

Original Research

On-The-Job Training (OJT) Experiences Among Senior Hotel and Restaurant Management Students from a Selected College in Manila

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ABSTRACT

The hands-on practice known as On-the-Job Training (OJT) is how students acquire the specific skills and knowledge required to perform their duties effectively within the workplace. This study identified and described the on the job training experiences of senior hospital and restaurant management students. This qualitative phenomenological research explored and described the experiences of 7 senior Hotel and Restaurant Management students during their on the job training in a selected hotel in Manila. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data were gathered using a focused group discussion and a comprehensive review of the participant's diaries and exit interviews. Data were analyzed using Collizi's method in data analysis. Four major themes were formulated namely; (1) A sense of excitement, (2) Challenges and difficulties, (3) Ways of coping , and (4) Fulfilment . These themes were divided into 10 sub-categories which are the following: (1) Learning new things , (2) Meeting new people , (3) Being late, (4) Duties and responsibilities, (5) More training facilities , (6) Monetary issues, (7) Communication skills, (8) Camaraderie, (9) Family support , and (10) Teamwork. *A sense of Excitement* represents the experiences of the participants in learning new things during their OJT. *Challenges and difficulties* are all the problems they have encountered during the entire process. *Ways of coping* on the other hand discusses the different strategies used by the participants to solve all the issues they encountered. And Fulfilment which represents the participants accomplishments as they completed their OJT. The on the job training (OJT) experiences among the participants provides a very good avenue for them to learn and improve their knowledge, skills and even their attitude towards work which they can use to survive the challenges of the actual workplace.

Keywords: Experiences, On the job training (OJT), Hotel management, Restaurant management

INTRODUCTION

On-the-job training (OJT) is a hands-on, practical method for teaching students the specific skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to successfully perform their roles. It is distinctive

because the learning occurs primarily in the actual work environment, or a dedicated space within it, utilizing the existing tools, equipment, and resources of the workplace.

The core principle of OJT is that employees learn while doing, practicing the required skills in the environment where they will ultimately be applied. This training may happen while the employee is performing their actual work duties, or it may take place in dedicated training areas within the facility. In either case, the goal is simple: to leverage the existing workplace structure and resources to train employees effectively, typically with the guidance of a manager, coach, or mentor. This type of supervised, task-related instruction is often used to broaden an employee's overall skill set and boost their productivity.

Hotel and Restaurant Management senior students' needs to complete 480 hours of OJT exposure. This study provided an avenue to identify their on-the-job training experiences of senior hospital and restaurant management students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research employed a Qualitative Phenomenological Interpretative approach to explore the lived experiences of senior Human Resource Management (HRM) students during their On-the-Job Training (OJT). This methodology was chosen because the primary goal of qualitative phenomenological research is to describe a phenomenon as it is experienced in real life (Waters, 2016). It focuses specifically on experiences and the meanings derived from them, aiming to "capture as closely as possible the way in which the phenomenon is experienced within the context in which the experiences take place" (Davidsen, 2013). The study utilized phenomenology as the central research

question aimed to address the experience of student during their training

Participants of the Study

The participants for this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique. This method was employed because its primary objective is to deliberately focus on specific characteristics within a population that are directly relevant to and will best help answer the research question (Laerd, 2012). A total of seven participants were chosen based on the following essential criteria: each participant needed to be (1) at least 18 years old, (2) must have completed all the required hours of their OJT (On-the-Job Training), and had to be (3) willing to provide consent and actively participate in the study.

Instrumentation

A semi-structured interview guide questions were utilized to gather data. The interview guide approach is suited in this study because the questions can be flexible depending on the researchers' interest and can draw in-depth experiences of the participants. A comprehensive review of the participants' diaries and exit interviews were also utilized.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained prior to the start of the interview. The researcher also explained verbally the substance of the consent. The informed consent illuminated the purpose of conducting the study, scope and limitations and the respondents willingly to participate in the study. The participants were given a brief outline of the topics of the interview. The researchers also explained ethical considerations such as anonymity, autonomy and confidentiality. No pertinent data referring to

participants' personal information such as name and mobile number were disclosed. Upon data presentation, the researcher will use identifiers to conceal participants' privacy. All collected data were secured by the researcher and not exposed. Even though the participants have signed the informed consents, they have the right to withdraw at any time from the study without giving any reason. Also, they have the right to request to remove all the information they gave to the study. The researcher ensured that the respondents understand the risks and agree to be participants in the study.

Respect for Human Dignity, Justice and Integrity were observed. The researchers respected any decisions made by the participants such as refusal to answer any questions which might feel uncomfortable to answer. The participants have the right to ask or clarify any questions or statements in the study until they fully understand.

Data Gathering Procedure

Informed consent were obtained by the researcher before the start of the interview which includes the purpose of the study, scope and limitations, criteria in choosing the participants and the participant's acknowledgement as a subject in the study. The participants of the study were interviewed one-by-one on their convenient date, time and place. The interviewer will give ample time to the participants to answer the questions. Each interview lasted for 60 minutes and additional sessions (3-4 sessions) were conducted. Rapport was established before the start of the interview. A semi-structured interview guide approach was used by the researcher to gather data. Follow-up and probing questions based on the responses of the participants were

observed by the researcher. A recording apparatus such as mobile phone and note taking were used by the researcher. Comprehensive reviews of the participant's diaries and exit interviews were also done. All gathered data were kept on a file cabinet that is only accessible by the researchers.

Data Analysis Plan

Since this study is a phenomenological qualitative research, the researchers used semi-structure interview guide questions to uncover the experience of Informatics Nurses. The Colaizzi' seven steps' approach was used for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results hereafter were obtained using Colaizzi's 7-step phenomenological method of data analysis. With this, four major themes were formulated namely; (1) A sense of excitement, (2) Challenges and difficulties, (3) Ways of coping, and (4) Fulfilment. These themes were divided into 13 sub-categories which are the following: (1) Learning new things, (2) Meeting new people, (3) Being late, (4) Duties and responsibilities, (5) More training facilities, (6) Monetary issues, (7) Communication skills, (8) Camaraderie, (9) Family support, (10) Teamwork, (11) Theories into practice, (12) Skills enhancement, (13) Enjoyment

Themes

The themes and categories presented hereafter were formulated based on the common experiences of all senior HRM interviewed. This part of the study presents discussions and analysis of the participants' experiences supported by related references.

A Sense of Excitement

This theme represents the participants' recollections about the start of their on-the-job training (OJT). There is a feeling of great enthusiasm and eagerness among the participants. This is supported by the following categories:

Learning New Things

This category describes the participants' experiences in doing and accomplishing new activities related with their chosen field of work. The majority were excited as they performed all the things they learned. The following statements support this category:

“Excited because it’s our time to showcase the learning we gained from the class.”(Snow John)

“Excited for new learnings” (Mr. Ventura)

Those with a passion for learning don't rely solely on structured education; they are independent thinkers whose minds are always searching for answers and questioning the world around them. This strong inner drive motivates them to explore and investigate until their curiosity is satisfied.

Meeting New People

Most of the participants are very positive that their OJT experience will bring new learning by being acquainted with different people or customers from the institution where they spent most of their OJT experiences. This is supported by the narration of one of the participants:

“ Nervous especially on how to deal with newly met people.”(Papi)

Meeting new people benefits the students since it can increase their sense of belonging and purpose. It also improves self-confidence and self-worth.

Customer Service

This category provides a description on the importance of providing the best possible care to the clients. Each customer will have a different perception of what customer service means to them, but the participants were able to meet these expectations from their clients.

*“We always give our best possible service to all”
(Mr. Johnny Sins)*

To provide good customer service, students need to understand who your customers are and what they want. The participants were able to deal with these by having a constant communication with their superiors.

Challenges and Difficulties

This theme presents all the problems, issues, and concerns of the participants as they complete the on-the-job training. The entire process for the participants is not always smooth sailing. The following categories support the above theme:

Being late

Most of the participants experienced reporting late for duty. Most of the time this is related to the heavy traffic and sometimes attitude-related. This resulted in some issues from their immediate superiors.

“ Traffic minsan kaya na la late kami”. (Snow John)

“ Sometimes I wake up late in the morning ” (Onin)

Being late happens to everyone at some point of time. Most of the time when people are late, the excuses are pretty often; overslept, I got stuck in traffic, the bus broke down, etc. During the OJT punctuality is an essential part of professional conduct. When you are late, you can set off a domino effect that causes a slowdown on your entire team or company.

Financial Concerns

This refers to some of the participants' issues when it comes to money. The majority of the participants depend on their parents for their allowances. Sometimes there is inadequate or delayed financial support. This causes a big trouble in meeting the daily expenses during OJT like uniforms, food allowance, travel expenses, projects, etc. Most significant statements were;

“ Minsan delayed talaga ang allowance ko ”. (Mr. Beast)

“ Inadequate budget to meet all the expenses for the OJT ”. (Onin)

Financial problems or financial pressure is a situation where money worries are causing stress. The OJT is very costly among the participants. Overcoming the daily expenses is a big part of their day to day experience.

More Training Facilities

This category represents the concerns of the participants in terms of having new training hotels or establishments. The present venue for the OJT can provide the training experiences they need, but it will be better if they are exposed to new training facilities that will greatly improve their experiences.

“ Better if we have other hotels were we can have our OJT ”. (Louise)

“ Hotel facilities must be upgraded ”. (Mr. Ventura)

Training facilities like hotels serve as a very good training ground for the participants in order for them to practice all the theories they learned from the classrooms.

Ways of Coping

This theme presents how the participants dealt with all the problems, issues and their concerns during the OJT process. The majority of the respondents did different strategies to make the experience smooth sailing.

Communication Skills

Participants were able to comprehend well with all the concerns of their customers. Non verbal communication like body language, eye contact, hand gestures, tone of the voice are also essential when communicating with the guest.

“ Good Communication skills are important “. (Papi)

Effective communication is crucial for success across all industries, regardless of the sector. In the digital age, this essential skill includes the ability to clearly convey and receive messages with superiors, colleagues, and staff, whether it be in person or through modern channels like phone, email, and social media. Strong communication skills are fundamental assets that will help secure employment, achieve promotions, and ensure career-long success.

Comaraderie

This is a spirit of good friendship and loyalty among members of the group characterized by a sense of trust and goodwill that develops between people who have known each other for a significant period. This strong bond is often evident in workplaces or service units where individuals collaborate effectively toward a common goal.

“ We have a very good working relationship. 10/10”.
(Louise)

The OJT experience develops a spirit of friendship among the participants which makes the entire experience easy and created an atmosphere of mutual trust among them.

Family Support

This category describes how the participants face some of their difficulties during their OJT, with the help of their respective families. Family support can help you feel secure and comfortable with members of your family. All of the participants were constantly supported by their families as they continue to fulfill their dreams.

“ 100 % support from my family.”(Papi)

“ My parents supported me all the way”. (Johnny Sins)

Family is the single and most important support system we can have. Good family communication is important because families are what we most often turn to for support.

Fulfillment

This culminating theme represents the achievement of life goals which are important among the participants. Fulfillment comes from witnessing

your own growth. People often feel fulfilled when something is completed. For the participants finishing their OJT provides joy and a sense of accomplishment among them. They are so happy that all of the theories they learned were put into practice, their skills were enhanced and they believed that they are ready to face the challenges of the workplace. Many of the participants verbalize;

“ I feel very fulfilled after my OJT” (Onin)

“ Everything is memorable, I enjoyed everything” (Mr: Beast)

“ Yes, our knowledge and skills were broaden” (Snow John)

Personal fulfillment is an achievement of life goals which are important among the participants. Being able to finish the 480 required OJT hours provides a feeling of happiness and satisfaction among them.

CONCLUSION

The on the job training (OJT) experiences among the participants provides a very good avenue for them to learn and improve their knowledge, skills and even their attitude towards work which they can use to survive the challenges of the actual workplace.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, continuous monitoring of the students during the entire process of the OJT is recommended along with finding new training facilities and venues for the students.

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