

Tracer Study of BS Hotel and Restaurant Management in Kalinga State University

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Received: 18 Jan 2024, Received in revised form: 25 Feb 2024, Accepted: 29 Mar 2024, Available online: 10 Apr 2024

Abstract

This study aims to track the employment profile, struggles of the graduates during their search for employment and perceived competencies acquired. The study is limited to the graduates of BS in Hotel and Restaurant Management of year 2017 – 2020. Further the study also assessed the curriculum design of the program of Kalinga State University. It aimed to find out the specific skills that helped the graduates attain employment in line with their specialization. There are 127 graduates, 87 of them were able to respond. The instrument is patterned with the employability survey used by Commission on Higher Education. Results show that 84% are employed. Among the employed 29% hold a position in line to specialization and 5% are in supervisory level. 38% of the employed respondents took 1 – 6 months as their length of pursuing employment. As to struggles during pursuit of employment, 25% believed that they lack industry experience. As to the skills acquired during their stay in university it is communication skills that got 59%. Tracer studies have been used as tool to know the performance of graduates from formal education to employment. This study was conducted to help the university deliver a more effective curriculum for BS HRM program. The findings provide helpful information on the improvement of the curriculum design, enhance the teaching strategies and planning initiative for the delivery of current and future curriculum. Furthermore, it will also be used as the databank of the graduate's profile for future studies and accreditation purposes.

Keywords— Kalinga State University, tracer study, curriculum design, BS HRM.

I. INTRODUCTION

One measure of success of a higher institution can be seen on the by the quality of graduates received in work. (Romaldon & Mohammad, 2021) Tracer study is known to help educational institutions bridge the gap between the competencies required and the available employment opportunities. Tracer studies can provide information to evaluate higher education outcomes to be used as material for improvement and quality assurance of the higher education institutions

concerned. (Aquino, Punongbayan & Macalaguim, et al., 2015)

The hospitality industry is a vibrant and progressive sector that is highly competitive and essentially customer oriented. Thus, the quality of staff employed in hotels is crucial in achieving positive outcomes in customer satisfaction and overall profitability. (Fraser, 2017) Guided by CMO 62 series of 2017 the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management program is a 4-year degree program that will equip students with competencies that are needed to execute operational

and management functions in food production, accommodation, food and beverage service, tourism planning and product development, events planning, transportation services, travel and tour operations and other emerging sectors of hospitality and tourism industry.

While it is true that there is a continuing demand for workforce in the tourism and hospitality industry, Schomburg (2007) warns that the graduates might not always identify the relationship between the knowledge acquired during the study and their professional lives. Hotels, resorts, and restaurants highly competitive companies' due various reason, thus, companies require applicants to possess competencies. Competency is the number one aspect that an employer is looking for from BS Hotel and Restaurant Management graduate. (Malonzo et.al, 2020)

The program was offered to accommodate the increasing number of youths interested in working in the hospitality and tourism industry in Kalinga. It was not only because of the demand of hospitality and tourism workers abroad but also in the province, due to the evident increase of international and domestic tourist arrival in the province. Further, local business owners started to invest in hotels and resort to cater to tourist.

In the desire of the institution to continuously improve the delivery of hospitality management education to the students through a relevant and comprehensive curriculum. In a recent study conducted by Duyan (2019), the Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies of Kalinga State University Students were moderate. Moreover, Dawaton (2021) suggested that more effort is required to strengthen students' entrepreneurial competencies to become more competitive and increase their success as future entrepreneurs or professionals.

This study was conducted to help the university deliver a more effective curriculum. Through knowing the employment status of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management graduates in Kalinga State University from 2017-2020. Findings from this study will provide helpful information on improvement of the program and planning initiatives for the delivery of current and future programs. Further it will also be used as databank of the graduate's profile for future studies.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study applied the survey research method. It utilized a questionnaire recommended by Commission on Higher Education and tools used by Gines (2014). It was modified to answer the objectives of the study. It also used descriptive research for the study to have clear and specific result. The list of graduates was gathered from the office of the University Registrar. As shown in Table 1; there are 125 graduates, and 70% were able to participate in the study. The study added additional 10% compared to the 60% sample used in conducting tracer studies. Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents as to gender and civil status.

The questionnaire consists of the following: profiles of the graduates, educational background, employment profile, and competencies learned in college that were useful in first job after college. Before the floating of survey instruments, the researcher followed the process of the University in the approval of research. The proposal endorsed by the college research coordinator to the director for research for checking and approval of VP for Research and Extension Services. Upon the approval of Vice President for Research and Extension Services; the questionnaire was distributed thru google form and messenger. Data retrieved were collated and tabulated using Microsoft Excel. The researchers also solicited the aid of a statistician to guarantee the accuracy of the results.

Table 1. Population of the study

Year	Graduates	Respondents
2016 - 2017	21	15
2017 - 2018	39	27
2018 - 2019	54	38
2019 - 2020	11	8
TOTAL	125	88

Table 2. Profile of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	9	9%
Female	79	91%
Civil status		
Single	78	90%
Married	20	10%

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part presents the survey results, organized, and presented in the order by which they address the stated objectives of the study: current employment profile, reasons of unemployment and in college that were useful in first job after college.

Table 3 presents the current employment status of the respondents. Among the 88 respondents 55 are employed. 46 out of 55 are employed locally specifically in the Province of Kalinga and are earning between 6,000-10,000. This support the study of *Celis (2013)* that most of the graduates were working in the Philippines, which suggests the job opportunities outside the country require enough work experience. Majority took 1-6 months to land a job after college. And 55 employed respondents are not on their first employment. And, the highest reason of unemployment is due to family concern.

On the employment status most of them are on contractual basis (32%), some are permanent (15%), few are self-employed (10%), temporary (3%) and casual (2%). As to the place of work 84% are locally employed and 9% are employed abroad. In the study conducted by *De Castro (2017)* work experience, technical and management skills, knowledge, or mastery of the field are just a few qualities an employee should possess to obtain a stable position in a world where the battle is about.

The table shows the first monthly salary. 34 of the 83 respondents were earning between P6,000 and P10,000 (41%), 21 were earning between P11,000 and P16,000 (21%), 18 were earning between P5,000 and P5,000 (21%), 9 were earning P22,000 (10%), and 5 were earning between P17,000 and P22,000 (5%).

In addition, the table also presents the length of time on the pursuit of their first job. Most of them were able to land a job within one to six months (39%), 26 took them more than one year (31%), 21 of the respondents only took them less than a month to get a job (21%) and 4 took seven to eleven months (5%). This result only signifies the demand for employee's tourism and hospitality industry is high.

Lastly, it is important to note that among the 32 unemployed respondents 4 did not look for a job and 2 answered that they lack work experience. Thus, it can be inferred that there is a need for additional hands-on and minds-on learning to give enough exposure to industry's standard and boost their confidence to apply for jobs.

Hence, it can be inferred that BSHRM graduates of KSU have high employment rate. It can be gleaned from the results that there are employment opportunities for the graduates of BS HRM in the country. It can be noticed that most respondents are employed locally as a result, most of them make less than P10,000 gross a month since the province has lower standard daily wage.

Table 3. Employment Profile

Current employment status	Frequency	Percent
temporary	3	4%
casual	2	2%
contractual	28	32%
self-employed	9	10%
permanent	14	16%
not employed	32	36%
Total	88	
Place of work		
local	46	84%
abroad	9	16%
Total	55	
Initial monthly salary in their first job		
P5, 000.00	18	21%
P6, 000.00-P10, 000.00	34	41%
P11, 000.00-P16, 000.00	21	24%
P17, 000.00-P22, 000.00	5	6%
more than P22, 000.00	9	10%
Total	83	
Length of pursuit before landing a job		
Less than a month	21	25%
One to six months	33	39%
Seven to eleven months	4	5%
More than one year	26	31%
Total	84	
Are their Current job their first employment		
Yes	22	40%
No	33	60%
Total	55	
Reasons of Unemployment		
Further study and training	7	22%
Did not look for a job	4	13%

Lack of work experience	2	6%
Family concern	8	25%
Health related concerns	4	23%
No job opportunity	7	22

Total	32	
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This part presents the survey results, organized, and presented on the order by which they address the stated objectives of the study: Line of business they are currently employed and positions they hold.

Table 5 shows the responses of graduates' job placement in the hospitality and tourism industry. Out of the 55 employed respondents, 33 are employed in hotel and restaurant. And most of them are on entry level positions.

The table shows that 9 are employed in government agency (16%) 10 are in business activities (15%), 2 respondents are employed in the academe (4%) and 1 of them is in manufacturing (2%). As to the positions presented were classified based on the potential positions for a BSHRM graduate. It is worth to mention that few are in the supervisory level (9%), most are working as food and beverage attendant (27%), some as front desk clerk (21%), others are as room attendant (15%) and kitchen attendant (15%), few are as cook (9%) and bartender (3%).

Lastly, the table shows the job placement of the respondents that are not working in the hospitality and tourism. 22 are employed as office assistants (41%), 6 are call center agents (27%), 4 are sales representatives, and the remaining 3 are teachers (14%).

It can be seen in the result, some decided not to pursue a career in the hospitality and tourism. The implication is that the graduates meet the entry level roles of hospitality and tourism industry; however, they lack job opportunities for higher positions since most of them are employed within the province. This further implies that graduates lack confidence in applying for more relevant and good-paying jobs outside Kalinga. This confirms Marcos et al. (2017) findings that business graduate students at Kalinga State University prefer to work within the province than to look for jobs in other cities or abroad.

Table 4. Job Placement

Line of business they currently employed	Frequency	%
manufacturing	1	2%

hotel and restaurant	33	60%
banks	0	0%
business activities (retail and wholesale selling)	10	18%
public administration and defense	0	0%
education/academe	2	4%
health and social work	0	0%
government agency	9	16%

Total	55	
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Current job placement in hospitality & tourism industry

bellman	0	0%
room attendant	5	15%
laundry attendant	0	0%
bartender	1	3%
cook/chef	3	9%
kitchen attendant	5	15%
food and beverage attendant	9	27%
front desk clerk	7	21%
conciierge	0	0%
travel agent	0	0%
event/ banquet attendant	0	0%
food and beverage supervisor	1	3%
kitchen supervisor	1	3%
front office supervisor	1	3%

Total	33	
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Job placement if not in the hospitality & tourism industry

call center agent	6	27%
office assistant	9	41%
sales representative	4	18%
teaching	3	14%

Total	22	
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Table 5 reveals the respondents' difficulties in finding job. Out of 83 graduates that applied for a job after graduation 25 said that inadequate experience is the most common struggle. 22 said the lack skills and trainings is also a struggle and 15 checked few job vacancies. It is crucial to note from the findings that lack of experience and inadequacy of skills and training

are the main challenges that graduates face when looking for work.

Table 5. Common struggles in looking for a job

Difficulties in looking for a job	Frequency	%
few jobs vacancies/Lack of position or item	15	18%
inadequate experience	47	56%
inadequate skills and trainings	22	26%
Total	83	100%

Table 6 presents the competencies learned that they find useful in their first job. 59 chose communications skills (68%), 39 of them answered human relations skills (45%), 29 were convinced that they learned entrepreneurial skills (33%), 23 believed that they acquired managerial skills (26%), 17 chose problem-solving (20%) and the remaining 17 answered critical thinking (20%).

This supports the result findings of the study of Fronda (2013), that in addition to HRM-related skills, the curriculum may also need to intensify communication skills training to students to make them more confident in working with and through people in the industry.

Table 6. Competencies learned in college

Competencies learned	Frequency	%
communication skills	59	68%
human relations skills	39	45%
entrepreneurial skills	29	33%
problem-solving skills	17	20%
critical Thinking skills	17	20%
managerial skill	23	26%
Total	184	

IV. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that curriculum, teaching strategy and environment should be given emphasis to enhance to enhance learning experience of BS Hotel and Restaurant Management program of the University. The graduates of the program have good employment opportunities; however, they lack confidence in applying for jobs locally and abroad. While it is true that most of the respondents are employed. There is adequate number of graduates that are unemployed due to lack of training and experience, it can be said

that their confidence is minimal. Critical thinking and problem-solving was not given emphasis on their curriculum, which, could have helped them land a higher-level position.

Since this study is limited only to an average number of respondents and graduates of recent years using the descriptive quantitative method, future researchers are encouraged to conduct a further and in-depth study on a broader scope to gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum implemented since the start of the program offering.

V. RECCOMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

The College may organize a program or organization to support and help the graduates find a job after college and inculcate work stability. And must tap linkages that will bring possible employment opportunities for its graduates.

The College could help improve the students' competencies by strengthening their exposure to various competitions and other related training and seminars.

The College can enhance the practicum program to give access to students to gain more competencies.

The BS Hospitality Management faculty may do the following:

Encourage the students to be more motivated to work hard and persevere in whatever task and project assigned to them to develop their sense of responsibility.

Conduct needs analysis of the target skills before designing the syllabus.

Teaching strategies of the major subject could be improved through experiential learning to enhance the students' skills and help the graduates have the confidence to apply for a job.

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