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**A TRACER STUDY OF THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT GRADUATES OF THE BALIUAG UNIVERSITY
FROM SCHOOL YEAR 2005-2006 TO 2009-2010**

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to determine the employment status of the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management graduates for the past five years from SY 2005-2006 to SY 2009-2010. The study utilized the descriptive survey method using questionnaire as the main source of data. A total of 186 respondents participated in the study. Findings revealed that majority of the graduate respondents were employed and regular or permanent in their present job positions. Most of their present job positions were aligned with the hospitality industry and that includes Restaurant Supervisor, Seafarer, Front Office Staff and Manager, Housekeeping Supervisor, Head Cook/Chef and other related fields. Most of the graduates have been staying in their present jobs from one (1) year to less than four (4) years. Majority of the graduates were employed in their first jobs in the rank and clerical positions within a month to six months and stayed for seven (7) months to less than three (3) years. Graduate-respondents have been committed and motivated to stay in their present jobs because of the salaries and benefits, career challenge and relatedness to the course/program they finished. Human relations skills and communication skills were the most useful competencies learned by the graduates. Moreover, additional practical applications and hands-on activities including additional practicum venues abroad are on the top list of suggestions of the respondents on how BU could further improve its BS Hospitality Management program.

Keywords: BS Hospitality Management, employability, hospitality industry, tracer study

In Region III, Baliuag University in Bulacan is one of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that responds to the boosting growth of the hospitality industry wherein it started offering Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management in School Year 2002-2003. Abreast with the needs of the industry, the curriculum of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) program of Baliuag University is aligned with the requirements prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and Technical Education Skills and Development Authority (TESDA) that develop competent and versatile

hospitality practitioners who have the passion and sense of commitment to the advancement of the industry, locally and globally.

Baliuag University's College of Hospitality Management and Tourism offers a comprehensive curriculum that integrates business theories and practices with management skills, hands-on experiences, and internship opportunities, both local and international. Students gain world-class skills in destination marketing, tourism planning, food and beverage operations, and hotel and restaurant management. It is one of the region's finest breeding grounds for competent, service-oriented hospitality and tourism professionals. The Student Internship Abroad Program (SIAP) is also one of the admired strengths of the college, giving the students the opportunity to complete their practicum in prestigious establishments abroad.

Aligned with the continuous growth and development of the hospitality industry, the need for competent management personnel has created outstanding career opportunities for foodservice and lodging management graduates. The need for diverse talents, skills, and competencies to meet the expectations of the industry also arises. In an effort to keep pace with the increasing employment opportunities and demand for qualified and well-trained personnel, there has been an increase in the number of educational institutions offering hospitality management program. This phenomenon has been taking place in various countries around the world (Apolega, 2016).

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2016), hospitality industry is one of the world's fastest growing and most dynamic fields of employment, with positive trends forecasted for the coming years and is promising more growth and a powerful economic influence in the next decade over and above the 260 million jobs worldwide already created by the industry.

The main objective of the study is to look on the status of the CHMT graduates from school year 2006 to 2010. Graduates in the past years were traced in order to determine their employability in the job market considering the stiff competition in the industry. Employability refers to a person's ability to gain initial employment, maintain employment, and obtain new employment if required. It is having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes that make him more likely to choose and secure occupations in which he will be satisfied and successful (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007).

Related Studies

In the study conducted by the College of Business Administration and Accountancy of Baliuag University for School Year 2009-2010 to School Year 2011-2012 (Calma, 2015), it was revealed that 98.3% of the total respondents were employed, and that majority of the graduates were employed in

Accounting/Auditing firms, Banks/Financial Services, and government organizations.

A similar study was conducted by the College of Information Technology Education of Baliuag University from School Year 2007-2008 to School Year 2011-2012 (Malang, 2015) which showed that majority of the CITE graduates were employed; 104 or 29.13% of the graduate-respondents were employed in the business, marketing, construction, and automobile industries during the survey period. This was followed by 96 respondents or 26.89% who were employed in the banking and private institutions.

Based on the study conducted by the Lyceum of the Philippines University on the employability of their BSHRM graduates from 2005-2009, it was revealed that majority of the graduates were gainfully employed and landed a job from one to two years after graduation.

Most of them were on contractual basis and are working in the Philippines. Majority were professionals working as rank and file in HRM establishments. Human Relations skills and communication skills were deemed to be the most useful competencies learned by the graduates of the Lyceum of the Philippines University (Celis, Festijo, et al., 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The main objective of this tracer study is to determine the employability of the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management graduates of Baliuag University from SY 2005-2006 to SY 2009-2010. Specifically, the researchers sought answers to the following sub-problems:

1. What is the present employment status of BSHM respondents in terms of job status, job position, place of work, length of service, and means of getting the job?
2. How long did it take them to land their first job, stay in their first job, and what job position did they first have?
3. What are the reasons of the respondents for staying in their present job?
4. What is the initial gross monthly income of the respondents in their present job?
5. Which of the competencies do graduates acquire in college that they find very useful in their previous and current jobs?

6. What suggestion/s may be given by the respondents to further improve the hospitality management program of the Baliuag University?

Article IV, Section 8 of the CHED Memorandum Order, No. 30, series of 2006 (Policies and Standards for Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management/ Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management/ Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management / Bachelor of Science in Travel Management) states that graduates of BSHM program should possess the following five (5) competencies: resources which identify goal-relevant activities, rank them and allocate resources; interpersonal skills that show how an individual can work with others; ability to acquire and evaluate information; systems that show how one understands complex interrelationships; and ability to work with a variety of technologies Likewise, graduates of BSHM program should have the following skills and personal qualities: (1) basic skills that include reading, writing, performing arithmetic and mathematical operations, listening and speaking; (2) thinking skills that include thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, and visualizing and reasoning; and (3) personal qualities which describe that graduates should possess a sense of responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines have also started to take notice of the growing demand for qualified, skilled, and competent personnel needed by the hospitality industry. Together with organizations such as Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education Skills and Development Authority (TESDA), and other hospitality industry-related organizations, the hospitality curriculum is continuously being revised to better address the needs of the students when they enter the world of work (Hospitality News Philippines, 2016).

The researchers considered the employment status of the graduates in terms of job status, job position, and length of service in their present and previous companies. Reason/s for staying in the present job and monthly income were also investigated in the study. Moreover, the length of time in finding the first job, length of stay, and job position in the first job were considered in the study so as to determine the employability of the graduates of BSHM.

The competencies that were developed and acquired by the graduates will reflect in their work effectiveness as expected by the hospitality industry's top management, managers, and supervisors. The competencies that the graduates find very useful in their previous and present jobs were identified by the respondents. These competencies include communication skills, human relation skills, entrepreneurial skills, information technology skills, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills. These skills are fundamentals to professional learning and are also controlled by meta-processes concerning self-knowledge and self-management.

Method

A descriptive method of research was utilized using questionnaire as the main source of data. This method was used to facilitate complete analysis and report of the graduates of Baliuag University College of Hospitality Management and Tourism from SY 2005-2006 to SY 2009-2010.

Participants

The target of the study included all the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management graduates from the College of Hospitality Management and Tourism of Baliuag University for the abovementioned five-year period. From the data provided by the Center for Career and Counseling of the University, there were 364 total graduates consisting of 172 males and 192 females. Out of the total number of graduates, 186 responded and participated in the tracer study.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire was based on the CHED's Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) questionnaire. This consisted of the following parts: (a) year graduated; (b) present employment data; (c) previous job information; (d) relevance of the curriculum; and (e) suggestions to further improve the program. The items in the instrument measure the employment status of the graduates as well as its employability as will be reflected in the initial employment information.

Data Gathering Procedure

The addresses and electronic mail addresses of the graduates were obtained from the Year Book of graduates from SY 2005-2010. The researchers distributed the questionnaires through the help of students under the CHMT department which were hand-carried, while others were distributed through electronic mail and social networking sites like Facebook.

The process of collecting data took place within eight (8) months. Responses were collected after one to two weeks. The data were gathered from the respondents' answers to the questionnaires.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The responses were tallied and tabulated using Google form. Frequency counts, ranking, and percentages were used for the description and interpretation of the collected data.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Participants of the study

Year Graduated	<i>f</i>	%
2006	21	11.3
2007	30	16.1
2008	34	18.3
2009	56	30.1
2010	45	24.2
Total	186	

Table 1 shows that the highest frequency of graduates who were traced were in the year 2009 with 30.1% respondents followed by 24.2 % in the year 2010. Graduate respondents who were traced in the year 2006 had the least number of respondents.

Table 2. Employment of the respondents

Employed	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	172	92.5
No	14	7.5
Total	186	

As shown in Table 2, majority (92.5%) of the graduate respondents were employed while only a few (7.5%) were unemployed. It was revealed that more graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management were readily employed.

Table 3. Present employment status

Status of Employment	<i>f</i>	%
Regular or Permanent	132	76.7
Temporary	2	1.2
Casual	3	1.7
Contractual	27	15.7
Others (self-employed)	8	4.6
Total	172	100

As shown in Table 3, majority of the graduate-respondents (76.7 %) were regular or permanent in their present jobs. Twenty-seven or 15.7% of them were employed in a contractual status while 8 or 4.6% were self-employed. Only a few were temporary and casual.

Table 4. Present job position

Present Job Position	<i>f</i>	%
Restaurant Supervisor	28	16.3
Restaurant Manager	6	3.5
Assistant Manager	5	2.9
Customer Service Representative	4	2.3
Supervisor (other than restaurant or hotel)	11	6.4
Front Office Staff/Receptionist	10	5.8
Front Office/Front Desk Manager	6	3.5
Cook	5	2.9
Head Cook/Chef	6	3.5
Food and Dining Attendant	5	2.9
Kitchen Staff	5	2.9
Businessman/Self-employed	10	5.8
College Instructor/Faculty	8	4.6
Bartender	3	1.7
Wine Sommelier	2	1.2
Office Clerk	5	2.9
Office Supervisor	6	3.5
Casino Dealer	4	2.3
Seafarer	13	7.6
Housekeeping Supervisor/Manager	9	5.2
Call Center Agent	5	2.9
Sales Executive	4	2.3
Senior Sales Executive	5	2.9
Airline Staff	3	1.7
No response	4	2.3
Total	172	

Among the many job positions of the graduate respondents, restaurant supervisor obtained the highest frequency with 28 respondents, followed by seafarer with 13 respondents, supervisor (other than restaurant or hotel) with 11 respondents, front office staff/receptionist and self-employed with 10 respondents each. Moreover, housekeeping supervisor/manager were other job positions that 9 of the graduate respondents were holding. Most of them were working in hospitality-related jobs while others were employed beyond the scope of the industry.

Table 5. Place of work

Respondents' Place of Work	<i>f</i>	%
Abroad	36	21.0
Local	136	79.0
Total	172	

As shown in Table 5, majority of the graduate respondents (79.0%) were working in local companies in the Philippines while 21.0 % were working in foreign countries.

Table 6. Length of service

Length of Stay in the Present Job	<i>f</i>	%
1 month to 6 months	17	9.8
7 months to 11 months	25	14.5
1 year to less than 2 years	30	17.4
2 years to less than 3 years	19	11.0
3 years to less than 4 years	42	24.4
More than 4 years	32	18.6
No response	7	4.0
Total	172	

Table 6 shows the length of stay of the graduate-respondents in their present jobs. Forty- two (24.4%) are presently staying in their present jobs for three years to less than 4 years, 32 respondents (18.6%) are presently working in their respective jobs for more than four years. Out of 172 respondents, 30 (17.4) % of them answered that they are currently connected in their respective companies and have been working for 1 year to less than 2 years. Only a few (9.8%) were working for only a month to 6 months. Seven (4.0%) of the respondents did not answer the question.

Table 7. Means of getting the job

Means of Getting the Present Job	<i>f</i>	%
Response to an advertisement	23	13.4
As walk-in applicant	38	22.0
Information from friends	37	21.5
Jobs fair	29	16.9

Means of Getting the Present Job	<i>f</i>	%
Family business	12	7.0
Recommended by someone	16	9.3
Others (through ojt)	14	8.1
No response	3	1.7
Total	172	

Based on the results of the study, 38 or 22% and 37 or 21.5% of the graduate respondents found their present job as walk-in applicants and information from friends, respectively. Other means of getting their present jobs were through job fairs (16.9%) and response to an advertisement (13.4%), recommendation from someone (9.3%) and through OJT/practicum. Family business was another means of getting their present job with 7.0% responses. Three (1.7%) respondents refused to answer the question.

Table 8. Reason/s for unemployment

Reasons for Unemployment	<i>f</i>	%
Advance or further study	6	42.9
Family business	6	42.9
Health-related reason/s	2	14.2
Total	14	

Table 8 shows that six (6) out of 14 graduate respondents (42.9%) who were unemployed during the time that the tracer study was conducted revealed that it was because of advanced or further studies that made them unemployed while another 6 (42.9%) of them stated that it was because of their family business. Only two (2) of the respondents had a health-related reason for not being employed.

Table 9. Length of time in finding the first job

Length of Time in Finding the First Job	<i>f</i>	%
Less than a month	32	18.6
1 month to six months	85	49.4
7 months to 11 months	34	19.8
1 year to less than 2 years	14	8.1
2 years to less than 3 years	5	2.9
3 years to less than 4 years	2	1.2
Total	172	

As shown in Table 9, most of the graduate respondents landed their first job in just 1 month to 6 months with 85 respondents, while 34 and 32 of them were hired by their respective employers within 7 months to 11 months and less than a month, respectively. Only a few of them took 2 years to less than 3 years and 3 years to less than 4 years in finding their first job.

Table 10. Length of stay in the first job

Length of Stay in the First Job	<i>f</i>	%
1 month to six months	23	12.4
7 months to 11 months	45	24.2
1 year to less than 2 years	54	29.0
2 years to less than 3 years	36	19.4
3 years to less than 4 years	28	15.0
Total	186	

Table 10 revealed the length of time that all the graduate respondents stayed in their first job. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of them stayed in their first job for 1 year to less than 2 years, while 24.2% stayed for 7 months to 11 months in their first job. Moreover, 36 respondents (19.4%) rendered their services in their companies for 2 years to less than 3 years. Only a few of them stayed in their first job in 1 month to six months.

Table 11. Job position in the first job

Job Position in the First Job	<i>f</i>	%
Rank or Clerical	98	52.7
Professional, Technical or Supervisory	56	30.1
Managerial or Executive	18	9.7
Others (business owner, family business)	8	4.3
No response	6	3.2
Total	186	

Based on the results of the study, more than half of the 186 respondents (52.7%) were employed in a rank-and-file or clerical job in their first job. There were 56 (30.1%) who were employed in the professional, technical, or supervisory positions. Eighteen respondents (9.7%) were hired in a managerial or executive level, while the remaining 4.3% were business owners or running family businesses. Six respondents (3.2%) refused to answer the question.

Table 12. Reason/s for staying in the present job

Reason/s for Staying in the Present Job	<i>f</i>	%	Rank
Salaries and Benefits	49	24.9	1
Career Challenge	43	21.8	2
Related to course or program of study	35	17.8	3
Related to Special Skills	24	12.2	4
Proximity to Residence	18	9.1	5
Family Influence	16	8.1	6
Peer Influence	12	6.1	7
TOTAL	197		

Based on the results of the study, multiple responses were reflected. Salaries and benefits ranked 1 among the many reasons of the respondents for staying in the present job, followed by career challenge with 43 responses. Thirty-five of the respondents that ranked 3 stated that it was because of the relatedness of the job with their finished program that made them stay in the company they were working with. Only a few of the respondents said that peer influence was their reason for staying in the job.

Table 13. Initial gross monthly income in the present job

Initial Gross Monthly Income	<i>f</i>	%
Php 5,001.00 to Php 10,000.00	4	2.3
Php 10,001.00 to Php 15,000.00	25	14.5
Php 15,001.00 to Php 20,000.00	43	25.0
Php 20,001.00 to Php 25,000.00	45	26.2
Php 25,001.00 and above	51	29.7
No Response	4	2.3
Total	172	

Table 13 presents the gross monthly income of the respondents in their present job. A gross income of Php 25,000 and above was the one with highest frequency with 51 respondents, followed by Php 20,000 to Php25,000 with 45 respondents, and Php15,000 to Php20,000 with 43 responses. Very few of the respondents had a gross income of Php5,000 to Php10,000.

Table 14. Competencies learned in college found useful in the present job

Competencies	<i>f</i>	Rank
Communication Skills	75	1
Human Relation Skills	66	2
Critical Thinking Skills	59	3
Information Technology Skills	53	4
Entrepreneurial Skills	29	5
Problem-Solving Skills	28	6
Total	310	

As shown in Table 14, out of 310 multiple responses, communication skills ranked 1 in the competencies that graduates learned in college which they find useful in their present jobs. Human relations and critical thinking skills ranked 2 and 3 respectively, followed by information technology skills that ranked 4. Problem solving and entrepreneurial skills had the least number of responses that ranked number 5.

The results were highly supported by the study of Celis et al. (2014) which revealed that human relations skills and communication skills were deemed to be the most useful competencies learned by the graduates of Lyceum of the Philippines University.

Table 15. Suggestions to improve the hospitality management program

Suggestions	<i>f</i>	%	Rank
More practical application and hands on activities	14	24.5	1
Additional practicum venue abroad	9	15.8	2
Provide more seminars	8	14	3
Add more subjects relevant to the program	6	10.5	4
Send students for OJT in other foreign countries	5	8.7	5
Send more students to international practicum	4	7	6
Additional hours for OJT	4	7	7
More educational trips/learning activities	3	5.2	8
Have program specializations to further enhance the skills of the students	2	3.5	9.5
More activities to further develop the skills in decision making and problem solving	2	3.5	9.5
Total	57		

Table 15 shows some of the suggestions of the respondents on how to further improve the Hospitality Management program. Fourteen (24.5%) out of 57 responses stated that the curriculum should focus more on practical applications and hands-on activities, followed by more practicum abroad with 9 responses. To provide more seminars was another suggestion of 8 or 14% of the respondents followed by adding more subjects relevant to the program with 6 responses. Other suggestions of the respondents include: more students for OJT abroad, additional OJT hours, more educational trips/learning activities, program specializations to further enhance the skills of the students, and more activities to further develop the skills in decision making and problem solving.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the study, the following are the conclusions:

1. Majority of the graduate respondents were employed from the time the tracer study was conducted.
 - a. Majority of the respondents have been regular or permanent in their present job positions.
 - b. Most of the present job positions of the graduate respondents are aligned with the hospitality industry which includes restaurant supervisor, seafarer, front office staff and manager, housekeeping supervisor, head cook/chef, and other related fields.
 - c. Majority of the graduate respondents have been working in local companies in the Philippines.
 - d. Most of the graduates have been staying in their present jobs from one (1) year to less than four (4) years.
 - e. Information from friends, walk-in applications, and job fairs helped the respondents in finding their present jobs.
 - f. Some of the graduates who were unemployed during the time the study was conducted were doing advanced or further studies or were managing their own family business.
2. Majority of the graduate respondents found their first jobs within a month to six months. More than half of them were employed in the rank and clerical positions and stayed in their first jobs for seven (7) months to less than three (3) years.
3. Graduate respondents have been committed and motivated to stay in their present jobs because of salaries and benefits, career challenges, and relatedness to the course/program they finished.
4. The initial gross monthly income of the majority of the respondents ranged from Php 15,000.00 to Php 25,000.00 and above.

5. Aside from technical skills that the industry is looking for, communication skill is another significant aspect. It is a major requirement in the service or customer-oriented industries which the respondents affirmed that they learned in college.
6. Additional practical applications and hands-on activities including seminars and additional practicum trainings abroad are on the top list of suggestions of the respondents on how to further improve the BS Hospitality program of Baliuag University.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researchers offer the following recommendations:

1. More students should be encouraged to take BS Hospitality Management program since there are many job opportunities available for graduates locally and abroad.
2. The CHMT must further promote a strong relationship with the industry and look for more industry partners in order to expand assistance to the students in their OJT.
3. The CHMT should further send the students to a variety of seminars and trainings so that they will be updated on the current trends in the industry and further enhance their technical skills.
4. Follow-up studies/tracer studies on the rate of employment and employment status of BU graduates should be conducted by the CHMT to assess the program as well as the additional trainings and advanced studies pursued by the graduates.

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