

Internship Performance and Employability Skills of Hospitality Management Students: Basis for Enhancement Program

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Abstract: The study aimed to determine the level of internship performance and employability skills of hospitality management students in terms of food and beverage, housekeeping, food preparation, guest service and sales and marketing. The subject of this study were the one hundred ninety nine (199) hospitality management students enrolled in the different higher education institution in the city and in the province of Iloilo. This study was conducted during the Academic Year 2018-2019. The duly validated questionnaire to evaluate the level of performance and employability skills of hospitality management student's were utilized in this study. The percentage, frequency count, mean, standard deviation rank and t-test for independent sample were used in the study. All tests were set at 0.05 alpha level of significance using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22. Findings of the study revealed that the internship performance of the student trainees in food and beverage service, housekeeping, food preparation, guest service and sales and marketing were very satisfactory. The result also showed that there was no significant difference in the employability skills of the students in terms of food and beverage, housekeeping, food preparation, guest service and sales and marketing when they were grouped according to higher education institution. When student trainees were grouped according to internship affiliation, the result showed that there was no significant difference found in guest service and sales and marketing however, significant difference was noted in food and beverage, housekeeping and food preparation. In terms of location of internship venue, student trainees in the city of Iloilo obtained the highest mean rating compared to student trainees at the Province of Iloilo.

It was recommended that results of this study be disseminated to the concerned higher education institutions to strengthen their internship program specifically on the competencies with least dominant skills. Furthermore, skills training workshop was recommended to be conducted to enhance the performance and employability skills of the students to be more competent in the various areas as required by the hospitality industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

Hospitality is one of the industries with the primary goal of serving customers. The industry evolves a wide range of businesses dedicated for the service of people away from home. Often, the hospitality product is an experience and the customer walks away with nothing more than a memory. Experts recommend students to have hands-on activities within the industry combined with the coursework in the university. As the industry continues to grow, so does the demand for highly trained and qualified people to continuously fill new positions.

Effective education and training can take place only when there is congruence between school learning and industry employment experience. This theory of congruence means that the students' school experiences must reflect actual skills needed in the industry. The experience would include instruction, processes, work ethics and attitudes, facilities like training venues, shops, tools and equipment, safety or accident prevention measures and acquisition of work employability skills.

Dr. Jose Vergara Jr. (1986) proposed the Technical and Vocational Education Act. He emphasized that the need for trained manpower is very necessary in economic planning for industrialization and development. This conforms to the development of manpower skills among the hospitality students through internship requirement.

As an answer to this concern, the creation of Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) was a reform in education.

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) is the government agency tasked to manage and supervise technical education and skills development (TESD) in the Philippines. It was created by virtue of Republic Act 7796, otherwise known as the "Technical Education and Skills Development Act of 1994." The said Act integrated the functions of the former National Manpower and Youth Council (NMYC), the Bureau of Technical-Vocational Education of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (BTVE-DECS) and the Office of Apprenticeship of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

With the cited conditions, a general scenario was observed by the researcher: that there was a mismatch on the line of work of graduates in the hospitality management degree concerning the training program performance and employability skills of the students. Students are expected to learn more of the required skills during their internship training, but they learn less because they are usually assigned to work on jobs not related to their course. The number of hours acquired was less, and less opportunities were offered to learn employability skills. They were even required to perform janitorial tasks or act like a messenger.

Due to this observations, the researcher was prompted to conduct a study and determine the level of internship performance and employability skills of the hospitality management students. From the results, an enhancement program was developed to help improve the performance and skills of the student interns making their experiences meaningful and productive; hence, this study.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of internship performance and employability skills of the Hospitality Management students as basis for an enhancement program.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of internship performance of the Hospitality Management students in terms of food and beverage, housekeeping, food preparation, guest service and sales, and marketing?
2. What are the employability skills of the Hospitality Management students in terms of food and beverage service, housekeeping service, food preparation competency, guest service skills and sales, and marketing?
3. Is there a significant difference in the level of internship performance on the competencies of the Hospitality Management students in terms of type of higher education institution, internship affiliation and location of internship venue?
4. Is there a significant difference in the employability skills of the Hospitality Management students in terms of type of higher education institution, internship affiliation and location of internship venue?
5. What enhancement program can be developed?

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There was no significant difference in the level of internship performance of Hospitality Management students in terms of higher education institution, internship affiliation and location of internship venue.
2. There was no significant difference in the employability skills of Hospitality Management students when grouped according to the higher education institution, internship affiliation and location of internship venue.

Definitions of Terms

For better understanding, the major terms used in the study were clustered and given their conceptual and operational definitions:

Employability. Employability is a set of achievements such as skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy (Yorke & Knight, 2004).

In this study, employability skills referred to the competencies acquired by the hospitality students specifically in food and beverage, housekeeping, food preparation, guest service and sales, and marketing

Food and beverage service. Food and beverage service is defined as the process of preparing, presenting and serving of food and beverage to guests. It provides fully prepared food and drinks for immediate consumption on or off premises (Carino, 2013).

In this study, food and beverage service competencies referred to the skills acquired by hospitality management students during their FBS instructions.

Food preparation. Food preparation means to prepare food for eating by applying heat. It involves recipes or formulas which give the proportion of ingredients to be used, the methods of combining them and the cooking process involved (Marcos & Pastor, 2000).

In this study, food preparation competencies referred to the skills performed by students in hospitality management during their internship in the kitchen area of a restaurant/hotel/resort.

Guest service. Guest service is the backbone of any industry. It is the provision of personalized attention to the customers to make their stay enjoyable (Andrews & Anchal, 2008).

In this study, guest service competencies referred to the skills of the hospitality students when attending to guests to provide their needs and services.

Housekeeping . Housekeeping refers to the upkeep and maintenance of cleanliness and order in a house or lodging establishment such as inn, hotel, apartel, condominium, resort, dormitory or hospital (Roldan & Crespo, 2016).

In this study, housekeeping competencies referred to the 10 set of skills the students acquired during their rooms division instructions.

Internship. This refers to the practical application of classroom learning to the actual regular work environment such as, but not limited to, commercial and industrial services, and government or non-government agencies. It is also synonymous to practicum, field practice or on-the-job training (Article III, Section 2, CMO No. 104 s 2017).

In this study, internship performance referred to the evaluation or accomplishment of hospitality management students during their training/exposure in the host/partner establishments.

Sales and marketing. Sales and marketing perform workplace activities for selling and advertising products and for increasing sales by understanding what customers want, or how much they will pay (dictionary.cambridge.org).

In this study, sales and marketing competencies referred to the skills of HM students in presentation, decision making etc. during their internship exposure.

Training. Training is an ongoing activity that is conducted by selected individuals within each department (Careno C., et al., 2013).

In this study, training referred to the learning process in which Hospitality Management students acquire knowledge, skills and experience that they need in order to perform their jobs well for the achievement of their organizational goals. This is also a process of increasing the knowledge and skills of the students in doing a particular job.

Training program. Training program is a structured and procedural activity or effort designed to improve human performance with the process of teaching, informing, imparting or educating people to acquire specific levels of knowledge, skills, aptitudes, or abilities and can be applied to perform a job better (Jucius & Van Dersal, 1975).

In this study, training program referred to the proposed enhancement program for courses with internship training specifically Hospitality Management students.

Trainees. Trainees refers to the person qualified to undergo the dual training system for the purpose of acquiring and developing job qualification.

In this study, trainees referred to Hospitality Management students who underwent apprenticeship or practicum to enhance their creative thinking and problem solving skills.

Significance of the Study

The dream to train and employ highly skilled workers is common among all training centers and academic institutions. The popular trend for strong school-industry linkage in training has reached a growing level as evidenced by increasing number of industries and educational institutions improving their on-the-job training programs. Along these concepts, the study aimed to determine the internship performance and employability skills of the Hospitality Management students of state universities, colleges and private institutions in Iloilo City. The result of the study could be beneficial and useful to the following:

CHED and TESDA. The data and information of the study could serve as a guide to the Commission on Higher Education and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority in the formulation and revision of policies and guidelines of their internship/on-the-job training program requirements.

Curriculum Planners and Internship/Industry Linkages Coordinators. The information based on the result of the study could serve as a baseline data for the curriculum planners, school administrators and internship/industry linkages coordinators for the revision, enhancement and offering of a new program. Internship/industry linkages coordinators can utilize the data in the revision/formulation of policies and guidelines in the conduct of internship/ojt in their respective units.

Stakeholders. The output could guide stakeholders especially the parents and students about the right decision on their career choices, skills and employment prospects.

Future Researchers. The study could serve as guide and motivating factor to conduct similar studies that will contribute to further improvement of internship training program and employability skills of students in the school and in the industry to produce well-trained and prepared industry workers. Further, the result of the this study may be used to validate the findings on the actual skills needed by the market on the graduates.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study aimed to find out the internship performance and employability skills of the Hospitality Management students of state universities and colleges and the private institutions in Iloilo City as basis for an enhancement program.

This was conducted last December, 2018 to January, 2019 at Iloilo City.

The researcher's made questionnaire duly validated and tested for its reliability was used to gather the data from 199 Hospitality Management students of Second Semester, Academic Year 2018-2019.

The statistical tools used were frequency count, percentage, weighted mean, rank and t-test. The data was tested at 0.05 level of significance. All statistical computation was processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

2. METHODOLOGY

This chapter consist of the research design, sources of data, subjects of the study, data gathering instrument, data gathering procedure and the data processing technique.

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive survey method of research. According to Posinasett (2011), a descriptive study is one in which information is collected without changing the environment (i.e., nothing is manipulated). It is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. The methods involved range from the survey which describes the status quo, the correlation study which investigates the relationship between variables, to developmental studies which seek to determine changes over time.

Descriptive survey research can be quantitative. It involves collections of quantitative information that can be tabulated along a continuum in numerical form, such as scores on a test or the number of times a person chooses to use a-certain feature of a multimedia program, or it can describe categories of information such as gender or patterns of interaction

when using technology in a group situation. Descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection (Glass & Hopkins, 1984).

In this study, the researcher generated the data on the internship performance and employability skills of hospitality management student trainees of the higher education institutions (state universities and colleges and private institutions) in Iloilo City and Province of Iloilo. The study used description as a tool to organize data into patterns that emerge during the analysis. Those patterns aid the researcher's mind in comprehending a qualitative study and its implications.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the data, analysis and interpretation of data gathered on the internship performance and employability skills of hospitality management student trainees of selected higher education institutions within the City and Province of Iloilo.

Results show that the level of internship performance of hospitality management students in food and beverage was very satisfactory (M= 4.28). The competency with the highest mean ratings included the following: prepare dining area for service (M=4.42), serve and clear food and drinks (M= 4.41) and serve meal correctly (M=4.33), while the areas with the lowest ratings included: clarify details of food orders (M=4.17), *mise-en-place* for next service (M=4.23) and carry plates according to industry standards, and set trays and trolleys and take and process orders (M= 4.24).

Internship Performance of Hospitality Management Student Trainees in Terms of Food and Beverages Service Competencies

The result of the study conforms with the study of Buted (2014), that majority of the intern had a very satisfactory performance in the food and beverage services and the interns obtained a very good performance rating in personality followed by attitude, knowledge and skills.

It implies that the competencies learned and skills developed by the student trainees conforms with the needed competencies required by the hospitality industry. The institutions offering hospitality management program that incorporates internship in their curriculum perceive student satisfaction in their internship training program.

The result reveals that the level of internship performance of Hospitality Management students in housekeeping was very satisfactory (M=4.16). The competencies with the highest mean ratings included the following: replacing the bed linen (M=4.28), preparing cleaning supplies for rooms (M=2.25), and checking pillows and linen for stain (M=4.25), while the competencies with the lowest ratings included cleaning shoes based on the guest instruction (M=3.96), preparing reports on laundered items (M=4.04) and set luggage in rooms based on industry standards.

This means that the student trainees were competent in performing their functions in terms of bed linen replacement, preparing supplies for cleaning the rooms and checking pillows and linen for stain as reflected by their very satisfactory performance. On the other hand, while student trainees performed in a very satisfactory way in their housekeeping responsibilities, they needed further experiences to develop their competencies in terms of cleaning shoes based on the guest instruction , preparing reports on laundered items and set luggage in rooms based on industry standards.

Schools should place their student trainees in various internships to gain relevant skills and training and to strengthen their connections with the industry. Their internship performance is considered to be more authentic than traditional paper and pencil classroom testing approach.

Student trainees should also develop and apply various skills that they will need to enable them to make a smooth transition from the classroom to the industry.

4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the data presented.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the internship performance and employability skills of the Hospitality Management students. The results of which were the basis for an enhancement program.

The subject of this study were the 199 Hospitality Management students enrolled in the higher education institution in Iloilo city and in the Province of Iloilo. This study was conducted during the Academic Year 2018-2019. The duly validated questionnaire was used to evaluate the level of performance and employability of Hospitality Management students. The percentage, frequency count, means, standard deviation, ranking and t-test for independent sample were used in this study. Tests were set at 0.05 alpha level of significance using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22.

The findings of the study were as follows:

1. The internship performance of the student trainees in food and beverage service, housekeeping, food preparation, guest service, sales and marketing were very satisfactory.
2. No significant differences were found on the internship performance of the trainees when grouped according to higher education institution enrolled in, and location of the internship venue.
3. Significant differences were found on the internship performance of the trainees when grouped according to internship affiliation.
4. For the employability skills under the food and beverage, the most dominant competency were to prepare a dining area for service, serve and clear food and drinks and serve meal correctly. While the least dominant competency were on clarify details of food orders, *mise-en-place* for next service and set trays and trolleys.
5. For the employability skills under the housekeeping, the most dominant competency were preparing the cleaning supplies for rooms, replacing bed linen and cleaning premises, while the areas with the least dominant competency include the cleaning shoes based on guest instruction, preparing reports on laundered items and setting luggage in rooms based on industry standards.

following: demonstrating critical thinking, willingness to ask for guidance and giving attention to accuracy and details.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The student trainees perform very well in the assigned tasks and the skills they develop conform with the competencies required by the industry.
2. The internship performance of the student trainees are almost the same when they are grouped as to higher education institution enrolled in and the location of the internship venue.
3. The internship affiliations affect the internship performance of the student trainees.
4. The quality of instruction and skills training provided by the institutions in preparation of the student for industry work meet the standard set by the industry.
5. The least dominant competencies are the topics to be included in the enhancement program to be developed like clarifying details of food orders, *mise-en place* for the next service, cleaning shoes based on guest instruction, preparing reports on laundered items, setting luggage in room based on industry standard, following workplace hygienic procedure in cleaning, assembling ingredients according to correct sequence, preparing dishes under time constraint, preparing daily reports, orienting guest about the facilities and amenities, applying product knowledge, demonstrating critical thinking , willingness to ask for guidance and attention to accuracy and details.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendation were drawn:

1. An enhancement program could be developed focusing on the least dominant competencies in the areas of food and beverage service, housekeeping, food preparation, guest service and sales and marketing. It is further recommended that proper monitoring and implementation of the program be conducted to give students greater opportunities for employment after graduation.

2. It is imperative that results be disseminated to the concerned HEIs. The internship coordinators importantly monitor and observe the behavior of the student trainees; this should be done because the behavior of the student trainees vary from one situation to another. To achieve a higher level of internship performance, the faculty handling shop subjects should initiate or conduct activities that will meet the industry requirements.
3. Faculty handling shop subjects in Hospitality Management should initiate and conduct other activities utilizing strategies that enhanced the students skills and knowledge in preparations for their internship training in the industry. The activities to be conducted should be pattern with the TESDA requirements for the students to pass or qualify for the NC assessment.
4. Similar studies could be conducted utilizing other possible variables to validate the results of the present study.
5. It is necessary for students to take the National Competency Certificate as required by TESDA. The NC results may be considered as the students' passport in looking for a job in the future. This is also an indication that students gain adequate knowledge, skills, values and proper training in the colleges or universities they graduated from.

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