

Assessment of the Hospitality Education Program in Digos City: Basis for Training Enrichment

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This study was conducted to assess the hospitality education program of Schools in Digos City to provide a basis for developmental and training interventions. The study utilized descriptive-evaluative research methods and employed universal sampling techniques in respondent selection that included administrators, teachers and students. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and one –way ANOVA. The study revealed that implementation of best practices in hospitality education program in Digos City have moderate implementation of best practices. The overall response of the respondents in terms of the extent of implementation of hospitality education program is 3.17 or satisfactory . The Study also concluded that there is significant difference on the level of hospitality education program in the four schools rated in terms of curriculum program, logistics and approaches, teaching pedagogy and linkages and network when grouped according to schools.

Keywords: *Hotel and Restaurant Management, Hospitality Education, Descriptive-Comparative, Philippines.*

INTRODUCTION

This hospitality industry assumes importance in job employment to tourism related courses all throughout the world. In a report entitled “The Hospitality Sector in Europe” which involves 31 countries, it was revealed that the Hospitality Industry made a major contribution to European economy (Ernst & Young, 2013). Despite the challenges in the economy, the United States of America saw an increase in Consumer Customer Index by 9.9 points suggesting a high optimism in the Leisure and Hospitality Industry which led to the creation of more jobs (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Europe is also proud to announce of employing 10 million people in the European Hospitality Industry (Hotrec Hospitality Europe, 2014). Africa also reported to

create additional 320,000 new jobs which was already predicted by a research group W Hospitality Group (Hotellingstaffwriter, 2014). The same trends are reported in Latin America and Asia (Global Hospitality Insights, 2014).

The growth of the hospitality industry also requires additional formal training for tourism administrators and staff. One of the most popular techniques is simulation modeling (Feinstein & Parks, 2014). In most international hotels, managers need to employ strategies which be acceptable to ethnically diverse employees (Manoharan, Gross & Sardeshmukh, 2014; Reynolds, Rahman & Bradetich, 2014). Moreover, managers are mindful of the work environment and character of employees (Bruce & Tews, 1995). To maintain and accelerate growth, several studies dwell on factors that affect the hospitality industry (Shani, Uriely, Reichel & Ginsburg; 2014). However, management support, adequate HR support system, a good working environment and enticing incentives are considered top motivating factors to ensure employees' retention (Vasquez, 2014; Davis, Taylor & Savery, 2001). In this case, the knowledge and skills of managers have to be developed in such a way that their leadership and management are tailored to the needs of the industry's frontlines. Hence, schools with the hospitality programs are front runners of skills acquisition in the tourism industry. Through formal education and trainings, the required manpower with world class tourism competence is produced. Ankomah and Larson (2011) also stressed the need for universities and tourism industries to collaborate to come out with a workable education program. Therefore the country should give importance in assisting schools offering hospitality education.

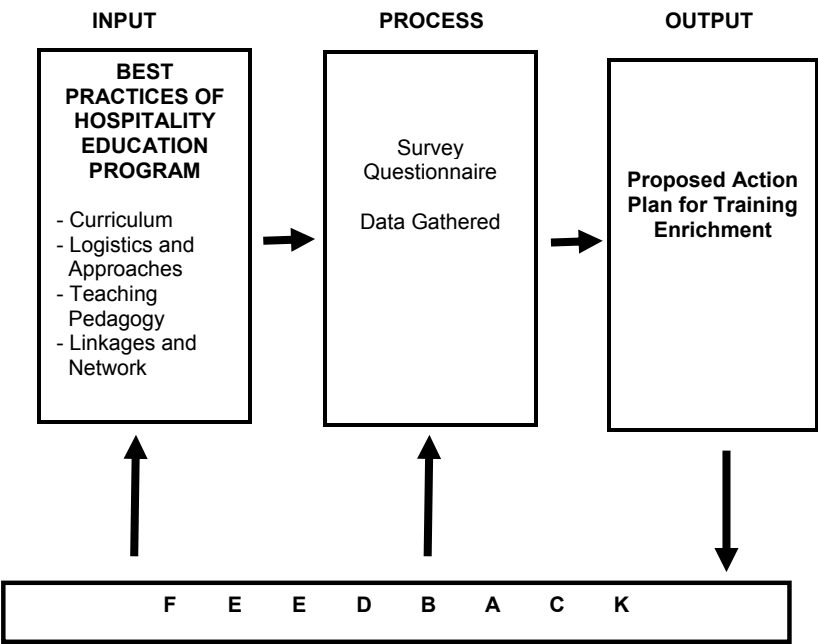
Globalization plays a very important role in the growth in the tourism industry. With this growth, people have become sophisticated travelers, prompting constructions of resorts and other venues for relaxation and recreation. This growth further increased the demand for quality services and thus tourism companies need to invest in training and skills exposure of their staff or workers to ensure that the services provided addresses the comfort and sophistication expected by tourists and clients. Again, it poses an even greater challenge for schools offering hospitality courses.

In the context of Digos City, no studies have been done in relation to hospitality industry. However, Caballes (2001) shared that resorts in Davao del Sur, of which Digos City belongs, have poor marketing strategies as well as manpower skills, suggesting that the resorts in the province need to provide trainings to improve overall services and address clients dissatisfaction. Sadly these data also suggest that graduates hired for tourism –related employment have poor tourism skills. Thus this scenario in the local tourism prompted

investigation on the implementation of hospitality education programs areas: curriculum program, logistics and approaches, teaching pedagogy and linkages and networks. The extent of application of the aforementioned areas as well as the difference in the implementation of the four hospitality schools in Digos was also determined.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study utilized the input –process- output model. The input the best practices in hospitality education and these are curriculum program, logistics and approaches, teaching pedagogy, and linkages and networks. The process comprises the procedures undertaken for the assessment such as distribution of survey questionnaires, data gathering, analysis and interpretation. The output is the developed action plan for training enrichment.



METHODS

There were four institutions in Digos City that were tapped for the study. Table 1 presents the profile of the participating educational institutions.

Table 1. *Profile of hospitality education institutions*

School	Type of Institution	Accreditation	Hospitality Education Program Offered	Management
A	Tertiary	CHED	BSHRM	Sectarian
B	TechVoc	TESDA	HRM	Corporation
C	TechVoc	TESDA	HRM	Corporation
D.	Tertiary	CHED	BSHM	Corporation

These four institutions are major institutions in Digos City offering hospitality education programs. School A and D offer a four- year program for hospitality education while School B and C offer two year technical course in Hotel and Restaurant Management .The study tapped a total of 182 administrators, hospitality management faculty, and hospitality management students from the four institutions.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to assess the hospitality education program of these four institutions, descriptive- evaluative research design was used. This design delves into actual situations, current conditions and the present phenomena to come up with a good assessment.

Curriculum

Hospitality management curriculum needs to meet both industry and student expectations by delivering the skills sets needed in the workplace and the institutional demands for academic rigor (Mahony,2003). Presented in table 2 is the level of assessment on the best practices of the different hospitality institutions in terms of their hospitality education program curriculum.

Table 2. *Level of assessment of hospitality education program in terms of curriculum program*

Items	A		B		C		D		TOTAL	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE
enhances cultural competence	3.87	VS	3.00	S	3.77	VS	3.43	S	3.51	VS
infuses local culture	4.21	VS	3.79	S	3.78	VS	4.23	VS	4.00	VS
Includes school-community interaction	3.88	VS	3.89	VS	3.78	VS	4.01	VS	3.89	VS
Includes cultural enhancement activities	4.05	VS	4.16	VS	4.13	VS	4.14	VS	4.12	VS
Reflective of cultural perspective	3.99	VS	4.12	VS	3.98	VS	3.90	VS	3.99	VS
Average	4.00	VS	3.79	VS	3.88	VS	3.94	VS	3.90	VS

The curriculum of the four institutions gained an overall mean score of 3.90 with the descriptive equivalent very satisfactory. This overall score suggests that the extent of implementation of the curriculum program among four schools is of great extent. Thus, these four schools are able to integrate cultural enhancement activities that support hospitality and tourism development in their respective curriculum. These activities include partnership with local government and stakeholders.

Logistics and Approaches

Logistics is an integral part of any organization and an effective logistics system can ensure efficient achievement of business goals of the organization. Table 3. Presents the assessment on the four institutions Logistics and Approach.

Table 3. *Best practices of hospitality education program in terms of logistics and approaches*

Items	A		B		C		D		<i>TOTAL</i>	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE
Logistics services defined in program objectives.	2.34	F	2.20	F	2.53	F	2.28	F	2.39	F
Operating procedures addresses environment	2.00	F	2.20	F	2.53	F	1.50	F	2.00	F
Technically feasible alternative logistics	3.30	S	2.20	F	2.30	F	2.12	F	2.40	F
Conducts assessments to logistical investment and procedures.	3.00	S	2.20	F	2.32	F	2.12	F	2.41	F
Formulates and applies performance measures.	2.10	F	2.20	F	2.22	F	1.54	F	2.01	F
Average	2.63	F	2.33	F	2.46	F	2.13	F	2.37	F

As reflected in table 3, the extent of implementation of clearly defined logistics is satisfactory with a mean of 2.37 School A with an overall rating of 2.63 has the highest overall mean score among the four participating institution followed by School C, B and D.

Teaching Pedagogy

Teaching using pedagogy involves assessing the educational levels of the students on particular skills. Understanding the pedagogy of the students in a classroom involves using differentiated instruction as well as supervision to meet the needs of all students in the classroom.

Table 4. *Best Practices of hospitality education program in terms of teaching pedagogy*

Items	A		B		C		D		<i>TOTAL</i>	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE
Knowledge enriching activities	3.00	S	3.12	S	2.99	S	3.29	S	3.10	S
Beneficial instructional materials	3.12	S	3.30	S	3.12	S	3.18	S	3.18	S
Effective teaching-learning approach	3.00	S	2.89	S	2.98	S	3.28	S	3.03	S
Integration of cultural enhancement	2.99	S	3.20	S	3.41	S	3.11	S	3.17	S
Module reflects cultural diversity	3.01	S	3.13	S	3.30	S	3.10	S	3.13	S
Overall	3.00	S	3.12	S	3.16	S	3.19	S	3.12	S

The overall mean rating for the category teaching pedagogy of the institutions is 3.12; this suggests that the implementation of such provision for their hospitality education is satisfactory. The highest mean was obtained by School D followed by C, B and A.

LINKAGES AND NETWORKS

Creation of networks and linkages are an essential component of any development program and provide synergies to build upon a point of advantage to a point of strength. Partnerships can be forged on technical grounds as for providing technical know- how and skill sharing monitoring and evaluation, proposal development, impact assessment and etc. Table 5 determines the level of assessment of hospitality education program in terms of industry and academe linkage.

Table 5. *Best practices of hospitality education program in terms of linkages and networks*

Items	A		B		C		D		<i>TOTAL</i>	
	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE	Mean	DE
Partners with travel agencies and operators.	4.12	VS	3.61	VS	4.15	VS	4.03	VS	3.98	VS
Build business relationship with suppliers, and trade intermediaries.	4.10	VS	3.63	VS	4.10	VS	4.18	VS	4.00	VS
Maintains relationship with local, regional, national and international tourism offices.	4.12	VS	3.64	VS	4.10	VS	4.16	VS	4.00	VS
Develops accessibility of booking office.	4.15	VS	4.20	VS	3.98	VS	4.16	VS	4.12	VS
Offers standardized trainings industry demands.	4.10	VS	3.96	VS	3.98	VS	3.99	VS	4.00	VS
Average	4.12	VS	3.80	VS	4.06	VS	4.10	VS	4.02	VS

The table reveals an overall mean of 4.02 suggesting a descriptive equivalent of very satisfactory. This value implies that the provision concerning hospitality education indicated that linkages and networks were implemented to wide extent by the four hospitality education program institutions. This results further suggests that the education programs in Digos City have highly developed accessibility to booking offices, tourism destinations, hotels, resorts and have established relationships with suppliers and other trade intermediaries.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings suggest that there is no significant difference on the level of assessment of hospitality education in the four schools which are rated in terms of curriculum program, logistics and approaches, teaching pedagogy and linkages and network. However, there is a significant difference on the extent of implementation of hospitality education among and between the four schools in terms of curriculum program, logistics and approaches, teaching pedagogy and linkages and network.

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