

Job Competencies of Hotel and Restaurant and Restaurant Management Students: Basis for Program Enhancement

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Abstract: *This study is aimed to assess the job competencies of hotel and restaurant management (HRM) or hospitality students as basis for instruction or program curriculum enhancement. The study employed descriptive survey method of research. The respondents were identified through simple random sampling composed of hotel and restaurant management or hospitality students and teachers/faculty from 1st to 4th year level of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST). Using a self-prepared but questionnaire-checklist and interview as data gathering tools the following were the findings of the study: HRM or hospitality of NEUST produces graduates capable in performing jobs concerning Housekeeping, Bartending, Food and Beverage, Baking, and Events Management. The competence of concerned students is preserved due to the commitment of the University in bringing up-to-date equipment related to the field, hiring of competent faculty, as well as, continuous faculty development program provided by the University. Also, support of the University played a major role towards endowment of quality education to HRM or hospitality students. Lastly, the curriculum of the program needs never-ending evaluation in order to address possible alignment or opportunities that would fit to the needs of stakeholders, employers, clients, and the like. Hence, by doing so, graduates of the Program would be always ready facing the demands of future employment.*

Keywords: competitiveness, curricula, curriculum, employability, employability skills, hospitality industry, hospitality program

1. Introduction

Capability of graduates is the primordial duty of every higher educational institutions (HEIs) whether private or public universities or colleges. It is an academic duty that has to be provided to students in order to satisfy work requirements of stakeholders or potential employers after graduation. Selvi (2010) said that education is a discipline aiming at revealing systematic and scientific results towards meeting the needs of individuals and society. Also, the aims of education change very quickly depending on the demands of the era requiring more capability.

HEIs' teachers must convey their competence to their students. Similarly, instructors of HRM or hospitality programs have to develop and maintain their competence. According to Katane et. al. (2006), competencies are defined as "the set of knowledge, skills, and experience necessary for future, which manifests in activities." Long (Small Business, n.d.) said that hospitality industry encompasses a wide range of professions, including those related to food service and lodging. ...hospitality services need to understand the skills and competencies typically required of those employed in the industry to ensure they hire the best and brightest for any position, especially those in management. Also, Chung-Herrera, Enz, & Lankau (2003) believed that the ability to identify the skills and competencies required for tomorrow's industry leaders is essential for companies that hope to remain competitive. Relative thereto, Doyle (thebalancecareers, 30 May 2019) emphasized that hospitality industry is a consistent form of employment in many areas and a great place for young people to break into the professional world. Hospitality industry includes skills such as knowledge in food service,

hotel operations, food and beverage prep, maintenance, management, and more.

Assessment of graduates' performance on their current employment is essential part of academic development. Informal survey of employers' revealed that HRM or hospitality graduates are often not prepared for the workplace and call on universities to provide a curriculum that would meet the industry's needed skills and knowledge and produce competitive graduates with potentials. The Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST), being one of the educational institutions contributing to the higher education's goals, is committed to contributing and producing quality HRM or hospitality graduates. The program is considered as one of the youngest colleges that started in June 2008 with a population approximately 800 students. It has been facing tough challenges of promoting and maintaining academic excellence among its faculty and students. The college had its first batch of graduates for the academic year 2012-2013. At present the program is under the guidance of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Order No. 62 series of 2017 which is also known as Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management.

The aforementioned literatures moved the researchers to assess the job competencies of HRM or hospitality students of NEUST in order to identify and address gaps that may affect future employment especially academic aspect. Yet, the researchers believed that comprehensive training and education of hospitality students relevant to potential jobs greatly shapes them become fit to their desired profession. Thus, the researchers offer the following problems, to wit:

- 1) How the learning competencies of the NEUST HRM or hospitality students be described in terms of: Housekeeping, Bartending, Food and Beverage, Baking, and Events Management.
- 2) Is there a significant difference between the responses of the two groups of the respondents?
- 3) Is there is a significant relationship between the profile of the student-respondents and their competencies?

2. Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Competency-Based Education by Sturgis & Casey (2018). Competency-based education is a system designed for equitable student achievement to ensure all learners master academic knowledge, develop the expertise to apply it to real-world problems and build the skills to be lifelong learners for future success. Hence, this study sought to assess the competency of HRM or hospitality students of NUEST in order to identify possible point of development in terms of instruction, curriculum, and faculty enhancement. The researchers provide the paradigm of the study.



Figure 1: Research Paradigm

3. Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey method of research. According to Kumar (2014), as cited by Pagandian and Eduardo (2019), descriptive method can systematically describe a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or programs, or provides information or describes the attitude towards an issue. Hence, descriptive would look, describe, and explain the learning job competencies of the HRM or hospitality students of the NEUST Academic Year 2018-2019. The respondents were identified through simple random sampling composed of students from 1st to 4th year level and faculty of HRM or hospitality. Validated self-prepared questionnaire-checklist was the main gathering tool supported by interview of the researchers. Data were statistically treated through weighted mean, frequency percentage, t-test, and person r.

Table 1: Verbal Descriptors

Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
4.21 – 5.00	- Strongly Agree (SA)
3.41 – 4.20	- Agree (A)
2.61 – 3.40	- Moderately Agree (MA)
1.81 – 2.60	- Disagree (D)
1.00 – 1.80	-Strongly Disagree (SD)

4. Results and Discussion

1) Profile of Student-Respondents

Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, and average grade on major subjects.

As to age, 94 (78.33%) of the respondents aged 18-22 years old and 26 (21.67%) of them are aged 23-30 years old. This implies that most respondents are within the 1st to 3rd year level and few respondents belong to the 4th year level which is expected considering that implementation of academic standards (kick-out policy) affected the retention of students. Students with three failed grades in their major subjects are not allowed by the University to re-enroll.

Table 2: Profile of respondents

Age	f	%
18-22	94	78.33
23-30	26	21.67
Total	120	100.00
Gender	f	%
Female	78	65.00
Male	42	35.00
Total	120	100.00
Civil Status	f	%
Single	118	98.33
Married	2	1.67
Total	120	100.00
Average Grade on Major Subjects	f	%
1.00	0	0.00
1.25	7	5.83
1.50	11	9.17
1.75	20	16.67
2.00	22	18.33
2.25	28	23.33
2.50	12	10.00
2.75	15	12.50
3.00	5	4.17
Total	120	100.00

As to gender, there are 78 (65%) female and 42 (35%) male respondents. As expected, the study is dominated by females which imply that the community viewed the Course (hotel and restaurant management or hospitality) more suitable for women than men. By observation, hotels, restaurants and other hospitality related works are really dominated by female employees.

As to civil status, 118 (98.33%) of the respondents are single and only 2 (1.67%) of them are married. This implies that students are inclined finishing their studies; they value their future careers after finishing their hospitality course.

As to grade, no one among the respondents had an average grade of 1.00 in the major subjects. However, 7 (5.83%)

have an average grade of 1.25; 11 (9.17%) have an average grade of 1.50; 20 (16.67%) have an average grade of 1.75; 22 (18.33%) registered an average grade of 2.00; 28 (23.33%) of the respondents have an average grade of 2.25; 12 (10%) of them have 2.50 as their average grade; 15 (12.50%) have an average grade of 2.50 and 5 (4.17%) of the student-respondents have an average grade of 3.00 on the major subjects which included subjects on Housekeeping, Bartending, Food and Beverage, Baking and Events Management.

2) Learning Competencies of Student-Respondents

Table 3: Competencies on Housekeeping

Housekeeping	Students	VD	Teachers	VD
1. Communicates clearly with managers and other personnel.	4.83	SA	3.25	MA
2. Follows and performs procedure well to assigned task.	4.92	SA	3.00	MA
3. Observes precautions required to protect the premise and guests property.	4.93	SA	3.25	MA
4. Makes the Bed Making properly, clean and clear the rooms.	4.98	SA	4.00	A
5. Properly handle guest’s request.	4.9	SA	3.50	A
6. Remove and replace bed linens properly.	5	SA	4.00	A
7. Handle lost and found guest items.	4.88	SA	4.00	A
8. Follow the proper valet grooming and communicates to the guest properly.	4.82	SA	3.50	A
Overall weighted mean	4.91	SA	3.56	A

Despite of disparity on the perception of both group of respondents, it still showed that students are competent in terms of Housekeeping which implies that the respondents perform well in preparing beds and rooms of guests. Further, it signifies that the required competency which NEUST HRM or hospitality program sought to imbue to its students is visible.

b) Bartending

Table 4 shows that student-respondents had a 4.98 overall weighted mean described as Strongly Agree while teacher-

a) Housekeeping

Table 3 presents those student-respondents Strongly Agree that they are competent in terms of Housekeeping with overall weighted mean of 4.91. Significantly, students had a highest weighted mean of 5.00 (SA) in terms of *removing and replacing bed linens properly*. However, teacher-respondents had an overall weighted mean of 3.56 described as Agree with highest perceptions on *making the bed properly, clean, and clear the rooms; removing and replacing bed linens properly; and handling lost and found guest’s items* with a weighted means of 4 (A).

respondents had 3.59 described as Agree. Particularly, student-respondents had a highest perception in terms of *servicing in a friendly efficient manner and attentive* and practicing good hygiene with 5.00 (SA) weighted means while teacher-respondents viewed their students with highest weighted mean in terms of *distinguishing the distinctive characteristics of alcoholic beverages and flavoring ingredients used in beverages* with a weighted mean of 4 (A).

Table 4: Competencies on Bartending

Bartending	Students	VD	Teachers	VD
1. Mix drinks, cocktails and other beverages in compliance to a standard.	4.98	SA	3.50	A
2. Ensures that the assigned area is fully equipped with tools and products needed for mixing beverages.	4.97	SA	3.25	MA
3. Serves in a friendly and efficient manner and attentive	5	SA	3.75	A
4. Use correct cocktail mixing method.	4.98	SA	3.50	A
5. Practices good hygiene	5	SA	3.50	A
6. Can easily determine different areas of bar for cleaning and maintenance	4.96	SA	3.50	A
7. Prepare suitable kinds of garnish presentation of cocktails, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.	4.95	SA	3.75	A
8. Distinguish the distinctive characteristics of alcoholic beverages and flavoring ingredients used in beverages	4.99	SA	4.00	A
Overall weighted mean	4.98	SA	3.59	A

The results imply that NEUST HRM or hospitality students are competent and perform in the satisfactory level in terms of Bartending. Interview with student-respondents revealed that they are skilled in this area considering that their teachers are capable too. Also, by observation and interview, the College has a complete facility and equipment to which the students could personally perform and practice bartending lessons.

c) Food and Beverage

Table 5 presents the competencies of the student-respondents in terms of Food and Beverage. Similar to the preceding findings, student-respondents viewed their selves

as competent in this area with 4.83 overall weighted mean (SA) while teachers viewed their students having lower level of competence with 3.50 (A) overall weighted mean. Students stressed that they are highly competent in terms of *dressing appropriately in a workplace with frequent customer service interaction and moving comfortably and can be accessible when guests call for a service* with weighted means of 5.00 (SA). However, the highest as per teacher-respondents are *cleaning and wiping all tableware and dining room equipment and put in their proper places and organizing coffee workstation in accordance with safety and hygiene practices to enable efficient workflow and easy access to equipment and supplies* both had 3.75 (A) means.

Table 5: Competencies in Food and Beverage

Food and Beverage	Students	VD	Teachers	VD
1. Dress appropriately in a workplace with frequent customer service interaction.	5.00	SA	3.25	MA
2. Moves comfortably and can be accessible when quests call for a service.	5.00	SA	3.50	A
3. Arranges and utilizes materials in orderly manner.	4.92	SA	3.50	A
4. Prepare banquet service ware and checks for completeness ahead of time.	4.96	SA	3.50	A
5. Clean and wipe all tableware and dining room equipment and put in their proper places.	4.93	SA	3.75	A
6. Plan content of menus.	4.58	SA	3.25	MA
7. Organize coffee workstation in accordance with safety and hygiene practices to enable efficient workflow and easy access to equipment and supplies.	4.64	SA	3.75	A
8. Discuss wine types, styles, regions, viticulture, and production methods with customers.	4.60	SA	3.50	A
Overall weighted mean	4.83	SA	3.50	A

The results signify that students viewed their selves as highly competent in terms of Food and Beverages but their teacher perceived that they (students) still need enhancement. However, the endowment of quality education to NEUST HRM or hospitality students is still observable in consideration of the perception of both groups of respondents.

d) Baking

Table 6 clearly shows that student-respondents viewed their selves better than that of their teachers with overall weighted

means of 4.76 (SA) and 3.53 (A) by the former and latter, respectively. However, student-respondents had the highest mean in terms of *keeping working area in good sanitary order* and *using proper equipment for baking* with means of 5.00 (SA) while the highest for the teacher-respondents are *preparing ingredients and flavoring agents as per required menu items*; *selecting, measuring and weighing ingredients according to recipe requirements*; and *baking products according to techniques and appropriate conditions and enterprising requirements and standards* all with 3.75 (A) means.

Table 7: Competencies on Baking

Baking	Students	VD	Teachers	VD
1. Follows the formulas on a consistent basis to achieve and keep the quality of the products.	4.94	SA	3.50	A
2. Keeps working area in good sanitary order.	5.00	SA	3.25	MA
3. Bakes items on a consistent basis as per schedule.	4.12	A	3.25	MA
4. Use proper equipment for baking	5.00	SA	3.50	A
5. Prepare ingredients and flavoring agents as per required menu items.	4.99	SA	3.75	A
6. Select, measure and weigh ingredients according to recipe requirements.	4.73	SA	3.75	A
7. Select oven temperature to bake products in accordance with desired characteristics, recipe specifications and enterprise practices.	4.67	SA	3.50	A
8. Bake products according to techniques and appropriate conditions; and enterprise requirements and standards.	4.64	SA	3.75	A
Overall weighted mean	4.76	SA	3.53	A

The results imply that despite of students' perception (commendable competence in terms of Baking), teachers believed that their students still need baking skills development. Interview with teachers exposed that students got lower assessment in terms of competence in baking since they (teachers) were guided by the standards set by the Commission on Higher Education curriculum on HRM or hospitality program. It further signifies that teachers know better the needed baking competence for their students than their students based on the CHed-based HRM or hospitality curriculum.

e) Events Management

Table 8 presents that student-respondents got an overall weighted mean of 4.19 (A) while teacher-respondents had a

3.22 (MA) weighted mean. The highest among the items as perceived by the students is *practicing the proper sanitation in preparing the food* with a mean of 4.83 (SA) while teachers perceived that their students are more competent in terms of *creating an event concept, theme and format* with a mean of 3.75 (A). Notably, both group of respondents had a lower competence assessment in terms of Events Management in comparison with the previous areas. The findings imply that both groups of respondents agree that students of NEUST HRM or hospitality have a lower level of competence in terms of Events Management. Still, teacher-respondents perceived lower than that of the student-respondents because teachers are more aware of the required competence students has to learn in this area.

Table 8: Competence on Events Management

Events Management	Students	VD	Teachers	VD
1. Design a theme that suits the concept	4.17	A	3.50	A
2. Identify event objectives correctly.	3.9	A	3.00	MA
3. Create an event concept, theme and format.	4.23	SA	3.75	A
4. Cooperates the group to achieve goals.	4.16	A	3.25	MA
5. Design detailed event program.	4.18	A	3.25	MA
6. Develop proposal and bid material within a prescribed time.	3.93	A	2.75	MA
7. Prepare on-site management, oversees set-up and conducts appropriate briefings.	4.16	A	3.00	MA
8. Practice the proper sanitation in preparing the food.	4.83	SA	3.25	MA
Overall weighted mean	4.19	A	3.22	MA

Interview of teacher-respondents corroborated by the students exposed that students are more inclined into skills related matters such as Bartending, Baking, and the like.

3) Significant Difference between the Responses of the Two Groups of Respondents

Table 9 shows that the critical value of 2.45 is less than the tabular value of t-stat equivalent to 5.37. This means that there is a significant difference on the assessment made by the two groups of respondents; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 9: Difference between the responses of the two groups of respondents

Difference between the Responses	Students	Teachers
Mean	4.5767	3.4883
Variance	0.2280	0.0182
t Stat	5.37**	
t Critical two-tail	2.45	

**difference is significant @ 0.05 level

Table 10: Relationship between the Student-Respondents Profile and their Competencies

Profile	Learning Competencies in the Major Areas	p-value	alpha/level of significance	Interpretation
	r-value			
Age	-0.004	0.935	0.05	No Significant Relationship
Gender	0.006	0.899	0.05	No Significant Relationship
Civil Status	-0.094	0.061	0.05	No Significant Relationship
Average Grade in Major	.345*	0.033	0.05	Significant Relationship

*correlation is significant @ 0.05 level

p-value < alpha = significant relationship,

p-value > alpha = no significant relationship

Hence, the profiles in terms of Age, Gender, and Civil Status have no significant relationship to the competence of students in the areas of Housekeeping, Bartending, Food and Beverage, Baking, and Events Management. Also, it means that the respondents' competencies are most likely the same for every one regardless of the aforesaid profile.

Finally, the findings also show that the average grade of students in their major subjects could help teachers identify potential students for advancement or outside competition for purposes.

5. Conclusion

In the light of the findings, the research concluded that hotel and restaurant management or hospitality of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology produces graduates capable in performing jobs concerning Housekeeping, Bartending, Food and Beverage, Baking, and Events Management. The competence of concerned students is preserved due to the commitment of the University in bringing up-to-date equipment related to field, hiring of competent faculty, as well as, continuous faculty development program provided by the University. Also, support of the University played a major role towards endowment of quality education to hotel and restaurant management or hospitality students. Lastly, the curriculum of the program needs never-ending evaluation in order to address possible alignment or opportunities that would fit to the needs of stakeholders, employers, clients, and the like.

Further, the finding indicates that teachers and students have different views in terms of assessing competencies of students in the areas of Housekeeping, Bartending, Food and Beverage, Baking, and Events Management. This may be due to the dimension and standards teachers of HRM or hospitality are aware of which the students failed to consider or understand.

4) Relationship Between the Student-Respondents Profile and their Competencies

Table 10 shows that only the student-respondents profile particularly on the Average Grade in the Major Subjects has significant relationship considering that its r-value of .345 is greater than the p-value of 0.033 at 0.05 level of significance.

Hence, by doing so, graduates of the Program would be always ready facing the demands of future employment.

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