Self-Management on Employability Skills of Hospitality Management Students

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Abstract- Globalization is inevitable and Philippines as a member of ASEAN regard this reality of economic integration and interdependence. HEI's have raised concerns regarding graduate preparedness as part of the free flow of skilled labor and are now up on their heels to meet the demand and the issue of employability of the graduates has been a significant topic. The challenges of acquiring employment of graduates after graduation mainly due to the skills gap acquired from training and demanded by the employers. The study concluded that the higher the emotional self-control, the better would be the chances of gaining employability skills.

Index Terms- employability skills, emotional self-control, self-management, higher education institution

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization is here to stay! The United Nations declared that global economic interdependence has inevitably grown tremendously as an outcome of massive technological progress and policies that are aimed at opening national economies to competition internally and externally (United Nations Secretariat, 2009, 2011). Philippines being a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) regard this reality of economic integration and interdependence as becoming even more imminent as it moved to become integrated into one community since 2015 together with the rest of the ten (10) country-members.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) have raised pressing concerns regarding the preparedness of college graduates who are going to be an inevitable part of this free flow of services and the free flow of skilled labor (AEC Blueprint, A2, A5). Competency-based courses are among the highly focused programs in the Philippine colleges and universities where diverse competencies are defined by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). This anticipated change is driven by the market and is forcing universities, especially private universities in ASEAN countries, to change its mode of operation (Louangrath, 2013).

It is of no surprise that HEIs are up on their heels in meeting the demands of this globalized integration especially that of preparing and forming the needed human resources in the global employment arena. Issues on the employability of the graduates have been considered as significant topics in the higher education agenda in the first decade of the 21st century worldwide. Many educators believed that traditional courses might become less relevant when these present day batches of students graduate. Social scientists likewise projected the substantial alteration of the contemporary workplace considering global competition, an increase of knowledge-based economy, technology and the multigenerational workforce (Gedye and Chalkey, 2006).

Filipino graduates are facing with the challenge of acquiring employment right after graduation (Ballon, 2007). This was recently affirmed by SEAMEO Innotech Research Updates of 2014. The Updates reported that Philippine graduates frequently become underemployed and further stressed on the need for the Commission on Higher Education as well as HEIs to launch into more aggressive measures that address the expansion of graduates' employment opportunities.

To meet the demands of the industry, there has been a collaborative effort done between industries and HEI's to supply skilled graduates. However, while the HEI's are doing their best to produce employable graduates, Shivpuri and Kim (2004) noted that a skills gap exists in college graduates which are considered by the employers as important. Dael (2006) cited Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS, 1991) who expressed that more than half of the graduates leave school without the knowledge or foundation required to find and hold a good job. With this, employers stressed a considerable dissatisfaction with employees' entry-level preparedness.

Employability skills are viewed as job specific skills or competencies that a person acquires through education, training, work experience, interests and extra-curricular activities (RMIT Career Development and Employment, 2014). These skills equip individuals to carry out complexities of new job market demands brought by globalization. Employability skills may be basic and generic in nature, but these are very important in capacitating a person entering the workforce (Hofstrand, 1996; Robinson, 2006). Harvey (2001) believes that employability is not so much of skills, but of attributes, qualities, competencies, and dispositions as well. Employability skills such as team working, communication, self-management and analytical skills are broadly considered critical in graduating students (Bowman, 2010).

Considering the present day students, HEIs at the very least, need to look consciously preparing students to enter the complexities of their prospective world of work. Reviewing existing practices and working on developing the students' employability skills to increase their competence in meeting the rigors of the current workforce can be a wise head start. HEIs are encouraged therefore to develop students with into employable graduates with competency based skills and the appropriate soft skills. This means that while HEI's focus in sharpening the professional skills of students, they should not forget developing personal skills, qualities, and experiences that would enable them to compete in the labor market (de Guzman and de Castro, 2008).

This study attempted to establish the employability skills of students in selected HEIs within the context of self-management. The value of this study lies in the information on students' employability and offers additional insights into what could influence employability and the use of these data toward a developing a concrete action plan.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined the interrelationships of self-management and employability skills. Specifically, this was guided by the following questions:

1. How do students assess their self-management competencies?
2. How do the teachers perceive the competence of students' employability skills?
3. Is there a significant relationship between self-management and employability skills?
4. Which of the independent variables influence employability skills?

Hypotheses

Ho1: No significant interrelationship exists between self-management and employability skills

Ho2: None of the independent variables significantly influence employability skills

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed mix method design as a means of collecting the needed data to attain the objectives. This method allows the researcher to collect and analyze data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study or program of inquiry (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2008). Clark and Creswell et al., (2011) posited that the mixed method design provide the best understanding of a research problem that either of the approach alone could not suffice.

This study employed three (3) sets of questionnaires for gathering data. Part 1 composed of two sections. Section A used a competency model for self-management of Emotional Intelligence Theory developed by Daniel Goleman (1995). The adapted questionnaire was taken from the study Abdullah Sani, Masrek, Sahid and Mohd Nadzar (2013) entitled *"Assessing the Emotional Intelligence Profile of Public Librarians in Malaysia: Descriptive Analysis"*. Section B, on the other hand, utilized an adapted questionnaire measuring the openness of students to diversity and challenge taken from the study of Barkely et al., (2005) *"Openness to Diversity and Challenge: Assessment of Undergraduate Attitudes and Experiences in the College of Agriculture at Kansas State University"*.

Part 2 was developed by Robinsons (May, 2006) in the dissertation *"Graduates' and Employers' Perceptions of Entry-level Employability Skills needed by Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Graduates"* the same instrument employed by Ogbeide (December, 2006) in the dissertation on *"Employability Skills and Students' Self-Perceived Competence for Careers in the Hospitality Industry"*.

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained by the researcher were collected, processed and interpreted by descriptive and its statistical treatment.

Table 1 shows the summary of students' responses on their self-management competencies. The result displays a mean of 3.22 supported with almost 63% of total population of the respondents. The .409 standard deviation shows homogenous response of the respondents.

The data exhibit competencies of self-management. The data demonstrates adaptability as the competency with the lowest mean 3.08. The result significantly implies students' adaptability skills need to be enhanced and developed to become more flexible in the challenges and changes of workplace requirements and processes, particularly with the ASEAN integration.

Considered as an imperative factor, adaptability enables to understand people of different cultures; thus, schools should give emphasis to training and development of the hospitality management students.

Emotional intelligence according to Goleman (1995) are taught and developed through training, the main reason why hospitality management students are encouraged for exposures (i.e. Educational Tour, On-the-Job Training, Hotel Exposure/Ocular Inspection) in order to facilitate changes due to the growth of technology espoused with modern economy requiring highly trained and skilled human resource. Jordan and Troth (2004) and Matthews, Zeidner and Roberts (2002) cited Goleman (1998) who significantly expressed EI is more focused on social and emotional competencies.

On the other hand, according to the study of Economist Intelligence Unit (2008) entitled Growing Global Executive Talent, the ability to facilitate change to fit circumstances ranked 3rd as the top qualities that will be significant over the years. The study expressed that adaptability is a crucial skill for everyone and an important dimension of emotional intelligence. However, openness to diversity and challenges rated with the highest mean 3.55 and interpreted as high competence. The result disclosed students' enthusiasm in working at diverse workplaces.

On the basis of the findings of the study, while students are open to diversity and challenge, however, their adaptability competence must be enhanced. Barkley's (2005) study reported that while there is a relatively good determinant of openness to diversity and challenge among college students, their experience to this opportunity may be very low. As suggested in the study of Barkley's (2005) that to refine by the institutions the policy on

students' adaptability to diversity through provision of opportunities for students with higher measurable levels of openness to diversity and challenges, diversity appreciation and understanding. Pitts, Melton, Hawes and Hicklin (2010) cited Richard (2000) and Zqourides, Johnson and Watson (1993) that diversifying employees with varied education background creates opportunities for greater innovation and more creative solutions to problems.

Table 1. Students' Assessment of Self-Management Competencies

Variable	Mean	Description	Interpretation	SD
Emotional Self-control	3.10	Almost Always	Moderate Competence	.522
Transparency	3.26	Almost Always	Moderate Competence	.568
Adaptability	3.08	Almost Always	Moderate Competence	.544
Achievement Orientation	3.22	Almost Always	Moderate Competence	.615
Positive Outlook	3.13	Almost Always	Moderate Competence	.654
Openness to Diversity and Challenges	3.55	Strongly Agree	High Competence	.372

Table 2 exhibit teachers' summary of perceived students employability skills according to the teachers' ratings. The result shows a mean of 3.31 described as moderate competence. Almost 74% responses of the population with the standard deviation .333 showing a homogenous response from the respondents supported the result of the study.

The findings of the study reveal that students' employability skills were of moderate competence. Dael (2006) asserted that schools need to look consciously into and workout on the employability skills of the students in order to meet the current workforce demand (Hofstrand, 1996; Robinson, 2006). Thus, de Guzman et al., (2008) encouraged colleges and universities to produce employable graduates.

The data was evident that students have not fully acquired employability skills regardless of the training and formal education provided in the curriculum. Hence, the result supported to the study of Ballon (2007) that Filipino graduates are facing the challenge of acquiring employment right after graduation due to lack of employability skills. In this study, Robinsons (2006) argued that these skills be perceived important by stakeholders in entry-level positions for employment.

On the other hand, participants addressed to the questions "What challenges do you encounter in your training? Do you see it as a preparation for your future endeavor?". They commented that:

Student a: "The on-the-job training hour requirement cannot provide the kind of training one wants to learn the varied operation of hotel."

Student b: "As a trainee, there are instances we are asked to do things outside our immediate responsibility."

This means to say that there is a discrepancy of skills acquisition because of the kind of training they received from training providers. As asserted by Ogbedie (2006), students may learn skills, but there should be reinforcement, direct test and evaluation on those skills. Thus, the company training should serve as reinforcement to develop and apply these skills in real-life situations (Riebe, Roepen, Santarelli and Marchioro, 2010).

In this study, it can be observed that the item "Oral Communication" got 3.13 mean and "Written communication" received 3.14 mean. The findings confirmed that students' have difficulty in terms of their communication skills. There is a good number literature about the importance of communication skills. For example, Covey (1989) stated that communication is the most important skill in life and is widely valued by employers (Crawford, Helliar and Monk, 2011; Jogan and Herring, 2007), however, Coplin (2003) articulated that it is frequently unfulfilled desire. Furthermore, teachers commented on the question "What challenges do you see on students' communication skills?". They articulated that:

Teacher a: "Our students are coming from other rural areas within the region with varied background and training in their basic education."

Teacher b: "We are challenged to improve their communication skills since a study conducted in our school that our students have problems in terms of their communication skill."

With this in mind, it supports the result of this endeavor of the deficiency of students' communication skills both oral and written as confirmed by the result. On the other hand, results of the study also show students' competence in "Lifelong learning" with 3.52 mean described as high competence and "Coordinating" 3.51 mean interpreted as high competence. The result confirmed that while students may have the deficit in terms of other employability skills, however, they manifest lifelong learning competence as they would pursue more in life.

Table 2. Employer's Assessment on Students' Employability Skills

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Problem Solving and Analytic	3.26	Moderate Competence	.379
Decision Making	3.17	Moderate Competence	.437
Organization and Time Management	3.17	Moderate Competence	.435
Risk Taking	3.15	Moderate Competence	.435
Oral Communication	3.13	Moderate Competence	.486
Written Communication	3.14	Moderate Competence	.488
Listening	3.32	Moderate Competence	.427

Interpersonal Relationship	3.28	Moderate Competence	.386	Visioning	3.47	Moderate Competence	.410
Managing Conflict	3.25	Moderate Competence	.427	Ability to Conceptualize	3.37	Moderate Competence	.411
Leadership and Influence	3.41	Moderate Competence	.381	Lifelong Learning	3.52	High Competence	.346
Coordinating	3.51	High Competence	.391	Motivation-Personal Strength	3.48	Moderate Competence	.349
Creativity, Innovation and Change	3.40	Moderate Competence	.370				

Table 3. Pearson r to Establish Relationship between Self Management and Employability Skills

Ho1: No significant interrelationship exist between self-

Employability Skills (n=148)	Self-Management (n=148)											
	Emotional Self-Control (mean=3.10)		Transparency (mean=3.26)		Adaptability (mean=3.09)		Achievement Orientation (mean=3.22)		Positive Outlook (mean=3.13)		Openness to Diversity (mean=3.55)	
	r	sig	r	sig	r	sig	r	sig	r	sig	r	sig
Problem Solving and Analytic (mean=3.26)	-0.25	0.00 (sig)	0.01	0.89 (ns)	-0.03	0.73 (ns)	-0.14	0.09 (ns)	0.03	0.74 (ns)	0.06	0.44 (ns)
Decision Making (mean=3.17)	-0.22	0.01 (sig)	0.02	0.80 (ns)	-0.03	0.73 (ns)	-0.12	0.13 (ns)	0.01	0.95 (ns)	0.02	0.84 (ns)
Organization and Time Management (mean=3.17)	-0.17	0.04 (sig)	0.01	0.88 (ns)	0.04	0.59 (ns)	-0.11	0.20 (ns)	0.03	0.76 (ns)	-0.03	0.69 (ns)
Risk Taking (mean=3.15)	-0.21	0.01 (sig)	-0.01	0.92 (ns)	-0.04	0.65 (ns)	-0.07	0.37 (ns)	0.01	0.95 (ns)	-0.02	0.83 (ns)
Oral Communication (mean=3.13)	-0.13	0.12 (ns)	0.06	0.45 (ns)	0.04	0.60 (ns)	-0.04	0.63 (ns)	0.07	0.42 (ns)	-0.01	0.91 (ns)
Written Communications (mean=3.14)	-0.15	0.06(ns)	0.05	0.56 (ns)	0.07	0.39 (ns)	-0.05	0.56 (ns)	0.11	0.18 (ns)	-0.07	0.42 (ns)
Listening (mean=3.32)	-0.17	0.04 (sig)	0.03	0.74 (ns)	-0.03	0.68 (ns)	-0.06	0.49 (ns)	-0.06	0.47 (ns)	-0.02	0.84 (ns)
Interpersonal Relationship (mean=3.28)	-0.17	0.04 (sig)	0.01	0.86 (ns)	-0.11	0.19 (ns)	-0.08	0.36 (ns)	-0.08	0.36 (ns)	0.00	0.96 (ns)
Managing Conflict (mean=3.26)	-0.20	0.02 (sig)	-0.04	0.66 (ns)	-0.07	0.39 (ns)	-0.19	0.02 (sig)	-0.14	0.09 (ns)	-0.06	0.50 (ns)
Leadership and Influence (mean=3.41)	-0.11	0.20(ns)	0.02	0.82 (ns)	-0.03	0.75 (ns)	-0.06	0.47 (ns)	0.00	0.98 (ns)	0.04	0.66 (ns)
Coordinating (mean=3.52)	-0.02	0.83 (ns)	0.06	0.49 (ns)	0.07	0.42 (ns)	-0.01	0.87 (ns)	0.07	0.37 (ns)	0.07	0.43 (ns)
Creativity, Innovation, and Change (mean=3.41)	-0.08	0.35 (ns)	0.00	0.9 (ns)	-0.08	0.35 (ns)	-0.04	0.66 (ns)	-0.06	0.46 (ns)	0.06	0.50 (ns)
Visioning (mean=3.47)	-0.10	0.21 (ns)	-0.08	0.32 (ns)	-0.07	0.38 (ns)	-0.03	0.70 (ns)	-0.09	0.28 (ns)	0.06	0.48 (ns)
Ability to Conceptualize (mean=3.37)	-0.08	0.32 (ns)	-0.02	0.82 (ns)	-0.02	0.77 (ns)	0.01	0.92 (ns)	-0.02	0.84 (ns)	0.11	0.19 (ns)
Life Long Learning (mean=3.52)	-0.10	0.23 (ns)	-0.04	0.62 (ns)	-0.07	0.38 (ns)	-0.01	0.91 (ns)	-0.03	0.74 (ns)	0.14	0.08 (ns)
Motivation-Personal Strength (mean=3.48)	-0.06	0.44 (ns)	-0.02	0.81	-0.03	0.68	-0.02	0.79	-0.03	0.72	0.06	0.51

management and employability skills

Table 3 shows the Pearson (r) values for the correlation between self-management and employability skills. While the study found no significant relationship between self-management and employability skills, however, study shows that certain employability skills can be associated with some dimensions of self-management.

The data reveals that emotional self-control was found to be significantly related to employability skills such as problem-solving and analytic, decision-making, organization

and time management, risk taking, listening, interpersonal relationship and managing conflict. The null hypothesis that self-management and employability skills are not significantly interrelated is rejected in these dimensions of both variables. Relationships were found to be not only significantly but also positively correlated. The result suggests that the higher the students' emotional self-control response scores, the greater the tendency for higher employability skills scores in these specified aspects of the variable mentioned above. This further means that when a student possesses emotional self-control would most likely have better employability skills.

Given these findings, the result confirmed Carmeli (2003) that emotional intelligence can strongly associate with employment. The study was supported by Khokhar et al., (2009) that emotional intelligence brings about better quality of work performance.

Table 4 illustrates multiple linear regression analysis of teachers' perception of students' employability skills and students' assessment on their emotional self-control. The data shows that emotional self-control can predict employability skills in general. It further presents the influence of the self-management in terms of emotional self-control to employability skills in general. The value of adjusted R2 indicates that 2.3% of the changes in the students' employability skills can be explained by their emotional self-control. With f-value of 4.482, the model is highly significant at 0.036.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of Emotional Self-Control and Employability Skills

Variables that influence Employability Skills	Employability Skills (mean=3.31)		
	Beta*	T-value	Sig.
Emotional Self-Control (mean=3.10)	0.211	-2.117 (sig)	.030
Constant T-value	3.657		
Adjusted R2	.023		
F value	4.482		

Sig. Level (F)	0.036

Ho2: None of the independent variables significantly influence employability skills.

In this case, the hypothesis is rejected. Emotional self-control can explain and or predict the students' employability skills. Given this model below, the influence of the variables is explained by this equation below:

Employability skills = 3.657 + 0.211Emotional Self Control

The model shows that emotional self-control accounts for 21.1% in the changes of students' employability skills. This further means that the greater the students' tendencies for emotional self-control, the higher would be their chances of gaining employability skills. It is worthy to note that only emotional self-control figured out in the equation, and this only explains 21.1% of the changes employability skills. This study then speculates that the remaining 78.9% of the changes can be attributed to the other self-management variables or other variables that can be theoretically associated with employability skills. It is then of paramount importance that future investigations may be focused towards this direction.

The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between the emotional self-control and students' employability skills. Tarullo, Obradovic and Gunnar (2009) supported by Diamond and Taylor (1996), Lewis and Todd, (2007), H. N. Mischel and Mischel (1983), Thompson, Barresi and Moore (1997) expressed that this ability to control one's emotion is critical to success. This implies that students' ability to control emotions plays a significant role in their employment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The general findings on the students' moderate competence on their self-management skills and employability skills are quite alarming considering that these data were taken from graduating students. These have grave implications for the students' readiness for the world of work. Many studies claimed of the challenges and difficulty of new graduates (Ballon, 2007; OECD, 2012). The moderate and or average competence gained by students in their schools can aggravate the situation of difficulty in finding jobs after graduation.

It would do well for the school involved in this study to review their curriculum and their manner of implementing the curriculum. The findings that self-management regarding emotional self-control is a good predictor of employability skills can be a good input to the decisions of curriculum revisions.

Furthermore, this study did not confirm the assumed relationship of Goleman's (1995) emotional intelligence's theory and Bandura's (1986) social-cognitive learning theory. Nonetheless, it can be asserted that in the context of emotional self-control of self-management, it is positively correlated with employability skills. The result supports Khokhar et al., (2009) that the higher the students' control over their emotion, the higher they gain employability skills and better performance at work.

From the drawn conclusions and the homogeneity of the results from the participants, the following measures are recommended to:

1. Intensify students' awareness and utilization of their emotional intelligence by embedding social and emotional learning into teaching practices;
2. Involve stakeholders in the design and delivery of the curriculum to facilitate quality training and learning to meet the demands of the industry;
3. Strengthen the reinforcement and evaluation of students' training performance; and
4. It is strongly recommended that future studies consider other variables that would predict the employability skills of future graduates other than emotional self-control.

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