

DESIGNING THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN EVENTS MANAGEMENT CURRICULUM IN THE PHILIPPINES: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

The growth of the event management industry in Asia is well documented, but few degree programs are offered by Asian universities. In the Philippines, there are no existing degree programs in events management although there is a professional certification course offered by the Technical Education Skills Authority (TESDA). This research will focus on the development of an undergraduate course in event management and the rationale for the design of the curriculum.

Keywords: *event management, undergraduate degree program*

Introduction

As the number of events increase and the field of event management matures, there is a growing realisation about the continuing need to develop event management professionals who are able to create, organise and manage events to an international standard. Employing high-quality individuals who are trained and qualified in event management may satisfy several objectives. It will help to ensure professionalism in the field; equip managers with the necessary skills to deal with the specific challenges of the events industry as they arise and will ultimately help to sustain the delivery of high-quality events. Growing demand for professionally qualified event managers is driving institutions of higher learning to develop both graduate degree and undergraduate degree programs in event management.

The goal of event management education is to educate and train future generations of industry professionals. In order to achieve this goal, attention should be placed on the development of event management curriculum that not only meets the desire of potential students, but also satisfies the needs of the industry. In recognition of this the author undertook research to assist in the design of an event management undergraduate degree that could be offered in the Philippines.

Event Management Education

Getz (2014) argued, there are two distinct and potentially complementary approaches to events education:

- An interdisciplinary approach, which is based upon the theoretical and intellectual basis of higher education, with a philosophical approach underpinned by traditional disciplines and new subject areas;
- The professional bodies approach, which is based on competencies and skills, with factual knowledge and problem-solving at the heart of the curriculum.

The mission of the event management academia is to develop highly skilled and competent future industry professionals. In order to achieve this mission, educators and institutions must continually adapt to changes in the needs of both students and industry partners. Particularly, it is highly encouraged for the event management academia and educators to actively work to reduce the gap in the practical side of courses by incorporating opinions of industry professionals into the curriculum, (Kang et al., 2005).

The growth of the convention and event industry in Asia is well documented, but few degree programs in this field are offered by Asian universities. This gap was discerned by the researcher who decided to develop a conceptual framework that will be used to

propose a new degree program in higher education institutions in the Philippines.

TABLE 1

EXAMPLES OF BACHELOR DEGREE IN EVENTS MANAGEMENT PROVIDERS IN ASIA		
COUNTRY	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION	PROGRAM TITLE
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Polytechnic University	BSc in Convention and Event Management
Macau	Institute of Tourism Studies	BSc in Tourism and Event Management
Singapore	Kaplan Higher Education Academy	BA in Tourism and Events Management
		BA in Tourism and Events Management with double majors in: Communication and Media Studies Hospitality and Tourism Management Human Resource Management Management Marketing Public Relations
	Management Development Institute of Singapore	Bachelor of Business in Convention and Event Management
	PSB Academy	BA (Hons) Festival and Event Management
	Singapore Institute of Management	BSc Facilities and Events Management
	TMC Academy	BSc Facilities and Events Management (Hons)
	James Cook University Singapore	BA (Hons) in Strategic Events Management (Top Up) Bachelor of Business (Sports and Events Management)
		Bachelor of Communication (Hons) specializing in Event Management
		Bachelor of Event Management (Hons)
		BA (Hons) in Event Management BA (Hons) in Event and Tourism Management
Malaysia	Universiti Utara Malaysia	Bachelor of Tourism Management (Hons) specializing in Event Management
	Limkokwing University of Creative Technology	Bachelor of International Tourism Management (Hons) (Event Management)
	UCSI University	Bachelor of Mass Communication (PR and Event Management)
	HELP University	Bachelor of Events Management (Hons)
	Taylor's University	Bachelor of Events Management (Hons)
	Berjaya University College of Hospitality Management and Science University	Bachelor of Events Management (Hons)
	Binary University of Management and Entrepreneurship	BA (Hons) in Business Management specializing in Event Management

Source: www.hotcoursesabroad.com

Shown in Table 1 are some of the events management degree providers in Asia retrieved from the website, www.hotcoursesabroad.com. As can be seen from Table 1 there is no stand-alone events management degree in the Philippines. However, events management is

offered by Philippine higher education institutions as modules within an existing BS Tourism or BS Hospitality degree or a variant of these programs. Students and event professionals in the Philippines who wish to gain a professional qualification in event

management can study for the Event Management Services Certificate that is offered

by the Technical Education Skills Authority (TESDA) – see Table 2.

TABLE 2
EVENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES OFFERED BY TESDA

Course title:	Events Management Services
Nominal Duration:	108 hours
Qualification:	NC III
Course Description:	This course is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, behaviour, and motivations in EVENTS MANAGEMENT SERVICES III in accordance with industry standards. It covers the core competencies required for the NC III level.
Entry Requirements:	There are no entry requirements for trainees or students wishing to enter into training on the Events Management Services NCIII qualifications.
Facilities:	Workshop, Laboratory, Audio-visual room, Lecture room, Storage/Stockroom
Assessment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written examination • Practical demonstration • Direct observation • Hands-on
Course Delivery:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussion • Demonstration • Film viewing • Modular instruction • Practical application • Reporting • Industry immersion • E-learning
Trainer's Qualifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be a holder of NC III or equivalent relevant qualification • Must have undergone training on Training Methodology II (TM II) or equivalent trainers' training program • Duly Licensed and DOT Accredited Tour Guide • Must be computer-literate • Must be physically and mentally fit • *Must have at least 2 years job/industry experience • * Optional. Only when required by the hiring institution.

Source: Technical Education Skills Development Authority, Taguig City, Philippines

The nominal duration of the Event Management Services Certificate is 108 hours and has a very limited event management content.

To assist higher education institutions in the Philippines to consider developing stand-alone event management degrees the author undertook research to identify best practice in curriculum design from the United Kingdom where event management degrees have been offered since 1996.

Methodology

A qualitative method of research was employed in this study to gather information to develop a conceptual framework needed in designing the events management curriculum. The Leeds Beckett University's (United Kingdom) Centre for Events Management (UKCEM) was used as a benchmark for this study because of its leading and pioneering position in event management higher education. In 1996 the UKCEM launched the first BA (Hons) Event Management program to be offered in Europe and since 1996 the

UKCEM has expanded its course portfolio to include postgraduate and PhD programs in events management. UKCEM is considered to be one of the leading providers of event management teaching, learning, research and publications in the world with its faculty members authoring many of the text books in event management that are used by faculty and students in many other universities.

A semi-structured interview with open-ended questions was conducted with the academic staff of UKCEM to determine the interviewee's views on the design of an international standard event management undergraduate degree. Sixteen academic staff who comprised of one professor, one reader, and 14 principal lecturers and senior lecturers were sent an invitation through e-mail to participate in the research project. Out of the 16, there were ten respondents scheduled for a 45 minutes to one hour personal interview. An observation of teaching, learning and assessment methods in event management was also conducted at Leeds Beckett University to gain insight into the pedagogy implemented by UKCEM. The observations enabled the researcher to witness the different teaching, learning and assessment methods used by the interviewees in the learning and teaching context of events management modules.

Thematic analysis was used to identify and analyse the data from the interviews and observations.

Results and Discussion

The best practices in UKCEM in terms of pedagogy responds directly to students' learning preferences, styles, and interests. The respondents emphasized and demonstrated a student-centred approach highlighting areas of good practice in terms of developing student employability and engaging with community.

In terms of curriculum the BA (Hons) Events Management degree offered by UKCEM includes significant experiential learning opportunities for students. Current practices such as workshops and live events are considered as best practice around student engagement and assessment. Further, the inclusion of student input into the workshops gave valuable insight and feedback in terms of their own perception of the tasks they were given to complete by their faculty lecturers and also contributed to the development of their employability skills. Outcomes that are seen to accrue to students participating in such initiatives include the development of reflective analysis, enhanced student engagement and a redefining of the relationships between lecturers and students in the classroom.

When comparing the BA (Hons) Events Management degree offered by UKCEM to the curriculum that is normally included in an event management curriculum in the Philippines the following gaps in the Philippines subject knowledge were identified:

TABLE 3
PHILIPPINES SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE

<p>New subjects needed in the Philippines events curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resource Management for the Event Industry • Event Marketing and Sponsorship • Event Risk Management and Safety • Sports and Festival Event Management • MICE Management • Event Laws and Ethics • Event Planning, Logistics, and Design
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A suggested course description is provided for each of the above subjects:

TABLE 4
COURSE DESCRIPTION SUGGESTION

Course Description Human Resource Management for the Event Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to study the policy and process of human resource management with job analysis, recruiting, education and training, and evaluation in the event industry.
Course Description Event Marketing and Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to study the event marketing including research method, segmentation and target market positioning, marketing mix, and consumer behaviour.
Course Description Event Risk Management and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to understand and acquire the knowledge of risk management process and safety performance requirement for the planning, management, and operation of an event
Course Description Sports and Festival Event Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to understand the concept, plan, organization, and management of a sports event and local festival with various scales acquiring the knowledge and techniques for operation.
Course Description MICE Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to understand the concept, plan, organization, and management of a trade exhibition and a conference acquiring the knowledge and techniques for operation.
Course Description Event Laws and Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to understand and acquire the knowledge related laws and regulations required for the planning, management, and operation of an event and studying the ethics for the ethical administration.
Course Description Event Planning, Logistics and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to study on the creation of ideas necessary for the planning and designing of program, human resources, marketing, administration and financial matters of an event. It will also acquire practical knowledge and techniques required for various facilities and the management of equipment for an event.

The author is of the view that if the above course curricula in event management are used to enhance the existing content of event management modules that are offered by higher education institutions in the Philippines then an international standard degree program will be created that is benchmarked against the BA (Hons) Event Management degree offered by Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom – the pioneer of event management education in Europe.

Conclusion

Event management as an academic subject is a relatively new phenomenon in the Philippines. While there is an obvious need for a tailored event management curriculum, this study aims to provide some insights into the

direction of event management curriculum by adapting the best practices from the UKCEM in terms of curriculum. Seven possible new subjects were identified as follows:

- Human Resource Management for the Event Industry
- Event Marketing and Sponsorship
- Event Risk Management and Safety
- Sports and Festival Event Management
- MICE Management
- Event Laws and Ethics
- Event Planning, Logistics, and Design

Clearly, opportunities exist for industry and educators in the Philippines to work together to provide a well-rounded event management undergraduate degree program. It is hoped that

the contents of this paper can contribute to the discussions and debate on what the curriculum and syllabi of a new event management undergraduate degree program for the Philippines could include.

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