

## **Internship Performance of Tourism and Hospitality Students: Inputs to Improve Internship Program**

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### **Abstract**

Lyceum of the Philippines University educates and trains students to be competitive by providing them with applied learning opportunities that require talented workers and rank among the best in the world in terms of productivity, career, attitude and technical skills. This study aimed to assess the level of performance of the interns as a result of the evaluation by the manager or immediate supervisors of the different establishments where the CITHM interns were deployed.

The researcher utilized the descriptive qualitative design using 50 percent of the interns of second semester 2012-2013 as participants in the area of food and beverage and travel agencies. Results of the study revealed that interns have satisfactory level in academic performance. In training performance they were rated as very good in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude and personality. This study also revealed that there is no significant relationship between the academic performance and the training performance.

**Keywords:** Internship Performance, Tourism, Hospitality, Technical Skills

### **Introduction**

Knowledge alone is not important as what matters is how one applies it. Keeping in mind that education is an ever evolving field, developing our curricula should be undertaken to suit the needs of the industry. Industry driven course structure helps students to become industry ready and thus makes the transition to workplace smooth. The curriculum encourages students to apply theoretical learning to real-life scenarios in the form of case studies, research, events, live projects and on the job training (<http://iecuniversity.com>).

In response to the academic challenges of national and international significance, the higher education system needs to focus on systemic reforms to strengthen and make their output and services more competitive. In accordance with the pertinent provisions of RA 7722, otherwise known as the “Higher Education act of 1994”, and pursuant to Commission en banc Resolution No. 148, dated April 19, 2009, the guidelines for Student Internship Program in the Philippines for all programs with practicum subject were adopted for the information, guidance and compliance of all concerned.

Lyceum of the Philippines University educate and train students to be competitive by providing them with applied learning opportunities that require talented workers and rank among the best in the world in terms of productivity, career, attitude and technical skills. The College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management in cooperation with the Internship office provide training to the students as part of their curriculum. Through the memorandum of agreement, students are deployed in the different tourism and hospitality establishments like hotels, restaurants, resorts, theme parks and travel agencies. Students are assigned in the departments such as food and beverage, housekeeping, front office, kitchen where they can apply the knowledge and skills learned in the university and employ the positive attitude and personality.

The quality of education in higher education institutions in the country is one of the basic goals for national development. A related issue of the continuing concern is the kind of educational preparation related to industry work. An educational forum on current problems in the food service identifies its key role in bridging the gaps between manpower requirements and the present acquired skills. The role of the educational training program is perceived as a major factor in developing competencies needed by the industry. It is imperative, therefore, that the goal of the industry and academe must be integrated and unified. In the context of bridging the gap between the industry need and the knowledge and skills provided by the educational institution that the researcher conduct this study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study aimed to assess the level of performance of the interns as a result of the evaluation by the manager/supervisors of the different establishment where the CITHM interns were deployed. Specifically, this paper has the following objectives: (1) to identify the internship profile of the CITHM students in terms of nature of establishment, department assigned and length of internship and the academic performance; (2) to determine the academic performance and internship performance in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude and personality, (3) to determine the significant relationship between the academic performance and training performance of the interns (4) to propose an action plan/program to enhance the performance of the interns.

### **Review of Literature**

Student’s exposure to “on-the-job training” focuses on the acquisition of skills within the work environment generally under normal working conditions. It is the oldest form of training prior to the advent of off-site training classrooms. The only practical way of learning a job was working along-side an experienced worker in a particular trade or profession. Through on-

the-job training, students acquire both general skills that they can transfer from one job to another and specific skills that are unique to a particular job. The exposure to on-the-job training includes verbal and written instruction, demonstration and observation, and hands-on practice and imitation.

Several studies indicate that it is the most effective form of training. The largest share of on-the-job training is provided by the private sector. On-the-job training programs range from formal training with company supervisors to learning by watching.

There are two types of on-the-job training frequently distinguished in the professional literature: structured (planned) and unstructured (unplanned). Structured on-the-job training requires work up-front, but produces consistent training outcomes of predictable quality while unstructured on-the-job training produces inconsistent training outcomes. The result of unstructured OJT are the desired training outcome is rarely achieved, and when it is, trainees rarely achieve the same outcomes; the training content is often inaccurate or incomplete, and may represent an accumulation of bad habits, misinformation, and possibly unsafe shortcuts on which employees have come to rely over time; experienced employees are seldom able to communicate what they know in a way that others can understand; experienced employees use different methods each time they conduct the training, and not all of the methods are equally effective; many employees fear that sharing their knowledge and skills will reduce their own status as experts and perhaps even threaten their job security, or they may not be given adequate time away from their duties to deliver the training to others and leads to increased error rates, lower productivity, decreased training efficiency and is less effective at reaching the training objectives. (Jacobs, 2003)

On the other hand, structured OJT has been shown to be the preferred training method over unstructured OJT and in some cases, over classroom training because the structure of the training allowed mastery of skills. Training objectives were achieved five times faster than using over unstructured OJT. (Jacobs, 2003)

According to Rothwell and Kazanas(2004), there are contemporary approaches to on-the-job training that lay emphasis on training of novice by experienced workers who possess not only the skills necessary for the tasks to be learned but also the skills as a trainer. By selecting such trainers, companies can achieve consistency in training content, methods, and results. In addition, structured on-the-job training is viewed as a process that includes training inputs (novice employees, experienced employees, and tasks to be learned), a training program, and training outputs (job performance and novice employee development).

This process begins with the selection of qualified trainers and trainees. Trainers must know the tasks and know how to communicate how to perform them and the trainees must be able to learn the tasks. In addition, the tasks to be learned and the training goals must be identified. Based on this information, companies can establish a training program. The implementation of the training program also should follow a specific timetable, hence it should help new employees learn needed skills more quickly and systematically than unstructured programs (Rothwell and Kazanas 2004).

Finally, the training outputs result from the training inputs and the training program. If all goes well the training outputs should include the trainee being able to complete assigned tasks adequately in accordance with the training goals. After a training program is finished and new employees begin to work on their own, someone must assess the training process—inputs, the training program, and outputs to make sure that it successfully prepared workers for their tasks and any necessary modifications should be made (Rothwell and Kazanas 2004).

There are also identified areas for improvement on practicum program. Freebee(2003) identified that in the practicum program, students felt they were lacking parental involvement, time, and the collaborative model. Latter involves consultation with teachers. It was also observed there were plenty of testing and there was need for more opportunities to branch out in the classroom. She also found out that the practicum program and the student's expectations of meeting program objectives outlined in the course syllabus significantly correlated. It was suggested that an effective program evaluation should focus on assessing the effectiveness of student performance outcomes. To accomplish this, it must be incorporated with the learning expectations of the program and correlate it with the program's goals and objective.

In the study of Walo (2001) assessed students' perceptions of their level of management competence, before and after the internship component of their degree programme. A self-assessment instrument utilizing the management competencies within the competing values was used for the empirical stages of the study. The research imply that the internship programme has proved effective in contributing towards the development of management competencies for this cohort of students. The study provides valuable insight into the relationship between internship and the development of students' management competencies and highlights the need for further research in this area.

In the paper job competency expectations for hospitality and and tourism employees: perceptions of educational preparation shows the practitioner perceptions of desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It further demonstrates the overall impressions of practitioners concerning levels of preparation for entry-level positions in the industry. Finally, present conclusions and suggestions for central collaborative initiatives aimed at improving the preparation of individuals from secondary and tertiary institutions for successful entry into hospitality and tourism industry employment (Tesone, 2005).

## **Materials and Method**

### **Research Design**

The researchers utilized the descriptive qualitative design of the study in order evaluate the performance of the Interns of Lyceum of the Philippines University - Batangas under the College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management. The method is designed for the researcher to gather information on the performance of the interns in terms of interns knowledge, skills and attitude and personality during second semester school year 2012-2013.

### **Participants**

The participants of the study are the 50 percent of the interns in the areas of food and beverage, culinary, rooms division and travel agencies. They were evaluated by the managers or supervisor of the establishment where they undergone their training.

### **Instrument**

The researchers used the performance evaluation tool to measure and obtain the necessary information that pertained to the evaluation of the work performance of the interns of CITHM students. This instrument is a standard performance evaluation tool provided by the university to evaluate the performance of the interns. This is divided into four areas: knowledge, skills, attitudes and personality. The performance evaluation sheet score is divided into five (5) scoring grades where 1 is the lowest and rated as very poor, 2 is poor, 3 is fair, 4 is good and the highest is 5 rated as very good.

### **Procedure**

Documentary analysis of the evaluation forms provided to the students by the internship office which were accomplished or rated by the managers or immediate supervisor of the establishments where the interns were deployed. The evaluation form was used to determine the work performance of the CITHM interns.

The researcher asked permission from the dean to access the data of the interns evaluation form of second semester 2012-2013. This will be presented to the statistician through the center for data encoding of the instrument.

### **Data Analysis**

This study used percentage, weighted mean and Pearson correlation as statistical tools for the treatment of data. To further analyze the result, the data was treated using SPSS software with 0.05 alpha level.

### **Results and Discussion**

Data show that majority of the interns (78 or 37.3 percent) are deployed in travel agencies. These interns are the students enrolled in the program Bachelor of Science in Travel and Tourism Management program.

They are all required to have training in travel agency systems and procedures. Other interns are distributed to other establishments like resort, on board training, restaurants and hotel where departments such as Food and Beverage and Rooms Division. Food and Beverage department has the highest frequency because both BSIHM-HRA and BSITTM are required to have training in this area.

**Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Internship Profile**

<b>Profile Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Nature of Establishment</b>		

Resort	1	0.50
On-board	60	28.70
Travel Agency	78	37.30
Restaurant	66	31.60
Hotel	4	1.90
<b>Department Assigned</b>		
Food & Beverage	103	49.30
Rooms Division	33	15.80
Travel Agency	73	34.90
<b>Length of Internship</b>		
200 hours	71	34.00
400 hours	138	66.00
<b>Program</b>		
BSHRA	65	31.10
BSITTM	144	68.90

In terms of the length of internship, travel agency requires to have 400 hours of training for BSITTM students, Food and Beverage requires 200 hours for BSITTM and 400 hours for BSIHM-HRA while 200 hours for Rooms Division for BSIHM-HRA students only. There were 68.90 percent or 144 of the respondents enrolled in BSITTM and 31.10 percent or 65 students in BSHRA.

**Table 2. Academic Performance of the Interns**

Academic Grades	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	3	1.44
Very Satisfactory	48	22.97
Satisfactory	114	54.55
Fair	40	19.14
Poor	4	1.91

*Legend: 1.00 – 1.25 = Excellent; 1.26 – 1.74 = Very Satisfactory; 1.75 – 2.24 = Satisfactory; 2.25 – 2.74 = Fair; 2.75 – 3.00 = Poor*

Based on the table, majority or 54.55 percent of the interns are in the satisfactory academic performance level and only 3 students or 1.44 percent has excellent academic performance level. The basis of this academic performance are the semesters where the professional subjects required or prerequisite before the internship were enrolled. For BSITTM, students are required to have travel and tour operation course before they can be deployed to travel agencies and Food and Beverage Services for Food and Beverage Department. On the other hand, BSIHM-HRA are also required to enroll Food and Beverage Services course before they can be deployed to Food and Beverage Department and Housekeeping Services course for Housekeeping department or Rooms Division.

**Table 3. Performance of the Interns in terms of Knowledge**

Knowledge	WM	VI	Rank
1. Comprehends/follows instructions easily	4.41	Very Good	1
2. Understands the operating procedures and	4.37	Very Good	2

Techniques			
3. Competitive enough to his/her job assignment	4.30	Very Good	5
4. Able to organize work and analyze it	4.33	Very Good	3.5
5. Has the command of relevant general information and technology	4.33	Very Good	3.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	

*Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 = Excellent; 3.50 – 4.49 = Very Good; 2.50 – 3.49 = Good ; 1.50 – 2.49 = Fair; 1.00 – 1.49 = Poor*

In terms of knowledge, interns' performance is very good with the composite mean of 4.35. The interns can comprehend/follow instructions easily has the highest mean of 4.41, while the lowest is that interns are competitive enough to his/her job assignment. This only shows that they have enough knowledge on the courses that they obtained from the school. They were able to apply what they have learned from professional courses such as Housekeeping for BSHRA, Food and Beverage Services for both BSHRA and BSITTM and Travel and Tour Operations for BSITTM only.

Students know how to consolidate and submit reports, do routine task at the end of their shift makes the supervisor monitor the trainees and employees productivity. Through this report, proper action can be done if necessary. Some trainees adapted the latest trends of service and could easily understand instructions. 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 develop knowledge in hospitality service (Arroyo, 2010)

Table 4 shows that in terms of skills, interns' performance are also very good with the composite mean of 4.31. The interns delivers the required amount/volume of work output within the allotted time got the highest mean of 4.31 while accuracy and efficiency in work has the lowest mean of 4.24.

The data prove that the skills thought by their competent professors were properly absorbed by the students and properly executed their skills during their training. Skills were develop through seminars held every 3 times every semester and during competitions held every summer term.

**Table 4. Performance of the Interns in terms of Skills**

Skills	WM	VI	Rank
1. Seeks to improve his/her skills by taking initiative to learn new paradigms and methodology	4.35	Very Good	2
2. Comfortable in presenting recommendations, suggestions and criticisms to his/her supervisor/peers and open to accommodate them with objective and positive point of view	4.26	Very Good	4
3. Accurate and efficient in work	4.24	Very Good	5
4. Makes productive use of resources (e.g. terminals and workstation assigned to him/her	4.33	Very Good	3

5. Delivers the required amount/volume of work output within the allotted time 4.37 Very Good 1

**Composite Mean 4.31 Very Good**

*Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 = Excellent; 3.50 – 4.49 = Very Good; 2.50 – 3.49 = Good ; 1.50 – 2.49 = Fair; 1.00 – 1.49 = Poor*

Students are competent in doing task such as opening the whole restaurant, setting up tables, taking guest reservation through telephone and email, welcoming the guest and escorting them to their tables and showing the menu to the guest and taking orders. They are also competent in serving foods to the guest and explaining everything in the menu. Serving wine, tossing a bucket of salad in front of the guest, bussing out, placing and folding napkins and arranging flowers are among the skills the interns demonstrated competently (Arroyo, 2010).

**Table 5. Performance of the Interns in terms of Attitude**

Attitude	WM	VI	Rank
1. Reports to the office with regular punctuality and finishes the duty as scheduled	4.47	Very Good	2
2. Reliable and imbues a sense of responsibility in handling the tasks assigned to him/her	4.39	Very Good	5
3. Enjoys comfortable working relationship with his/her superior or peers.	4.46	Very Good	3.5
4. Applies the virtues of integrity and honesty in all aspects of his/her work	4.49	Very Good	1
5. Positive attitude towards criticism and towards superior	4.46	Very Good	3.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	

*Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 = Excellent; 3.50 – 4.49 = Very Good; 2.50 – 3.49 = Good ; 1.50 – 2.49 = Fair; 1.00 – 1.49 = Poor*

Data show that attitude of the interns is deemed to be very good as denoted by the composite mean of 4.45. Interns were also considered very good in applying the virtues of integrity and honesty in all aspects of work as indicated by the weighted mean of 4.49 while reliability and sense of responsibility in handling the task assigned obtained the least mean score of 4.39 with very good verbal interpretation.

Attitude should at all times project a professional image which also conveys the energy and enthusiasm. With the attitude, it illustrates the commitment they had in their endeavors. Attitude will allow the individual personalities to shine without compromising the professional presence of the person and through attitude interns can show respect towards others.

Proper conduct within all settings allows the students to practice hospitality and etiquette. Through conduct, people seek to be accountable and responsible. When dealing with the people in the industry front liners are conscious of the need for proper greetings and introductions. Conduct should at all times demonstrate respect, while certain situations may warrant being politely aggressive ([www.niagara.edu](http://www.niagara.edu)).

**Table 6. Performance of the Interns in terms of Personality**

Personality	WM	VI	Rank
1. Reports to work in proper attire and follows proper personal hygiene	4.74	Excellent	1
2. Exercise self confidence and comfortable in airing his/her problems and difficulties with his/her supervisor	4.37	Very Good	5
3. Flexible in work and in dealing with people	4.38	Very Good	4
4. Accepts miscellaneous jobs and tasks with the proper attitude without complaining	4.44	Very Good	3
5. Shows interest and pride with the task assigned to his/her	4.46	Very Good	2
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>4.48</b>		

*Legend: 4.50 – 5.00 = Excellent; 3.50 – 4.49 = Very Good; 2.50 – 3.49 = Good ; 1.50 – 2.49 = Fair; 1.00 – 1.49 = Poor*

Based on table 6, Intern were rated excellent in reporting to work in proper attire and following proper personal hygiene which obtained the highest mean of 4.74. The first component of appearance is proper attire. Proper attire maintains our professional image. The second component of appearance is the area of grooming and hygiene. In this area people seek to achieve the standards of the traditional business environment. This only shows that the students are applying what they have learned and practiced in the university of wearing proper uniform.

On the other hand, Interns were still rated very good in exercising self confidence and they were comfortable in airing their problems and difficulties with their supervisor which obtained the least mean score of 4.37. This only means that students need to develop more confidence. Self confidence, is extremely important in almost every aspect of our lives, yet so many people struggle to find it. People who lack self-confidence can find it difficult to become successful ([www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com)).

**Table 7. Relationship Between the Academic Performance and Training Performance of the Interns**

Training Performance in terms of:	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Knowledge	-0.011	0.873	Not Significant
Skills	0.003	0.968	Not Significant
Attitude	-0.022	0.755	Not Significant
Personality	-0.034	0.629	Not Significant

*Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.05; HS = Highly Significant; S = Significant; NS = Not Significant*

The computed r-values indicate that there is almost negligible correlation and the resulted p-values were all greater than 0.05 level of significance, thus the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the academic performance and training performance of the interns is accepted. This means that there is no relationship exists and implies that the interns' training performance is not affected by their academic grades.

Areas on the training performance of the interns such as knowledge, skills, attitude and personality were evaluated as very good by the supervisors and managers of the establishment where they were deployed. Students who obtained either high or low academic performance have the possibility of attaining either high or low internship evaluation.

Academic performance do not have relationship or effects in the performance evaluation of the interns because manager or immediate supervisors' basis for the evaluation was the actual output or performance they possess during the duration of training.

**Training Plan**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>Knowledge</b> To be competent learners towards job assignment.	A. Continuous implementation of Outcomes Based Curriculum (OBE) in all courses specially the professional courses such as Principles of Food Hygiene and Sanitation, Principles of Food Preparation, Food and Beverages Service Operations, Principles of Tourism 1 and 2 for both HRA and Tourism. Beverage Products and Operations for HRA only and for ITTM, Philippine Tourism, World Tourism, Tour Guiding and Travel and Tours Operations.	From 1st semester of First year until first semester of Second Year.
	B. Communication Skills Seminar	5 days
<b>Skills</b> Work Efficiency and Accuracy	A. Training/ seminar on the specific area to be assigned to each trainee 1. Food and Beverage Services 2. Housekeeping Services 3. Travel Agency Operation 4. Front Office Services	5 days each program
	B. NC II Certification from TESDA 1. Food and Beverage Services 2. Housekeeping Services 3. Travel and Tour Operations	1 day per Qualification
<b>Attitude</b> Reliable and imbues a sense of responsibility in handling the tasks assigned to students	Seminar on Improvement of Attitude or Discuss the Ways to Improve Attitude during the Orientation before deployment	2 days
<b>Personality</b> Demonstrate self confidence and comfortable in airing problems and difficulties with supervisor	Personality Development Seminar Or Interpersonal Skills Seminar	2 days

## **Conclusions**

Majority of the interns were trained in travel agencies and restaurants under the Food and Beverage department with the duration of 400hrs. Fifty four percent (54%) of the students have satisfactory academic performance rating. The interns obtained the highest very good performance evaluation rating in personality followed by attitude knowledge and skills. There is no significant relationship between the academic performance and training performance of interns, academic performance of the interns were only satisfactory but the training performance were rated as very good.

## **Recommendations**

The College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management (CITHM) of LPU Batangas may continue to implement the existing activities in preparation for the deployment of interns to different establishments such as Personality Development Seminar, English proficiency Seminar and Pre-Internship Seminar and Orientation. The CITHM may continue its mission in providing quality education through continually updating the course syllabus by providing training and seminars to hospitality professors and continuously implement the Outcomes Based Curriculum. The university may upgrade the quality of facilities and laboratories to continuously enhance knowledge and skills of the students necessary to have future work assignments. The proposed training plan may be implemented to enhance the knowledge, skills and values of the students to prepare them in more holistic approach to employment. Future studies may also be conducted to further confirm the results of this study.

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