities Plan outlined a period of 13 (thirteen) weeks with a workload of 4 (four) hours per week, starting on August 14, 2023, and concluding on November 3, 2023.

As part of the internship development planning, we formulated a Preliminary Internship Plan with objectives to be achieved, aiming to determine the desired outcomes, i.e., a strategy for conducting the work. In this regard, we sought to apply the knowledge acquired during the Bachelor's degree in CR, putting into practice the concepts and theories studied in the classroom. The goal was to bridge the gap between theory and the practical reality of the Scientist of Religions, to be developed within the literature and religion collection of the BJGB.

To implement the plan, we focused on identifying the collection of works on literature and religion within the library, comparing the list of cataloged and displayed works on literature and religion in the library. This procedure was carried out primarily to investigate the available collection on literature and religion, listing the need for acquiring new works to ensure that the library meets the community's needs.

In this sense, we conducted Supervised Internship I through structured research based on what was proposed in the Activities Plan, following the approach outlined by Saulo de Tarso Cerqueira Baptista from the State University of Pará, where:

Research is a labor guided by the epistemological foundations that define the status of scientific production. Nevertheless, the practice of research is also an exercise in artistic practice in the poietic sense of knowing how to do, according to Aristotle's classification of types of knowledge. The researcher develops acuity and sensitivity to perceive the concreteness or appearance of a phenomenon. They strive for the selection and application of methods and work techniques. They



decide what is necessary and sufficient for the most complete understanding of a phenomenon, within the limits of what is possible, given the current situation. They establish the scope and limits of their study, as well as the conjectural nature, arbitrariness, and plausibility of their choices, and the verifiability and falsifiability of the results of their research (Silveira, 2018, p. 22, author's emphasis).

The internship for the Bachelor's in CR was an opportunity to practice and engage in research, as stated by Silveira (2019), where the development of the perception of a phenomenon was deemed necessary. Therefore, the application of the working methods learned in the classroom was indispensable. In this sense, the application of theory in practice was emphasized, that is, the essential interaction for reflective action, confirming the feasibility of the union of theory with practice, according to the understanding of Marran and Lima:

The understanding of the inseparability of the theoretical and practical dimensions of the reality in which the professional will build their identity through the dynamism between knowing and doing, between the training situation and the work situation, can contribute to their improvement and the understanding of formative action as a permanent dimension in the professional field, both at the undergraduate level (horizontal growth) and in the pursuit of training in research, among other aspects (vertical growth) (2011, p. 6, authors' emphasis).

Within the studied context and understanding the inseparability of theoretical and practical dimensions, we conducted research to gather data from the library collection focused on literature and religion. We applied procedures for qualitative content analysis (image, summary, and reference for each work) and quantitative analysis in the creation of a control list. The generated document was the production of data from the collection displayed on the shelves, related to Religious Sciences (CR), accompanied by a review of the work and observations. The developed work was stored in the library's database, in the Online Excel System, a location defined by the internship supervisor, Executive Manager of Cultural Education at BJGB, Tatiana de Fátima Cavalcante Silva.

We conducted an analysis of the physical collection displayed on the shelves and compared it with the implementation of works in the system related to CR. The list of works processed by us, interns, is organized by the



cataloging order of the System belonging to the library, enabling control of both digital and physical files. Additionally, the classification of works and system updates make it possible to generate reliable reports. We also identified a significant number of uncataloged works received in the technical room, which, when cataloged and inserted into the System, will allow for the production of identification reports. This will be greatly helpful in meeting the needs for works that have not yet been included in the library, especially those related to literature and religion.

Regarding the uncataloged collection not yet implemented in the system, it will serve as motivation for future research. This procedure is necessary to identify the acquisition needs for works related to religious entities that have not been covered, aiming at establishing the Religious Literature Center in the Library. In this regard, the ongoing planning will be based on the list of religious entities in João Pessoa, involving contacts with leaders to obtain specific works from their religious denominations, including their foundational books if available.

The process will be somewhat complex, generating significant information that will require specific treatment. To ensure that the diverse material produced does not deviate from its purpose, the search should adhere to academic criteria, as stated by Silveira (2018, p. 207): "This literature involves a broad set of written material on the investigated topic. This search can be conducted through consultations and studies of articles, books, theses, dissertations, monographs, dictionaries, or other forms." This work should be carried out by someone with expertise in the researched content, namely, the Scientist of Religions.

In terms of adhering to the plan regarding the stock in the Technical Room, due to time constraints, it was not possible to implement it. This aspect will be the subject of research and implementation for the next interns. We will continue the research on the inventory, which will involve identifying, classifying, and storing the items in stock until the space for display in the library is determined. Regarding the space for Religious Sciences (CR),



research will be conducted among religious entities to inquire about the supply of works related to their denominations. The received material will undergo the same process as the items in stock: identification, classification, and storage. However, we understand that not all consulted entities will likely offer material about their denomination, requiring a new decision from the researching intern.

Lastly, and no less important, it is crucial to keep a keen mind for recording information and observations. These should be documented as soon as they are made to avoid losing details. Additionally, understanding the internship goals, including getting acquainted with the library's collection related to religion, making efforts to inventory the works and produce reports, and seeking to comprehend and plan a likely space for the exhibition of the religion-focused collection.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the context of external social service (ES) in higher education institutions (IES), regarding the Bachelor's degree in Social Work (CR), it would be impossible to draw a conclusion about what has not been concluded. Moreover, passing judgment and considering it as final conclusions place us under an impossible burden to bear. I understand that we will make some significant considerations here, providing readers of this essay with encouragement to continue the discussion on this inconclusive matter.

As mentioned earlier, we are dealing with a novel topic in the Bachelor's degree in Social Work: the external internship outside the institution where the student is formed. This is where theoretical learning is confronted with practical experience, both taught within the institution that has opened itself to the confirmation that its methodology fulfills the proposed objectives. This work comes at a stage where more than 50% of the training course is underway, and its graduates will present to society what they have truly learned in the university classrooms.



However, we are here to highlight the points related to the importance of putting into practice what has been socialized during this extended period of over two years of study. In this sense, we were given an unprecedented experience as the first cohort of the Bachelor's degree in Social Work at UFPB, facing the uniqueness of the irreplaceable experience of applying the theoretical knowledge acquired. We understand the apprehension and concern on the part of both students and faculty involved in such a significant process.

However, what we have to report is that there was indeed apprehension, particularly in terms of assimilation and learning from what was shared in the classroom, from what is cognizable. With gratitude, we affirm that the internship for Social Work undergraduates is justified by the work carried out by dedicated teachers and students interested in building quality education for those who believe that doing belongs to those who trust in the development of their abilities. The courage to apply in practice the acquired knowledge has turned our learning about Social Work into a meaningful and enriching knowledge construction.

The opportunity to experience practical aspects, which are sometimes not attainable in the classroom, was provided in this unique moment. As a science based on interdisciplinarity, it lacks the practical experience of various religious contexts, which was partly gained during the field placement. In addition to the significant experience of integrating theoretical knowledge with practice in order to exercise our profession with expertise, we were evaluated by supervisors on our practical performance, validating our internship and contributing to the affirmation of our professional identity in the field of Religious Studies. Furthermore, it confirmed what the curriculum guidelines prescribe for undergraduate courses regarding the values of research, as well as internships and other activities related to extensions, in the quality education of students.

Therefore, reflecting on research and extension in higher education courses, concerning the maintenance of constant updates, was what



happened with our current year's Bachelor's degree program. It will undergo necessary updates based on the results obtained from the field placement, which is part of the training of professionals in Religious Studies who will work in the job market, providing meaningful answers for the development of society. The field placement is an integral part of the professional training in their specific area, linked to the pedagogical political project of the course in order to meet the demands of society.

Our effective formation as students and citizens is intricately linked to field placement (ES), aiming also at developing work with responsibility. The internship is understood as a component of our education that led us to work on skills and competencies essential to citizen development. The planned objective of the field placement translates into our academic preparation to produce through work, as we were given the opportunity to learn competencies related to the future activities, we will engage in upon completing our courses. This understanding was put into practice in ES I and confirmed our development in terms of learning CR competencies.

As a conclusive result of our ES I, we present the achieved objectives satisfactorily, considering the validations we sought as academic benchmarks. The effectiveness of theory combined with practice resulted in a solid construction of doing with expertise. This was evident through the liberating sensation experienced when realizing the construction of knowledge, we acquired. In the context of this specific knowledge, we understand that it was the result of the aforementioned effect caused by the inseparability between theoretical education and practical application. In this unique moment, as Scientists of Religions, we feel empowered and free to pursue our place in the job market according to our now-established identity.

Finally, I understand that the word "conclusion" regarding the construction of scientific work implies that the text is closed, that it has been completed, and the absolute truth is established. However, according to Senra (2016), and I concur with this perspective, opening the text to debate is beneficial as it leads to a deeper understanding of knowledge under



construction, resulting in the evolution of science. Therefore, we agree with the mentioned understanding and leave the text produced partially to be continued.

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