

Academic Performance and Application Level of Acquired Learning and Student Outcomes from MBA Courses towards the Attainment of Personal Growth

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Abstract - *Application of learning from attending graduate school is a good manifestation of the immediate utilization of the acquired knowledge and skills to the work assignment. This study aimed to determine the academic performance and application level of acquired learning outcomes from MBA Courses towards the attainment of personal growth. Descriptive type of research was utilized in the study. Results revealed that the currently enrolled MBA students have an academic performance rating of average with high application of MBA courses in achieving personal growth in terms of measuring their competence as well as application in their workplace specifically in utilizing the acquired learning from International Business Management and Entrepreneurship in Global Perspective. High application levels of acquired learning and student outcomes from the MBA courses were achieved specifically in building relationships to support group effectiveness. There is a possibility that the level of application of learning and student outcomes could influence the personal growth of the MBA students in terms of competence.*

Keywords: *Business, MBA courses, learning and student outcomes, competence*

INTRODUCTION

Part of the lifelong learning process is attending graduate school for advanced studies in any specific discipline. One of these is the Master in Business Administration program, considered as one of the most popular graduate degree programs being taken by most professionals even from the fields of engineering, education, hospitality, medicine and among others. Business schools are continuously giving the graduate students an edge to become future managers and entrepreneurs. The performance of the students is considered important part of monitoring their development in the program. Academic performance is viewed as a measure on the capability of the students in accomplishing specific task [1] only in certain part of their educational undertakings. It is the result of consolidated classroom activities through discussion, presentation, examination [2] and recitation as well as field and home works through case studies and scientific research outputs. Students take responsibility for achieving their full potentials in the learning process [3].

Performance is determined and quantified through various types of assessment and evaluation, informing

the students of the numerical value on how they perform academically for a specific term. The measure of academic performance in an Outcomes-based environment [4], [5], [6] as assessed through the evidence of achieving the intended learning and student outcomes [7], [8]. This study is anchored in the Theories of Learning Outcomes of Kraiger, Ford and Salas [9] who proposed that learning during training may be classified into one of the three types of outcomes: cognitive, skill-based, and affective. In addition, each type of outcome includes particular categories and foci of measurement.

Pursuing advanced graduate studies is like climbing a ladder and seeing what opportunities are awaiting to be taken on the other side of the wall. It is not always an assurance that after taking the Master's degree, there will be a grand take off for the graduates in their professional careers. Education is a never ending development which can give new meaning and direction [10]. Acquiring and applying the higher order thinking skills [2] in the workplace during the course of action and in the process of completing the degree serve as a good habit for the knowledge and skills to be enhanced. This is a manifestation and

evidence of the direct outcomes of the courses learned from the classroom and off-campus activities. Utilizing the written theories and principles into practice is always the best attempt to learn more from the experience. Graduate School students not need to wait to finish the degree before they can actually apply the knowledge they learned from the MBA program in any business related activities.

Setting good career goals drives the motivation of the learners to achieve certain direction guided with proper perspective and life's orientation. Personal and professional goals are both important part in achieving the vision and mission of any organization. Every employee should contribute to the attainment of goals and objectives of the company; therefore, meeting the demand of any work environment would be the strength of the employees to become assets rather than liabilities. Like in the tourism business industry, it starts to see the need of a more sophisticated approach to human resource management and this is reflected in a new approach to education and training of the workforce [11] through the development of human capital [12].

Graduate degree programs like Master in Business Administration help the students set their targets and be an instrument in achieving their personal goals in appropriate and professional manner. MBA is one of the most preferred career choices, students make to pursue their post-graduation studies [13]. Making things possible in the execution of any strategic plans of the organization is a form of positive attitude that triggers and brings the job performance of the employees into higher level of achievement. Giving them the chance to demonstrate their potential and apply what they have learned in the MBA program might keep the management of the targets realizable in different approaches. This is also part of the indirect assessment of learning and student outcomes based on constructivist methods [10] to examine certain level of competence to take leadership roles.

Competencies are identified knowledge, skills, abilities and personalities that impact the success of work performance of employees and business organizations [14]. Likewise, Valdez [15] noted that the curriculum prepares the graduates to demonstrate the core competencies expected of them in the workplace and must be supported by activities which are in the forms of actual experiences outside the classroom that could provide better learning and understanding of the difference between principles and practice [16].

This study explores the gap between the actual and immediate application to the work environment of

the acquired learning and student outcomes of the students from their completed MBA courses. This would provide insights for effective and efficient management of the educational setting of objectives for the Graduate School. Supporting adequate input to the teaching and learning processes in an Outcomes-Based Environment in the graduate programs would provide a sustainable curriculum development leading towards a competitive edge for the MBA students who take advantage of the opportunities to become catalysts in building a progressive nation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to determine the academic performance and application level of acquired learning outcomes from MBA Courses towards the attainment of personal growth. Specifically, it aims to determine the academic performance of the MBA students during SY 2014-2015; to determine the level of application of MBA courses in the work place and in the attainment of personal growth; to determine the application level of acquired learning and student outcomes from the MBA courses; to determine if there are significant relationships between the academic performance and the application level of MBA Courses in the workplace and personal growth; to determine if there are significant relationships between the application level of acquired learning and student outcomes from the MBA courses and the attainment of personal growth; and to propose an action plan as input to the student development program of the graduate school.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Education is gaining prime importance in today's competitive scenario. Students acquire professional degrees in science, medicine, accounting, management, law, etc. that give them an edge over others in their career. Businesses, on the other hand, look for expert managers to effectively make strategic and operational decisions [13]. But having an advanced degree in the Graduate School is another edge to look forward by those graduates with almost one year working experience in the industry for greater career opportunities. Post-graduation has become a pre-requisite for many jobs. Management education has been on forefront as it opens up several opportunities for the candidates. Masters of Business Administration (MBA) is known to be one of the most common career choices amongst the youth today [17] and most popular approaches to management education [18] because of the benefits that the course offers [13].

The mission of some higher education institutions is to educate leader managers in coordination with the business environment, high quality academic staff and efficient education programs. The aim was to breed businessmen who are capable, creative, self-confident, inquisitive, and self-evolved, with broad perspective and sense of social responsibility [19]. It is often perceived that the quality and success of MBA program also depends on the merit and distinction of the incoming students [13]. Therefore, selection of students with appropriate bachelor's degree is of great importance in the admission policy and having relevant job assignment is another.

Academic Performance

Monitoring and measuring the students' progress would provide first hand information to the teachers as basis of assessment whether a certain activity is effective or not. Academic performance is one of the measures of students' development as compared to previous results of their accomplishments. Success rating can be determined through statistical analysis and interpretation of the result which will somehow be the basis of decision for immediate action. Çilan and Can [19] noted that education institutions worldwide have always given a great emphasis on the factors governing the performance of their students. Academic performance is the outcome of education — the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. It is relevant because it is strongly connected to the positive outcomes for individual [14]. It is best measured when the questions are developed along the different levels of critical thinking skills. Otherwise, Baylon [20] emphasized that the level of academic performance will become incoherent to the level of critical thinking skills, thus, the results will become futile to serve as the basis of learner's development. As Cybinski and Forster [21] mentioned that of the many factors influencing academic performance, the student's personal inputs to learning are recognized as among the most critical.

In a study which is conducted by Nonis and Hudson [22] concluded that time spent on work influences academic performance. As time at work increased academic performance decreased. The role of co-curricular activities in students' academic performance helps to develop the all-round personality of the students to face undaunted task and turbulent world of future [23]. As the classroom tasks and assignments become more interesting and manageable, and as their performance levels improve [24].

The teachers monitor the students' performance through implementing the curricula designed by the curriculum developers who are the people in the middle management being supervised and controlled by the top university officials who provide conducive physical facilities and organize how the student services shall be delivered to the customers [25].

The value of academic performance in the graduate school is sometimes not getting much attention because some employers were not looking this as object for any promotion or career advancement of an individual employee but rather the completed degree as a whole. In spite of this, MBA graduate students are still considering their academic performance seriously as measure on the level of their accomplishment and sometimes for any academic excellence award. It is somehow related on the attitude of the students towards the culture of educational system in an academic community and how they respond and adapt to the environment to get meaningful outcomes. It also serves as motivating factor to continuously improve the performance or sustain some attributes and behaviour that make them feel contented or satisfied with their outputs. However, Campbell [24] noted that student achievement may be viewed as an indirect index or measure of motivation.

Academic performance is the numerical result based on the assessment of instructors from the submitted course requirements and active participation in class discussion which can be utilized as good source of data to determine how they also perform at work in their respective business organizations.

Personal Growth

Individual growth is dependent on how a person perceives and takes certain actions that could improve his well-being either personally or professionally. Career path holds bigger weight to motivated persons as their aspiration in achieving higher educational goals and job positions which are supported with innate personal values and positive attitude towards improvement. Smith and Koltz [26] noted that personal growth involves movement or change toward increased self-awareness, self-examination, and the understanding of one's impact on others. Likewise, Villalobos et al. [27] emphasized that having a good education is a great opportunity for everyone. It involves learning new knowledge which is necessary in grounding of the young in the principles and tradition. Stout [28] shared with readers some self-reflections (or insights) regarding "things I have learned" over the course of his professional and

personal life. At a fundamental level, the paper asserts the merits of reflecting on and sharing one's own pursuits, and the potential value this sharing has on others in the academy – particularly younger accounting faculty (for development and mentoring purposes) as they themselves engage in critical self-reflection.

In the academic environment, students who are motivated to learn should persist at tasks when they encounter obstacles. Persistence is important as learning does not always result in instant gratification. Persistence relates to the sustained component of motivation and the greater the persistence, the greater the accomplishments and rewards [24]. Accountability is another important aspect in business education, the management and leadership styles that permeate business education focus on team building, collaboration, and consensual decision making [29]. Core aspects of the course include reading articles from academic journals and business periodicals, engaging a wide variety of experiential activities, keeping a personal journal, and completing two individual projects [30].

Findings of Nair and Ghosh's [31] study revealed that the management institutes attract a good number of candidates with experience, all aspiring for fast-track career growth. On the other hand, organisations are realising that it is ultimately people who are the driving force in companies, and are therefore investing substantially in hiring and grooming bright young management graduates.

Meanwhile, the study of Ugur et al. [32] revealed that the findings combined with the anecdotal reactions of group members and facilitators, their impressions suggest that the consistent expression of personally selected values and characteristics requires that these aspects first become internalized as meaningful guides for living, second, motivate behavior that is consistent with the chosen values and characteristics, and third, contribute to a sense of well-being and personal growth.

Learning and Student Outcomes

Competencies are identified knowledge, skills, abilities and personalities that impact the success of work performance of employees and business organizations. Moussouri [33] stated that “learning outcomes are generally developed in relation to specific programmes of study or schemes of work in formal education. In universities, for example, programme specifications and module outlines must include an explicit statement of intended learning outcomes linked to assessment criteria for judging

student achievement in respect of these outcomes” (p.6).

Competency models can help organizations align their initiatives to their overall business strategy so that companies can better recruit and select employees [14]. Assessment plays a crucial role in the delivery of quality education. In the triad of education, assessment is considered one of the key areas aside from curriculum and instruction; thus, educators need to give premium to classroom assessment techniques [34]. Eiland et al., [35] concluded that the student feedback and outcomes were positive regarding the incorporation of team-based learning (TBL) into a video-conferenced elective with faculty at off-site locations from students.

The findings of Mihail and Kloutsiniotis' [36] study indicate that an MBA contributes considerably to most of the managerial skills, although relevant criticisms regarding a gap between MBA programs and business needs are not groundless. The need for MBA programs to prepare managers for international business requires an international, interactive learning environment [37].

Jain and Stopford [17] examined the broad trends shaping business education and recommends how MBA curricula might be redesigned to make students globally aware, and be effective in the midst of global competition. Constructivist teachers encourage students to assess regularly how the activity is helping them gain understanding. Self-examination of strategies used by faculty, students in a constructivist classroom ideally becomes “expert learners” [34].

The use of portfolio assessment provides opportunities to parents, teachers, administrators, students and other school stakeholders to evaluate the outputs and observable products depicting student performance. These students' learning outcomes are called portfolios [38]. Most schools attempted to democratize learning environments akin to a more learning-centered fashion of teaching and learning [39].

Entrepreneurship is one of the skills included in the Institutional Intended Learning Outcomes of the Lyceum of the Philippines University wherein the students would be able to engage in projects and activities using basic knowledge and skills in business management, entrepreneurship and finance management [40]. Furthermore, the study of Fresko et al. [41] examined a project aimed at helping students develop professional interpersonal skill. The academic institutions ensure that the necessary skills for MBA students are developed within the teaching and learning process as defined in the MBA curriculum.

The demands of the industries are also being addressed through the revision of the syllabi according to the current trends and updates in the local and international business environments.

The study of Bautista et al. [42] suggested that the competency levels of students especially along the areas of opportunity seeking, risk taking, and self-confidence can be done by universities by reviewing the design of their curriculum to promote entrepreneurship through apprenticeship program, ocular visits, forums or symposia and linkages.

Feedback from the study of Bentley et al. [43] helped develop further changes in the learning content and delivery approach of the MBA program. The study contributes to a better understanding of global blended learning initiatives, and offers insights to managers on improving course management, enriching learning content, enhancing teaching quality, and improving students' satisfaction levels.

Developing the lifelong skills of the students which primarily encompass their critical thinking cum creative thinking skills and problem solving depends on how the teachers play their roles [20]. Learning competencies bridge between the standards and the learning outcomes [39].

It is an indication that students were able to learn or acquire the critical thinking skills if they can formulate questions along the different levels of critical thinking skills, while this may or may not affect the academic performance depending on how the questions were formulated, the best way that critical thinking can be manifested is through the questioning skills of the students [20].

Since these complex organizations are important in the students' life, it is more and more crucial to identity and highlight both the issues solicited by these life experiences, and the contribution and support they provide to the personal and professional students' growth [44].

The average effect of instructional leadership on student outcomes was three to four times that of transformational leadership. Inspection of the survey items used to measure school leadership revealed five sets of leadership practices or dimensions: establishing goals and expectations; resourcing strategically; planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum; promoting and participating in teacher learning and development, and ensuring an orderly and supportive environment [45].

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a descriptive-survey type of research method. This is appropriate in the present

study to illustrate and discover some characteristics that might be considered common or rare among the MBA students that will particularly describe the level of application of MBA courses to the attainment of their personal growth.

Participants

This study focused on the 34 MBA students of LPU-Batangas presently enrolled during the third trimester of AY 2015-2016 with at least 12 units earned. Total population of the students served as the actual respondents. Students who haven't completed the 12 units were not included in the study because they cannot fully evaluate the application of what they have learned in the MBA courses initially offered to them. The study determined the profile of the MBA students in terms of number of units earned, job position and length of service in the current position that served as secondary data in supporting the result of analysis.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

| Number of Units Earned | f | % |
|------------------------|----|------|
| Less than 24 units | 13 | 38.2 |
| 24 units and above | 21 | 61.8 |
| Position | | |
| Rank and File | 18 | 52.9 |
| Mid-career/Supervisory | 16 | 47.1 |
| Length of Service | | |
| 5 years and below | 22 | 64.7 |
| 6 years and above | 12 | 35.3 |

There are 21 or 61.8 percent of the MBA students have completed 24 units of their MBA program while 13 or 38.2 percent have less than 24. Meanwhile, there are 18 of them have in the rank and file position in the organization and 16 or 47.1 percent are in the mid-career and supervisory position and 22 or 64.7 percent with a length of service of 5 years and below while 12 or 35.3 percent, 6 years and above, in their current job assignments. The profile variable is not considered as part of the objective because based on the preliminary test of differences on these variables it shows that the variations between groups are considered not significant.

Instrument

A survey questionnaire was used in the study to gather pertinent data about the level of application of MBA courses to the attainment of career goals of the students. The instrument was adapted from the Institutional Intended Learning Outcomes (IILO) and the Student Outcomes of MBA program. It was content-validated by the Program Dean of Business Administration, Assistant Vice-President for

Academics and Research and one Language teacher. The checklist of the MBA courses was used to identify its level of application in the workplace to see how these courses are being utilized by the students immediately or having plans of utilization in the future. Only ten (10) courses were included in the study because these are the only courses have already taken by the participants which include: Business law, Current Trends in IT, Statistical Method in Administration, Research Method, Managerial Economics, Entrepreneurship in Global Perspective, Operation Management, Human Resource Management, International Business Management, and Corporate Planning.

Procedure

Names of the MBA students were obtained from the Office of the Graduate School. The respondents were informed regarding the purpose of the study. The data gathered were treated with strict confidentiality and were solely used for the purpose of this study. Questionnaire was administered personally by the researchers before the end of third trimester AY 2015-2016.

Data Analysis

Weighted mean, frequency count and percentage were used to describe the profile and the level of application of MBA courses towards the attainment of personal growth. Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was utilized to test the relationship between academic performance and level of application of MBA courses because both data types have interval level of measurement.

The given scale was used to describe the academic performance of the MBA students: 1.00 – 1.25: High; 1.26 – 1.50: Average; 1.51 – 1.75: Low; below 1.75: very Low. Meanwhile, another scale was used to describe the result of the survey regarding the level of application of the MBA courses to the students' workplaces and general application of MBA courses to personal growth: 1.00 – 1.49: Strongly Disagree (SD)/ Very Low (VL); 1.50 – 2.49: Disagree (D)/ Low (L); 2.50-3.49: Agree(A)/ High (H); 3.50- 4.00: Strongly Agree (SD)/ Very High (VH).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 presents the academic performance of the MBA students in the courses they have taken. The MBA students who finished the Statistical Method in Administration obtained the highest performance rating of 1.06 followed by Entrepreneurship in Global

Perspective (1.21) and Human Resource Management (1.21).

Table 2. Academic Performance of the MBA students

| | Mean | VI | Rank |
|--|-------------|----------|------|
| Business law | 1.41 | A | 7.5 |
| Current Trends in IT | 1.41 | A | 7.5 |
| Statistical Method in Administration | 1.06 | H | 1 |
| Research Method | 1.50 | A | 9.5 |
| Managerial Eco | 1.36 | A | 6 |
| Entrepreneurship in Global Perspective | 1.21 | H | 2.5 |
| Operation Management | 1.25 | H | 4 |
| Human Resource Management | 1.21 | H | 2.5 |
| International Business Management | 1.50 | A | 9.5 |
| Corporate Planning | 1.25 | H | 4 |
| Composite Mean | 1.30 | A | |

Likewise operations management (1.25) and corporate planning (1.25) which obtained high performance rating. However, Research Method and International Business Management obtained the least average performance rating of 1.50. The overall academic performance of the currently enrolled MBA students is average with a mean value of 1.30. Results imply that the MBA students have provided quality outputs to satisfy the requirements of the professors based on the grading system. This is the amount of knowledge derived from learning [46] which the MBA students have received from their professors with good grades that demonstrate their ability and achievement to carry out tasks remarkably.

Table 3. Application of MBA Courses in the Workplace

| MBA Courses | Mean | VI | Rank |
|---|-------------|----------|------|
| 1. Managerial Economics | 3.38 | H | 5.5 |
| 2. Human Resource Management | 3.38 | H | 5.5 |
| 3. International Business Management | 3.75 | VH | 1 |
| 4. Statistical Methods in Administration | 2.56 | H | 10 |
| 5. Research Methodology | 3.33 | H | 7.5 |
| 6. Business Law | 3.44 | H | 4 |
| 7. Entrepreneurship in Global Perspective | 3.67 | VH | 2 |
| 8. Operations Management | 3.50 | VH | 3 |
| 9. Current Trends In It | 3.11 | H | 9 |
| 10. Cost Management | 3.33 | H | 7.5 |
| Composite Mean | 3.27 | H | |

Table 3 presents the application of MBA courses in the students' respective workplaces. There is a very high application of International Business

Management (3.75) course in the respective work place of the MBA students followed by Entrepreneurship in Global Perspective (3.67) and Operational Management (3.50).

The role of finance and the management of financial resources in the international organization are also considered along with their supporting systems [47]. Possessing the right knowledge and information on how international businesses operate on various perspectives and areas of management is an advantage for every individual employee to participate in discussions and brainstorming sessions of the group on improving the performance of the organization in the world market. Philippine micro scale businesses need more people who can share their resources to uplift the demand of their products to global market.

Meanwhile, there is high application of the following MBA courses to the respective work places of the MBA students: Business Law (3.44), Managerial Economics (3.38) and Human Resource Management (3.38). Effective resource management can deliver competitive advantage; organizations must manage people, information, knowledge and technological resources along with tangible goods and materials if they are to be responsive, innovative, effective and efficient [47]. The experience of the MBA students in studying business law and managerial economics would always be of great help to understand the basics of managing business operations in accordance with the national and international law so that they could abide with the requirements of various agencies like Bureau of Customs and Bureau of Internal Revenue. Managing human resources is always important part of every business to maintain good people in a certain department or work unit. It is a leadership role of everyone in giving people with proper treatment and appropriate learning experience that would lead to personal and career development relevant to the attainment of the organization's vision.

However, Research Methodology (3.33), Cost Management (3.33), Current Trends in IT (3.11) and Statistical Methods in Administration (2.56) obtained the least MBA courses being applied to their work assignments. The composite mean score of 3.27 implies that there is high application of MBA courses in the work places of the students. Not all employees are being given the task to do actual research assignment but only few can be assigned to perform such duty due to its complicated process. Tichacek [48] emphasized that cost as the standard measure of project success—having higher visibility and

requiring extremely effective methodologies for managing and communication. Cost management is usually assigned to accounting department and not all MBA students are handling direct positions related to finances of the company, therefore, this course is not highly applicable to their work places.

Table 4. General Application of MBA Courses in Achieving Personal Growth

| Competence | WM | VI | Rank |
|--|-------------|----------|------|
| 1. Develop creativity in the workplace | 3.43 | A | 4 |
| 2. Eliminate tolerations or problems at work | 3.12 | A | 5 |
| 3. Learn a new skill | 3.55 | SA | 1 |
| 4. Communicate more effectively | 3.51 | SA | 2 |
| 5. Organize daily schedule more efficiently | 3.45 | A | 3 |
| Composite Mean | 3.41 | A | |
| Commitment | | | |
| 6. Consider a career that doesn't feel like work | 3.08 | A | 3 |
| 7. Create a long term career plan or strategy. | 3.25 | A | 2 |
| 8. Improve profitability of my company | 2.67 | A | 5 |
| 9. Be more organized with daily goals | 3.50 | SA | 1 |
| 10. Complete projects with less stress and no procrastination | 3.00 | A | 4 |
| Composite Mean | 3.12 | A | |
| Caring | | | |
| 11. Manage clients better | 3.08 | A | 3 |
| 12. Find a mentor or BE a mentor | 2.67 | A | 4 |
| 13. Develop more friendships at work, less competitive with others | 3.25 | A | 2 |
| 14. Be nice to people I work with, develop relationship with clients or co-workers | 3.33 | A | 1 |
| 15. Get a promotion and help others to be promoted | 2.42 | D | 5 |
| Composite | 2.95 | A | |
| Credibility | | | |
| 16. React less and work and respond more | 3.33 | A | 2 |
| 17. Aim to get for a specific award | 3.08 | A | 4 |
| 18. Build my personal brand | 3.50 | SA | 1 |
| 19. Bring balance into my job | 3.17 | A | 3 |
| 20. Ask for feedback on how you can grow at work | 3.08 | A | 4 |
| Composite Mean | 3.23 | A | |

Table 4 presents the general application of MBA Courses in achieving personal growth of the students. MBA students strongly agree that their completed MBA courses helped them in achieving personal

growth in terms of learning new skill (3.55) and communicating more effectively (3.51).

Organizing daily schedule more efficiently (3.45) and developing creativity in the workplace (3.43) were also achieved through the MBA program while eliminating tolerations or problems at work (3.12) was considered as the least achieved personal growth.

The composite mean score of 3.41 implies that generally, there is high application of MBA courses in achieving personal growth of the MBA students in terms of measuring their competence. Personal skills are congruent with challenges being confronted result in an inevitable sense of personal growth from the “stretching” of skills and confidence in using those skills [49]. The MBA program gives them the sense of personal development that they need to gain confidence to communicate their ideas and opinions for them to learn new skills that are beneficial to present work assignment.

They strongly agree that they become more organized with daily goals (3.50) and they agree of their capability in creating a long term career plan or strategy (3.25) and considering a career that doesn't feel like work (3.08). However, completing projects with less stress and no procrastination (3.00) and improving profitability of their companies (2.67) were considered as the least achieved part of their personal growth. MBA program helps them to become more committed and loyal to their organizations. Having the right motivation is one of the keys that organization should develop its people to create a well-rounded work force. The feeling of comfort or well-being and security increases motivation to stay with the organization [50]. They keep on pushing themselves to be part of the success of the organization and contribute something to improve the performance of the company which is something remarkable positive attitude of the MBA students as employees. Their personal growth can be associated to employee behaviour from a productive and ethical stand point which emphasizes the key role of leadership [47].

Being nice to people they work with, developing relationship with clients or co-workers (3.33) is agreed by the MBA students as part of their personal growth in terms of caring as well as developing more friendships at work and less competitive with others (3.25); managing the clients better (3.08) and finding a mentor or being a mentor (2.67). However, they disagree that they get a promotion and help others to be promoted (2.42). The composite mean score of 2.95 implies that the MBA students still achieve their

personal growth in terms of caring with people. Although this aspect is considered the least among the four, they still manage to be of help for others. They acknowledge their strengths and weaknesses in terms of associating what they have learned from the MBA program to apply in their respective work places. This signifies that the MBA program has a little bearing on developing the personal growth of the students in terms of collaboration.

MBA students strongly agree that their completed MBA courses help them build their personal brand (3.50) as they improve their confidence and capability to become trustworthy. Moreover, they agree in reacting less and work and respond more (3.33) and bringing balance into their job (3.17) as part of personal growth that have achieved through the MBA program. However, aiming to get for a specific award (3.08) and asking for feedback on how they can grow at work (3.08) were the least attributes achieved in terms of credibility. The composite mean score of 3.23 implies that there is high application of MBA courses in achieving personal growth of the MBA students in terms of measuring their credibility.

Table 5 presents the application level of acquired learning outcomes from the MBA courses. MBA students strongly agree that they can demonstrate interpersonal skills through effective listening, establishing rapport, monitoring non-verbal signals and expressing awareness of and respect for self and others (3.58) which is part of the acquired learning outcomes from the MBA courses followed by defining and applying different types of thinking and research skills and employing innovative strategies to solve real-life situations (3.50) and utilizing the application of computer and information technology to process information and manage data observing legal and ethical concerns (3.50).

Since interpersonal skill is inherently relational and process oriented like establishing a trusting relationship [51], this is always necessary in a work environment to maintain a communicate climate that is common to everyone. Understanding the behaviour of every member of the organization through possessing the right interpersonal skill is one way of collecting information through informal research on how people would best fit to a kind of culture that the company really valued most. Problems occur in the work place maybe due to miscommunication and misunderstanding which need some strategies to solve the issues that would best work to the kind of people in the group.

Table 5. Application level of Acquired Learning Outcomes from the MBA courses

| Competent Learners | WM | VI | Rank |
|--|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1. Express ideas clearly and effectively in oral and written communication | 3.42 | A | 4 |
| 2. Utilize the application of computer and information technology to process information and manage data observing legal and ethical concerns. | 3.50 | SA | 2 |
| 3. Engage in projects and activities using basic knowledge and skills in business management, entrepreneurship and finance management. | 3.33 | A | 6 |
| 4. Demonstrate understanding of responsibility for environmental, local and global issues | 3.17 | A | 8 |
| 5. Utilize lifelong learning strategies and practical skills for life, survival and leadership. | 3.33 | A | 6 |
| 6. Demonstrate interpersonal skills through effective listening, establishing rapport, monitoring non-verbal signals and expressing awareness of and respect for self and others | 3.58 | SA | 1 |
| 7. Define and apply different types of thinking and research skills and employ innovative strategies to solve real-life situations | 3.50 | SA | 2 |
| 8. Explore new challenges and conduct investigations that are beneficial to the community. | 3.42 | A | 4 |
| Composite Mean | 3.41 | A | |
| Committed Achievers | | | |
| 9. Become realistic in challenging goals and accomplish tasks with discipline, determination and sense of urgency. | 3.50 | SA | 2 |
| 10. Strive for excellence by providing continuous improvement and producing quality output. | 3.58 | SA | 1 |
| Composite Mean | 3.54 | SA | |
| Credible and Values-driven Leaders and Members | | | |
| 11. Manifest faith in the Supreme Being / Creator | 3.42 | A | 2 |
| 12. Identify and recognize personal, moral and spiritual values and beliefs | 3.33 | A | 4 |
| 13. Determine decisions, actions and consequences after thoroughly examining multiple perspectives (individual, community, national, global) | 3.41 | A | 3 |
| 14. Practice honesty, fairness and transparency in dealing with others. | 3.50 | SA | 1 |
| Composite Mean | 3.42 | A | |
| Collaborative and Caring Team Leaders / Members | | | |
| 15. Identify and apply knowledge of personal and group processes skills in specific tasks in resolving conflicts. | 3.50 | SA | 3.5 |
| 16. Build relationships to support group effectiveness by being open, cooperative, flexible and respectful of others and being a team player | 3.67 | SA | 1 |
| 17. Accept diversity and demonstrate respect for difference in acceptance of cultures, ideas, opinions, and beliefs. | 3.58 | SA | 2 |
| 18. Participate actively in uplifting the welfare of the community especially the less privileged sectors | 3.50 | SA | 3.5 |
| Composite Mean | 3.56 | SA | |

Information Technology skill is always part of being competent learner due to the revolution of modern devices and equipment being utilized in business operations. However, engaging in projects and activities using basic knowledge and skills in business management, entrepreneurship and finance management (3.33); utilizing lifelong learning strategies and practical skills for life, survival and leadership (3.33) and demonstrating understanding of responsibility for environmental, local and global issues (3.17) are the least learning outcomes applied as competent learners in their respective work places.

These skills might not be highly applicable to their work assignments at the moment but these could be utilized as they move up in the organization through giving them higher duties and responsibilities to tackle some national and international issues with the changing business landscapes. Hill, Cronk and Wickramasekera [52] noted other key global issues which include: cross-cultural communications, role of culture, regulatory environment, international negotiations and decision-making, planning in the global arena, regional trade regions and agreements and international institutions and the rapid

technological innovations that are necessary in understanding how businesses operate in the world view. The composite mean score of 3.41 implies that there is high application of learning outcomes as competent learners among the MBA students. This signifies that students are competent in utilizing relevant information and experience acquired from the MBA program directly to their job assignments.

MBA students strongly agree that they can strive for excellence by providing continuous improvement and producing quality output (3.58) and become realistic in challenging goals and accomplish tasks with discipline, determination and sense of urgency (3.50). The composite mean score of 3.54 signifies that the MBA students are committed achievers who could deliver notable services to their clients and other stakeholders with purpose, courage, strength and resilience. Organizational commitment brings meaning and significance for the employees to pursue their career in a certain work environment where they find satisfaction to participate in various programs of the institution. Rollinson [53] emphasized that “managers and consultants across the globe believe that a company cannot achieve its aims and objectives without enduring commitment from all staff of the organization”. Giving them enough and substantial information and knowing how they can be of help to the organization are something that the human resource managers and the administrators should work on leading to a well-informed community.

They strongly agree that they practice honesty, fairness and transparency in dealing with others (3.50). Meanwhile, they agree that they can also manifest faith in the Supreme Being / Creator (3.42) and determine decisions, actions and consequences after thoroughly examining multiple perspectives (3.41). However, identifying and recognizing personal, moral and spiritual values and beliefs (3.33) obtained the least score. The composite mean score of 3.42 signifies that there is high application of learning outcomes as credible and values-driven leaders and members among MBA students. Positive attitude drives the behavior of the employees towards work productivity based on personal values connected to the core values of the institution. It is also important to consider the congruence of values of employees and the organization in meeting the demands of work environment.

MBA students strongly agree that they are capable of building relationships to support group effectiveness by being open, cooperative, flexible and respectful of others and being a team player (3.67) and accepting diversity and demonstrate respect for

difference in acceptance of cultures, ideas, opinions, and beliefs (3.58). They also strongly agree that they can identify and apply knowledge of personal and group processes skills in specific tasks in resolving conflicts (3.50) and participate actively in uplifting the welfare of the community especially the less privileged sectors (3.50). The composite mean score of 3.56 implies that there is high application of learning outcomes as collaborative and caring team leaders and members among MBA students. Employees need to behave sensibly at workplace not only to gain appreciation and respect from others but also to maintain healthy work culture. Being a team player is an important attribute of employees that could lead them to a better work relationship among their peers.

Table 6. Application level of acquired Student Outcomes from the MBA courses

| Student Outcomes | WM | VI | Rank |
|---|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1. Communicates effectively both oral and written in dealing with customers | 3.75 | SA | 1 |
| 2. Thinks critically and makes decisions to business case studies | 3.58 | SA | 2.5 |
| 3. Integrates a variety of approaches and practices from various disciplines to analyze and evaluate organizational situation | 3.58 | SA | 2.5 |
| 4. Diagnoses accurately the competitive performances of both local and international enterprises | 3.33 | A | 6 |
| 5. Applies knowledge necessary to ethically manage today's business operations | 3.45 | A | 4 |
| 6. Leads community – based activities for sustainable development | 3.36 | A | 5 |
| Composite Mean | 3.52 | SA | |

Table 6 presents the application level of acquired student outcomes from the MBA courses. Student outcomes are important measure of performance if the students have the capability to apply these outcomes on their present work assignments. MBA students strongly agree that they can communicate effectively both oral and written in dealing with customers (3.75) and think critically and makes decisions to business case studies (3.58) as well as integrate a variety of approaches and practices from various disciplines to analyze and evaluate organizational situation (3.58). Meanwhile, they agree that they can also apply knowledge necessary to ethically manage today's

business operations (3.45). However, leading the community – based activities for sustainable development (3.36) and diagnosing accurately the competitive performances of both local and international enterprises (3.33) are the least applied student outcomes by the MBA students. The composite mean score of 3.52 implies that the MBA students really possessed the student outcomes that they need to acquire before they finish the MBA program. Measuring student outcomes is part of the implementation of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) which is the main thrust of most Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines today to go along with the standards of foreign universities and colleges all over the world [7]. This signifies that the MBA students are well-equipped in some areas of the student outcomes but still need to be taught to enhance their qualities to become fully prepared for higher leadership roles in their respective work places.

Table 7. Significant relationships between the academic performance and the application level of MBA Courses in the workplace and personal growth

| | r-value | p-value |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Application of MBA Courses | -.526 | .180 |
| Personal Growth | | |
| Competence | -.008 | .985 |
| Commitment | .267 | .522 |
| Caring | .373 | .363 |
| Credibility | .137 | .746 |

**Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is no significant relationship between academic performance and the application level of MBA courses in the workplace and personal growth as shown in Table 7 and as denoted by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of

significance. This signifies that no matter what level of academic performance they can achieve in the MBA courses that would not be a factor to determine the application level of MBA courses in their work assignments as well as its general application on achieving their personal growth. MBA has a diverse level of academic performance with various functions being performed in the organization. Likewise in achieving their personal growth, various degree of student performance cannot lead to form linearity when correlated to personal growth.

There is a significant relationship between the acquired learning and student outcomes and the attainment of personal growth in terms of competence as denoted by the computed p-values which are all less than the 0.05 level of significance as shown in Table 8. This signifies that there is a possibility that the higher level of application of learning and student outcomes would have a tendency to obtain a higher personal growth specifically the competence of the MBA students. Likewise, there is also a significant relationship between learning outcomes specifically as being credible and values-driven leaders and members as well as student outcomes and the attainment of personal growth in terms of credibility. This signifies that the level of application of MBA courses in learning outcomes to become credible team players could possibly influence the attainment of personal growth of the MBA students in terms of credibility.

The results reveal that the first application of what they have acquired from the MBA courses is to utilize it directly to improve their competence on their respective assignments where the students who are still trying to finish the MBA program have limited scope of mind-set on how they will utilize the acquired leaning fully in the organization.

Table 8. Relationships between the application level of acquired learning and student outcomes from the MBA courses and the attainment of personal growth

| Acquired Learning Outcomes | | Personal Growth | | | |
|--|---------|-----------------|------------|--------|-------------|
| | | Competence | Commitment | Caring | Credibility |
| <i>Competent Learners</i> | r-value | .700(*) | .271 | .065 | .547 |
| | p-value | .011 | .395 | .840 | .066 |
| <i>Committed Achievers</i> | r-value | .757(**) | .168 | .004 | .481 |
| | p-value | .004 | .602 | .990 | .113 |
| <i>Credible and Values-driven Leaders and Members</i> | r-value | .597(*) | .432 | .246 | .670(*) |
| | p-value | .040 | .161 | .441 | .017 |
| <i>Collaborative and Caring Team Leaders / Members</i> | r-value | .578(*) | .180 | -.098 | .426 |
| | p-value | .049 | .576 | .761 | .168 |
| Acquired Student Outcomes | r-value | .765(**) | .414 | .160 | .638 (*) |
| | p-value | .004 | .181 | .619 | .026 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

That is why, commitment and caring variables were not considered significant because they haven't seen yet the practical application of their knowledge within a short period of time they have completed the MBA courses would also be some other factors that can be considered for its non-significance.

Proposed Action Plan

The action plan in Table 9 has four (4) key result areas namely: academic performance, personal growth, learning and student outcomes. It is composed of strategies that would provide learning experiences through co-curricular activities to strengthen the development of knowledge, skills and attitude of the MBA students. Some learning activities may be reinforced in the professional courses during the delivery of instruction that would motivate them to produce quality student outputs based on the requirements of individual courses.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The currently enrolled MBA students have an academic performance rating of average with the highest computed grade in Statistical Method in Administration. There is high application of MBA courses in achieving personal growth of the MBA students in terms of measuring their competence as well as application in their workplace specifically in utilizing the acquired learning from International Business Management and Entrepreneurship in Global Perspective. High application levels of acquired learning and student outcomes from the MBA courses are achieved specifically in building relationships to support group effectiveness. There is no significant relationship between the academic performance and the application level of MBA Courses in the workplace and personal growth. There is a possibility that the level of application of learning and student outcomes could influence the personal growth of the MBA students in terms of competence. The action plan as input to the student development program of the Graduate School was proposed.

It is recommended to strengthen research output as MBA course requirement with some application of statistics in preparation for their thesis writing subject. Ensure active involvement of students in professional business organizations for them to get updates and keep abreast of the latest innovation and information about Technopreneurship. Facilitate community extension activities to SHL restoration village through an outreach program to help beneficiaries manage their small business and assess the capability of the

residents to sustain a livelihood project. The Graduate School may conduct seminars or conferences for undergraduate business students to discuss national and global challenges of MSMEs. This study is limited to the application of MBA courses to the attainment of personal growth of the currently enrolled students which may further be investigated the impact of the MBA courses to the professional growth or productivity. The proposed action plan as input to the student development program may be implemented and evaluated as to its effectiveness and impact to the students and to the institution.

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