Effectiveness of BSHRM Curriculum in Developing Competence among the on-the-Job Trainees of King's College of the Philippines

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Abstract: The Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) program is geared towards equipping students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to provide quality service in the hospitality industry. Its primary concentration is on the development of practical and management skills which are achieved through the combination of theoretical classes, practicum exercises, and experiential learning. One of the requisites in determining the student's ability to perform job responsibilities is by means of a practicum program (also called internships or work programs). The effort and collaboration of the faculty and institution, industry partners and related organizations need to align the program with the industry requirements. Engaging students on the experiential learning activities is one way of develop competencies. These will become an edge of the program. The objective of the study is to explore the effectiveness of the BSHRM curriculum in developing the competency to the graduates as observed in actual experience during the internship.

I. Introduction

Hospitality industry employers, worldwide are expecting graduates to be work ready, possessing competencies such as interpersonal skills, teamwork skills, communication skills, and problem-solving skills to make them employable (Andrews, 2015; Balakrishnan, 2016).Kokt (2018). These means that graduatescomprise four main components which are knowledge, skills, attributes and ability.

ASEAN 2012 consider in its trainee manual the industry knowledge as a vital pre-requisite for effective performance within the industry. It is important in tourism industry to keep an up-to-date information due to the demand to talk to customers about industry specific events, trends and happenings; know when you need to update your training (knowledge and skills) in line with changes in legislation, equipment, trends and industry best practice; communicate effectively with colleagues and management who have themselves kept up-to-date and learn new techniques.

According to article of Rensol Recruitment, the demand for hospitality services has grown bigger as millennials, the wanderlust generation, conquered one-third of the world's hotel guests and may reach 50 percent by 2020. Meanwhile, this increase in the global consumer trend hasn't corresponded with the level of competency of the hospitality workforce. In a report by the Food Service Consultants Society International (FCSI), hospitality, despite being a people industry, unfortunately, lacks the right people for the right skill set. However, talent imbalance is identified as a crisis on human capital, one of the struggles in the hospitality recruitment. The international hospitality industry has been long suffering from an under-skilled labor force based on FCSI's Taste of Society 2020 Report. Moreover, it said that matching talent's competitiveness to the necessity of the current market has been has been a crisis being ignored.

One of the biggest challenges that hospitality educators face today is determining clear goals and objectives for the curriculum that meets the constantly changing needs of the industry. It is crucial to close the gap between what is taught to students and what the industry expects of the students being hired (Dopson &Tas, 2004).Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou (2015) suggested that the most important aspect of the development of educational programmes in tourism is the relevance of the curriculum to the needs of the tourism industry. The stakeholder groups can influence, or are affected by, tourism curricula decisions, and their interests with respect to tourism development should be taken into account when developing curricula (Lewis, 2006). Therefore, to ensure that education for a tourism career is relevant to the employers within the industry, better communication between tourism education providers and the tourism industry is needed (Wang, Ayres &Huyton, 2010).

Since the beginning of the 20th century, higher education institutions have been trying to determine what the outcome of higher education is supposed to be (Urciouli, 2005). Hospitality educators agree with clear objectives that the curriculum should be determined and those objectives should meet the constantly changing needs of the industry in order to prepare graduates for a successful career (Gursoy & Swanger, 2004).

Most commonly, school systems in many countries made use of Outcome Based Education. Student-centered teaching and learning is the recommended approach to modern day pedagogy especially in the Outcomes-based Education where the teachers served as the facilitator of learning activities rather than performing the traditional lecture method (Laguador, 2014; Laguador & Dotong, 2013).

Higher Educations are encountering many changes and challenges brought by the new concept set by CHED. There are calls for curriculum revisions to meet global standard and work competitiveness (Bay, 2013) though study remains one of the means to standardized certification in evaluating qualified professionals (Gomez & Panaligan, 2013). Outcome-Based Education is a process of training and program of study scheming that emphasizes the results given by the students through their span of learning in an institution with the support of the on-the-job training programs (Bernardo et al., 2014; Martinez et al., 2014; Laguador, 2015; An & Mauhay, 2016). The core emphasis of this program is the contribution they would impart after being educated and molded by the teachers. Leadership capabilities are strengthened to maximize the potentials of the learners to handle higher responsibilities (Laguador, Velasquez & Florendo, 2013). With this, HEIs update their program and facilities, as well as the instructional materials used in teaching and the approaches and strategies utilized by the instruction specialists (Flores et al., 2015).

One of the requisites in determining the student's ability to perform job responsibilities is by means of a practicum program (also called internships or work programs). An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting (National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), 2010). Practicum helps to sharpen the students to aim necessary competency standard set by the hospitality industry. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

The Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHMR) program of King's College of the Philippines (KCP) aims to prepare graduates with necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to provide quality service in the hospitality industry. As part of the curriculum, the program provides training to the students through the memorandum of agreement with different hospitality businesses locally. During practicum program, students have an actual training that can apply the knowledge, skills and attitude acquired in the institution.

The main objective of this study is to explore the effectiveness of the BSHRM curriculum in developing the competency to the graduates as observed in actual experience. This study will provide data on the required competency of the program as perceived by the industry. Moreover, it will gain insights into competency gaps in the academic and industry. This will identify the key needs for improving the program and competency development for tourism-hospitality professionals. This study is important for different stakeholders in the hospitality industry. This competencies as the knowledge, work performance and attitudes necessary to be competitive in the 21st century workforce. The study is further important to the broader body of knowledge since it will add to the understanding of the hospitality industry in the case of the Philippines and application in a business venture with the diverse product offering and corporate structures

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II. Questionnaire Design

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The study used Descriptive Research Design to determine the level of competence and its significant difference of the OJTs. Also, it sought to determine the problems encountered by the industry partners during the OJT program. The method is designed for the researcher to gather information on the work performance, knowledge and attitude of the OJTs during the second semester of academic year 2019-2020. In order to gather the necessary data, the researchers utilized the descriptive method, using quantitative approaches.

A representative of the employees and the immediate supervisor or on-job-trainees (OJT's) coordinator among the industry partners of program were interviewed. The interview aimed to elicit relevant information concerning the competence of the OJTs.

Data Gathering Tools

A survey-questionnaire was used in the study as the instrument for data-gathering. The researchers patterned the questionnaire from the on-the-job-trainees performance evaluation of the BSHRM program. The questionnaire is composed of 2 parts that were rated by the industry partners. Part 1 is the level of competence among on-job-trainees (OJTs). The level of competence focused on the work performance, knowledge and attitude of the on-job-trainees (OJTs). Moreover, each area were compared from the start to the end of the internship. This aims to differentiate the level of competence among the on-job-trainees (OJTs).

The results of the survey were then processed and ranked. The computed values were compared to the Likert scale for data interpretation. The descriptive equivalent was used to analyze the responses of the industry representatives. The weighted mean was used to provide a summative response representing the level of competence of the on-the-job trainees in each indicator of the level of competence scale as well as a summative level of work performance, attitude, and knowledge.

Data Analysis

The following results showed the level of competence among the OJTs during their internships. The three areas particularly, work performance, knowledge and attitude were the focus of the evaluation. All of the OJTs were moderately competent in the respective areas. The OJTs were evaluated on the different areas of hotel and foodservice operation, such as housekeeping, rooms division, kitchen, food and beverages, and banquet. This covered the evaluation on the first two (2) weeks and the end of the internship.

Level of Competency on the Work Performance

Table 1 presents the work performance evaluation among the OJTs. The data show that on the first two weeks, the OJTs have met the standards (3.63) on the use of equipment, facilities and materials when deployed at the assigned establishments. This is followed by the ability to comprehend instructions (3.54). Third is, OJTs have enough competencies to perform the appropriate procedures set by the operation(3.36).

At the end of the training, the data show that the OJTs were able to further develop their competency in performing the appropriate procedure to the assigned establishment aside from the use of equipment, facilities and materials (3.63). Also, the OJTs were able to acquire the required competency and even exceeded to some extent on dealing with the demand for additional and unexpected workload (3.54). The ability to comprehend instruction remains second (3.54) since the start of the OJT program. Last on the aspect are the following: the notion of the industry representatives showing the OJTs performing their tasks without much supervision (3.45), dealing with guests with ease (3.45), and demonstrating leadership skills (3.45).

Table 1: Level of Competency on the Work Performance

WORK PERFORMANCE	FIRST-TWO WEEKS EVALUATION		FINAL EVALUATION	
	RESULT	RANK	RESULT	RANK
1. Ability to deal with the demand for additional and unexpected workload in a limited time.	3.27	5	3.54	2
2. Ability to show flexibility and positively adjust to change.	3.27	5.5	3.45	3
3. Ability to comprehend easily to instructions from guests and co-workers.	3.54	2	3.54	2.5

4. Ability to perform tasks without much supervision.	3.45	4	3.45	3.5
5. Ability to deal with guests with ease.	3.45	4.5	3.45	3.5
6. Ability to perform the appropriate procedure set by the operation.	3.36	3	3.63	1
7. Ability to demonstrate good leadership.	3.36	3.5	3.45	3.5
8. Ability to use appropriate equipment, facilities, and materials needed to do a certain work	3.63	1	3.63	1.5
9. Reports regularly to his/her scheduled duty.	3.18	6	3.18	4
10. Shows punctuality.	3.27	5.5	3.18	4.5

The effort of the Institution as well as the BSHM Department to meet the industry requirements becomes a factor in the student's performance. In the desire of BSHRM Department to have competitive students especially in the field of Hotel and Restaurant services, students need to undergo National Certification (NC II) after the completion of the particular course such as Housekeeping, Food and Beverage Operation, Bar Management, and other related NC II. The acquired ability of the students to perform the appropriate procedure is assessed according to the industry requirements. After the completion of the course, student are deployed to the restaurant, hotel and other hospitality business. With these, the availability of the physical facilities and equipment, maximizing these resources, integration of experiential learning activities, and in compliance to the NCII implies that this method and strategy contribute to the enhancement of the OJTs performance.

From the data shown in Table 1, the OJTs are able to meet the required competencies in terms of work performance. This provides an idea that the OJTs observe the customer's needs, able to adapt, can easily transition into a variety of roles, and can handle number of customers while juggling some tasks. This is a good indication that the OJTs are competent enough in their chosen career.

Moreover, the results show the efficiency of the OJTs' work styles with less supervision. Ensuring the quality of work and completing the assignment on time are important and needed in business operation. It shows also that the OJTs gave what the company expected from them.

The goal of the OJT program is to place the participants in occupations that will enhance their prospects for long term employment and will ultimately permit employment competencies, through exposure in an actual work setting, to the processes, work tasks, and tools and methods of a specific job or group of jobs(Krishnaswamy, 2007). This indicates that the program adds to the acquired competencies of the students that will help in building the future career in the aspect of the hospitality and business platform.

Level of Competency on the Knowledge

In terms of knowledge, table 2 implies that the OJTs have enough information needed from the start of internship (3.63) and wasconsistent until the end of internship (3.72). This indicates that the OJT shave enough knowledge on the courses that they took from the Institution as prerequisite for internship. They were able to apply the learning acquired from their Instructors using the competency-based curriculum of the BSHM Department of the Institution. Also, the ability to understand work-related documents (3.54) implies that the practice of the BSHM Department to involve the students in compliance to documentation prior to the conduct of the activity had helped the OJTs to have a clear picture on the information and/or documents related to assigned work.

According to Arroyo (2010), the food service trainees is a supervised practical application of the principles and theories in hotel and food service management. Therefore, they should be familiar with dining room, kitchen layout and developed knowledge in hospitality service. With this, OJTs should not only know how to consolidate and submit reports, but also adapt the latest trends of service and well versed on the operation.

Table 2 also shows the OJTs'rank in formulating solution and/or corrective actions from the start (3.54) until the end of internship (3.45. They also were able to analyze the situation and identify problems having the same result from the start

and until the end of internship(3.45).This infers that the OJTs were able to apply what they have acquired from professional courses that require decision-making which includes:Housekeeping, Food and Beverage Services, Bar Management, Front Office, Events and Convention Management, and other related subject courses. The result indicates that the methods of the Instructors as well as the industry partners used to teach BSHRM students match their learning aptitude in terms of making decision.

Table 2: Level of Competency on the Knowledge

KNOWLEDGE	FIRST-TWO WEEKS EVALUATION		FINAL EVALUATION	
	RESULT	RANK	RESULT	RANK
1. Knowledge of the basic hospitality terminologies.	3.63	1	3.72	1
2. Knowledge of principles and methods for showing, promoting and selling products and services.	3.54	2	3	4
3. Ability to analyze the situation and identify problems.	3.45	3	3.45	3
4. Ability to formulate a solution and/or corrective actions.	3.54	2.5	3.45	3.5
5. Ability to understand written sentences, paragraphs and/or information in work-related documents.	3.54	2.5	3.54	2

In a study conducted by Buted, et al (2014), entitled A Correlation Study between Student Performance in Food and Beverage Services Course and Internship in F&B Department of Hospitality Business, in terms of skills, it was noted that interns' performance is also very good with the composite. The interns can perform tasks of order taking and maximize sales opportunities through knowledge of product and suggestive selling. Skills were developed through seminars held every semester and during training, especially if the students are joining the skills competition like CITHM skills Olympics, Food Showdown, Chefs on Parade and other regional and national competition.

On the knowledge of showing, promoting and selling products and services, it ranked second when they start the internship (3.54), but drops at the end of the internship (rank 3). OJTs had their training mainly to housekeeping operation, food and beverage service and in the kitchen operation. This implies that the method, procedures and strategies may not be adequate to let the students comprehend all the information they need to learn in terms of sales and marketing which can be applied when assigned in the different areas of front-of-the-house. Relating to the work performance, this is in contrast with the back-of-the-house work styles of the OJTs.

Level of Competency on the Attitude
Table 3 presents the level of competence of the OJTs for the internship program in terms of attitude which is moderately competent (3.56 for the first two weeks and 3.58 at the end of internship).This is an indication of showing positive attitude as to the industry requirements.

At the end of the training, the data show that the OJTs have shown their eagerness to new skills (3.72) and put enthusiasm and interest towards their tasks (3.63). They have also maintained the respect and receptiveness in dealing with authority and co-workers (3.63) and their pleasing personality (3.63).However, the harmonious working relationship, cooperation and teamwork in carrying out work activities, mental and emotional maturity, right conduct and trustworthiness were not upheld, with a weighted mean of 3.63 during their start, and 3.54 at the end of internship.

Table 3: Level of Competency on the Attitude

ATTITUDE	First-Two Weeks Evaluation		Final Evaluation	
	Result	Rank	Result	Rank
1. The eagerness in learning new skills	3.45	2	3.72	1
2. Good attitude by showing enthusiasm and interest towards assigned tasks	3.63	1	3.63	2
3. The harmonious working relationship, cooperation, and teamwork	3.63	1.5	3.54	3

in carrying out work activities				
4. Mental and emotional maturity	3.45	2.5	3.54	3.5
5. Perseverance and hard-working over and above what is assigned	3.63	1.5	3.45	4
6. Right conduct in observance of rules and regulations set by the establishment	3.63	1.5	3.54	3.5
7. Respect and receptiveness in dealing with authority and co-workers	3.63	1.5	3.63	2.5
8. Trustworthiness	3.63	1.5	3.54	3.5
9. Shows poise, self-confidence and always well – prepared	3.36	3	3.54	3.5
10. Pleasing personality and personally well groomed	3.54	2.5	3.63	2.5

Aceron (2015) states that attitude is a verbal expression, intention, and mental position with regard to a fact or state, or a feeling or emotion toward a fact or a state. In addition, Laguador (2013) cited that work values and attitude are necessary to achieve the ultimate goal of education to produce efficient and effective leaders and professionals. As cited by Fuller (2015), it is recommended that a student selects an internship that requires substantial work; acts professionally; networks; asks questions; sets goals; volunteers; and follows up with the business after the internship is completed.

It can be gleaned that the internship program of BSHRM is highly imperative in the development of the students. It is also important that the students have a clear picture on what to possess in their chosen career. The curriculum plays akeyrole in training and developing the students to align their work values and attitude in their field of specialization. Thus, this implies that it is important to have a curriculum and industry mapping. Curriculum mapping is a reflective process that helps teachers understand what has been taught in a class, how it has been taught, and how learning outcomes were assessed (Schweitzer, 2019). Industry mapping will allow the institution to determine the number of companies and establishments that may provide training for the students and to ensure that the OJTs will be deployed in their respective field of specialization at the same time.

Based on the data, the level of competence of the OJTs as rated by the industry partners in the competency of work performance (3.36), knowledge (3.55), and attitude (3.56)is moderately competent for the first two weeks. At the end the internship, evaluation remains to moderately competent in the competency of work performance (3.45), knowledge (3.43), and attitude (3.58). Thus, the hypotheses partaking competent during the first two weeks and highly competent for the duration of the internship is rejected.

Table 4: Level of Competence of OJT's from the Start to the End of the Internship

Period	Competency	Mean	Variance	P-value	Level of Competence
First two weeks of Internship	Work Performance	3.36	0.02	0.22	Moderately Competent
	Knowledge	3.55	0.003	0.33	Moderately Competent
	Attitude	3.56	0.01	0.76	Moderately Competent
End of Internship	Work Performance	3.45	0.03	0.22	Moderately Competent
	Knowledge	3.43	0.070	0.33	Moderately Competent
	Attitude	3.58	0.005	0.76	Moderately Competent

Based on the table, the computed p-values were all greater than 0.05 level of significance, implying that there is no significant difference as to the level of competence of the OJTs from the start to end of their internship. This infers that the OJTs'level of competence did not change until the end of their internship hence, the second hypotheses is rejected as to the significant difference of the level of competence of OJTs from the start to the end of the internship.

Students who obtained low academic performance have the possibility of attaining high internship evaluation. Skills and knowledge acquired from the school were enhanced as they apply them in the workplace. However, these have not fully met the expectations of the industry. It is also an indication that the industry representatives have higher expectations of these competencies from students because the basis for the evaluation of the OJTs was the actual output or performance they have during the duration of the internship. Another factor is due to lack of more opportunities for

exposure to these specific competencies both in the industry and institution setting. It also implies that these competencies were not observed in the workplace.

III.   Conclusion and Recommendation

The level of competence of the On-the-job trainees as rated by the industry partners in terms of work-performance, knowledge, and attitude for the whole duration of the internship needs to be improved. It is imperative to consistently align the curriculum focus to the industry requirements through designed a curriculum that allows flexibility and creativity among the learners. Moreover, the course line-up should incorporate subjects on sustainable development and international standards and practices to address issues that arise from market imperfections and the challenges of globalization. Strengthening the relationship with industry partners as well as related-organizations will be a great help in developing a strong program aligned with the industry requirements. Included faculty exposure to international hospitality standards can be one aspect in the faculty development plan.

To deter the problems encountered by the industry partners, involve and empower students to: initiate activities addressing competency gaps, conduct more group dynamic activities and leadership training, motivate students to engage entrepreneurial activities, conduct seminar workshop, training camps, and team building activities. Experiential learning activities as a requirement to the students will be an edge for the program. On the common difficulties of the industry partners with trainees which is time management, emphasis should be given on the strict compliance to time management. This can be done by giving more stringent disciplinary measures.

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