IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN TOURISM CURRICULA FROM 1977 TO 2003: BASIS FOR A PROPOSED CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT

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Abstract:

The goal of this research is to analyze the development of Bachelor of Science in Tourism curriculum through the assessment of graduates and their employers which will serve as the basis for a proposed curriculum enrichment that may be used as model or framework specifically by the Centro Escolar University in Manila, Philippines. The findings revealed that there are more female students enrolled in Tourism course and they want to eventually be engaged in airline industry as flight attendants. Graduates of BS Tourism do not find difficulty in being gainfully employed and that their internship in travel agencies plays a very important role in their preparation for employment. The findings also revealed that there is a need to re-evaluate the major and professional subjects in terms of relevance and responsiveness to current industry needs.

Key words: Tourism, curriculum, enhancement, development, enrichment

Background of the Study

Following the rapid growth of tourism in the 1970s, the Department of Tourism (DOT), Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA) and the University of the Philippines collaborated to institutionalize the first baccalaureate degree in tourism in the country. Patterned after the tourism curricula offered in U.S. universities, U.P.’s B.S. Tourism program became the model for tourism education in the country. It was designed for those planning a career in the travel and tourism industry.

The stated mission was to “professionalize” the industry. For school year 1995-1996, data from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) showed an enrollment of 5,357 tourism students in thirty-three (33) CHED accredited schools all over the country. More than a third of these schools are in Metro Manila. Some of the big colleges and universities that offer B.S. Tourism as a four-year course are University of the Philippines – Diliman, University of Santo Tomas, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Centro Escolar University, La Consolacion College, Siena College, San Sebastian College - Recoletos, College of the Holy Spirit, PATTS College of Aeronautics, and Lyceum of the Philippines.

Schools providing tourism education in the Philippines can be divided into two categories: (a) those which emphasize management training and (b) those that emphasize skills training. Most of the schools mentioned above fall under the former category. The problem with graduates of management – oriented schools is that most of them are not equipped with skills needed at entry-level positions in tourism establishments. It has been pointed out that a big gap exists between these management-oriented programs and real world requirements of tourism establishments. Industry practitioners criticized the schools for producing graduates who possess neither the skills nor the attitude needed to be effective in the profession. They suggested that graduates be subjected to professional licensure examination to standardize the quality of tourism education in the country. On the other hand, skills training graduates of other schools may fare well during their first few years with the company but soon become incapable of handling more responsibilities that demand leadership skills. Many tourism graduates are deficient in both oral and written communication.

There are a number of weaknesses found in the tourism industry at present, such as the low quality of
available human resources, the scarcity of manpower at the top management level but abundant labor at lowest-level, the uneven distribution of skilled labor by sector (gap among front officers, cook, room boys, guide, travel consultants, etc.) and the low understanding of the nature of tourism industry with its multidimensional aspects.

Realizing the above situation, the challenge for tourism schools is to make their curricula relevant not only to the present but also to the future needs of the industry. A good curriculum must possess specific characteristics in the pursuit of the aims of education the schools are to pursue.

The curriculum is continuously evolving. Thus for a curriculum to be effective, it must have continuous monitoring and evaluation. The curriculum must adapt its educational activities and services to the needs of a modern and dynamic community.

The curriculum is based on the needs of the people. A good curriculum reflects the needs of the individual and the society as a whole. The curriculum is in proper shape in order to meet the challenges of times and make education more responsive to the clientele it serves.

The curriculum is democratically conceived. A good curriculum is developed through the efforts of a group of individuals from different sectors in the society who are knowledgeable about the interest, needs and resources of the learner and the society as a whole.

The curriculum has educational quality. Quality education comes through the situation of the individual’s intellectual and creative capacities for social welfare and development. The curriculum helps the learner to become the best that he can possibly be. The curriculum has administrative flexibility. A good curriculum must be ready to incorporate changes whenever necessary. The curriculum is open to revision and development to meet the demands of globalization and the digital age.

Tourism education programs exist throughout the nation within a diversity of school settings. It must develop greater responsiveness to national needs and initiatives that relate to the changes of the future by preparing people to such changes. Hence, undergraduate students in Tourism must be prepared for current and future professional roles in the international arena. A change in curriculum content to respond to the changing times and the changing needs of students will ensure better preparation for their future employment and this is what this paper intends to accomplish, to be able to propose measures that will lead to tourism curriculum enhancement.

Setting of the Study

Centro Escolar University, the setting of the study, offered in 1976 the four-year course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science (Major in Tourism) under the College of Arts and Sciences. Major subjects of tourism were initially offered in the first semester of third year. The students were required to take 36 units of major subjects such as Tourism Principles I, Organization and Management of Tourist Enterprise I (Tourist Travel Agencies), Travel Geography, Tourism Principles II, Organization and Management of Tourist Enterprise II (Hotels, Restaurants, and Resorts), Recreational Geography, Accounting Principles, Public Relations, Internship I, Labor Relations, Economics of Leisure and Recreation, and Internship II.

Students were able to choose from the following Tourism electives: Tourism Development, Sociology of Leisure, Tour Guides and Escorts, and Current Problems. The 1976-1977 Tourism Curriculum was revised in 1984 to meet the demands of the changing times. Total revisions were made in the major subjects in order to offer more relevant professional subjects in the 1984-1985 curriculum of tourism. The new subjects offered were Principles of Tourism, World 11 Tourism, Tourism Laws, Management of Tourism Enterprises, Domestic Tourism, Tourism Promotion, Hotel, Restaurant and Allied Industries Management, Internship I, Transportation Management, Tourism Development and Control, Internship II, and Business Policy in Tourism Industry. The B.S. Tourism curriculum has been repeatedly evaluated and revised to meet the demands of the fast changing society in school years 2002-2003, 2005-2006, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.

Choice of major subjects was left to the discretion of the school depending on what the school perceives to be the relevant subjects that will serve the needs of their area/region. Basic Finance, and Principles of Management and Food and Nutrition subjects such as Food Hygiene, Sanitation and Environmental Concerns, Principles of Food Selection and Preparation and Meal Management were incorporated in the curriculum.

The minimum requirement for facilities in B.S. Tourism was a mock-up travel counter with desks and counters, filing cabinets, 12 telephone and communication facilities, waiting area, accounting machine and computer. In school year 2005-2006 the revision involved change of some subject descriptive titles: Physical Science 11 – General and Inorganic Chemistry to Physical Science 11b – General and Food Chemistry. Computer 1 – Introduction to Computer Science to IT Essentials with Productivity Software. Computer 3 – (Computer Application in the Hospitality Industry) was deleted from the curriculum.

Revisions made in 2007-2008 was in compliance with CHED Memorandum Order No. 30, series of 2006 changing the program title of Bachelor of Science in Tourism (BST) to Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) and the re-alignment of the curriculum.

In CHED Memorandum Order No. 30, Series of 2006 on the Updated Policies and Standards for Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM), Section 2 of Article 1 states that “A good starting point for reform was to make a thorough review of the management oriented curriculum that has, since the 70’s, pervaded among tourism and hospitality schools. To produce graduates that will not only survive but also thrive in a borderless economy, a paradigm shift from supply driven to market-driven curriculum in terms of content and structure 13 was adopted. To be more responsive to the needs of the industry, the new program emphasizes skills and competencies instead of just managerial theory and is scheduled in such a way as to provide more but focused options for the students in terms of career paths. The course line-up incorporates subjects on sustainable development and international standards and practices to address issues that arise from market imperfections and the challenges of globalization.

Finally, the curriculum is designed to allow flexibility and creativity on the part of higher educational institutions.

As tourism continues to grow, the need for training and education grows. Part of the objectives of any educational institution is to develop the students’ innate potential to the greatest extent possible and to prepare them for the life’s greatest challenge – finding a job and performing one’s job effectively. Because the tourism industry is so large and diverse, it offers a broad range of challenging positions to the graduates. Each of these position offers its own opportunities and demands and working in a range of jobs in different sub-sectors of tourism can strengthen their understanding of the industry as a whole.

Since surveys of graduates are often seen as an important tool of institutional development, this study aims to assess the tourism curriculum of the school through feedback from the graduates and their employers. The researcher believes that the students’ development emotionally and professionally is the primary responsibility of the school. It should actively promote the improvement of the curriculum by following the graduates’ footsteps and assessing their courses of difficulty in finding and adopting the working environment.

Theoretical Framework

Great philosophies had laid the historical and philosophical foundations of education which include the concept of curriculum is as dynamic as the changes that occur in society. It is about the total learning experiences of individual not only in schools but in society as well.

Peter Oliva first introduced a curriculum development model in 1976 and expanded the model in 1992. It has 12 components, and it can be used in a variety of ways. It offers a process for the complete development of a school’s curriculum. The original model requires a statement of philosophy and the revised model includes societal and students needs, which are also invaluable parts of curriculum models. Ralph Tyler’s Model explained that in curriculum development, the following considerations should be made: purposes of the school, educational experiences related to the purposes, organization of the experiences and evaluation of the experiences.
Hilda Taba believed that those who teach curriculum should participate in developing it. Her advocacy was commonly called the grassroots approach. She presented seven major steps to her model where teachers could have a major input. First, the diagnosis of 19 learners’ needs and expectations of the larger society. Second, formulation of learning objectives. Third, selection of learning content. Fourth, organization of learning content. Fifth, selection of learning experience. Sixth, organization of learning experiences and seventh, the determination of what to evaluate and the means of doing it.

Miller and Seller introduced the motion that the various models of curriculum development exhibit orientations toward the purpose of the curriculum. The first orientation is the transmission position. They indicate that the curriculum can emphasize that education should transmit facts, skills, and values to students. The second orientation they delineate is the transaction position. In this view, the individual is perceived as rational and a capable of intelligent action. The third position, transformation, centers on personal and social change. Their model has five stages: First, orientation. Second, aims, developmental goals, instructional strategies. Third, teaching models. Fourth, implementation plan and fifth, evaluation. They present it in a circular format so that evaluation data feedback to the orientation stage and the cycle can repeat.

According to Ornstein and Hunskins there are four actions which curriculum designers can follow in order to be effective in facilitating 20 curriculum improvement. These are; (1) Change the climate and the working conditions in the institutions to encourage curriculum improvement; (2) Achieve and maintain appropriate tempo in curriculum improvement; (3) Arrange for a variety of activities that lead to improvement and; (4) Build evaluation procedures into each curriculum.

Examining the various curriculum models, the interacting processes in curriculum development are planning, implementing and evaluating. Curriculum design involves all the preliminary work that is carried out to ensure that the curriculum is relevant, appropriate and workable.

At this stage, the curriculum is conceptualized and attention is paid to arrangement of the varied components. Considerations include the focus on the philosophical underpinnings, goals, objectives, subject matter, learning experiences and evaluation; all established in consultation with stakeholders.

Curriculum development involves planning, construction and the logical step-by-step procedures used to produce written documents, as well as print and non-print resource materials. These documents may include mission statements, goals, standards, performance benchmarks, learning activities and instructional strategies, interdisciplinary connections, and other integration activities that guide curriculum implementation.

Curriculum implementation is the stage in which all stakeholders become part of the process by making this contribution implement the curriculum as designed and developed: It requires interaction between schools, student’s parents and the industry practitioners. In-service teacher education through seminars and workshops facilitate the required alteration of individuals’ knowledge, skills and attitude.

Curriculum monitoring is important to determine if the curriculum is still relevant and effective. Monitoring is a periodic assessment and adjustment during the try-out period. It determines how the curriculum is working, such that the monitoring report becomes the basis of a decision on what aspects have to be retained, improved or modified. Monitoring also provides decision that would even end or terminate the program. Curriculum evaluation is the process of using information that is collected through assessment. The ultimate purpose of any evaluation process that takes place in schools is to improve student learning. Data collected on the field will be analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum.

The information gained from data analysis is used to guide appropriate adjustments to the curriculum documents. Such 23 adjustments incorporate the strengths and address any apparent weakness of the implemented curriculum. Because of technological developments and the resulting ease with which new information can be shared, continuously evolving curriculum is now possible. Updates, links to
resource material and successful teaching and learning experiences can be easily incorporated in the curricula. These considerations are all geared towards curriculum improvement and improved student performance in meeting national, developmental and educational goals.

Assessment is an integral part of any curriculum. It is necessary if educators want to find out whether the learning experiences actually produced the intended results. It determines whether the program should be maintained or modified. The learners are at the center stage in the educative process. They are the most important factors in the learning environment. A major basis for evaluating educational courses, programs, and curricula is the learners’ performance. Students and graduates influence the curriculum to a great extent.

Curriculum improvement is a continuous process and must be reviewed periodically. Information gathered from the learners provide 24 valuable feedback to curriculum planners by serving as basis to identify the strength and weaknesses of the curriculum. The researcher will trace the graduates of the various Tourism curricula in order to assess its strengths and weaknesses in order to offer possible enrichment programs for the new Tourism curriculum and to give suggestions to serve as basis for improvement.

**Statement of the Problem**

This study attempted to analyze the development of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism curriculum through the assessment of graduates and their employers which will serve as the basis for a proposed curriculum enrichment.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the respondents?
   1.1. Graduates
      1.1.1. gender
      1.1.2. age
      1.1.3. civil status
      1.1.4. year graduated
      1.1.5. curriculum used
      1.1.6. waiting period for employment after graduation
      1.1.7. area of employment
      1.1.8. current position
      1.1.9. years of experience in current position
      1.1.10. monthly income

2. How did the graduates and the employers perceive the usefulness of the Tourism curriculum as regards the following components?
   2.1. general education subjects and core curriculum subjects
   2.2. professional subjects

3. How did the perceptions on the professional subjects compare when the graduates are grouped according to:
   3.1. gender
   3.2. year of graduation classified into the following curriculum years:
       1977
       1985
       1994
       1998
       2003?

4. How did the graduates and the employers perceive the skills and competencies acquired in the professional subjects in terms of their usefulness in the workplace?

5. How did the perceptions of the graduates and of the employers compare as regards the skills and competencies acquired in the professional subjects in terms of their usefulness in the workplace?

6. What were the suggestions offered by the graduates and employers to improve the B.S. Tourism curriculum to make it more responsive to the needs of the different sectors of the tourism industry?

7. Based on the findings, what revisions/enrichment may be proposed for the B.S. Tourism curriculum?

**Assumption**

The study is premised on the assumption that the respondents gave accurate and objective perceptions about the curriculum that is being assessed.

**Hypothesis of the Study**

1. There is no significant difference among the perceptions of the graduates on the professional
subjects when grouped according to gender and year of graduation.

2. There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the graduates and employers on the skills and competencies acquired in the professional subjects in terms of their usefulness in the work place.

Significance of the Study

Tourism has become more multifaceted and more complex over the past several years. This development is attributed to changing economic conditions, globalization, diverse lifestyles and a greater utilization of new technologies. With growing complexity and sophistication goes the need to increase the supply of manpower and to enhance its professionalism to meet the consumer culture of the world today 28 particularly among the higher-level market segments. Clearly, the need to enhance the quality of human resources and promote greater efficiency in services comes to fore. These multi-dimensional developments pose major challenges to schools, colleges, and universities offering tourism and hospitality industry programs to deliver the highest quality of education that would prepare potential manpower requirements of the world’s largest industry and generator of quality jobs – the tourism industry.

This study was conducted in order to assess the various Tourism programs in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the 1977, 1985, 1994, 1998 and 2003 Tourism curricula. It sought to ask the graduates and their employers to conduct an assessment of the four-year B.S. Tourism curriculum to determine its strengths and weaknesses and its relevance and usefulness to the present needs of the tourism industry.

The study will contribute to making administrators and faculty members aware of the need for periodic review of the curriculum to keep pace with change. Faculty members will help in terms of scope of subject matter; instructional strategies and technologies that will be 29 useful and applicable to graduates’ successful employment. They will be kept abreast of new trends in the field of tourism.

Results of the study will serve as basis for determining skills that students should be equipped with to make them competitive in their chosen profession. Supervisors or managers of Tourism graduates have an important role to play in curriculum assessment and to recommend innovations that will make the curriculum more relevant to the needs of the tourism industry.

Moreover, the study can be of importance to Tourism educators, curriculum specialists, and administrators. This study may serve as a source of relevant and reliable information for purposes of curriculum planning, development and improvement. Future students of Bachelor of Science in Tourism will ultimately benefit from this study since any improvement made in the curriculum will result in more effective learning that will help in producing better quality of graduates. For the same reason, employers of graduates will also be benefited since they will be hiring graduates of better knowledge, skills and competencies.

Finally, an analysis of the results of this assessment can be utilized in determining the necessary improvement of the general and professional subjects of the Tourism curriculum.

Scope and Delimitation

The respondents of this study were all B.S. Tourism graduates of Centro Escolar University from 1981 to 2007 and their employers. The study was focused mainly on the assessment of the general education and professional education components of the Tourism curriculum leading to the degree Bachelor of Science in Tourism and assessment of skills and competencies that graduates must possess in preparation to their gainful employment. For purpose of this study, the 2005-2006 B.S. Tourism curriculum of the Centro Escolar University, School of Nutrition and Hospitality Management was used.

Data Gathering Procedure:

The researcher utilized the purposive sampling technique which is based on choosing the sample according to the purpose of the researcher. The purposive sampling technique is relevant to the study primarily because only samples purposively selected
were consulted about the strengths and weaknesses of the B.S. Tourism curriculum. The criteria for selection were the following:

1. Must be a tourism graduate of Centro Escolar University from school year 1981 to 2007 and an employer of the graduate.
2. Must be employed.
3. Must be willing to answer the questionnaire and be interviewed.

Treatment of Data

The following statistical procedures were used to attain an in-depth analysis of data:

1. Frequency Count. This determined the number belonging to a group.
2. Percentage. Percentage was used to determine the magnitude of a portion of a variable to the whole.
3. Mean.
4. Standard Deviation. The standard deviation was used to describe the homogeneity or the heterogeneity of a set of variables.
5. Two Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Two-way analysis of variance table must be constructed to evaluate the possible interaction and its main effect.
6. ANOVA. The various quantities used in the analysis of variance can be summarized in an ANOVA table.

Findings:

The findings of the study are as follows:

1. Characteristics of Respondents
   1.1 Graduates
      1.1.1 Gender. Most of the respondents were female.
      1.1.2 Age. The biggest number of respondents belonged to the 21-25 age bracket.
      1.1.3 Civil status. More than half of the respondents were single.
      1.1.4 Year graduated. The biggest number of respondents were graduates of batch 2005-2007.
      1.1.5 Curriculum used. Majority of the respondents used the 2003 curriculum.
      1.1.6 Waiting period for employment after graduation. In less than six months, the respondents were gainfully employed.

   1.7 Area of employment. The multifaceted nature of tourism profession was apparent in the diversity of businesses where respondents were employed.

1.8 Current position. Respondents were either supervisor or manager of hotel, restaurant, resort, and travel agency.

1.9 Years of experience in current position. A majority of respondents had occupied their positions for 2-3 years.

1.10 Current monthly income. Highest in number among the respondents were those earning more than PhP21,000.00 per month.

1.2 Employer
   1.2.1 Gender. Thirty eight females comprised most of the employers.
   1.2.2 Age. The biggest age group of employers belonged to the 31-35 bracket.
   1.2.3 Civil status. Both single and married employers got an equal frequency.
   1.2.4 Highest educational attainment. Majority of the employers were graduates of the 4-year B.S. Tourism course.
   1.2.5 Area of employment. Majority of the employers were working in travel agency.
   1.2.6 Current position. Employers were holding a position of operations manager.
   1.2.7 Years of experience in current position. Employers had been occupying their position for 2-3 years.

2. Perceptions of Graduates and Employers about the B.S. Tourism Curriculum in terms of Its Usefulness to Current Tourism-related Industry Practices.

2.1. General education subjects and core curriculum subjects. Both groups of respondents perceived English, Social Sciences, Philosophy, Humanities, and Computer subjects to be highly important.

2.2. Professional subjects. The professional subjects were perceived by both groups of respondents to be very important in terms of its usefulness to current tourism related industry practice.

3.1. Gender. The perceptions of the male and female respondents regarding the usefulness of the major and professional subjects in the tourism curriculum were the same.

3.2. Year of graduation classified into the following curriculum years: 1977, 1985, 1994, 1998, 2003. The differences in the perceptions of the respondents when grouped according to the curriculum year were significant only to Domestic Tourism.

4. Perceptions on the Usefulness of Competencies and Skills Acquired in Major and Professional Subjects in Preparing Graduates for Professional Practices. Both graduates and employers perceived that the competencies and skills acquired in Professional subjects were useful to a large extent.

5. Comparison between the Perceptions of the Graduates and Employers on the Competencies and Skills Acquired in Professional Subjects. The differences were very significant in Convention Management, Tour Guide and Escort, Transportation Management and Internship in hotel.

6. Respondents’ Suggestions to Improve the B.S. Tourism Curriculum. A total of one hundred sixty-one suggestions were ventilated by the graduates. The highest concerns was focused on the development of communication skills.

7. Proposed B.S. Tourism Management Curriculum. After evaluating the respondent’s perceptions, a proposed four-year B.S. Tourism Curriculum was prepared in accordance with the policies prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) pertaining to curriculum.

Conclusions:

In the light of the findings, the following conclusions are shown:

1. The course B.S. Tourism is largely dominated by female. This is evident by the large number of female respondents. This may be due to the fact that a large number of students who enroll in tourism eventually want to become flight attendants.

2. The graduates and their employers are a valuable source of information and data for evaluating the curriculum. Their perceptions of the subjects and the skills and competencies acquired in the course can serve as basis for further curriculum enrichment.

3. Graduates of B.S. Tourism do not find difficulty in being gainfully employed. Majority are connected with hotels, restaurants, resorts, travel agencies, airline companies, and other tourism related establishments. On the other hand, the diversity or multifaceted nature of the tourism profession is proven by graduates who are working in fields such as banking, call centers, realty, hospitals, insurance, or as entrepreneurs.

4. Internship in travel agencies plays a very important role in the graduates’ preparation for employment more than the internship in hotels or airlines.

5. There is a need to re-evaluate the major and professional subjects in terms of relevance and responsiveness to current industry needs.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were drawn by the researcher:

1. The graduates of tourism and their employers should be asked to help in the continuous improvement of the curriculum. Their work experience would provide valuable information to strengthen and enrich the tourism program.

2. There must be a systematic and continuous appraisal and re-evaluation of the tourism program, identifying major areas of concern.
which need enrichment to ensure that graduates are competent to the needs of the industry.

3. The actual training on the tourism industry centralized reservation system should be integrated in the tourism curriculum.

4. The internship hours should be increased to further expose students to the three major sectors of the industry: hotel, airline, and travel agency.

5. A comparative study of the Tourism curriculum of state universities and private schools and the employability of their graduates may be done.

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**OTHER MATERIALS**