

Tourism Management Students' Academic Achievement Vis-a-Vis their Practicum Performance

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Abstract

The Philippine tourism sector has shown strong performance, exhibiting double-digit growth in domestic and foreign tourist arrivals for the past several years. As a major employer on the continent, the tourism industry offers economic stability and various jobs (Hobson, 2008). A well-designed and flexible curriculum is needed to integrate dynamic changes and strategic developments in the tourism and hospitality industries. This study aims to determine the correlation between the University of Cebu-Banilad Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students' academic achievement (based on the General Weighted Average [GWA]) and their practicum performance, with the end view of devising a program-level intervention scheme.

This study utilized the descriptive correlation research design using secondary data from the Registrar's Office and the College of Hospitality Management. The research subjects were the seventy-one (71) Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students of the University

of Cebu-Banilad enrolled during the school year 2023-2024. Purposive sampling was applied to select the research subjects. Frequency count and simple percentage were used to describe the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA]) and their practicum performance. The chi-square test of independence was used to determine the significant relationship between the research subjects' gender and their General Weighted Average [GWA]) and the research subjects' gender and practicum performance. Pearson R was used to determine the significant relationship between the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA]) and practicum performance. Ethical principles of beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice were observed in this investigation.

The majority of the research subjects had good academic and practicum performance. No significant relationship exists between the research subjects' gender and the General Weighted Average [GWA], and no correlation was found between their practicum performance.

Moreover, there is a significant relationship between the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA] and practicum performance. Therefore, the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) manifested mediocre cognitive abilities in applying theoretical

concepts to practice in the real world of work in tourism-related fields. This association of their mental abilities and on-the-job performance exemplifies the extent to which they can manage and carry out tasks while minding the theories and concepts they learn in school.

Keywords: *Tourism management education, performance achievement, on-the-job-training, correlation, University of Cebu, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

The Asia Pacific region has over two billion people and is home to several important economies, such as Japan, China, and South Korea. Asia has significantly more outbound tourists than any other emerging region (Cohen & Cohen, 2015). The demand for tourism and hospitality workers extends beyond Philippine borders with the advent of the ASEAN community workers (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017). The substantial development of the tourism industry in Asia has resulted in a growing international demand for tourism and hospitality higher education in Australia (Bui et al., 2017).

The Philippine tourism sector has shown strong performance, exhibiting double-digit growth in domestic and foreign tourist arrivals for several years. As the fifth growth driver of the Philippine economy, tourism accounts for 8% of the country's gross domestic product, generating 4.7 million jobs and more than Php1.74 billion in tourist receipts. The multiplier effect of tourism has prompted investment and created new business and employment opportunities across a wide variety of sectors, which demand knowledgeable and highly skilled workers (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017).

As a major employer on the continent, the tourism industry offers economic stability and various jobs (Hobson, 2008). Within this context, the ASEAN Economic Community has four pillars, focusing on a single market and production base to allow for the free flow of goods, services, skilled labor, investment, capital, food, and agricultural security, and integrating 12 priority sectors. With this, the ASEAN Member States (AMS) signed several Mutual Recognition Arrangements, including the ASEAN MRA for Tourism Professionals. This will allow AMS to mutually recognize or accept some or all aspects of one another's conformity with assessment results for Tourism Professionals through the use of the Common ASEAN Tourism Curriculum (CATC) (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017).

Tourism is a labor-intensive service industry, dependent on survival (and for competitive advantage) on the availability of good quality personnel to deliver, operate, and manage the tourist product (Amoah & Baum, 1997). However, as the industry continues to expand and develop, the lack of well-trained researchers and skilled industry managers is becoming a significant concern. In particular, developing Asian countries have a growing need for industry managers who meet international standards. Consequently, given their proximity to Asia, Western countries like Australia and New Zealand are facing an increase in the demand by Asian students for quality tourism and hospitality higher education (Hobson, 2008).

Human resource issues in tourism are multi-dimensional: the poor image as an employer, the quality and availability of skilled staff, rewards and benefits, labor turnover, working hours and conditions, use of expatriate labor, barriers to employment, and a traditionally low level of training and education (Peacock & Ladkin, 2002).

Tourism is an in-demand course nowadays, and graduates who are highly competent, as reflected in their academic performance, have bigger chances for employment (Basmayor et al., 2015). Thereby, higher education institutions play a pivotal role in producing qualified human power that enables solving the real problems of a community (Idris et al., 2012). Hence, Ballado-Tan (2014) opined that the quality of education an institution offers is often determined by the graduates it produces.

The tourism sector is a vibrant and dynamic industry encompassing various activities, including travel, hospitality, leisure and event management. It plays a significant role in global economies, and as the sector continues to grow and evolve, there is a growing demand for well-trained professionals who can navigate its complexities. Various educational programmes have been established to meet this demand, offering different levels of training and qualifications (Serrano et al., 2024).

A well-designed and flexible curriculum is needed to integrate dynamic changes and strategic developments in the tourism and hospitality industries. The Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) primary responsibility is to provide guidelines and oversight functions to ensure relevant, responsive, and proactive curricular offerings. The General Education courses provide balanced development for the student as a professional. Tourism and hospitality programs are considered management programs, so a minimum set of management courses is prescribed. Typical courses for tourism and hospitality programs are designed to facilitate a shared understanding of closely interrelated industry sub-sectors (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017).

The primary purpose of teaching at any level of education is to bring a fundamental change in the learner (Tebabal & Kahssay, 2011). To facilitate the process of knowledge transmission, teachers should apply appropriate teaching methods that best suit specific objectives and level exit outcomes. In the traditional epoch, many teaching practitioners widely applied teacher-centered methods to impart knowledge to learners compared to student-centered methods. Until today, questions about the effectiveness of teaching methods on student learning have consistently raised considerable interest in the thematic field of educational research (Hightower et al., 2011). Learning is a process that involves investigating, formulating, reasoning, and using appropriate strategies to solve problems; teachers should realize that it becomes more effective if the students are tasked to perform rather than just asked to remember some information (Ganyaupfu, 2013). Tomul and Polat (2013) demonstrated that the type of high school students who graduated strongly predicts subsequent performance.

However, the rise in student demand for international education has presented many challenges to tourism and hospitality educators, institutions, and students (Kwek et al., 2013). Mouw and Khanna (1993) disclosed that the ability of any of the predictors to predict college success is disappointingly low.

Finally, to ensure that graduates are adequately prepared for the industry's requirements, longer practicum training will be required to complete the programs (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017). The on-the-job training (OJT) program is one of the most crucial programs in higher education. It is an integral part of the educational system in the Philippines, specifically in tertiary (Tolentino, 2023).

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So, consistent growth in tourism and hospitality international students in Australian universities makes it imperative that higher education institutions remain vigilant in understanding diverse student cohorts to provide the best possible learning environments (Rynne, 2013). Also, it is possible to prepare dynamic (educated) and static (trained) tourism operators in order to achieve public objectives pursued by governmental and educational institutions, on the one hand, and to meet current needs put forward by firms and students, on the other hand, by moving away from the non-optimal long-run equilibrium, and by avoiding detrimental impacts on trained students (Zagonari, 2009).

Academic literature has extensively studied the relationship between classroom attendance and academic performance in higher education. However, there is a lack of specific studies on higher education in tourism (Serrano et al., 2024). Tourism students are not high achievers in terms of academic grades. The reasons for this seeming lack of motivation to excel in their studies must be examined (Basmayor et al., 2015).

It is the primary responsibility of the school to enable the students to acquire knowledge, competencies and develop skills as stipulated in the CHED Memorandum Order No. 62. Therefore, this study determines

the correlation between the academic performance and on-the-job ratings of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students of the University of Cebu-Banilad to devise a program intervention scheme.

FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The early 1900s saw Charles Spearman using a mathematical approach to measuring human intelligence. Using statistical factor analysis, Spearman identified *g*, a single underlying intelligence factor he believed accounted for various observable abilities (Wilson, 2017). Spearman's theory of general intelligence is known as the two-factor theory, which states that general intelligence or "*g*" is correlated with specific abilities or "*s*" to some degree. All tasks on intelligence tests, whether related to verbal or mathematical abilities, were influenced by this underlying *g* factor (Cherry, 2023).

Spearman noticed that children's grades across all subjects tended to be highly correlated. If a child did well in one subject, they generally did well in another, and vice versa. What did this say about the nature of intelligence? He devised factor analysis to measure the relationships between seemingly varied cognitive abilities and account for the correlations he saw between scores on different tests. The result was Spearman's two-factor theory, which attempted to show that all cognitive performance can be explained by two variables: one *general* ability (*g*) and the many *specific* abilities (*s*) to which it gave rise. Later, however, further analysis showed that *g* alone was enough to explain the correlations between different tests. When people talk about IQ or intelligence, it is usually this general mental ability that they are referring to (Wilson, 2017).

Spearman suggested that this *g* factor was responsible for overall performance on mental ability tests. He noted that while people certainly could and often did excel in certain areas, people who did well in one area also tended to do well in others (Cherry, 2023).

In the 1940s, Raymond Cattell theorized that two types of intelligence affect human cognitive ability: fluid intelligence (*Gf*) and crystallized intelligence (*Gc*). Fluid intelligence refers to intelligence that we are born with and acquire through interacting with our environment. Crystallized intelligence is intelligence that we acquire through our culture. Others suggest that there are more types of general intelligence, often referred to as the "*g*'s of intelligence." additional *g*'s of intelligence include general memory and learning (*gy*), broad visual perception (*gv*), broad auditory perception (*gu*), broad retrieval ability (*gr*), broad cognitive speediness (*gs*) and reaction time (*gt*) (cherry, 2023).

In psychology, fluid and crystallized intelligence (abbreviated *Gf* and *Gc*, respectively) are factors of general intelligence initially identified by Raymond Cattell. Fluid intelligence or fluid reasoning is the capacity to think logically and solve problems in novel situations, independent of acquired knowledge. It is the ability to analyze novel problems, identify patterns and relationships that underpin these problems, and extrapolate them using logic. It is necessary for all logical problem-solving, primarily scientific, mathematical, and technical problem-solving. Fluid reasoning includes inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning. Crystallized intelligence is the ability to use skills, knowledge, and experience. It should not be equated with memory or knowledge, but it does rely on accessing information from long-term memory (Psyngo Inc., 2018).

The Cattell–Horn–Carroll (CHC) theory of cognitive abilities is a comprehensive taxonomy of abilities embedded in multiple overlapping theories of cognition (Schneider & McGrew, 2018). It is the most comprehensive and empirically supported psychometric theory of the structure of cognitive abilities (Flanagan & Dixon, 2014).

The basic idea of CHC theory is that intelligence is multidimensional and functionally integrated. In CHC theory, the ability dimensions have a hierarchical structure, meaning that some have a broader scope than others. At the bottom of the hierarchy are specific abilities tied to a specific task or test. Specific abilities are the only abilities that can be measured directly. Narrow abilities are clusters of highly correlated specific abilities. Broad abilities are clusters of narrow abilities that are mutually more correlated with each other than with abilities in other broad-ability clusters (Schneider & McGrew, 2018).

Gf-Gc theory and Carroll's Three-Stratum Theory are considered hierarchical theories of intelligence. They posit a broad cognitive ability with multiple, more specialized abilities at lower levels of the hierarchy. Because of the significant overlap in the main components of the two theories, an integrated theory has been proposed that combines elements of both theories to provide an understanding of the broad range of abilities (Marrs, 2001).

Intelligence, a central psychological concept, is a multifaceted construct that extends beyond a single definition. It is typically characterized as the ability to learn, understand, and apply knowledge and the capacity to solve problems and adapt to new situations (Main, 2023). Moreover, Sharma (2008) opined that intelligence had been defined in many ways: the capacity for abstraction, logic, understanding, self-awareness, learning, emotional knowledge, reasoning, planning, critical thinking, and problem-solving. It can be described as the ability to perceive or infer information and retain it as knowledge to be applied to adaptive behaviors within an environment or context.

Intelligence is the ability to learn from experience and acquire, retain, and use knowledge; essential intelligence is the ability to learn from experience. The acquisition, retention, and use of knowledge are essential to intelligence. It also pertains to the recognition of problems, which relates to using knowledge; people first must identify the problems it might address and solve problems, and then they must use what they have learned to come up with solutions to problems (Cherry, 2024).

Moreover, intelligence is an individual's aggregate or global capacity to act purposefully, reason, and deal effectively with the environment (Wechsler, 1944). General intellectual functioning (intelligence quotient) typically refers to one's global or overall level of intelligence (Hartman, 2009).

Individuals differ in their ability to understand complex ideas, adapt effectively to the environment, learn from experience, engage in various forms of reasoning, and overcome obstacles by taking thought. Although these individual differences can be substantial, they are never entirely consistent: a given person's intellectual performance will vary on different occasions, in different domains, as judged by different criteria. Concepts of "intelligence" are attempts to clarify and organize this complex set of phenomena. Although considerable clarity has been achieved in some areas, no such conceptualization has answered all the essential questions, and none commands universal assent. Indeed, when two dozen prominent theorists were recently asked to define intelligence, they gave two dozen somewhat different definitions (Ulrich et al., 1996).

Intelligence enables humans to remember descriptions of things and use those descriptions in future behaviors. It gives humans the cognitive abilities to learn, form concepts, understand, and reason, including recognizing patterns, innovating, planning, solving problems, and employing language to communicate (Stanek & Ones, 2018).

General intelligence, also known as the general factor or *g factor*, refers to the existence of a broad mental capacity that influences performance on cognitive ability measures. Other terms such as intelligence, IQ, general cognitive ability, and general mental ability are also used interchangeably to mean the same thing as general intelligence. This general mental ability underlies specific mental skills related to spatial, numerical, mechanical, and verbal abilities. The idea is that general intelligence influences performance on all cognitive tasks. So, general intelligence can be defined as a construct that is made up of different cognitive abilities. These abilities allow people to acquire knowledge and solve problems (Cherry, 2023).

Psychologist Louis L. Thurstone (1887–1955) focused on seven primary mental abilities rather than one general ability. These include Associative memory, which is the ability to memorize and recall; Numerical ability, which relates to the ability to solve mathematical problems; perceptual speed, which pertains to the ability to see differences and similarities among objects; reasoning, which relates to the ability to find rules; spatial visualization, which is the ability to visualize relationships; verbal comprehension, which pertains to the ability to define and understand words and word fluency, which is the ability to produce words rapidly (Cherry, 2024).

Many modern intelligence tests measure some of the cognitive factors that are thought to make up general intelligence. Such tests propose that intelligence can be measured and expressed by a single number,

such as an IQ score. The Stanford-Binet, one of the most popular intelligence tests, aims to measure the g factor. In addition to providing an overall score, the current test version offers several score composites and subtest scores in ten different areas (Cherry, 2023).

Education is a powerful agent of change that improves health and livelihoods and contributes to social stability. At the micro-level, it is associated with better living standards for individuals through improved productivity, given that those who have received a higher education tend to have more economic and social opportunities. At the macro level, education builds well-informed and skilled human capital, which is considered an engine of economic growth that positively contributes to economic development (Sothan, 2019).

Apart from schools at the elementary through high school levels, it is hard to think of a more propitious setting for studying the gamut of character strengths than college (Lounsbury, 2009). The college experience provides many opportunities for students to develop various psychological dimensions, including values, competencies, attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, identity, self-concept, and personality traits (Astin, 1993; Hamrick, 2002). These variables correspond to the two leading educational outcomes Astin (1977) identified: cognitive and affective.

Institutions play an important role in motivating students by understanding intrinsic and extrinsic factors that motivate students to remain in college. Colleges and universities should escalate the process of creating bridge programs that link higher education to secondary education. These experiences provide academic and social pathways that assist first-generation students in overcoming inadequate college preparation (Tanjula, 2014).

Per Section 13 of RA No. 77722, higher education institutions shall exercise academic freedom in their curricular offerings. However, they must comply with the minimum requirements for specific academic programs, the general education distribution requirements, and the specific professional courses. HEIs are allowed to design curricula suited to their contexts and mission provided that they can demonstrate that the same leads to the attainment of the required minimum set of outcomes, albeit by a different route; in the same vein, they have latitude in terms of curricula delivery and in terms of specification and deployment of human and physical resources as long as they can show that the attainment of the program outcomes and satisfaction of program educational objectives. The programs related to the fields of hospitality and tourism education will equip students with competencies that are needed to execute operational tasks and management functions in food production (culinary), accommodation, food and beverage service, tourism planning and product development, events planning, transportation services, travel and tour operations and other emerging sectors of hospitality and tourism industry (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017).

Knowledge about self-regulation and motivation processes enables students to maximize their college career paths. It allows universities to implement better intervention programs to encourage struggling students to persist and complete their educational studies. College administrators and instructors should focus on developing interventions to instill a healthy sense of self-efficacy in students and teach them how to manage their time effectively. Interventions in the form of learning how-to-learn courses and/or workshops should be designed specifically for first-year students to provide them with helpful adjustment strategies such as setting strategic goals, planning effectively throughout the first year of undergraduate study, and seeking help when needed (Kitsantas et al., 2008).

According to Graunke and Woosley (2015), commitment to an academic major and satisfaction with faculty interactions were both found to be significant predictors of grade point averages. This suggests that researchers and practitioners should be cautious in applying what is known about first-year students to students who have progressed beyond the first year and that institutions may want to develop sophomore-specific programs.

Academic performance, as represented by a student's cumulative grade-point average (GPA), is generally considered the most critical indicator of college student performance (Astin, 1993; Pascarella &

Terenzini, 1991). Moreover, there has been a long-standing emphasis in psychological research on grades (Lounsbury et al., 2005).

Likewise, Akbasli et al. (2016) opined that many benefits lead students to academic success. In recent years, educators have found that many factors affect students' performance in science and math classes. Significantly, reading comprehension has changed many traditional teaching procedures in math and science. It also shows remarkable benefits.

The teaching environment, inputs (human resources), processes (teaching-learning objectives), and feedback all have significant impacts on the output (academic achievement). The strategies developed predict that providing more conducive lecture rooms, allocating a moderate number of students to each classroom, improving the facilities and study environment, and using interactive and participatory teaching strategies are critical to the training and preparation of hospitality and tourism management students. If implemented, the strategies can enhance the achievement of academic grades, such that it is suitable for filling employment vacancies in the HTM sector of the country (Fallon & Fagbolu, 2021).

Kumar (2013) found that certain personality traits such as sociability, self-confidence, and ambition are significantly and positively correlated with high school students' academic achievement, signifying that certain personality traits are closely linked with students' academic achievement.

Serrano et al. (2014) disclosed that women and students who do not repeat courses exhibit higher attendance rates and achieve better academic outcomes. Class attendance and course repetition are the most influential factors affecting students' final grades.

Majod and Mattoo (2012) completed a study on personality and academic performance among adolescents. They examined the unique contribution of personality traits (sociability, self-confidence, and ambitiousness) toward academic performance. The results revealed a highly significant relationship among the three dimensions of personality: sociability, self-confidence, and ambition. No significant relationship was found between the personality traits (sociability, self-confidence, and ambition) and academic performance of male respondents in government schools, likewise, females in private schools. However, ambitiousness was found to have an impact on the academic performance of the respondents.

Many academic disciplines have undergone structural changes; tourism management has received more serious attention due to its position in building a native and Islamic civilization. The achievement of this scientific strategy in the country is only possible through operationalizing its goals in tourism management. However, on the other hand, according to the developments of education and research in the era of digital progress and knowledge explosion, some traditional methods and attitudes in tourism management need new changes in line with the production of knowledge in the current globalized era rather than Iranian Islamic civilization (Azari, 2023).

Basmayor et al. (2015) revealed that tourism students who intend to acquire high grades should spend more time studying instead of going out with friends. Putting studies at the top of their priorities is very important if they want to finish their degree on time. Students with a high level of personal relations tend to obtain low GPAs compared to those with a low level of personal relations. While it is true that a sociable type of personality is a requirement in the tourism industry because of the nature of their work, tourism students should be taught how to create a balance between their social activities and studies. Guidance counselors and tourism teachers can help students learn time management skills to perform academically. On the other hand, introverted tourism students would benefit from student development programs providing opportunities to enhance their social skills.

The research of Kwek et al. (2013) explored the impacts of self-esteem and resilience factors on the academic performance of international students compared to domestic Australian students. The results suggest that self-esteem and resilience are significant predictors of academic performance for both groups.

Moreover, using a pre-and-post-study design, the results of the study of Bui et al. (2017) indicate that after a semester of teaching and learning, the improvement in self-efficacy was only evidenced among high-performing students. While self-efficacy was significant in predicting the performance of domestic students, this positive relationship was not found among international students.

The study of Tolentino (2023) determined the relationship between the academic performance and practicum performance of 59 BSBA Marketing Management students at the College of Business, Systems Plus College Foundation, who had taken their practicum in 23 organizations. Findings showed that the student trainees got the highest rating on adherence to company policies rated as very good, followed by job performance, attitude towards, competence, and personal characteristics. The students were rated low in oral and written communication skills as an area for evaluation, with a rating of good. This creates an impression that this area should be improved by strengthening communication skills in all courses by integrating interactive teaching-learning methods like presentations, role plays, debates, cases, written reports, portfolios, and reaction/ term papers to further their communication skills.

Nowadays, the world of education is required to be able to equip students with 21st-century skills such as: flexible, adaptive, initiative, self-control, social, productive, leadership, and responsibility (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). These abilities must in line with the view of life, life attitudes, and life skills from students, and they can thrive in school, out of school, and family. In schools, these abilities can be trained through scientific literacy and science process skills (Turiman, 2012).

Tourism-educated and trained students play different roles (in driving future tourist demands and meeting current tourist preferences, respectively). It states that the main features characterizing the four stakeholders involved in the design, development, and implementation of tourism programs (firms, students, educational and governmental institutions), together with the main facts they face in making their decisions, lead to a non-optimal strategic long-run equilibrium, where tourism non-graduated or differently-from-tourism graduated employees prevail (Zagorani, 2009).

Through internships, undergraduate students take their first steps into a profession and apply the theoretical knowledge acquired during their education to real-life situations. The skills taught at school do not go beyond theories unless practiced. However, students may not know how to use the knowledge gained from a specific subject, and knowledge that is not used is forgotten. Internships allow students to practice what they have learned in the classroom, better understand the industries' requirements, test career choices, and develop important hands-on workplace skills (Walo, 2001).

An internship is an activity in which one practices training related to a profession or skill and gains experience (Kasli & Ilban, 2013). According to Titley (1984), an internship encapsulates these features: it is a learning experience that deals with the reality of professional practice; it follows other theoretical and practical aspects of preparation; it is usually a terminal experience - the last stage before the granting of full professional status, it is an experience that is subject to evaluation by qualified practitioners; and though under supervision, the internship must also entail full-fledged decision making and its concomitant professional responsibility.

Through internships, undergraduates can gain perspective on their future careers. Additionally, the internship can be regarded as a complement to their education. Hence, the internship process must be elucidated as part of students' education and experiences. If the students gain experience through the two parts of their education, educational goals will be easier to achieve, and students will be better prepared to enter their field. Studies about internships are insufficient. Identifying the problems that undergraduate students experience during their internships is a necessary first step to solving them and will help maximize an internship's contribution to university education (Kasli & Ilban, 2013).

The investigation of Valdez et al. (2015) ascertained the contributions of a university's on-the-job training (OJT) program to the development of skills, personal qualities, and competencies of tourism students. Results show that the university's OJT program significantly contributed to developing students' basic skills, thinking skills, personal qualities, and competencies in resources, interpersonal skills, information systems, and technology. Further, the similarities of OJT contributions for males and females imply no gender bias in the training places. In contrast, the differences in OJT contributions for self-employed, casual, contractual, and permanent employees indicate that those with more skills and competencies are more inclined to engage in entrepreneurial activities than employment. The OJT program has also been consistent throughout the years in providing skills and personal qualities, as indicated by the

non-difference in OJT contributions when grouped according to graduation year. Of immediate concern, however, is the decline of OJT contributions to the competencies of 2013 graduates. The study recommends that the university tie up with more tourism industry partners that can give excellent training for students and offer more international OJT for them to be more globally competitive. University training coordinators should regularly monitor student training. Finally, the university may also consider and study ways to develop tourism students' entrepreneurial skills.

In addition, Ko (2007) investigated the factors associated with hospitality students' satisfaction with internship programs and the relationships between training, job satisfaction, and confidence about future careers to provide schools and industries with suggestions regarding course development and training during internships. Training classes significantly impacted satisfaction with the supervisor and educational program. The regression analysis showed that training satisfaction played a positive role as a predictor of participants' job satisfaction and confidence about future careers. The effect of satisfaction with training on participants' confidence about future careers was mediated by their satisfaction with the internship. The administration and learning factors connected with participants' satisfaction during the internship were significant predictors of their confidence about future careers, but supervision, environment, and interpersonal relations were not.

The research of Kasli and Ilban (2013) identified the problems undergraduate students encounter as interns in tourism programs and documented their views on the tourism sector after their internships. The paper also focuses on whether the problems experienced during the internship program affect the students' intention to work in the tourism business in the future. Internship problems have four dimensions, though from a business perspective, the problems can also be viewed from two sub-dimensions. The findings of this study reveal that interns are given only fundamental employee rights, that interns are viewed as cheap labor, and that the service business does not contribute to interns' professional development. All these issues negatively influence interns' motivation. The results of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) show that problems encountered during internships negatively affected the students' attitudes toward tourism-related jobs, undermining their intention to work in this business in the future. The study findings indicate that the problems faced during internships have implications for universities and businesses. Contemporary internship practices necessitate reconsideration by universities. Moreover, the findings show that the business sector does not provide trainees with the necessary attention, compensation, and professional conditions. Collaboration with educational institutions is necessary to improve the relationship between interns and tourism enterprises.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study determined the correlation between the University of Cebu- Banilad Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students' profile, academic achievement (based on General Weighted Average [GWA]), and their practicum performance, with the end view of devising a program-level intervention scheme during the School Year 2023-2024. Specifically, this investigation presents the following: 1) research subjects' gender; 2) students' academic achievement (GWA); 3) practicum/on-the-job training performance; 4) significant relationship between the research subjects' gender and their General Weighted Average [GWA]; research subjects' gender and practicum performance; research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA] and practicum performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents the discussions on the research design, research environment, data sources, research subjects, data gathering procedure, treatment of data and ethical considerations.

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive correlation research design to determine the significant relationship between the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students' academic achievement (based on General Weighted Average [GWA]) and their practicum performance, S.Y. 2023-2024.

A correlational study is a research design that looks at the relationships between two or more variables (Cherry, 2023b). The measure is best used in variables that demonstrate a linear relationship between each other (Taylor, n.d.). The effect of correlation is to reduce the range of uncertainty. The prediction based on correlation analysis is likely to be more valuable and near to reality (Sharma, 2015). Correlations can be strong or weak and positive or negative. Sometimes, there is no correlation (Health, 2028). There are three possible outcomes of a correlation study: a positive correlation, a negative correlation, or no correlation. Researchers can present the results using a numerical value called the correlation coefficient, a measure of the correlation strength. It can range from -1.00 (negative) to $+1.00$ (positive). A correlation coefficient of 0 indicates no correlation (Schneider, 2012).

Research Environment

This study was undertaken at the University of Cebu-Banilad, a private, non-sectarian Higher Education Institution in the Philippines. The University of Cebu envisioned democratizing quality education, being the visionary and industry leader, giving hope, and transforming lives. As its mission, the University of Cebu offers affordable and quality education responsive to the demands of local and international communities. UC-Banilad is located at the center of a residential cum business district in Cebu, offering students professional teaching instructions set on industry-based and world-class standards. Linkages and partnerships with various industries allow students more significant immersion and on-the-job training.

Data Sources

The data about the General Weighted Average [GWA] of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students during the School Year 2023-2024 were obtained from the University of Cebu-Banilad Registrar's Office, while the information on the on-the-job training/ or practicum performance (ratings) was further obtained from the College of Tourism Management (CTM).

Research Subjects

The research subjects were the seventy-one (71) Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students of the University of Cebu-Banilad enrolled during the school year 2023-2024. Purposive sampling was applied in selecting the research subjects.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Campus Director of the University of Cebu Banilad.

Treatment of Data

The data were tabulated and analyzed using the appropriate statistical technique. Frequency count and simple percentage will be used to describe the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA]) and their practicum performance. The Chi-square test of independence will be used to determine the significant relationship between the research subjects' gender and their General Weighted Average [GWA]), as well as the research subjects' gender and practicum performance. Pearson R will be used to determine the significant relationship between the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA]) and practicum performance.

Ethical Considerations

The University of Cebu Research Ethics Committee will review the research protocol. This study will ensure that it benefits the target research subjects, the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students of the University of Cebu-Banilad. Hence, the proposed program-level intervention scheme intends to improve the BSTM curriculum and deliver quality tourism educational nursing. Similarly, the principle of non-maleficence was adhered to in the study by ensuring that the data about the research subjects would not be divulged to the public that might harm their reputation or cause any emotional and psychological distress. The data are stored in the personal computer of the researchers with a password, and access will be restricted to unauthorized parties. The data utilized in this investigation will be treated with utmost confidentiality to protect the privacy of the research subjects. De-identification and codes will be used in each set of records, such as the General Weighted Average (GWA) and the practicum rating. Choosing the research subjects follows the purposive sampling technique to choose the research subject, mitigate bias and discrimination and prevent the risk of biased evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the profile of the University of Cebu- Banilad Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management graduates' profile academic performance and their ratings in the practicum. It also presents the results of the significant relationship between the research subjects' gender and their General Weighted Average [GWA]) as well as the research subjects' gender and practicum performance and the significant relationship between the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA]) and practicum performance.

University education is the apex level of the education system. It is a very crucial level of education because it is a stage that prepares students for high-level skilled work in various fields. In realization of the critical role the university education has to play in the country's all-round development. It is expected that university education should inspire and equip students with the desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence and relevant skills that will help them make maximum contribution to all facets of the economy of the nation (Agboola et al., 2014). Table 1 shows the data about the research subjects' gender.

Table 1. Research Subjects' Gender (n = 71)

Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	19	26.76
Female	52	73.24
Total	71	100

Of the seventy-one (71) research subjects, fifty-two (52) or 73.24% were females, while there were only nineteen (19, 26.76%) males. This information indicates that most students who took the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management program at the University of Cebu-Banilad Campus from 2023 to 2024 were predominantly ladies due to their innate skills to coordinate events and manage tourism programs and activities. Likewise, the industry is often perceived as a good fit for their skills, including hospitality, interpersonal abilities, and a focus on customer service, which are often associated with traditional female roles; additionally, tourism offers flexible work arrangements and opportunities for cultural interaction, making it appealing to many women seeking career paths that allow for work-life balance.

Women comprise 54% of the tourism workforce but are concentrated in lower-skilled, lower-paid, and often informal employment. Even though women face fewer opportunities for career progression, more difficulties in opening a business, and higher barriers to education and training – the tourism sector is

brimming with empowered women and strong initiatives leading the way to gender equality (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2024).

Academic performance or achievement is the extent to which a student, teacher, or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals and is measured either by continuous assessment or cumulative grade point average (CGPA) (Talib & Sansgiry, 2012).

GWA (general weighted average, similar to Grade Point Average (GPA), is a representation (often numerical) of the overall scholastic standing of students used for evaluation. GWA is based on the grades in all subjects taken at a particular level, including those outside the curriculum. Representation of the subjects taken only in a specific curriculum is called CWA, or curriculum weighted average (University of the Philippines, 2003).

Table 2 shows the research subjects' academic achievement data regarding the General Weighted Average (GWA).

Table 2. Research Subjects' Academic Achievement (GWA) (n = 71)

Performance Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very Good	20	28.17
Good	50	70.42
Fair	1	1.41

Legend: 1.0 = Excellent; 1.1-1.5 = Very Good; 1.6-2.5 = Good; 2.6 – 2.9 = Fair, 3.0 = Passing; 3.1- 3.5 = Failing

Of the seventy-one (71) respondents, fifty (50), or 70.42%, had good academic achievement based on their General Weighted Average (GWA). This data shows that the majority of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students of the University of Cebu-Banilad for the school year 2023 to 2024 had average grades in the various subjects they had taken in fulfillment of the curriculum requirements.

Agustino et al. (2017) revealed that Capiz State University Sigma Satellite College students' fourth (4th) year Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students had good academic performance.

A practicum allows the students to apply what they have learned in class to their field of study. A field placement can be invaluable to their career preparation (Fecich, 2023).

The on-the-job training (OJT) program is one of the most crucial programs in higher education. It is an integral part of the educational system in the Philippines, specifically in tertiary (Tolentino, 2023). The Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad requires six (6) unit practicum. Table 3 shows the data about the research subjects' practicum/on-the-job training performance.

Table 3. Practicum/On-the-Job Training Performance (n = 70)

Practicum/on-the job training performance	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very Good	8	11.43
Good	62	88.57

Legend: 1.0 = Excellent, 1.1-1.5 = Very Good, 1.6-2.5 = Good, 2.6 – 2.9 = Fair, 3.0 = Passing, 3.1- 3.5 = Failing

Practicum evaluations are used to assess a student's progress. The desired outcomes of a practicum are intellectual, professional, and personal growth. There were sixty-two (62) respondents, comprising 88.57%, with good practicum performance at various establishments, like travel agencies, where the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) was deployed. It can be inferred from this foregoing result that most of them had mediocre performance ratings in the various tasks assigned to them by the personnel of the tourism service-related establishments.

Moreover, Tolentino (2023) disclosed that Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) student trainees of Systems Plus College Foundation got the highest rating on adherence to company policies rated as very good, followed by job performance, attitude towards competence, and personal characteristics. The students were rated low in oral and written communication skills as an area for evaluation, with a rating of good.

When students carry out practicum, they can share the task and role in completing the investigation. Each student can play a role according to his or her task, synergizing and integrating the results into group successes. So, cooperation does not mean every group member should do the same job; rather, it depends on how each member can support the joint success. Student co-ops are seen with indicators of all group members performing the practicum in groups, with a clear division of tasks, and each member completing the task. Responsibility is a consequence that must be borne due to the actions that have been done. When students conclude, they must be prepared to face the consequences of the decision that has been chosen (Wiwin & Kustijono, 2017).

Table 4 shows the results of the test of hypothesis on the significant relationship between the research subjects' gender and their General Weighted Average [GWA] as well as their gender and practicum performance.

Table 4. Result of the Test of Hypothesis on the Significant Relationship between the Research Subjects' Gender and their General Weighted Average [GWA] as well as their Gender and Practicum Performance

Variables	Computed Value of X^2	df	P-Value	Cramer's V	Decision	Interpretation
Gender & General Weighted Average [GWA]	6.949	2	0.031	0.313	Reject H_0	Significant
Gender & Practicum Performance	0.108	1	0.742	0.039	Do Not Reject H_0	Not Significant

P value is significant if it is ≤ 0.05

There is a significant relationship between the research subjects' gender and their General Weighted Average [GWA], as indicated by the computed Chi-square value of 6.949, more significant than the Cramer's value of 0.313. Also, the P-value of 0.31 is lesser than 0.05 level of significance. This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This result indicates that differences in the sexuality of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students influence their performance in the courses they enrolled in as vital components of the curricular requirements to obtain the degree.

However, there is no significant relationship between the research subjects' gender and their practicum performance, based on the computed Chi-square value of 0.108, which is less than Cramer's value of 0.039. Likewise, the P-value of 0.742 is more significant than the 0.05 significance level, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. This result means that the sexual orientation of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) students did not correlate to their ability to apply theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom to real-world situations in the provision of tourism services as well as to observe, practice and develop skills with the guidance of a mentor or supervisor.

Sahila et al. (2022) posit that students perceived the work community as an environment for their learning and wellbeing, an enabler of students' participation and agency, and a form of support for mentoring.

Table 5 presents the results test of the hypothesis on the significant relationship between the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA] and practicum performance.

Table 5. Result of the Test of Hypothesis on the Significant Relationship between the Research Subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA] and Practicum Performance

Variables	Pearson Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
General Weighted Average [GWA] & Practicum Performance	0.292	0.014	Reject Ho	Significant

P value is significant if it is ≤ 0.05

There is a significant relationship between the research subjects' General Weighted Average [GWA] and their practicum performance, as shown by the P-value of 0.014, which is more significant than the 0.05 significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This result indicates that the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students' academic achievement relates to their ratings during their on-the-job training at various tourism-related establishments. Hence, their cognitive abilities connect to their ability to apply the theoretical knowledge they learned during the classroom discussion or teaching-learning process. It can be deduced that those with high grades in the major courses performed well in their practicum phase.

Acquiring knowledge comes in various forms. Academic institutions impart and inculcate knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to students, preparing them for employment or an entrepreneurial endeavor. The On-the-job training (OJT) is a vital component of learning for Higher Education Institution (HEI) curriculum abridging the gap between theory and practice,' i.e., classroom instruction or learning and real-world environment which presents a significant learning experience that proves the importance of the academic program that allows its usefulness for both personal and social life of the students (Batool et al., 2012).

CONCLUSION

Therefore, the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) manifested mediocre cognitive abilities in applying theoretical concepts to practice in the real world of work in tourism-related fields. This association of their mental abilities and on-the-job performance exemplifies how much they can manage and carry out tasks while minding the theories and concepts they learn in school.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH Proposed Program-Level Intervention Scheme

Key Result Area	Objectives	Scheme of Implementation	Budget	Locus of Control	Expected Output
1. BSTM students' good academic performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve the academic performance of the future BSTM students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the students learning style. The assessment of the learning style shall be done in scientific approach under the Institutional Faculty Research Grant. Moreover, the teachers' teaching strategies and approach shall address the learning style of the BSTM students to ensure that they will be able to grasp and acquire the intended learning outcomes of each of the course/subject in the curriculum. 	Php 10,000.00	Dean Program Head Teachers Human Resource Director Campus Affairs Director Vice-Chancellors for	To increase the number of BSTM students at 80% to reach excellent or very good academic performance and practicum performance



2. BSTM students average practicum performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the future BSTM students to achieve high performance in the practicum phase learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers' Training. Train the BSTM faculty members on the different teaching methodologies, strategies and approaches as well on the appropriate mechanics in matching it with the students' learning styles and abilities Align formative and authentic assessments to the KSA/ Learning Competencies set for the BSTM program' courses. There shall be appropriate and balanced combination of formative and authentic assessments that will be implemented and monitored by the college. Intensify skill-based training. The major courses shall intensify the development of skills that are needed in the performance of the tasks and jobs related to tourism service provision. Revisit, revisit and enhance the current course guide/syllabi for practicum. Before the deployment of the students to the various tourist service-oriented establishments, there shall be a comprehensive assessment of the BSTM competencies and skills that are essential in the performance of the various tasks and jobs. 	Php 10,000.00	Academic Affairs	
Strategy Fitness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Up-to-date instructional material/resources for students and instructors</i> <i>Intensifying consultation programs</i> <i>Periodic student progress monitoring</i> 					

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