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### On-the-Job Training Performances and Industry Exposure of Hospitality Management Graduates in NEUST: Basis for Proposed On-the-Job Training Framework

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#### Abstract

This study examined the On-the-Job training (OJT) experiences of Hospitality Management graduates of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST), focusing on demographic profiles, performance based on general and specific competencies, industry exposure, and common challenges. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, with data collected through survey questionnaires from graduates of Hospitality Management of academic year 2024–2025. Results showed that most students began OJT at age 21, were predominantly female, and were deployed mainly to hotels and cruise lines, particularly the 2GO Cruise Ship, with training durations exceeding 500 hours. Students generally achieved a “Good” level in both general and specific competencies, reflecting consistent yet non-

exceptional performance. Industry exposure findings indicated that while students felt recognized and respected, issues emerged in mentoring consistency, workplace inclusion, and alignment of tasks with academic training. Correlational analysis revealed significant relationships between age, type of establishment, and OJT performance, but no significant relationships between demographic profile and industry exposure, nor between exposure and performance. These findings suggest that NEUST’s OJT program effectively builds baseline competence but requires stronger mentorship, more diverse placements, and improved academic alignment. The study recommends institutional reforms, expanded industry collaboration, and future research on supervision practices, exposure quality, and employability outcomes.

**Keywords:** General Competencies, Hospitality Management, Industry Exposure, On-the-Job Training, Performance, Specific Competencies

#### 1. Introduction

In the rapidly evolving hospitality industry, experiential learning through On-the-Job Training (OJT) has become crucial for bridging academic theory and professional practice. The hospitality sector, particularly in the Philippines, continually seeks graduates equipped with both technical proficiency and soft skills that match industry expectations. However, discrepancies between educational preparation and industry requirements persist, resulting in gaps in employability.

This study addressed that gap by assessing the OJT performance and industry exposure of Hospitality Management graduates from the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST). It aimed to evaluate their competencies, identify challenges encountered, and propose a data-driven OJT framework. Guided by Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory and Kirkpatrick’s Four-Level Training Evaluation Model, the research emphasizes how effective mentorship, meaningful exposure, and academic alignment shape professional readiness.

#### 2. Review of Related Literature

##### 2.1 On-the-Job Training: Concept and Importance

On-the-Job Training (OJT) serves as a vital link between academic theory and actual industry practice in hospitality education. Studies such as Shetu and Sayeda (2020) <sup>[37]</sup> and Zopiatis and Constanti (2021) highlight that well-structured internship enhance students’ confidence, technical skills, and readiness for the workforce. The effectiveness of OJT depends on both institutional preparation and student motivation, as differing expectations can affect outcomes. This concept aligns with Kolb’s

Experiential Learning Theory, emphasizing learning through direct experience and reflection. Similarly, it corresponds to Levels 1 and 2 of Kirkpatrick's Training Evaluation Model, which assess students' reactions and learning during training.

## 2.2 Indicators of Effective OJT

Effective OJT programs are evaluated not only by completion but also by improvements in students' job-related competencies and work ethics. Raza *et al.* (2020) and Baylen *et al.* (2024) <sup>[7]</sup> emphasize the importance of continuous feedback and supervisor involvement in enhancing learning transfer and job satisfaction. Conversely, weak supervision and inconsistent mentoring limit skill development and diminish motivation. Constructivist learning theory supports these findings, suggesting that students learn best when they actively construct meaning through guided experience. Thus, consistent feedback mechanisms and structured mentorship are critical for ensuring high-quality OJT outcomes.

## 2.3 Industry Exposure and Its Benefits

Industry exposure immerses hospitality students in authentic work environments, helping them understand operational dynamics and develop professional identity. Abat *et al.* (2022) found that rotational exposure to hotel departments strengthens technical and interpersonal competencies, while Cruz and Dela Peña (2022) observed that repetitive, clerical placements hinder learning. These contrasting results show that the benefits of exposure depend on its design and alignment with academic goals. Kolb's theory and Kirkpatrick's Level 4 (Results) both support structured, reflective practice that translates into employability. Hence, meaningful exposure should combine task variety, mentorship, and reflection to maximize long-term learning outcomes.

## 2.4 Hospitality Students' Perceptions of OJT

Research shows that hospitality students generally perceive OJT as beneficial for enhancing communication, confidence, and customer service skills. Baylen *et al.* (2024) <sup>[7]</sup> noted that students value OJT but desire more hands-on engagement rather than administrative tasks. In contrast, Abat *et al.* (2022) found that students exposed to varied hotel operations reported higher satisfaction and skill development. These differences underscore the influence of internship structure and mentor involvement on student perceptions. Similarly, Joshi and Tyagi (2020) concluded that supervision quality determines whether OJT builds professionalism or merely becomes routine work experience.

## 2.5 Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to evaluate the On-the-Job Training (OJT) performance and industry exposure of Hospitality Management graduates from the campuses and off-campus programs of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology. It sought to determine how training outcomes and exposure contribute to their professional growth and readiness for the hospitality industry, serving as the basis for developing a structured and responsive OJT framework.

Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Determine the demographic and academic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, host company or

establishment, type of establishment, duration of training, and job assignment or department of deployment.

2. Assess the OJT performance of the respondents based on NEUST's general competencies including punctuality, dependability, initiative, appearance and grooming, adaptability, communication skills, and safety and security practices and specific competencies including task performance, efficiency and accuracy, teamwork and cooperation, customer service and communication, and technical knowledge and use of tools or equipment.
3. Describe the respondents' industry exposure in terms of the quality of mentorship and supervision, opportunities for hands-on learning, workplace culture and environment, alignment of tasks with academic training, and job satisfaction and professional growth.
4. Identify the common problems encountered by the respondents during their OJT related to lack of supervision and feedback, limited hands-on task engagement, mismatch between academic preparation and assigned tasks, unfavorable working conditions, and interpersonal conflicts or poor workplace treatment.
5. Determine the significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their OJT performance.
6. Determine the significant relationship between the respondents' profiles and their industry exposure.
7. Determine the significant relationship between OJT performance and industry exposure.
8. Propose an On-the-Job Training framework based on the study's findings to enhance the effectiveness of OJT programs for Hospitality Management students.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

This study used a descriptive-correlational design to describe the industry exposure and training experiences of Hospitality Management students and examine how these relate to their profiles and OJT performance. Questionnaires provided measurable data to identify patterns, relationships, and evidence-based insights on students' training outcomes.

### 3.2 Research Locale and Sampling Procedures

The study was conducted at the NEUST campuses offering the BS Hospitality Management program, focusing on students who completed OJT in A.Y. 2024–2025. A map was used to illustrate the study's geographical coverage. Purposive sampling selected 185 graduates who completed their OJT, ensuring relevance and accuracy of responses. The official list from the Registrar served as the sampling frame. Confidentiality was maintained, and only students who met the OJT requirements and voluntarily participated were included. Those without OJT or who completed online internships due to restrictions were excluded.

### 3.3 Scope and Delimitation

The study assessed the OJT performance and industry exposure of Hospitality Management students using NEUST's OJT Training Plan. It focused on competencies, workplace experiences, and challenges encountered during training. The scope was limited to students who completed OJT in hospitality-related establishments during A.Y. 2024–2025. Evaluation was based on NEUST's competency areas

and students' self-assessments, excluding other programs and non-hospitality internships.

### 3.4 Research Instrument

A structured, self-administered questionnaire served as the main tool for quantitative data collection. It was developed based on Kirkpatrick's Model and NEUST's OJT evaluation tool. The instrument covered: Part I: Demographic and OJT profile, Part II: Industry Exposure (25 items) and Part III: Problems Encountered (25 items). Items used a 4-point Likert scale. The questionnaire underwent pilot testing and reliability analysis, yielding acceptable Cronbach's Alpha values.

### 3.5 Data Gathering Procedure

Permission was obtained from NEUST administrators, followed by securing the official list of OJT completers. Coordination with the area chairperson and OJT coordinator enabled access to evaluation data. Qualified graduates were invited, oriented, and asked to sign consent forms. The validated questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms, and data were collected over two weeks with follow-ups to ensure adequate responses.

### 3.6 Data Management and Analysis

The data gathered via the validated, self-administered questionnaire were encoded, structured, and statistically analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 26. Each statistical instrument employed was tailored to a particular research issue and data type collected, guaranteeing precise interpretation of the results in accordance with the study's aims.

### 3.7 Ethical Considerations

The study followed ethical standards, with informed consent obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed, with data stored securely and used only for academic purposes. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the proposal, and no deception was employed throughout the research.

### 3.8 Rigor of the Study

Research rigor was assured through expert validation of the instrument by faculty researchers and industry practitioners, ensuring clarity and relevance. Reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha. Accurate data coding, appropriate statistical procedures, and objective interpretation strengthened the study's validity and applicability.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Demographic Profile

Most respondents were 21 years old and female, commonly assigned to hotels and cruise lines such as 2GO Travel. The majority completed over 500 hours of training, primarily in food and beverage, housekeeping, and front office departments. These findings align with national OJT trends emphasizing hotel-based placements.

### 4.2 OJT Performance

Respondents demonstrated "Good" performance in both general (mean = 1.94) and specific competencies (mean =

1.99). These scores indicate consistency in punctuality, adaptability, and task execution, though few reached "Excellent" levels. Limited mentorship and short departmental rotations were identified as possible constraints to mastery.

### 4.3 Industry Exposure

Industry exposure was rated positively across mentorship, workplace culture, and task alignment. Mentorship quality achieved a strong rating (mean = 3.25), and opportunities for hands-on learning were also high (mean = 3.23). Respondents appreciated inclusive work environments but noted occasional disparities in feedback and task complexity.

### 4.4 Challenges Encountered

Common issues included limited feedback and task mismatch between academic training and assigned roles. However, the overall ratings suggest effective supervision and positive workplace integration.

### 4.5 Significant relationship between the respondents' profile and On-the-Job Performance

**Table 1:** Relationship between Respondent's Profile and on the Job Performance

|                                      | OJT General Competencies |         | OJT Specific Competencies |         |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|
|                                      | r value                  | p value | r value                   | p value |
| Age Upon OJT Engagement <sup>a</sup> | -.187*                   | 0.011   | -0.047                    | 0.525   |
| Sex <sup>b</sup>                     | 0.098                    | 0.183   | 0.112                     | 0.13    |
| Host company <sup>b</sup>            | -0.094                   | 0.202   | -0.004                    | 0.954   |
| Type of Establishment <sup>b</sup>   | -.172*                   | 0.019   | -0.015                    | 0.839   |
| Duration of Training <sup>b</sup>    | -0.053                   | 0.477   | 0.102                     | 0.168   |
| Job Assignment <sup>b</sup>          | -0.033                   | 0.66    | 0.002                     | 0.975   |

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

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

a Pearson

b Spearman's rho

Table 1 presents the relationship between respondents' profiles and On-the-Job Performance. The results revealed that age and type of establishment had significant relationships with general OJT performance ( $r = -0.187$ ,  $p = 0.011$ ;  $r = -0.172$ ,  $p = 0.019$ ). Younger students performed better in general competencies, indicating greater adaptability and eagerness to learn, while those deployed in hotels demonstrated stronger performance compared to other establishments. These results suggest that age-related motivation and structured hotel environments play key roles in developing students' punctuality, adaptability, and professionalism during OJT. Thus, rejecting the null hypotheses. Other factors, such as sex, host company, training duration, and job assignment, were not significantly related, implying that demographic factors alone do not determine performance outcomes.

### 4.6. Significant relationship between the respondents' profile and Industry Exposure

**Table 2:** Significant relationship between the respondents' profile and Industry Exposure

|                                      | Industry Exposure Quality |         | Industry Exposure Opportunities |         | Industry Exposure Workplace |         | Industry Exposure Alignment |         | Industry Exposure Job Satisfaction |         |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|---------|
|                                      | r value                   | p value | r value                         | p value | r value                     | p value | r value                     | p value | r value                            | p value |
| Age Upon OJT Engagement <sup>a</sup> | -0.026                    | 0.726   | -0.029                          | 0.7     | -0.033                      | 0.654   | -0.069                      | 0.351   | -0.033                             | 0.655   |
| Sex <sup>b</sup>                     | -0.078                    | 0.294   | 0                               | 0.997   | -0.077                      | 0.3     | -0.036                      | 0.628   | 0.031                              | 0.679   |
| Host Company <sup>b</sup>            | 0.058                     | 0.431   | 0.108                           | 0.145   | 0.059                       | 0.422   | -0.021                      | 0.776   | 0.077                              | 0.298   |
| Type of Establishment <sup>b</sup>   | 0.099                     | 0.182   | 0.054                           | 0.468   | 0.048                       | 0.512   | 0.091                       | 0.217   | 0.057                              | 0.444   |
| Duration of Training <sup>b</sup>    | 0.046                     | 0.538   | 0.031                           | 0.678   | 0.06                        | 0.416   | 0.059                       | 0.426   | 0.000                              | 1.000   |
| Job Assignment <sup>b</sup>          | -0.014                    | 0.847   | 0.046                           | 0.531   | 0.038                       | 0.605   | 0.026                       | 0.729   | 0.006                              | 0.933   |

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

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

a Pearson

b Spearman's rho

Table 2 presents the relationship between respondents' profiles and industry exposure. The correlation results showed no significant relationships between demographic factors (age, sex, host company, type of establishment, duration of training, job assignment) and any dimension of industry exposure, with all p-values above 0.05. Thus, accepting the null hypotheses. This means that the perceived quality, opportunities, workplace culture, alignment, and job

satisfaction were relatively consistent across student groups, regardless of demographic or placement characteristics. These findings indicate that industry exposure experiences depend more on organizational systems and mentoring practices than on individual trainee differences.

#### 4.7 Significant relationship between the On-the-Job Performance and Industry Exposure

**Table 3:** Significant relationship between On-the-Job Performance and Industry Exposure

|                                        | Industry Exposure Quality |         | Industry Exposure Opportunities |         | Industry Exposure Workplace |         | Industry Exposure Alignment |         | Industry Exposure Job Satisfaction |         |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|---------|
|                                        | r value                   | p value | r value                         | p value | r value                     | p value | r value                     | p value | r value                            | p value |
| OJT General Competencies <sup>a</sup>  | 0.104                     | 0.158   | 0.063                           | 0.395   | 0.117                       | 0.112   | 0.089                       | 0.228   | 0.067                              | 0.362   |
| OJT Specific Competencies <sup>a</sup> | -0.045                    | 0.54    | -0.072                          | 0.33    | -0.092                      | 0.215   | -0.102                      | 0.169   | -0.105                             | 0.154   |

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

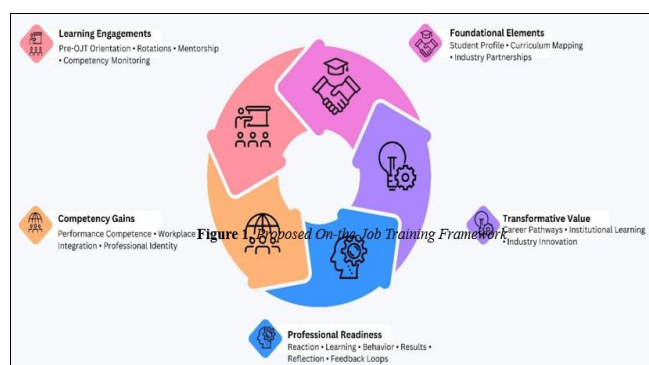
\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

a Pearson

b Spearman's rho

Table 3 presents the relationship between On-the-Job Performance and industry exposure. No significant correlations were found between OJT performance (general and specific competencies) and industry exposure dimensions, as all p-values exceeded 0.05. This suggests that a trainee's high performance did not necessarily correspond with stronger perceptions of exposure quality, task alignment, or job satisfaction, and vice versa. The results indicate that performance evaluation and exposure experience function as distinct yet complementary aspects of OJT learning. Thus, accepting the null hypotheses.

#### 4.8 Proposed On-the-Job Training framework to enhance the effectiveness of OJT programs for Hospitality Management students

**Fig 1:** Proposed On-the-Job Training Framework

The proposed OJT framework for Hospitality Management students is a cyclical, adaptive model integrating student, academe, and industry perspectives. Anchored in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Model, and Work-Integrated Learning principles, it emphasizes continuous improvement, feedback, and alignment of academic and industry competencies. The framework begins with student profiling, curriculum mapping, and industry partnerships to ensure relevant, equitable placements. It proceeds to structured learning engagements through orientations, departmental rotations, mentorship, and progress monitoring to strengthen hands-on experience. Competency gains, professional identity, and workplace integration mark the immediate results, followed by assessment of readiness and employability using Kirkpatrick's four evaluation levels. Finally, sustainability is achieved through alumni tracking, curriculum enhancement, and industry collaboration. Overall, the model transforms OJT from a mere requirement into a strategic mechanism for developing competent, motivated, and industry-ready hospitality professionals.

#### 5. Conclusion

This study revealed that NEUST Hospitality Management students generally enter OJT at the appropriate academic stage, gain substantial training hours, and perform well in both general and specific competencies. Their industry exposure was largely positive, with supportive supervision, aligned tasks, and respectful workplace environments,

though mentorship consistency, workload balance, and exposure to diverse sectors remain areas for improvement. These findings confirm that NEUST's OJT program establishes a strong foundation for professional readiness in hospitality operations.

The results highlight the importance and relevance of strengthening OJT structures, as student performance and exposure were shaped more by organizational systems than by demographic factors. While students demonstrated "Good" ratings overall, the limited number who reached higher competency levels underscores the need for more advanced, specialized, and well-supervised training experiences. The absence of significant relationships between performance and exposure further shows that both dimensions contribute uniquely to student development, emphasizing the usefulness of this study in identifying specific gaps that academic and industry partners can address.

In broader scope, the findings support the development of a structured OJT framework anchored in experiential learning and industry standards. This framework can guide partner selection, supervision practices, competency tracking, and exposure diversification to enhance learning outcomes and industry alignment. Future studies may explore factors such as motivation, organizational culture, and supervisory styles to deepen understanding of how experiential training can be optimized in the hospitality field.

## 6. Recommendations

1. Academic administrators may sustain timely OJT scheduling, promote gender inclusivity, and expand partnerships to travel, airline, and tour sectors while ensuring meaningful training rotations.
2. OJT Coordinators may apply structured supervisor training, regular feedback, and competency milestones, including focused rotations for students needing specialization.
3. OJT Supervisors and host companies may provide consistent mentoring, fair task assignment, and duties aligned with academic preparation to improve learning and satisfaction.
4. Institutions and partner establishments may monitor trainee progress using competency-based tracking, clarify expectations on work hours, and enforce conduct guidelines.
5. Faculty members may design training strategies suited for diverse learners and evaluate differences in hotel and non-hotel placements to guide placement decisions.
6. Industry partners may enhance mentorship systems and organizational support to strengthen overall training quality.
7. The University may adopt a dual-evaluation system combining performance assessments and student feedback, and encourage further research on motivation and supervision as factors affecting OJT outcomes.
8. The University may consider adopting the Proposed OJT Framework to further improve the effectiveness and consistency of the program.

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