

Airline Companies' Feedback on Tourism Practicumers of an Asian University: Basis for Enhanced Airline Practicum Program

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Abstract –*This study entitled “Airline Companies’ Feedback on Tourism Practicumers of Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas: Basis for Enhanced Airline Practicum Program” intended to determine the profile background of the Tourism Students’ during 2010-2013 and their performance during their practicum. This study may be a great help for the continuous innovation, a continuous improvement with regards to the tourism practicum program. As LPUB gears towards the outcome based education- OBE it is but proper to improve the airline practicum program. Moreover, LPU garners series of recognition, most especially the College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management which is accredited as Center for Development for Tourism program. With this study, the researcher proposed an action plan that can be a basis for an enhanced practicum program for Tourism program. One is the Enhancement of module for pre-internship with emphasize on attitude and punctuality. There can also be a Simulation Area 1 - Laboratory with ground staff, this would be for the hands on experience working in the airport before the students would be deployed.*

Keywords–*Airline Companies, Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas, Tourism Practicumers*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the leading and booming industry in the world. Trends of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) forecast that by 2020, there will be 1.6 billion international arrivals: 1.2 billion will be intraregional and 378 million will be the long-haul traveller [1].

The demand on the airline services also has a parallel effect on the human resources. It will be needed when the industry booms. Opportunities given by the airline industry can give way in enhancing the education of the tourism students. It is in this line of thought that the researcher would like to conduct the study on airline companies’ feedback on tourism practicumers: a basis for enhanced airline practicum program.

In its pursuit of excellence and quality education, Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas has embraced the accreditation and ISO certification process that has put LPU in the league of leading schools in the country. Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas is already taking the lead in the area of accreditations [2] – [4] as LPU has been awarded the autonomous university of the Philippines,

the highest and most prestigious recognition from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Opportunities given by the airline industries give way in enhancing the education of the tourism students so that it is required that before graduation there students must have at least an experience and exposure in the environment in the working atmosphere in the industry that can give them a glimpse of their future profession. This airline practicum is part of ensuring the quality training and quality education given by the industry as an immersion like. As a tourism student, normally they would be seeing themselves working in the airline industry; dream job could be as a ground staff or flight steward. With this, the Airline Companies’ feedback, a certain innovation can reveal if the education given by the University is in line with the demand of the airline Industry.

As Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas gears towards the outcome based education (OBE) [5]-[11], it is but proper to improve the airline practicum program. Being a CITHM Faculty the researcher strongly believes that this study may be a great help for the continuous innovation and

improvement with regards to the tourism practicum program

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to determine the performance of tourism practicumers in the airlines and ground service, specifically; it will present the profile of practicumers in terms of: Age, Civil Status, Gender, and Proficiency in the other foreign languages such as Mandarin and French, describe the airlines companies in terms of Number of years established and Number of years accepting LPU Tourism Practicum, determine the performance of tourism practicumers in tourism for the past 3 years in terms of: Knowledge, Skills, Attitude and Personality, Is there any significant difference between the practicumers' profile and their performance in terms of Knowledge, Skills, Attitude and Personality? And lastly, proposed an enhancement program for the Tourism Practicumers of LPU.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study uses quantitative research design, wherein the researcher determines first the performance of the practicumers in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude and personality.

After determining the variables, the researcher tested the significant difference between the respondents' profile and performance of the practicumers in terms of Knowledge, Skills, Attitude and Personality. Quantitative research is all about quantifying relationships between variables.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were the manager and/or supervisors of the different airlines and ground services who evaluated the practicumers for school year 2010-2013. There are a total of one hundred (100) tourism practicumers who had undergone training for 3 years.

Instruments

The first part was a questionnaire which was used to get the quantitative result for performance in terms of knowledge, skills, attitude and personality. These evaluation forms were released by the Internship office.

The second part was a questionnaire form used to get the demographic profile of the practicumers. The researcher formulated a questionnaire which includes the following information: Age, Gender, Proficiency in Foreign Language- Mandarin and Spanish.

Procedure

The following steps were undertaken in gathering the data. The researcher requested for approval from the Internship Director to obtain the evaluation from the previous Practicum at the Internship Office. Upon approval, the researcher tallied the data and gave the results to the statistician to evaluate using the SPSS.

All data were encoded, tallied and interpreted using different statistical treatment such as: frequency distribution and percentage, weighted mean and annova. Frequency and percentage distribution was used to determine the demographic profile of the practicumers. Weighted mean and ranking was used to determine the performance of the practicumers. ANOVA was used to test the significant difference between the respondents' profile and performance of the practicumers in terms of Knowledge, Skills, Attitude and Personality. To further analyze the result, data were treated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The given scale was used to interpret the data gathered: 1.00= Excellent (E); 1.25 – 1.50= Very Good (VG); 1.75 – 2.00 = Good (G); 2.25 – 2.50= Fair (F); 3.00- Poor (P)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Profile

Profile Variables	f	%
Age		
18-19 years old	30	30.00
20-21 years old	70	70.00
Civil Status		
Single	100	100.00
Gender		
Female	93	93.00
Male	7	7.00
Proficiency in other Foreign Languages		
Mandarin		
Excellent	2	2.00
Very Good	30	30.00
Good	60	60.00
Fair	8	8.00
Poor	0	0
French		
Excellent	4	4.00
Very Good	35	35.00
Good	40	40.00
Fair	21	21.00
Poor	0	0

Table 1 shows the Percentage distribution of the respondents' profile. The respondents were all tourism Practicumers from batches 2010-2011, 2011-2012,

2013-2014 who undergone airline on the job training program under the Dusit Thani Curriculum. Majority of the respondents were 20-21 years old with 70 or 70 percent while 18-19 years old were 30 or 30 percent and all of them are single. Majority of the practicumers were female with 93 or 93 percent. Majority of the practicumers were good in Mandarin with 60-60 percent while in French, Good also with 40 or 40 percent.

Table 2. Percentage Distribution of the Company's Profile

Profile Variables	f	%
Number of years established		
Less than 10 years	0	0
11-20 years	5	42.00
21-30 years	1	8.00
31-40 years	0	0
41-50 years	0	0
More than 50 years	6	50.00
Number of years accepting LPU Tourism Practicumers		
1-3years	0	0
4-6 years	12	100.00
7-9 years	0	0
More than 10 years	0	0

Table 2 shows the Percentage distribution of the Company's profile. The respondents were the following airlines and cargo ground handling services. The following airlines have Lycean practicumers: Cebu Pacific, Philippine Airlines, Delta Airlines, Sky Aviation, Saudi Airlines, Seair, PAGSS, Miascor, Macroasia, Eva Air, Dnata, and Jetstar. Majority of the airline companies were more than 50 years, 6 or 50 percent. Majority of the airline companies were 4-6years, 12 or 100 percent.

As reported by the Internship Office Cebu Pacific, Philippine Airlines, Delta Airlines, Sky Aviation, Saudi Airlines, Seair, PAGSS, Miascor, Macroasia, Eva Air, Dnata, and Jetstar were accepting LPU tourism practicumers since Internship Office open last 2010.

Table 3 shows the performance of the Airline Practicumers in tourism based on LPU's Evaluation in terms of Knowledge. All indicators have a verbal interpretation of Excellent.

The intern is competitive enough in his/her job assignment ranks first with the weighted mean of 4.71, competitiveness in terms of the assignment entrusted to the practicumers. LPU has identified the institutional learning outcomes which represent the qualities that all LPU students should possess when they graduate. One of which is competence in all areas

of tourism business, wherein the tourism practicum has portrayed in the evaluation interns of knowledge.

Table 3. Performance of Airline Practicumers in terms of Knowledge

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The intern comprehends and follows instruction easily.	4.66	E	3
2. The intern understands the operating procedures and techniques	4.63	E	5
3. The intern is competitive enough in his/her job assignment.	4.71	E	1
4. The intern is able to organize work and analyze it.	4.65	E	4
5. The intern has the command of relevant general information and technology.	4.69	E	2
Composite Mean	4.67	E	

To help employees improve their performance, he need to set goals that employees are required to achieve. Performing by the minimum standards means the employee is doing his job, and that can help an employee understand what is expected of him at minimum. Employees who are motivated with their personal goals will surely improve their performance in their workplace [12].

The intern has the command of relevant general information and technology ranked second, with the weighted mean of 4.69. Today's generation had a gift of technology advancement. Technology has been advocating for improved performance in many hospitality/ service businesses. Advances in technology have implied that stakeholders in the tourism industry must always be in line with new technologies so as to be competitive enough.

Technology is not only an essential condition of advanced, but also that the rate of technological change has developed its own momentum in recent centuries. Technology has a great effect to the world of tourism. In fact, in every area of the tourism business, technology is always maximized [13].

The intern comprehends and follows instruction easily ranked third with the weighted mean of 4.66.

The intern is able to organize work and analyze it ranked fourth with the weighted mean of 4.65. Many airlines offer various Internet services for passengers that make use of information systems, such as online seat reservation, e-ticketing and check-in services. However, as many customers do not feel comfortable using such services and their uptake remains low, the researchers argue that "providing quality service

through human interaction” remains an important part of airlines’ service delivery [14].

The intern understands the operating procedures and techniques. This indicator ranked last, with the weighted mean of 4.63. Airlines are an important sector of the tourism industry and have contributed significantly to its recent growth. The researchers suggest that increasing economic pressure has encouraged airlines to develop more advanced information systems to “gain overall operational efficiency and passenger satisfaction”.

Table 4. Performance of Airline Practicumers in terms of Skills

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Intern seeks to improve his/her skills by taking initiative to learn new paradigms and methodologies	4.66	E	2
2. The intern is comfortable in presenting recommendations, suggestions and criticism to his/her supervisor/peers and open to accommodate them with an objective and positive point of view	4.64	E	3
3. The intern is accurate and efficient in work	4.56	E	5
4. The intern makes productive use of resources e.g. terminals and or workstations assigned to him/her	4.67	E	1
5. The intern delivers the required amount/volume of work output within the allotted time.	4.63	E	4
Composite Mean	4.63	E	

Table 4 shows the performance of the Airline Practicumers in terms of Skills. The Result shows that the performance of the practicumers were excellent as denoted by the composite mean of 4.63.

The intern makes productive use of resources e.g. terminals and or workstations assigned to him/her ranked first, which has a weighted mean of 4.67. In terms of skills, anything can be done with the use of any resources in terms of technology or any other means of which can make the work be done easily and in the most convenient way.

This was followed by the indicator, Intern seeks to improve his/her skills by taking initiative to learn new paradigms and methodologies with a weighted mean of 4.66. The ability to maximize client online marketing strategies derives from our collective experience rooted deeply in traditional marketing, media, and direct response.

The intern is comfortable in presenting recommendations, suggestions and criticism to his/her supervisor/peers and open to accommodate them with

an objective and positive point of view ranked third with the weighted mean of 4.64.

The intern delivers the required amount/volume of work output within the allotted time ranked fourth with the weighted mean of 4.56. A few essential elements in addressing performance issues are regular interaction with employees, consistent application of workplace policies and the ability to identify the underlying causes of poor performance. This requires active and constant management of your workforce. Supervisors and managers who provide regular feedback and ensure their direct reports have the necessary tools to perform their jobs are leaders in your organization.

The intern is accurate and efficient in work ranked lowest with a weighted mean of 4.56. According to a new survey by Inc.com, the average worker admits to wasting away 2.09 hours per 8 hour workday, this isn’t including lunch and scheduled break time. Taking measures to improve the efficiency of employees and accuracy of marketing and production, it’s possible to see a greater amount of profit over the course of the year [15].

Table 5. Performance of Airline Practicumers in terms of Attitude

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The intern reports to the office with regular punctuality and finishes the duty scheduled	4.59	E	5
2. The intern is reliable and imbues a sense of responsibility in handling the tasks assigned to him/her	4.74	E	1
3. The intern enjoys comfortable working relationship with his/her superiors or peers	4.73	E	2.5
4. The intern applies the virtues of integrity and honesty in all aspects of his/her work	4.69	E	4
5. The intern has the positive attitude towards criticism and towards superiors.	4.73	E	2.5
Composite Mean	4.70	E	

Table 5 shows the performance of the Airline Practicumers in terms of Attitude. The result shows that practicumers were rated as excellent with the composite mean of 4.70.

The intern is reliable and imbues a sense of responsibility in handling the tasks assigned to him/her ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.74. Reliability is an admirable characteristic. People don't like to deal with those who are unreliable. They'd rather give their business and rewards to the person

they can count on. Also, the reliable person feels good knowing that he or she is trusted.

The intern enjoys comfortable working relationship with his/her superiors or peers and the intern has the positive attitude towards criticism and towards superiors. Tied on the second ranked with the weighted mean of 4.73. A positive work environment is not only important for our physical, mental and emotional health, but is also important for the results that we produce for the company.

The intern applies the virtues of integrity and honesty in all aspects of his/her work ranked fourth with a weighted mean of 4.69. Effective work relationships form the cornerstone for success and satisfaction with your job and your career. Thus, it is important in the effectivity of the work that one should have benefits like promotion, pay increases, goal accomplishment, and job satisfaction [16].

The intern reports to the office with regular punctuality and finishes the duty scheduled ranked lowest with a weighted mean of 4.59. This was all about being on time and being punctual. Punctuality is a wonderful trait of a person, one to be admired and respected. Two years back, the researcher attended a workshop on business ethics, the instructor explained the meaning of punctuality. Being on time, most especially in the airline industry, it is very important. Punctuality is more important at the workplace[17].

that the performance of practicum was excelled as indicated by the composite mean of 4.54, that has a verbal interpretation of Excellent, rather the ranking may vary.

The intern accepts miscellaneous jobs and tasks with the proper attitude without complaining ranked first with a weighted mean of 4.57. Complaining is a common ‘disease’ in the workplace. Somehow, two co-workers get together and the possible topic would be complaining about something. Complaining is a bad habit and can be detrimental to career success. Cultivating a good general work attitude means stopping the habit of complaining. When one complain, nothing positive comes out of it merely voicing dissatisfaction. If the complaint falls on the wrong ears, it may even hurt career. Instead, discuss the issue if it is affecting work. When discussed there is a next step in what can be done about the situation. This then is cultivating good general work attitude.

The intern reports for work in proper attire and follows proper personal hygiene and the intern shows interest and pride with the tasks assigned to him/her. Tied at second rank with a weighted mean of 4.56. Truly that the clothes worn to work make an impression on others. Striving to make a conservative, well-styled impression when dressing for work is best.

The intern is flexible in work and in dealing with people ranked fourth with a weighted mean of 4.53. If an employer doesn’t handle a request in a reasonable manner, the employee can take them to an employment tribunal. Consider how to communicate verbally and through body language in the most effective way with these different types of people to build rapport and make them feel understood[18].

The intern exercises self-confidence and is comfortable in airing his/her problems and difficulties with his superiors ranked lowest with a weighted mean of 4.46. Working in the hospitality and tourism industry really requires self-confidence and being people oriented. Although there were times that situation won’t allow avoiding problems since trends and culture evolve and behavior evolves with it. It is therefore imperative that companies understand this new generation of managers, design their training programs based on the prevailing behavioral patterns and use that knowledge to everyone's advantage. Confidence is generally described as a state of being certain either that a hypothesis or prediction is correct or that a chosen course of action is the best or most effective.

Table 6. Performance of Airline Practicumers in terms of Personality

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The intern reports for work in proper attire and follows proper personal hygiene	4.56	E	2.5
2. The intern exercise self-confidence and comfortable in airing his/her problems and difficulties with his superiors.	4.46	VG	5
3. The intern is flexible in work and in dealing with people.	4.53	E	4
4. The intern accepts miscellaneous jobs and tasks with the proper attitude without complaining	4.57	E	1
5. The intern shows interest and pride with the tasks assigned to him/her.	4.56	E	2.5
Composite Mean	4.54	E	

Table 6 shows the performance of the Airline Practicumers in terms of Personality. The result shows

Table 7. Difference on the Practicumers' Performance When Grouped According to Age

Performance	age	Mean	t-value	p-value
Knowledge	20-21	4.72	0.896	0.372
	22-23	4.65		
Skills	20-21	4.71	0.999	0.320
	22-23	4.60		
Attitude	20-21	4.76	1.026	0.307
	22-23	4.67		
Personality	20-21	4.67	2.001	0.049*
	22-23	4.48		

Legend: *Significant at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

Based from the result, only personality shows significant difference when grouped according to age. This was observed from the obtained p-value of 0.049 which was less than 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that the respondents' performance differs as to age. The result was also supported by the obtained mean values of the two groups of respondents'.

Researchers believe that personality changes as an individual ages. As person mature in age, their personality may also vary due to different perspective, values and beliefs. The opposite of change in personality would be consistency in personality. There are various things that influence whether or not an individual's personality changes. Time is a factor in personality change. There is an increase in consistency of a trait as age increases. However, personality does not stop changing at a specific age.

There are also many different ways to measure personality and some traits tend to change while some traits tend to stay stable [19]. Historical context effects personality change. Major life events can lead to changes in personality that can persist for more than a decade. A longitudinal study followed women over 30 years and found that they showed increases in individualism. This may have been due to the changes that were occurring in the country at the time. It has also been shown that major positive and negative life events can predict changes in personality.

Table 8. Difference on the Practicumers' Performance When Grouped According to Gender

Performance	Gender	Mean	t-value	p-value
knowledge	Male	4.66	0.539	0.591
	Female	4.74		
skills	Male	4.62	0.569	0.571
	Female	4.74		
attitude	Male	4.69	0.313	0.755
	Female	4.74		
personality	Male	4.52	0.806	0.422
	Female	4.69		

*Significant at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

As revealed from Table 8, all computed t-values were all less than the critical values with degrees of freedom of 98 and the resulted p-values were all greater than 0.05 level of significance, thus the study fail to reject the null hypothesis of no significant difference on the practicumers' performance when grouped according to gender. This indicates that the respondents' performance was the same when grouped based on gender. This result may pertain to Gender Equality.

Table 9. Difference on the Practicumers' Performance When Grouped According to Proficiency in other Foreign Languages (Mandarin)

	Mandarin	Mean	F-value	p-value
knowledge	1.00	4.70	0.897	0.446
	1.25 – 1.50	4.65		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.70		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.48		
skills	1.00	4.80	0.152	0.928
	1.25 – 1.50	4.60		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.65		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.58		
attitude	1.00	4.90	0.177	0.911
	1.25 – 1.50	4.68		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.70		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.70		
personality	1.00	5.00	1.339	0.266
	1.25 – 1.50	4.52		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.56		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.28		

Legend: *Significant at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$

As revealed from the table, all computed t-values were all less than the critical values with degrees of freedom of 98 and the resulted p-values were all greater than 0.05 level of significance, thus the study fail to reject the null hypothesis of no significant difference on the practicumers' performance when grouped according to proficiency in other foreign language (mandarin). This indicates that the respondents' performance was the same when grouped based on proficiency in other foreign language (mandarin).

As revealed from the table, all computed t-values were all less than the critical values with degrees of freedom of 98 and the resulted p-values were all greater than 0.05 level of significance, thus the study fail to reject the null hypothesis of no significant difference on the practicumers' performance when grouped according to proficiency in other foreign language (French). This indicates that the

respondents' performance was the same when grouped based on proficiency in other foreign language (French).

Table 10. Difference on the Practicumers' Performance When Grouped According to Proficiency in other Foreign Languages (French)

	French	Mean	F-value	p-value
knowledge	1.00	4.40	1.546	0.208
	1.25 – 1.50	4.60		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.74		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.70		
skills	1.00	4.15	2.700	0.050
	1.25 – 1.50	4.51		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.77		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.66		
attitude	1.00	4.85	0.625	0.601
	1.25 – 1.50	4.63		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.74		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.70		
personality	1.00	4.35	0.229	0.876
	1.25 – 1.50	4.53		
	1.75 – 2.00	4.54		
	2.25 – 2.50	4.58		

Legend: *Significant at p -value < 0.05

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Majority of the Respondent were 22-23 years old, single and female. Majority of the airline companies were more than 50 years in the industry, 6 or 50 percent. Majority of the airline companies were 4-6years since they were accepting tourism student as their practicumers. The practicumers are excellent interns of attitude, knowledge, skills and personality. In terms of age, only personality has significant difference in the performance of the intern while gender and proficiency in Foreign Language was no significant difference. An action plan was proposed to enhance the program for the tourism practicumers of Lyceum of the Philippines University - Batangas.

The researcher suggests the following action plan to better improve the On the Job Training Program under the Tourism Program in the area of Airline Practicum: The tourism faculty member may include in their teaching method the pre-test and review test to have the repetition approach to the student, which may lead to longer retention of the important principles in tourism.

The College of International Tourism and Hospitality Management may include in the professional subject some actual airline simulation as part of the classroom activities of the students. The college may be strict in time. Especially in attending

seminars, complying with the agreed due dates of requirements and in checking of attendance in class. The college may continue having oral recitation, reporting and may also add more activity that boost their confidence. The college may also propose an instrument for evaluation per course and design an evaluation instrument. Future researcher may also conduct study using different variable to further confirm the result of the study.

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