

Examining the Relationship Between Hotel Familiarization and Internship Performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management Students at Palawan State University – Brooke’s Point Campus

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hospitality education, experiential learning, hotel familiarization, internship training, student performance

Abstract. Experiential learning plays a crucial role in hospitality management education as it allows students to translate theoretical knowledge into practical competencies required in professional environments. This study examined the relationship between the performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) students during hotel familiarization and their performance during midyear internship training at Palawan State University – Brooke’s Point Campus. The study employed a descriptive–correlational research design using performance evaluation records of 56 BSHM students who completed both hotel familiarization and internship training during the academic year 2024–2025. Descriptive statistics were used to determine students’ performance levels, while simple linear regression analysis was applied to determine the relationship between the two experiential learning activities. Results revealed that most students achieved Satisfactory performance during hotel familiarization (45%), with a grand mean score of 77.8, indicating fairly satisfactory competency during the preparatory stage. In contrast, performance during internship training improved significantly, with 48% of respondents achieving Highly Satisfactory ratings and 14% obtaining Excellent performance. Regression analysis revealed a moderate positive relationship ($R = 0.532$, $p < .001$) between hotel familiarization performance and internship performance. The findings demonstrate that hotel familiarization significantly contributes to students’ readiness and performance during internship training. The study provides empirical evidence supporting the institutionalization of hotel familiarization as a vital and recurring experiential learning activity that should be conducted yearly to enhance students’ practical competencies and professional preparedness in hospitality management education.

Introduction

The hospitality industry is a globally significant service sector that requires a workforce equipped with strong technical competencies, professional discipline, and the ability to adapt to dynamic service environments. As competition among hospitality establishments intensifies and service quality expectations continue to rise, higher

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education institutions offering hospitality management programs are expected to produce graduates who are industry-ready and capable of delivering high-quality service. To meet these expectations, hospitality education increasingly integrates experiential learning approaches into its curriculum. Experiential learning allows students to apply classroom-based theoretical knowledge in real-world environments, thereby strengthening their operational skills, professional confidence, and industry awareness (Masadeh et al., 2020). Among the most important experiential learning components in hospitality education are hotel familiarization activities and internship training. Hotel familiarization programs introduce students to the operational environment of hotels prior to their internship training. These activities typically involve exposure to different hotel departments such as front office operations, housekeeping, and food and beverage services. Early exposure to hospitality operations allows students to observe professional practices, understand workplace expectations, and connect theoretical concepts with real service delivery processes (Frash et al., 2010).

Following hotel familiarization, hospitality students undergo internship training in actual hospitality establishments. Internship programs provide students with opportunities to perform operational tasks under supervision while developing professional competencies and workplace adaptability (Yu et al., 2017). Through these experiences, students are able to apply theoretical knowledge and refine their skills in real-world hospitality environments. Despite the recognized importance of hotel familiarization programs, limited empirical research has examined the direct relationship between students' performance during hotel familiarization and their subsequent performance during internship training, particularly within the Philippine context. At Palawan State University – Brooke's Point Campus, Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management students participate in hotel familiarization prior to their midyear internship training. However, this activity is conducted only once during the program. This study therefore investigated the relationship between students' performance during hotel familiarization and their performance during internship training. The findings aim to provide research-based evidence supporting the continuous implementation of hotel familiarization programs and highlight their importance as a vital experiential learning component that should be conducted yearly in hospitality management education.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the performance level of BSHM students during hotel familiarization?
2. What is the performance level of BSHM students during their midyear internship training?
3. Is there a significant relationship between students' performance during hotel familiarization and their performance during internship training?

Methodology

This study utilized a descriptive–correlational research design to examine the relationship between hotel familiarization performance and internship performance among hospitality management students. The respondents consisted of 56 Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management students enrolled at Palawan State University – Brooke's Point Campus who completed both hotel familiarization and midyear internship training during the academic year 2024–2025. Data were obtained from official institutional evaluation reports used by the university to assess student performance. These evaluation reports measured various performance indicators including operational competence, work efficiency, professional behavior, and application of hospitality knowledge.

Descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and mean were used to describe the level of students' performance during hotel familiarization and internship training. To determine whether hotel familiarization performance significantly influenced internship performance, simple linear regression analysis was employed. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Permission to access the students' performance records was obtained from the university administration. Students' identities were protected by using coded identifiers, and all collected data were used solely for academic research purposes.

Results and Discussion

Performance in Hotel Familiarization

The following sections present the respondents' performance in the hotel familiarization activity.

The following table presents a comprehensive overview of the respondents' overall performance during their hotel familiarization activity. This information is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of the training and identifying areas for further development.

Performance	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Excellent	1	1	2%	5
Highly Satisfactory	14	15	25%	2
Satisfactory	25	40	45%	1
Fairly Satisfactory	12	52	21%	3
Passed	4	56	7%	4
Total	56		100%	
Minimum	37.7	Maximum	93.8	
Grand Mean	77.8	Description	Fairly Satisfactory	

Table1 .Performance in Hotel Familiarization

The data in the table highlights the performance of 56 respondents in the hotel familiarization activity. The results show that the largest group, 25 or 45% of the respondents, had a Satisfactory performance. The second most common performance rating was Highly Satisfactory with 14 respondents (25%), indicating that about one-fourth of the students went beyond the basic expectations and showed commendable skills. This was followed by Fairly Satisfactory with 12 students (21%), reflecting that a notable portion of students met the minimum requirements but still had areas for improvement. Furthermore, 4 respondents (7%) obtained a Passed rating, and just 1 respondent (2%) achieved an Excellent rating. The small percentage of students in these extreme categories indicates that very few performed either at the highest or lowest levels.

In summary, the results reveal that most respondents are clustered around the middle performance levels, suggesting that while respondents generally meet the expectations, only a few excel, and only a small proportion struggle. These findings suggest that while a majority of respondents performed adequately, there is room for improvement to elevate the overall performance. The findings indicate that hotel familiarization provided students with sufficient exposure to meet performance expectations, but only a limited number demonstrated outstanding performance. This pattern aligns with the findings of So and King (2010) and Masadeh et al. (2020), who emphasized that experiential learning programs often result in moderate to satisfactory performance outcomes, particularly when exposure is brief or conducted only once.

Furthermore, Frash et al. (2010) found that students' confidence and competence during familiarization depend heavily on the level of active participation. The predominance of satisfactory ratings in this study may suggest that while students were exposed to hotel operations, opportunities for hands-on involvement may have been limited for some respondents. Similarly, Jokelainen (2023) noted that comprehensive exposure across departments significantly improves performance, implying that variations in departmental exposure may have influenced the results. The results suggest a need to enhance the structure and depth of hotel familiarization activities. Strengthening student engagement through increased hands-on tasks, longer exposure periods, or structured performance monitoring may help elevate students from satisfactory to highly satisfactory or excellent performance levels. These improvements are consistent with recommendations by Masadeh et al. (2020) and Chauhan (2023), who stressed the importance of structured experiential learning to maximize student outcomes.

Performance in Practical Internship

The next section will present the respondents' performance during their practical internship. The next table shows the summary of the performance ratings of the respondents during their practical internship.

It can be gleaned from Table 2 that 8 students, representing 14% of the respondents, achieved an Excellent level of performance during their practical internship. Meanwhile, the majority, or 27 out of 56 students (48%), obtained a rating of Highly Satisfactory. This finding suggests that more than half of the respondents were able to demonstrate strong competence and above-average performance in their internship tasks.

Furthermore, 21 students (38%) were rated as Satisfactory, indicating that a considerable proportion of the respondents met the expected standards, though with some areas still requiring improvement. The distribution of ratings underscores that while only a small percentage of students reached the highest level of performance, the majority performed at commendable levels, reflecting the effectiveness of the internship in preparing students for real-world professional demands.

Performance	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Excellent	8	8	14%	3
Highly Satisfactory	27	35	48%	1
Satisfactory	21	56	38%	2
Total	56		100%	
Minimum	78.1	Maximum	90.2	
Grand Mean	98.0	Description	Highly Satisfactory	

Table 2. Performance in Practical Internship

The improved performance during practical internship supports the assertion that extended, immersive experiential learning leads to stronger skill development and professional growth. This finding is consistent with Wang (2023), who reported that prolonged exposure to real work environments enhances students' self-efficacy and professional competence. Similarly, Yu et al. (2017) found that students demonstrate improved performance when they are able to apply theoretical knowledge continuously in real-world settings. The higher ratings observed during internship may also be attributed to clearer role expectations, consistent supervision, and increased responsibility, as emphasized by Widiawaty (2016).

Moreover, Wang et al. (2022) highlighted that internship performance is a strong indicator of employability, suggesting that the students in this study were able to meet industry expectations more effectively during their practical training. The findings underscore the effectiveness of practical internship as a critical component of hospitality education. However, the contrast between familiarization and internship performance suggests that strengthening pre-internship preparation could further enhance students' readiness. Aligning hotel familiarization activities more closely with actual internship tasks may help students transition more smoothly into professional roles.

Relationship of the Respondents' Performance in Hotel Familiarization and Practical Internship

The next section will present the relationship between the respondents' performance during their hotel familiarization and their performance in their Practical internship. This section aims to explore how the hotel familiarization activity contributes to the performance during internship. By examining this relationship, the study will provide insights into whether the hotel familiarization activity prepares the students in their internship.

The computed Multiple **R** shows a value of **0.532**, which indicates a **moderate positive correlation** between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This means that as the independent variable increases, the dependent variable also tends to increase. Moreover, the regression model yielded a **p-value of less than 0.05**, suggesting that the relationship is statistically significant. This implies that the independent variable has a meaningful effect on the dependent variable and that the observed relationship is unlikely due to chance.

Model Fit Measures				Overall Model Test			
Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.532	0.283	0.269	21.7	1	55	<.001

Model Coefficients – B

Model Fit Measures							
Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Overall Model Test			
				F	df1	df2	p
Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p	Stand. Estimate		
Intercept	70.200	4.3339	16.20	<.001			
A	0.253	0.0544	4.65	<.001	0.532		

Table 3. Correlational Analysis of the Performances in Hotel Familiarization and Midyear Internship

In practical terms, this result shows that respondents who performed better in their hotel familiarization also tended to perform better in their practical internship, highlighting the consistency of student performance across different experiential learning settings. This implies that the significant positive correlation implies that students' performance in hotel familiarization can serve as a reliable predictor of their performance in practical internship. This highlights the importance of strengthening familiarization activities as they set the foundation for later experiential learning. The findings indicate that students who performed better during hotel familiarization also tended to perform better during their practical internship. This supports the assertion that early experiential learning plays a foundational role in shaping later performance. Similar findings were reported by So and King (2010) and Masadeh et al. (2020), who found that pre-internship experiential exposure significantly predicts internship success.

Additionally, Frash et al. (2010) and Wang (2023) emphasized that confidence and familiarity developed during early exposure positively influence later performance. The results also align with Jokelainen (2023), who highlighted that prior operational exposure enhances adaptability and task performance during internships. The significant relationship suggests that hotel familiarization is not merely an orientation activity but a meaningful predictor of internship performance. Strengthening familiarization programs can therefore improve overall student outcomes. Educational institutions should invest in enhancing the quality, structure, and assessment of hotel familiarization activities to ensure they effectively prepare students for practical internship and professional practice. Taken together, the findings demonstrate that while students generally perform satisfactorily during hotel familiarization, their performance significantly improves during practical internship. The positive and significant relationship between the two variables confirms that hotel familiarization contributes to internship success. This underscores the importance of strengthening experiential learning strategies within the BSHM curriculum to produce competent and industry-ready graduates.

Conclusion and Implications

The findings of this study demonstrate that hotel familiarization plays a significant role in preparing hospitality management students for internship training. Although students generally achieved satisfactory performance during familiarization activities, their performance improved considerably during internship training. More importantly, the results confirmed that students' performance during hotel familiarization significantly predicts their performance during internship training. This highlights the importance of experiential learning in hospitality education and underscores the value of early exposure to professional hospitality environments.

Based on these findings, hospitality education programs should consider **institutionalizing hotel familiarization as a yearly experiential learning activity**. Conducting hotel familiarization annually would allow students to gain repeated exposure to hotel operations, progressively strengthening their operational competencies, professional confidence, and industry readiness. Educational institutions should also strengthen partnerships with hotel establishments to provide structured and meaningful experiential learning opportunities. These initiatives will contribute to the development of competent, confident, and industry-ready hospitality professionals.

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Competing Interests Statement

The authors declare that they have no competing financial, professional, or personal interests that could have influenced the conduct of this research or the preparation of this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The data used in this study were obtained from official institutional evaluation records of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management students at Palawan State University – Brooke’s Point Campus. Due to institutional data privacy policies, the raw data are not publicly available. However, aggregated data and analytical procedures may be made available upon reasonable request to the corresponding author and subject to university approval.

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Appendices

No appendices are included in this article