

# CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY BS HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT STUDENTS IN THE IN-PERSON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM DURING THE COVID-19

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## *Abstract*

*Internships are beneficial because they improve professional skills lead to more job opportunities. However, the students faced several challenges throughout training, particularly in obtaining assistance in acquiring knowledge and skills during the COVID-19 period. This study looked into the challenges that hotel management students face during an internship. A phenomenological research design was used with twenty student interns as participants selected through purposive sampling. Interview Guide was used in gathering the data. The researcher employed Moustakas' transcendental phenomenology, describing the experience of intern students. The qualitative study revealed the following themes; (1) financial problems encountered during the internship, (2) the need to develop mastery in the application of hotel and hospitality English communication, and (3) lack of hands-on experience in the field due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Results showed that the COVID-19 period has placed many students to experience some challenges and that the findings pave the way for the current internship program design to be revisited and enhanced.*

**Keywords:** *Challenges, Communication, Experience, Financial Problems, Internship, Pandemic*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has grown and diversified over the decades to become one of the world's fastest-growing economic industries expanding in tandem with the hospitality industry where ho-

tels are a major part of this service-oriented industry. And with the sector's growth, academic institutions play an important role in providing skilled manpower (Joshi, 2019). On the other hand, internships in hotel manage-

ment have been a cornerstone in allowing students to access the professional environment they will embrace after completing their hotel management degree, as well as experimentation in working roles that may become their career path, an opportunity for personal and professional growth. An internship provides students with practical experience in their area of study or career interest. A chance for students to learn new things, expand their skills, and explore potential careers. Thus, internships are professionally supervised, organized learning experiences that give students the chance to get useful work experience in the selected subject of study.

An internship is typically a task-specific service-for-experience arrangement between a student and a company. As one engages and learns in a professional atmosphere, theoretical concepts learned from the four corners of the classroom suddenly become practical tools for actual practice. According to the same study, the essential skills that may only be acquired via work are workplace collaboration, business decorum, and effective communication strategies. Internships in the field of study can help to acquire skills, which will help

later in life. Thus, a student's career is formed on their formal, formative, and internship experiences (Kilgore, 2021).

Moreover, internships promote character development helping a person become professional. An internship can significantly improve one's competence but also greatly improve one's character on the job (Writers, 2022). When it comes to hiring, many businesses even emphasize personal traits more than professional expertise. Internships are the ideal setting for learning, honing abilities, and developing personal professions in using knowledge in the real world. Internships are essential to prepare students for the workforce and give them chances after graduation. Most employers look for college graduates who are prepared for the workforce and have expertise and skills in a specific subject (The Benefits & Importance of Internships in College, 2021).

Most authors and researchers have positive findings on hospitality students' feedback and perceptions about internships and that the program provided valuable opportunities for students to acquire new skills and knowledge (Windawaty, 2023). Interns were highly satisfied with their internship ex-

perience and will still pursue a career in the tourism and hospitality industry (Salatan, 2015). And they have excellent job performance because they practice how to deal with the actual environment and handle all issues that arise (Arago, 2019).

However, during COVID-19, it is clear that it had a myriad impact on higher education, and student internships were no exception due to the global pandemic. Student internships were canceled or deferred, strict restrictions on face-to-face interactions were been implemented, and internships as a personal and professional development program for students were put at a critical level that the supposed actual experiences were shifted into limited exposure to follow the mandates for safety and health protocol.

Likewise, it is essential to identify such programs' impact on developing personal and profession-related skills among students. More importantly, the significant changes brought by the pandemic that affected the students' internship programs must be considered. Students need internships since they are one of the best methods to network and get their first jobs after graduation. Furthermore, students are thought to be especial-

ly well-suited to respond to the study's exploration of potential sentiment related to challenging situations during the in-person internship. The development of personal and profession-related skills, from the study's findings, may primarily benefit them. Secondary beneficiary includes Higher Education Institutions (HEI), promoter of the curriculum to bridge theoretical knowledge and practice in enhancing graduate employability opportunities. The third beneficiary is the host training establishment, a provider of knowledge of how the industry works, developing students' ability to work with others, adapt to changes, and act with leadership, among other soft and hard skills capacitation.

The internship is an off-campus learning opportunity that allows students to learn a variety of skills, particularly in programs such as hotel management, which places a substantial value on personal and professional qualities to assist someone in becoming a professional (Mediawati, 2022). Work-related learning and practical training, such as internship programs, are essential. This study describes challenges as issues or problems that inhibit intern students from developing personal and profession-related skills while com-

pleting an internship program as a requirement to pursue employment after graduation. There are several factors that can have an impact on the challenges.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

*Financial Problems Encountered during the Internship.* The financial matter is considered a personal encounter of the hospitality management student interns during the pandemic. In consideration of the difficulty in finding a place to do the internships Suastini et al., (2022) and the distance of the internship location is quite far (Sitorus, 2023). Although COVID-19 restrictions were eased in its second year, not everyone was able to recover their losses in finding stable jobs, and so student interns, despite being given the signal by the Commission on Higher Education, had the opportunity to engage in limited face-to-face experiential learning in hotels. The excitement creates an additional financial crisis for families, especially when looking for a prospective establishment that will have to accept them because the operations are limited to a few guests, and due to travel bans, the expected number of guests is not that high, which is why most establishments may not agree to accept trainees. As a result,

they began looking for another establishment, and the travel back and forth from the training establishment to their accommodation would affect their financial demands once more, taking into account that lower-income students are fifty-five percent than their higher-income peers, and forty percent have lost a job (Aucejo, 2020). In the Philippines, the guidelines for student internship programs for all programs with practicum subjects were adopted for the information, guidance, and compliance of all parties concerned in accordance with the pertinent provisions of RA 7722, also known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994," and pursuant to Commission en banc Resolution No. 148, dated April 19, 2009. The higher education system needs to concentrate on systemic reforms to enhance and increase the competitiveness of the students for national and worldwide scope.

*The Need to Develop Mastery in the Application of Hotel and Hospitality English Communication.* COVID shook the world in 2019, nobody could have predicted the disease's impact on all industries, including tourism and hospitality. Even the education sector is not an excuse for institutions to abandon traditional methods of teaching and

learning. As a result, internships are heavily influenced when experiences and learning are altered and influenced by limited face-to-face or in-person interaction, resulting in personal challenges and a lack of mastery of a particular skill required in the industry when one finds a job. This abrupt and unplanned move to online teaching and learning has most certainly impacted many people Plakhotnik (2023) including the students. And this adds an added concern where students find themselves having difficulty communicating for many of them, effective communication is not their gift (Vo, 2022). In view of the importance of communication during internships, hospitality students often are placed in positions that require them to interact with guests directly, so communication is crucial.

*Lack of Hands-on experience in the Field of Hospitality due to COVID-19 pandemic.* It reveals a negative trend due to COVID-19 in which such difficulties are associated with the sudden shift in the teaching and learning process to switching to online platforms. Although these challenges are not directly, pointing to the training establishment, however, it reveals a negative trend due to COVID-19

in which such difficulties are associated with career advancements (Kulbaka, 2022). The student's performance was affected during the internship because of the lack of laboratory subjects that requires practical skills. Online learning lowers students' comprehension of lectures and prohibits them from interacting physically in their labs (Ali, 2020). And this was the result of having limited face-to-face interactions between students and teachers, following the mandate of the health restrictions. This added challenge, contributes to factors in experiencing difficulties in student intern's on-site performances at the time of the pandemic. Assuming that the internship learning experience has to be a motivating and influencing factor for them to continue their career path because of the rewarding experiences they have acquired inside the institution as a provider of knowledge and skills and to host establishment as a provider of real-work settings, boosting their self-confidence to do the expected skills. Illustrating that internship is fundamental in shaping one's skill sets and knowledge and being holistically ready for the real world of jobs and employment. The primary goal of the researcher is to consider address-



ing the concerns of students who had specific issues and difficulties during the COVID-19 period. The research findings may allow leaders to consider new ideas which can help in modifying, improving, and upgrading the BS Hospitality Management curriculum to foster and develop student competencies.

### 3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Internship is an essential off-campus learning opportunity that enables students to acquire a wide range of skills, particularly in programs such as Hospitality Management, where personal and professional competencies are highly valued in preparing students for industry practice (Mediawati, 2022). Studies have shown that industry engagement through internships serves as a vital mechanism for students' professional development, as it enhances workplace readiness and strengthens employability (Daniels et al., 2022). Internships are also perceived by students as valuable experiences that enrich their curriculum vitae and are increasingly recognized during the recruitment process (Hemsworth, 2021). Moreover, industry internships provide pathways for long-term professional growth and of-

ten serve as gateways to future employment, especially since they are typically undertaken during the final semester of academic programs (Kapoor et al., 2019; Khorasgani et al., 2022).

Despite the recognized importance of internships, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted traditional modes of instruction and limited students' access to hands-on, practical training within higher education institutions. As a result, Hospitality Management students were required to engage in internship programs despite having reduced exposure to in-person laboratory work and experiential learning prior to deployment. This situation raises concerns regarding how effectively internship programs compensated for the lack of practical training during the pandemic and how these circumstances affected students' ability to develop essential personal and professional skills.

Thus, this study seeks to explore the challenges encountered by Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management students from selected higher education institutions in Misamis Occidental while completing their in-person internship programs during the COVID-19 period. Specifically, it aims to

examine the barriers that may have hindered interns' personal and professional skill development and to identify how students responded to these challenges as they prepared for employment after graduation.

#### **4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

##### **1.1.1 Research Design**

The study used the qualitative approach of research, specifically the phenomenological research design. It is a method of analyzing the participants' responses to determine the appropriate themes. Moustakas' transcendental phenomenology, describes the overall significance of the occurrence, circumstance, or experience (Moustakas, 1994). The phenomenological design was appropriate in exploring the challenges encountered by hospitality management students in an in-person internship program during the COVID-19 period.

##### **1.1.2 Research Setting**

This research was carried out at an identified Higher Education Institution (HEI) that offers a Hospitality Management Program in the Province of Misamis Occidental. The chosen HEI is the only state college offering a wide range of courses

and internship programs authorized and recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) with the highest number of students enrolled in the degree of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management. Moreover, in terms of accreditation status, the degree program is recognized as a Level 3 by the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACCUP). It is a non-profit and non-stock accreditation organization in the Philippines with its purpose to provide accreditation status for state universities and colleges. In addition, the state college is also awarded the Certificate of Program Compliance (COPC), recognized as fully compliant with CHED's policies, standards, and guidelines. It is under the Department of the School of Business Administration and Management, a leading department among ten identified departments with a considerable number of students in hospitality management that enrolled each year. The department serving the said program is a member of five leading hospitality and tourism organizations in the Philippines, namely: Cagayan De Oro Hotel and Restaurant Association (COHARA), Tourism Industry Board Founda-

tion Inc. (TIBFI), Association of Administrators in Hospitality Hotel and Restaurant Management Educational Institution (AAHRMEI), Philippine Association of Researchers for Tourism and Hospitality (PARTH), and Junior Tourism and Hospitality Management Association of the Philippines (JTHMAP).

### **1.1.3 Participants of the Study**

There were twenty Hospitality Management students interviewed as the participants of the study. The data collection had reached data saturation with number of participants. The following were the inclusion criteria: (A) had in-person internship during the COVID-19 following the implemented internship program for the academic year 2021-2022; (B) enrolled at the chosen HEI; (C) agreed to participate in this study. Participants were chosen using purposive and random sampling techniques.

### **1.1.4 Data Collection**

Prior to administering the interview questions approval was sought for the conduct of the interview. Following receipt of the approval from the Dean of the department concern and the President of the institution. After permission was granted to the researcher, administration to the

participants interview started.

During the interviews, the researcher discussed the research objective and gave clear instructions and directions to ensure the participants could comprehend. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and voice recordings were utilized. Data collection was done during the participants' free time. When all the participants were interviewed, their answers were transcribed and validated by the participants. The responses were coded, categorized, and translated into themes for analysis and interpretation.

### **1.1.5 Research Instrumentation**

The researcher utilized the researcher-made Interview Guide (Appendix A) in eliciting data from the students of the Hospitality Management program. Each interview session lasted for fifteen to thirty minutes, enhancing and increasing the elaboration of the participants' responses with follow-up questioning. The Interview Guide included the opening questions, core questions, and exit questions to meet the objectives of the study. The questions are related to the personal experiences a student had while carrying out their internship during the epidemic, as well as the difficulties



they encountered, including the most difficult, and finally, any recommendations for improving the current internship program.

#### **1.1.6 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical standards were observed in the planning and conduct of the study. First, the study was conducted with the full consent of all the persons involved, like the hospitality management students. The participants were asked to sign an informed consent indicating the aim of the study, foreseeable risk participation; potential benefits to themselves or others; confidentiality protection; researcher's contact information for answers to questions regarding the study; conditions of participation, including the right to refuse or withdraw at any time. Secondly, the researcher observed the right to privacy and the confidentiality of the information, thus, avoided identifying the individual participants. Permission was sought from the relevant authorities before the conduct of the study.

#### **1.1.7 Data Analysis**

In identifying the themes of this qualitative research, the NVivo software was used. The study operated the Moustakas' (1994) data analysis technique

of phenomenological reduction. The transcripts gathered from the participants' interviews were analyzed using the method.

#### **1.1.8 Moustaka's Sixth-Step Method of Data Analysis**

The steps were bracketing the effects of preconceived notions and perceptions to avoid bias, horizontalizing the statements with equal value and ignoring those irrelevant and redundant, and clustering experiences to form themes, textural description, structural description, and textural-structural synthesis.

**1.1.8.1 Bracketing.** It is an approach to mitigate the effects of preconceived notions and perceptions held before the study started and as the researcher, I cleared my mind by setting aside my own views about the phenomenon and gave focus on what participants has to say about their own views on their personal experiences. It is a process of suspending judgments and biases, or "epoche." And by clearing my mind, I was able to recall my own personal experiences when I was like them twenty years ago, and through this bracketing process, there are experiences from the participants that I do remember the same as I have experienced by reflect-

ing, allowing preconceptions and pre-judgment to enter my mind so that I could think freely.

**1.1.8.2 Horizontalization.** Refers to a collection of verbatim expressions I observed from my twenty identified interview participants during the course of the interview. Their statements were noteworthy statements that were not repeated or overlapped. The researcher made no attempt to group the statements of the individuals. During this stage, I, the researcher, merely wanted to learn about the experiences of student interns while observing the ripple effect. It gave details about students' own experiences that were reinvested in others through their words. Moustakas (1994) states that the horizon is "the grounding condition of the phenomenon that gives it a distinct character." As a researcher, I begin to comprehend the experience through reflection.

**1.1.8.3 Clustering.** The next phase, the researcher eliminates statements that are not relevant to the topic at hand, are repetitive, or overlap. Then, the significant statements are thoroughly examined by the researcher. In reducing the statements into horizons, the researcher clustered them into themes and en-

sured that each theme was implied with only one meaning. Three themes emerged from the analysis like financial problems encountered during the internship; the need to develop mastery in the application of hotel and hospitality English communication; and lack of hands-on experience in the field of hospitality due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**1.1.8.4 Textural description.** It refers to "what occurred" or to an account describing the phenomenon's perception. In obtaining the textual description of the participants' experiences, the researcher used verbatim excerpts from the interviews and provided a narration of the meaning units derived from the themes.

**1.1.8.5 Structural description.** It refers to one that occurred and integrates imaginative variation, an ingenious outlook, and insights into the textural description. An imaginative variation is considered the mental experiment on analyzing the details and structures of the participants' experience by being detached from natural inclination through epoche. It is appended in each paragraph of textural descriptions to generate a structural description.

**1.1.8.6 Textural-structural synthesis process.** In this step, the researcher collated the meaning units of each participant and developed a composite of textural and structural descriptions that were common to them. A narrative or Synthesis represented all the participants, written from a third-person perspective. The primary goal of this final step of Moustakas' method was to obtain the essence of the experience of the phenomenon. This step describes the textual and structural descriptions of the student intern's experiences as essential which captured the meaning ascribed to the experience.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Twenty hospitality management students were the participants of the study. They are between 20 to 21 years old. They went in-person internship program during the COVID-19 period in a higher education institution in Misamis Occidental, offering a BS Hospitality Management program. Thirteen students are females and seven males and are graduating students.

The researcher also identified three challenges encountered by the students throughout their in-person internship program. The following are the

themes created to investigate the challenges: (1) personal problems encountered during the internship, (2) the need to develop mastery in the application of hotel and hospitality English communication, (3) lack of hands-on experience in the field of hospitality due to the covid-19 pandemic.

The produced themes from the transcriptions of the participants were presented below:

#### Financial Problems Encountered During Internship

Through internships, undergraduate students can begin to apply the academic knowledge they have acquired throughout their college years to real-world situations. The skills learned in school as theories may not be effective unless put into practice. However, the student interns' personal interactions with internship experience during the pandemic encountered financial problems in finishing the program. And these problems may affect student's personal and professional states such as depression, lack of motivation, homesickness and a lot of common issues. Based on their experience during internship, the students claimed finances as the main challenge. This can be discerned in the answers of Participants 6 and 12:

*"For me, it was the financial resources. As far as I know as a student, I do not have lots of resources. I really needed greater time to look for other resources to meet needs on transportation during internship." (P6)*

*"My problem actually is the finances because it is a city and all the things are quite expensive" (P12)*

Because of the advent of COVID-19, most individuals have lost their employment and savings have been incurred solely to meet the daily necessities during lockdowns, and as a result, families of students were only restricting the granted allowances to what is expected to be spent throughout the week.

Finances, is crucial most especially for students given the opportunity to reach and complete their education. With the aid of support this may inspire them to complete the academic requirement such as internship. And financial circumstances are one of many elements that affect a student's academic progress (Bennett, 2021). Financially stressed students have lower self-esteem, grades, and most likely to drop out.

The Philippines is no excuse for the negative effects of these fi-

nancial crises on education, jobs, food security, and health, among others (UN Refugee Agency Philippines, 2023). These students' utterances were evident in how they were able to experience financial crisis in these trying times. One participant claimed: *"The most difficult part for me is the finances...the expenses also get higher."* (P15)

In addition to the observation, because most people lose their jobs during the pandemic, selling some assets, and cutting short their children's educational support were the only ways to cope. These unexpected challenges arose as a result of the students' needs to be exposed to real-world scenarios like internship. One participant revealed: *"Not everything is fine when it comes to finances and allowances, especially the finances."* (P16)

Students may be unable to attend to their obligations and responsibilities due to this kind of problem. And instead of participating in the internship program to learn, they may stay in boarding houses doing nothing, which could put them under more stress because their absences might result in them working longer hours than expected. It could also increase their transporta-

tion, food, and lodging costs because of the extra days and hours resulting from their absences, a contributing factor on added stress. And these challenges may impact their intention to work in the hospitality industry.

A study was also conducted by Gashaw (2019). He investigated the challenges facing internship for tourism students as a learning experience. The findings revealed that the internship faced many challenges, including needing adequate guidance and support for students during the training. He recommended that internship be planned and implemented as a valid learning experience right from the start by allocating adequate funds to support the intern students and for supervision. One participant expressed that: *"It is extremely difficult for me, particularly in terms of finances, because my father has no job."* (P19)

Lack of guidance and support may impair students on-the-job-training performances. It may lead them to stop the program, and may change course from interns to part-timers so they can work and provide the cost of daily living. This in return, increases the amount of time to finish the number of hours in a specific target as part of their responsi-

bility as a student to graduate

### **The Need to Develop Mastery in the Application of Hotel and Hospitality English Communication.**

Undergraduate students gain their first professional experience through internships. They use the theoretical knowledge gained throughout their studies in real-life situations. The capacity to communicate effectively and concisely with workers, visitors, and other industry experts is crucial to the success of any hospitality organization. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning as a means of continuing education among students has a significant impact on communication skills, resulting in a decrease in communication levels (Alawamleh, 2020). Below are the verbatim responses of the interns on how essential communication skills are to be developed and mastered. Several participants suggested. *"I may suggest "communication skills," like how you express your thoughts, especially on how you accommodate your clients."* (P1).

Working in the hospitality industry requires a lot of trust in your ability to provide the best services, and one effective approach to do so is by providing detailed



information that will enable you to meet the expectations of your guests. The ability to communicate helps hosts and guests work out any issues that may arise. One participant believed. *"I believe the most important thing is that you have good communication skills and the initiative to do everything; you must also be responsible and punctual."* (P4))

*"The communication skills because it is really needed since in international community."* (P6)

It simply indicates that the majority of visitors to the Philippines' major cities are foreign tourists. And these tourists, who are mostly from English-speaking countries, communicate in the country's second most common language. Being able to communicate effectively in a foreign language is a marketable ability in the global arena, thus improving, growing, and using it frequently is advantageous. According to one participant: *"It is communication skill in which you need to be more fluent in because in our industry you will encounter different guests sometimes, most of the time you will have foreigners."* (P7)

Students also noticed that English is more common than

other foreign languages. The interns' comments on the importance of mastering Hotel and Hospitality English are included and expressed by the following statements: *"Perhaps because English is international and foreigners are constantly visiting us. It is not expected that only Filipinos will visit us but also foreigners. Thus, we need to learn English."* (P6) *"The guests there are foreigners, most of them are Americans, and even though there are other nationalities, they also communicate in English. So English is important."* (P13)

Describing situations in which even guests who do not come from English-speaking countries use the language as a common tool to communicate with one another. It was revealed by the participants in this way: *"For me, a common tool in communicating with them is the English language. Since most of the guests are Americans and even other nationalities like Chinese communicate using English language."* (P12) *"English is the commonly used language for communication. Even Koreans speak English though they also speak their native language. During our classes, we have English as a foreign language to learn, which really helps because most of our visitors actually speak En-*

*glish. The local Visayan are few, but they speak mostly English."* (P15)

As a result, using English learned in school is really useful for them to communicate some common expressions important inside the hotel, such as in the front office, food and beverage area, and housekeeping, where regular interactions with guests are frequent, requiring them to be more fluent in the language. Hence, excellent communication skills are essential to thrive in the hospitality industry (Himalayan Institute of Technology, 2019). Therefore, having a good command of the English language facilitates communication between customers and service providers (Dhyani, 2022). This has resulted in an immense need for trained personnel, particularly labor with an excellent grasp of the English language, which benefits guest satisfaction.

Since the hospitality business is made up of a varied range of people and cultures, an internship experience is an important component of the learning process and helps students put what they have learned into reality. It is a hurdle that students must master and is to be expected. Undergraduate students must, nevertheless, be fluent in a foreign

language in order to communicate with guests on a cultural level, solve problems, and prevent miscommunication-related disputes. Learning these techniques improves future graduates' communication abilities, preparing them for multilingual and multicultural workplaces.

### **Lack of Hands-on Experience in the Field of Hospitality.**

Students who participate in hands-on learning are encouraged to think critically, to explore potential solutions to problems, and to conduct experiments based on hypothetical situations. These activities may improve students' managerial mindsets, particularly when it comes to making decisions about how to handle conflicts and other real-world problems they may face in the workplace. Students were exposed to actual circumstances and were able to apply the theories they had learned.

For students studying hospitality, practical experience is essential because they will eventually need to manage and run their own businesses in order to open their own hotels, restaurants, and resorts as well as to lead the company as managers and supervisors. Better practical skills are an advantage for students' credentials as they

pursue careers in hospitality.

Following the advice of public health officials, institutions and colleges were rapidly closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Murphy & Morgan, 2020). As a result, educational institutions immediately embraced e-learning as a means of distance education. Although this technique is effective for presenting content and overseeing various procedures, it has drawbacks regarding developing practical skills. For instance, working within the environment would expose one to various expensive and intricate tools and machines. Below are the responses of the interns on how distance learning loses valuable hands-on exposure to such facilities and the ability to understand the subtleties of being immersed in such an environment. The predicament was revealed by one of the participants:

*"The most challenging thing, aside from what I mentioned earlier, is when you are actually in your field of work and you do not have any knowledge and you just ask yourself, "How should I do it?" Most especially, you are worried because you are not actually being exposed to such things at school because of COVID-19. For two years, we were educated online, and then, when a face-to-face*

*internship became available, we were immediately exposed, and it was really difficult to handle."* (P1)

Educators in higher education institutions are paying more and more attention to the function of online learning because of the potential benefits to student learning in terms of flexibility and accessibility. It might have been viewed as effective for efficient learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it is debatable regarding the effectiveness of knowledge retention and overall student satisfaction with their learning experience, particularly in Hospitality where the hands-on aspect of learning is considered essential (Jung, 2022). The causes of the modality are expressed by the following participant:

*"Because of the online modality, the learning we experienced was very different from what we would have learned in actual classes, where our performance would have been observed and assessments would have been based on it. In my opinion, exposing us to a real-world scenario with classroom assessments was preferable because it would have given us complete hands-on experience."* (P2)

In the advent of COVID-19, technological approaches arise

and more of the learnings are introduced via an online platform that even hard copies like modules are practically designed for mobile learning. This is to generate an innovative approach to learning. But the activities imposed especially when it comes to practical skills may contribute a substantial impact that negatively affects academic outcomes. Participants mentioned being confused:

*"I was told that I needed to display a table service, but because we were not taught how to demonstrate the service during our online training, I was confused as to what I should do." (P7)*

*"Because of the pandemic, our actual learning had stopped, the module was introduced, and actual skills were no longer being taught." (P5)*

The pandemic made internships hype competitive (Martin, 2021). The global pandemic has caused a drastic shift to remote working and learning all across the globe. As a result, students are unable to realize their full potential and build capacity (Shuja 2019). As a result, courses such as hospitality management require more practical training to transform theoretical knowledge into skill-based competency, favoring Kolb's model, which is known

for its holistic approach to student learning that incorporates action and experience. Which are heavily professional in nature, their primary goal should be to produce work-ready individuals who possess both theoretical and practical skills (Ren, 2021).

The importance of practical learning in the hospitality industry cannot be overstated, even though managerial approaches are also emphasized. Practical abilities, however, are undeniable because they are necessary for a better grasp of how to manage and operate various hotel areas, particularly the actual services and how they were provided by the personnel with the highest care and attention. because guests' expectations and desires must be satisfied in a sophisticated and demanding profession. In order to maintain the "learning by doing" perspective, Kolb's model supports the inclusion of practical components in degrees like hospitality management.

Students benefit from industry-based experiential learning programs. This is an opportunity for them to put classroom concepts into practice and achieve levels of immersed learning (Sebby, 2020). Schools

that offer internship programs may consider the requirement to oversee any aspect of services in the industry by staying up to date on new trends, particularly practical operations that require higher skill value to broaden student knowledge to many areas in the industry.

The following are the conclusions, an effective financial management program may be introduced to students like the knowledge and skills needed to carefully plan, manage, and control their finances so that they can meet future obligations such as acquiring and completing academic requirements such as internships as well as achieving their goals. Hotel and hospitality English is essential for easy understanding of most guests' demands because it is the most commonly used language by travelers, creating a comfortable feeling for the guests talking and understanding in a familiar language while building rapport with guests, resolving conflicts, and creating a positive overall guest experience. Moreover, Hospitality management course is recognizing the necessity of hands-on delivery of programs on important areas necessitating demands on practical experience in front office services, food

and beverage services, house-keeping, and culinary. Supporting advanced knowledge and abilities in actual exposure to the real work environment.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. An effective financial management program may be introduced to students like the knowledge and skills needed to carefully plan, manage, and control their finances so that they can meet future obligations such as acquiring and completing academic requirements such as internships as well as achieving their goals.
2. Hotel and hospitality English is essential for easy understanding of most guests' demands because it is the most commonly used language by travelers, creating a comfortable feeling for the guests talking and understanding in a familiar language while building rapport with guests, resolving conflicts, and creating a positive overall guest experience.
3. Hospitality management course is recognizing the necessity of hands-on delivery of programs on important areas necessitating demands on practical experience in front



office services, food and beverage services, housekeeping, and culinary. Supporting advanced knowledge and abilities in actual exposure to the real work environment.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that the School of Business Administration and Management may consider a seminar training on financial management literacy program. To educate students on assessing the chosen course to match their decision to pursue the degree with long terms goals. The department may include in its curriculum a specialized English language teaching learning within the field of hotel and hospitality categorized as English for the Specific Purpose (ESP) for students to master hotel and hospitality English. In addition, the department may integrate an in-house training program into its curriculum. To allow students to learn job-related skills while completing the major programs before being assigned to real-world on-the-job training. Lastly, the department's internship program design may include a refresher training program as a good practice necessary for the delivery of the program. In

order to refresh students' memory ensuring information are up to date, which increases students' long-term competencies.

## 6. REFERENCES:

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