

## On-the-Job Training Performance of Students from AB Paralegal Studies for SY 2013-2014

Anunciacion Bernardo<sup>1</sup>, Alvin Landicho<sup>2</sup>, Jake M. Laguardor<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

On-the-job training describes the nature of work environment and responsibilities where the student-trainees would greatly benefit through encountering real-life scenarios and solving industry-based problems. This study aimed to correlate the academic performance and the on-the-job training performance of the students from AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Personal Characteristics, Attitude towards the job, job performance, adherence to company policy and competence. Descriptive-correlation type of research method was utilized in the study. Results showed that the students obtained excellent performance rating in terms of personal characteristics, attitude towards the job, job performance and competence. There is a need to enhance the communication skills of the students through giving them more verbal exercises as teaching and learning activity as well as giving more case studies to analyze and simulate for better understanding of the subject.

**Keywords:** Internship, Training Performance, Paralegal Studies, Filipino Students, Public Administration

### 1. Introduction

On-the-Job Training requires the students to demonstrate specific skills related to their respective field of specialization that would be essential application to their future work environment. It also provides ideas and real picture of the corporate world including the atmosphere of the work place, attitude of the work force and the organizational culture that the new employees might need to adapt and live in. Higher Education Institutions strengthen their industry partnerships and collaboration through sending students for internship. These industries become the training ground of the students to develop and enhance more their communication skills and confidence to face the big challenges and requirements of their respective fields.

On the Job Training (OJT) is one of the mechanics of Higher Education industries in developing the needed competencies of its graduates. Its goals and objectives served as a guide in developing the needed competencies for a particular job, and translating the training into a gainful working experience (Ylagan, 2013).

The internship is the culminating academic exercise for human service students, as well as students from a variety of disciplines in two and four-year academic programs. An internship combines the theory that students learned in school with practical work experience and lasts for about three months to a year (Ebreo et al, 2014). Allowing the graduating students to apply what they have learned from books in a work environment through On-the-Job Training would develop their work values and attitude necessary to achieve the ultimate goal of producing efficient and effective leaders and professionals in cross-cultural and multidisciplinary undertakings (Laguardor, 2013a).

Obedience of the students to their professors helped them built a strong character of complying with the requirements and demands of their immediate superiors. Unity of their ideas to keep their team working is another mind-setting which let them prove that they are really qualified in the position while their creativity

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<sup>1</sup>Paralegal Studies Department, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Batangas City, Philippines

<sup>2</sup>Paralegal Studies Department, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Batangas City, Philippines

<sup>3</sup>Paralegal Studies Department, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Batangas City, Philippines

and innovativeness brought them up to stand out among the employees who have the necessary skills but never discovered their talents, ingenuity and resourcefulness (Laguador & Dotong, 2013).

Internship has substantial educational and practical implications for public administration. Another benefit of quality students participating in internships is that they may otherwise not consider pursuing a public sector career due to insufficient knowledge about the way that the government works. Internship programs can be even more useful for countries that adopt civil service exams as a primary recruitment instrument. Since civil service exams partially measure the true capacity of prospective civil servants, internship programs can be used as a complementary source of recruitment (Ko & Sidhu, 2012).

A negative internship experience can have an even more negative impact than no internship at all. This suggests that the government should pay more attention to the needs of interns and institutionalize a procedure to evaluate students' satisfaction with internship programs (Ko & Sidhu, 2012).

The AB Paralegal Studies program enables its graduates to understand the concept of legal studies, politics and political science, principles, practices and problem of public administration. It equips students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to work in law offices or perform duties/ related to legal procedures and preparations of legal elements.

The paralegal profession traditionally offers stable income and good benefits, as well as job satisfaction and professional recognition to individuals who are unable or uninterested in investing the time and financial resources needed to attend law school or pursue other professional careers (Gierke, 2009). The AB Paralegal Studies program enables its graduates to understand the concept of legal studies, politics and political science, principles, practices and problem of public administration. It equips students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to work in law offices or perform duties/ related to legal procedures and preparations of legal elements. Executive politics is not just about the executive, it is about the how policies are executed. This area of interest considers the different ways in which policies seek to steer society, and how public services are designed and operated (Lodge & Wegrich, 2012). Acquiring the skills on public administration and understanding the Philippine politics would provide wider perspective for the students to realize the challenges of their future work environment. Getting involved in various activities and exercises of law offices and firms would also provide them better opportunities to appreciate the nature of their duties and responsibilities.

Ensuring a successful internship requires a marriage of student abilities with appropriate supervision. Finding appropriate host organizations for internships presents unique challenges. Securing organizational projects or assignments that can be completed within a relatively short time frame and that provide appropriate experiences for the student's level of training is critical. The internship should entail meaningful projects that will contribute to a true learning experience, not menial tasks (Shoenfelt, Kottke & Stone, 2012).

Academic performance is an important component of success of the students during their entire schooling. It provides data and information to describe the level of ability to understand, comprehend, apply, analyze, evaluate and synthesize things related or interrelated to their disciplines. Determining its correlation with the on-the-job performance would make it clear to the curriculum developers and program implementers as well as teachers on how they should deliver better services to enhance both performances. In trying to strengthen the quality assurance system in Philippine higher education, institutions of higher learning were mandated to upgrade higher education curricular offerings to international standards (Valdez, 2012). The curriculum was developed to integrate an in depth academics, laboratories and field internship programs that will ensure the efficiency and quality to meet worlds class standards (Mejia, Manzano & Menez, 2014).

This study analyzed the performance of the students enrolled in AB Paralegal Studies to examine the areas for improvement in the program of study and how the students can still develop and enhance their knowledge, values and skills to become qualified future professionals in performing critical and analytical tasks that will require them to accomplish. Internship is an important part of Outcomes-based education that

evaluates the products of university instruction, therefore, it always necessary to assess the output of a certain process for continuous improvement.

### Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the on-the-job training performance of the students from AB Paralegal Studies during SY 2013-2014 in terms of Personal Characteristics, Attitude towards the job, job performance, adherence to company policy and competence.

## 2. Methods

The study used descriptive-correlation type of research method. Total population of 14 On-the-Job Trainees from AB Paralegal Studies is considered as participants of the study. The Student Office Trainee Performance Appraisal Report was used as the instrument of the study which is consistently being used by the College of Education, Arts and Sciences (CEAS) to assess the performance of the OJTs. Pertinent data were gathered through documentary analysis of the submitted appraisal report from CEAS.

The given scale was used to analyze and interpret the result of the data gathered from the appraisal report: 4.50 – 5.00: Excellent (E); 3.50 – 4.49: Very Good (VG); 2.50 – 3.49: Good (G); 1.50 – 2.49: Fair (F); 1.00 – 1.49: Poor (P).

## 3. Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Personal Characteristics.

**Table 1: On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Personal Characteristics**

Personal Characteristics	WM	VI	Rank
1. Dresses neatly and appropriately for office work	4.62	E	2
2. Has a pleasing personality, is cheerful and good humored	4.69	E	1
3. Possesses above average oral and written communication skills	4.46	VG	5
4. Projects self-confidence and enthusiasm	4.54	E	3.5
5. demonstrate leadership potential	4.54	E	3.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>E</b>	

The trainees of the AB Paralegal Studies obtained an excellent performance rating for having pleasing personality, being cheerful with good humored from their immediate superiors as indicated by the composite mean score of 4.69 followed by dressing neatly and appropriately for the office work, projecting self-confidence and enthusiasm as well as demonstrating leadership potential as denoted by the weighted mean scores of 4.62, 4.54 and 4.54, respectively. However, they obtained a very good performance rating in possessing above average oral and written communication skills as manifested by the computed weighted mean score of 4.46 The composite mean score of 4.57 implies that the trainees have excellent on-the-job training performance in terms of personal characteristics.

Students were given proper orientation before they allowed to undergo their on-the-job training. One of the reminders provided to them is the proper wearing of corporate or business attire most appropriate to their respective fields and being required of them to wear in the office as uniform which make them more pleasing to the clients of certain firm.

Employers are always looking for graduates who are good in both written and oral communications. Therefore, students must be able to transform their feelings and thoughts to useful ideas and opinions that

would lead the organization to progress. The graduates must also learn to adopt the culture and communication climate of certain establishment in order to build worthy interpersonal relationships (Laguador, 2013 – Erint). The role of academic institutions is to hone the competencies of the students in order for them to achieve the personal and professional growth through continuing education after college and let them be glaring symbols and icons of integrity, leadership and nationalism with enormous faith and service for God and country (Dotong, 2014).

Table 2 shows the On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of attitude towards the job

**Table 2: On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Attitude towards the Job**

<b>Attitudes towards the job</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. shows marked interest and in his/her tasks/responsibilities	4.77	E	1.5
2. Has an exceptional sense of duty and can always be depended upon to do a good job	4.77	E	1.5
3. Cooperates willingly and fits easily to the group	4.54	E	4.5
4. Recognizes the authority and responsibilities of his/her superiors and previous his/her them the necessary support services and assistance required or sought	4.54	E	4.5
5. Takes initiative to update one's technical and/or non-technical knowledge and skills	4.62	E	3
<b>Composite Mean</b>	4.65	E	

The trainees of AB Paralegal studies obtained an excellent performance rating from their superiors by showing marked interest in their tasks and responsibilities and for having an exceptional sense of duty who can always be depended upon to do a good job as denoted by the weighted mean score of 4.77 on rank number 1.5. They also obtained excellent remark on taking initiative to update one’s technical and/or non technical knowledge and skills with weighted mean score of 4.62 on rank number 3. Cooperating willingly and fitting easily to the group and recognizing the authority and responsibilities of their superiors and previous his/her them the necessary support services and assistance required or sought.

Part of the leadership brand of the university is commitment and collaboration which the students should possess when they graduate. These are being taught and practiced through conducting institutional and college – based activities and programs wherein they were assigned in certain task and duty in the committee to accomplish.

Table 3 presents the On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Job Performance

**Table 3: On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Job Performance**

<b>Job Performance</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Delivers promptly assigned tasks/responsibility	4.77	E	2
2. Perform assigned tasks with minimum supervision	4.69	E	3
3. Willingly accepts work assignments and/ or responsibilities	4.85	E	1
4. Deliver assigned tasks within acceptable level of quality	4.62	E	4.5
5. Performs assigned tasks in an organized and orderly manner	4.46	VG	6
6. Exhibits ability to function well under pressure	4.62	E	4.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	4.67	E	

The trainees obtained an excellent performance rating from their superiors by willingly accepting work assignments and/ or responsibilities, delivering promptly assigned tasks/ responsibility and performing assigned tasks with minimum supervision as indicated by the computed weighted mean scores of 4.85, 4.77 and 4.69, respectively.

Delivering assigned tasks within acceptable level of quality and exhibiting ability to function well under pressure obtained an excellent performance from the immediate superiors as indicated by the weighted mean score of 4.62 on rank 4.5. However, the trainees obtained a very good performance rating from their superiors in performing assigned tasks in an organized and orderly manner with 4.46 least computed weighted mean score on rank number 6. The composite mean score of 4.67 implies that the trainees obtained an excellent performance rating from their immediate superiors in terms of job performance.

Giving them more responsibilities would make them feel important as part of the team. Realizing the importance of teamwork would provide them better understanding of cooperation and unity towards the achievement of common goals. They can also work independently with less supervision because they are confident that they can finish the task accordingly.

Interest in pursuing certain program in tertiary level is an important factor in considering the success of the students. It drives the motivation of the person to reach his dreams no matter how hard to travel the road towards certain direction that would bring not only his thoughts in the reality but also along with his presence (Laguador, 2014 – IJARPED).

Table 4 shows the On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of adherence to company policies

**Table 4: On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Adherence to Company Policies**

<b>Adherence to Company Policies</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Present at work most of the time	4.38	VG	3
2. Comes to work on time	4.54	E	1.5
3. Adheres to company policies	4.54	E	1.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>4.49</b>	VG	

The trainees excellently adheres to company policies and comes to work on time as manifested by the computed weighted mean score of 4.54 on rank 1.5 followed by a very good performance rating by being present at work most of the time as denoted by the weighted mean score of 4.38 on rank number 3.

Punctuality is being valued in the university especially in coming to school on time. Teachers are the role model on their attendance that will serve as good training for the students to value the time they need to wake up early and catch up the first lesson in the morning without being late. That habit will later become their routine until they join the workforce of professionals (Laguador, 2013b). Teaching the students the value of time management is an important aspect of success that they should possess. Planning ahead would provide many opportunities to think about alternatives and getting earlier at work is a sign of good time management.

Table 5 presents the On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Competence.

**Table 5: On-the-Job Training Performance of AB Paralegal Studies in terms of Competence**

<b>Competence</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>VI</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Shows mastery of generally accepted management/ marketing/ banking principles as applied to different situations	4.46	VG	3
2. shows adequate knowledge in performing assigned tasks and work assignment	4.69	E	2
3. Shows ability to perform routine office procedures	4.77	E	1
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>4.64</b>	E	

The trainees excellently show their ability to perform routine office procedures and show adequate knowledge in performing assigned tasks and work assignment as denoted by the computed weighted mean scores of 4.77 and 4.69 on rank numbers 1 and 2, respectively. Meanwhile, they obtained very good performance in showing mastery of generally accepted management/ marketing/ banking principles as applied to different situations as indicated by the computed weighted mean score of 4.46 on rank number 3. The composite mean score of 4.64 implies that the trainees obtained excellent performance rating from their superiors in terms of competence.

It is important that organizational hosts understand the nature of the internship, such as whether the internship will be full time during the summer or part time during the school year. Contacts and supervisors within host organizations also need to understand student abilities and competencies. Whereas students likely have some valuable capabilities, they typically lack experience, which is the primary reason they are completing an internship. The host organization must recognize what the students are capable of accomplishing and what may be beyond their capabilities (Shoenfelt, Kottke & Stone, 2012). New skills take time to refine, but each time use the communication skills, students must open to opportunities and future partnerships (Ylagan, Apritado, Mendoza & Tamayo, 2013). Skills can be measured in varying degrees and it is very important to keep these updated to learn new things from different perspectives. Communication skills are brought about by experiences through exchanging of thoughts and ideas from different people living in various social economic statuses (Laguador, 2013c)

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendation**

Students of AB Paralegal Studies obtained an excellent performance rating in terms of personal characteristics, attitude towards work, competence and job performance. The immediate superiors noticed the pleasing personality and being cheerful and good humored of the students as well as showing marked interest in their assigned tasks and responsibilities and willingness to accept work assignments.

There is a need to enhance the communication skills of the Paralegal studies through giving them more verbal exercises as teaching and learning activity. Students must improve their communication skills to express themselves and be easily understood when leading a team or a group (Laguador, Velasquez & Florendo, 2013).

Teachers may provide them more writing exercises and case analysis to enhance their writing skills.

Student organizations may be strengthened its function to encourage students' participation in taking the lead of planning, organizing, directing and implementing the programs of the department. Students may always be encouraged to join curricular and extra-curricular activities specifically in academic contests to make them more competitive and confident of their skills. Giving learning opportunities to students helps them to expand their knowledge, cultivate their abilities and discover new skills and talents (Britiller et al., 2014).

In response to the academic challenges of national and international significance, higher education system needs to focus on systemic reform to strengthen and make more competitive their output and services (Buted, Felicen & Manzano, 2014). The university may continue to implement the outcomes-based education to further strengthen the capability of the students to compete with the graduates of ASEAN member countries. Most universities in the country are already undertaking some of the educational practices involved in OBE. What they really need now is proper documentation of evidences of assessments and evaluation on the effectiveness of the program educational objectives which will prove that the graduates are really equipped with essential knowledge, values (behaviour) and skills that can contribute to the development of the community (Laguador & Dotong, 2014).

The curriculum may continue to revisit periodically to align the skills needed by the industry. The curriculum should be designed to prepare the graduates and demonstrate the core competencies expected of them in the workplace (Valdez, 2010). A growing number of employees and newly graduates must be fully

equipped with knowledge and skills to be competitive in their respective field. At this point, the educational attainment of the individual is given great emphasis (Dimalibot et al., 2014).

Strengthen the company linkages of Paralegal Studies to obtain more support the professional organizations that might be a good source of training for students and faculty members. Insights from industry-partners are essential input to the development of program curriculum in order to determine the concerns of the employers regarding the required qualifications of the graduates (Laguador & Ramos, 2014).

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