

Relevance and Responsiveness of the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration Program as Assessed by Stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

Responsiveness/relevance is perceived as the starting point for determining what constitutes a quality education. Since development is necessary, systems that support development, like education and training systems, must be responsive. This study is focused on the relevance and responsiveness of the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) program and to determine whether the initiatives currently practiced by the college to make the program relevant/responsive are effective. John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Bacolod is a higher education institution that offers a BSCA program and is the only one in Negros Occidental. However, despite the very satisfactory results in the board examination

in the past years and the high demand for employment in the import and export industry, only a few are enrolled in the program. Hence, the conduct of this study is to explore opportunities to improve enrolment. This descriptive study used the survey method to gather the data needed, with Mean and Standard Deviation as statistical tools. A discussion with representative stakeholders was made on the initiatives and strategies practiced by the college to calibrate the program. The respondents were 24 BSCA students, 53 alumni, and 22 industry representatives. The findings showed that the BSCA program is relevant and responsive to a very great extent, as assessed by the alumni and students, and relevant/responsive to a great extent by the industry. This implies then that as a Higher Education, JBLCF-Bacolod offers a program that is relevant/responsive and the initiatives practiced by the College of Business are very highly effective based on the four core resources and also affirms that teachers are considered the most valuable pillars in the teaching-learning process. This study could provide valuable insights to introduce development strategies to enhance the current enrolment.

Keywords — Education, relevance and responsiveness, customs administration, stakeholders, curriculum, descriptive, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Customs administration is perceived to be as old as human civilization since the collection of customs duties began along with the production, transport, and delivery of goods (Castillo, 2018). It is the study of the administration of customs operations and brokerage (CHED Memorandum Order No. 11, s. 2005) in transportation and supply chain management (Albay et al., 2013). Since the Philippines is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), it is committed to enhancing and addressing customs administration concerns. The World Bank recognized trade as a powerful force for growth and poverty reduction (Global Economic Prospects, 2015). Hence, improvements in the efficiency of ports and customs administration have the greatest gains for developing countries like the Philippines. To address the intensive changes in a globalized economy and being a member of different international trade agreements and unions, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) implemented CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 11 series of 2005 to re-engineer the customs administration curriculum as reform mechanisms to accelerate growth on exports and economic development through trade facilitation. This is supported by Pettinger (2019) in his study that to improve the standard of living, provide

employment, and for consumers to enjoy a wide variety of goods, international trade plays a very important role in making these possible.

Since higher education is identified as one of the underlying factors of growth performance, prosperity, and competitiveness, its social role, therefore, is to supply the link between the intellectual and educational role of universities on the one hand and the development of society on the other (QS Global Educational News, 2018). Any country hopes HEIs produce the needed human resources to move the country into a high, sustained, and equitable development. To achieve this, HEIs should respond well to the challenges of the labor market (Orbeta et al., 2015). Furthermore, the relevance of higher education should be assessed according to the adequacy between what society expects from the institutions and what they do (Miñán Ubillús & Diaz Puente, 2015). Higher education remains relevant if it promotes sustainable employment, foster personal development, and encourages active citizenship (European Commission, 2011). This characteristic was described by Stoessel (2016), who pointed out that if there is a lack of responsiveness, it will make a system ignorant of the needs of the government, the students that invested in the success of colleges and universities, and the industry concerned.

In the Philippines, the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration (BSCA) prepares individuals to become competent and knowledgeable customs brokers (Albay et al., 2013). It becomes essential now for higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines to endeavor to be responsive to the ever-unpredictable labor market and to make necessary adjustments to achieve this. One of the effective ways to keep up with the rapid changes is for the HEIs to provide opportunities for their graduates to gain the necessary skills to adequately equip them for the demands of the industry (Abas & Imam, 2016). According to Republic Act No. 9280 it is the policy of the State to prioritize, give attention, and support the practice of the customs broker profession in the Philippines. It is, therefore, the duty of the state to include in its policy a conducive climate for Filipino customs brokers to enhance and maximize their potential and capabilities to practice their profession.

John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Bacolod is one of the colleges and universities in the Philippines that offer a degree in Customs Administration and the only one in Negros Occidental. However, despite the very satisfactory results in the board examination for the past years, according to the Professional Regulation Commission during the CHED-PRC visit at JBLCF-Bacolod on July 27, 2019, and the demand for employment in the import and export, few are interested in enrolling and undergoing curricular training for BSCA and becoming licensed

customs brokers as shown by the enrolment trend in JBLCF-Bacolod.

For these reasons and the PACUCOA recommendation, the researcher drew out the inspiration to conduct this study on the relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program as assessed by stakeholders.

FRAMEWORK

This study is founded on the concepts from the General Education System Quality Analysis/Diagnosis Framework (GEQAF) by the International Bureau of Education under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IBE-UNESCO), which emphasizes that sustained development relevance/responsiveness is the starting point for determining what constitutes a quality education system.

According to IBE, an education system needs to be relevant and responsive to analyze and emphasize four important core resources: the curriculum, teachers/educators, learners/students, and the learning environment. These core resources are further discussed in this paper.

A curriculum is considered the “heart” of any learning institution, which means that schools or universities cannot exist without a curriculum (Kranthi, 2017). It is defined by IBE-UNESCO (2019) as a systematic or combined packaging of various competencies that learners should obtain through a methodical set of learning experiences. It also has to seek and value the opinions and experiences of experts and various legitimate stakeholders to take part in the review and development of a curriculum. The IBE emphasized that the curriculum is a means to foster quality learning; thus, curriculum development and reform processes involve public consultation and discussion with a wide range of stakeholders. It should value the input of stakeholders and should have a sustainable and long-term impact. Constructing a meaningful curriculum involves addressing basic factors such as the issues to be learned, the resources needed, and how learning is assessed. In the modern world, curriculum development is viewed as a comprehensive cycle of development, implementation, evaluation, and revision to ensure that it is updated and relevant.

Curriculum development has a broad scope because it is not only about the school, the learners, and the teachers. It is also about the development of society in general (Kranthi, 2017). The higher education curriculum preserves the country’s national identity and ensures economic growth and stability. Teachers implement it and depends on the quality of teaching, learning strategies, learning materials, and assessment.

As stated in the new Policies, Standards, and Guidelines (PSG) for the BSCA Program, CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 30, series of 2021, the revision of the curriculum is premised on the need to equip the graduates with sound fundamentals, technological, professional and technical knowledge with research capability to professionally and ethically deal with internationalization and standardization of customs and trade practices and supply chain in this dynamic and rapidly evolving world trade environments, every professional must possess in order to serve and secure public interest and welfare. As claimed by Kranthi (2017), curriculum development is a vital component in the educational process as it offers guidance for lesson plan preparation that meets educational standards.

An effective curriculum development process, according to Kranthi (2017), includes planning, articulating and developing, implementing, and evaluating. Meanwhile, an essential part of the curriculum development process is a discussion among the curriculum planners of their perspectives on how learning occurs to produce the best curriculum, its faculty, and learners. Educators consider assumptions and beliefs, discuss previous experiences, and identify the appropriate explanations for learning as they are relevant to the program under revision (Saylor, 2020).

On the other hand, learning outcomes and acquired competencies are the ultimate indicators or evidence of quality education and an effective learning system. The education system should consider learners not only as beneficiaries but as a benefactor or the “prime human resource” to measure the effectiveness and quality of education. With these, for programs of HEIs to be responsive and relevant, they have to be learner-centered (IBE-UNESCO, 2019).

Teachers or educators, as IBE mentioned, are considered the most valuable pillars in the teaching-learning process. Moreover, the education system has to apply a logical and appropriate selection and preparation process. It should adopt strategies for continuous professional development to provide the entrusted teachers with adequate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. Educational institutions need to give attention to the important factors affecting the quality of teachers to deliver quality education to students/learners.

Furthermore, according to IBE (2019), when provided with a supportive environment, learners will achieve a high level of ability to produce the desired or intended result and become self-driven. IBE also mentioned that when learners are welcomed in a safe and nurturing environment, it helps them develop as individuals and as part of society. HEIs should provide learners with

an environment that is physically and psychosocially supportive of learning effectiveness and conducive to developing quality education.

Furthermore, in education, relevance is defined as the learning experiences that in some way directly apply and connect to the personal aspirations, interests, cultural experiences, issues, contexts, and problems of students in the real world (Education Reform, n.d.). This term relates to a behavioral change when triggered by a stimulus. In science, it is considered to be a characteristic of living organisms. In science, it is considered to be a characteristic of living organisms. To survive, these organisms shall learn and adapt to the changes in environmental conditions. Responsiveness is the driving force for survival. As applied to educational institutions, however, responsiveness means matching society's broad expectations that higher education will adapt to change and help sustain national needs (Ogude et al., 2018). Meanwhile, Stoessel (2016) relates the term '*responsiveness*' with a system or curricular ability of colleges and universities to be internally focused, responding to the direction and needs of a constantly changing enterprise.

Inspired by these concepts, this paper focuses on the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program as assessed by the identified stakeholders based on the curriculum, learners/students, teachers, and learning environment as the four core resources. This paper will also present the initiatives practiced by the College of Business and the desired outcomes to assess the relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program and how effective these initiatives are and will explore the strategies that can be implemented to sustain and calibrate the program. Figure 1 shows the schematic diagram of the conceptual framework of this study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to determine the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod as assessed by the alumni and industry stakeholders. Specifically, the study aimed to, (1) determine the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program as assessed by the alumni, students, and the industry, (2) identify the initiatives that are practiced by the College of Business to achieve the BSCA program's relevance and responsiveness in terms of the following core resources, (a) Curriculum, (b) Learners/Students, (c) Teachers, and (d) Learning Environment, and (3) determine how effective the initiatives as assessed by students and faculty.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive design. Descriptive studies may be characterized as simply the attempt to determine, describe or identify what is or a purposive process to gather, analyze, classify, and tabulate data on existing conditions, processes, beliefs, or trends.

Research Site

This study was conducted at John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Bacolod, Alijis, Bacolod City, specifically in the College of Business and Education offering the Bachelor of Science in Customs Administration program.

Participants

The participants of this study were 24 BSCA students enrolled at JBLCF-Bacolod during the school year 2019-2020, 53 alumni, and 22 company representatives for problem number 1. For problems 2 and 3, the Dean, Program Head, Faculty, 6 representative students, and 6 representative alumni were formed as participants in the discussion workshop. Lastly, all BSCA students and faculty under the program were engaged for problem number 3.

Instrumentation

This study used three sets of survey instruments. The first survey questionnaire for question number 1 was answered by the students and alumni, the second by the industry representatives, and the third set by the BSCA students and faculty. The researcher-made survey questionnaires for objectives number 1 and 3 were derived from the concepts presented by the related literature previously discussed. The questionnaires were composed of questions on the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program answered by the students, alumni, and the concerned industry and at the same time by the students and faculty members to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives currently applied by the College to make the BSCA program relevant and responsive.

The items in the questionnaire for objective number 1 on the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program as assessed by the alumni, students, and the industry were rated using the Likert's Scale with a corresponding verbal interpretation:

| Scale | Verbal Interpretation | Description |
|-------|------------------------|---|
| 5 | To a very great extent | Shows a very significant relevance/responsiveness of the BSCA program |
| 4 | To a great extent | Shows a remarkable relevance/responsiveness of the BSCA program |
| 3 | To a moderate extent | Shows moderate relevance/responsiveness of the BSCA program |
| 2 | To a small extent | Shows little relevance/responsiveness of the BSCA program |
| 1 | Not at all | Shows no relevance/ responsiveness of the BSCA program |

Meanwhile, the items in the questionnaire for objective number 3 on the level of effectiveness of the initiatives as assessed by students and faculty were also rated using the Likert’s Scale as follows:

| Scale | Verbal Interpretation | Description |
|-------|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | Not Effective | The initiative currently applied in the College of Business to make the BSCA program responsive/relevant is ineffective. |
| 2 | Somewhat Effective | The initiative currently applied in the College of Business to make the BSCA program responsive/relevant is effective in some ways. |
| 3 | Moderately Effective | The initiative currently applied in the College of Business to make the BSCA program responsive/relevant is average and effective. |
| 4 | Highly Effective | The initiative currently applied in the College of Business to make the BSCA program responsive/relevant is effective to a high degree. |
| 5 | Very Highly Effective | The initiative currently applied in the College of Business to make the BSCA program responsive/relevant is effective to a very high degree. |

On the other hand, two sets of worksheets were designed to gather data needed for objectives 2 and 3. One set was used to gather data on the initiatives the College of Business currently practiced to achieve the BSCA program’s relevance and responsiveness based on the four core resources by the identified participants.

The two instruments, i.e., three sets of survey questionnaires and two worksheets, were submitted to the Research Committee of John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation-Bacolod for comments, suggestions, and feedback. Five (5) professionals validated the questionnaires. The validation instrument of Good and Scates (1972) was used for this purpose, and they obtained an average of 4.61 and 5, respectively, and both were interpreted as excellent.

To test the reliability of the instruments, Cronbach's alpha was used. The industry questionnaire obtained a coefficient of 9.68 and 9.82 on the questionnaires for alumni and students, and both were interpreted as excellent. On the other hand, the questionnaire for objective number 3 for students got a coefficient of 0.903 and 0.927 for faculty. These results were also interpreted as excellent. According to Mohajan (2017), reliability and validity are the two most important attributes of a research tool or instrument to complete good research.

Research Ethics Protocol

The participants' rights to privacy, in which they were made to understand that their responses were strictly kept confidential and were made available only to the researchers. No one could identify the participants when the results were reported, and the participants' names did not appear anywhere in the written report.

Data Collection

The questionnaires were distributed during the Stakeholders' Satisfaction Survey and the Alumni Gathering in Manila in November 2019. Likewise, each participant was provided a template of the worksheet to fill in and to retrieve information in two separate discussions (i.e., one was made in Manila with the industry representatives during the Stakeholders' Satisfaction Survey and the alumni gathering, and the other was in Bacolod City) to identify the initiatives practiced by the College of Business in achieving the relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program based on the four core resources. Their answers were collated and the output was used to formulate the questionnaire for problem number 3.

Statistical Techniques

The data from the questionnaire were gathered and presented in tables using the appropriate statistical treatment, which includes the following: Mean and Standard Deviation were used for Problem Number 1 on the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program and the effectiveness of initiatives.

| Mean Score Range | Interpretation |
|-------------------------|--|
| 4.21 – 5.00 | Relevant/Responsive to a Very Great Extent |
| 3.41 – 4.20 | Relevant/Responsive to a Great Extent |
| 2.61 – 3.40 | Relevant/Responsive to a Moderate Extent |
| 1.81 – 2.60 | Relevant/Responsive to a Small Extent |
| 1.00 – 1.81 | Not Relevant/Responsive |

Meanwhile, for question number 1 on the effectiveness of the initiatives currently applied by the College, this scale and interpretation were used:

| Mean Score Range | Interpretation |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 4.21 – 5.00 | Very Highly Effective |
| 3.41 – 4.20 | Highly Effective |
| 2.61 – 3.40 | Moderately Effective |
| 1.81 – 2.60 | Somewhat Effective |
| 1.00 – 1.81 | Not Effective |

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The extent of Relevance and Responsiveness of the BSCA Program as Assessed by the Alumni and Students

Figure 1 presents the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program as assessed by the 53 alumni and 24 students based on the four core resources. The results show that teachers got the highest mean results as assessed by the alumni and students. It can be concluded then that the teachers are important resource in the learning process among the four core resources and therefore play a very important role in making the BSCA program relevant and responsive. The results also imply that the college is effective in its current practices and implementation of initiatives and strategies in the teachers' core to make the program relevant and responsive. It also affirms IBE's claim that teachers or educators are considered the most valuable pillars in the teaching-learning process.

This is also supported by Sultan and Shafi (2014), who identified an important link between teacher competencies and viable learning outcomes since students need a personal connection to any learning by emotionally engaging them or connecting the new information with the previously acquired knowledge (Briggs, 2014).

To compare, Figure 1 shows how the alumni and students assessed the relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program based on the four core resources.

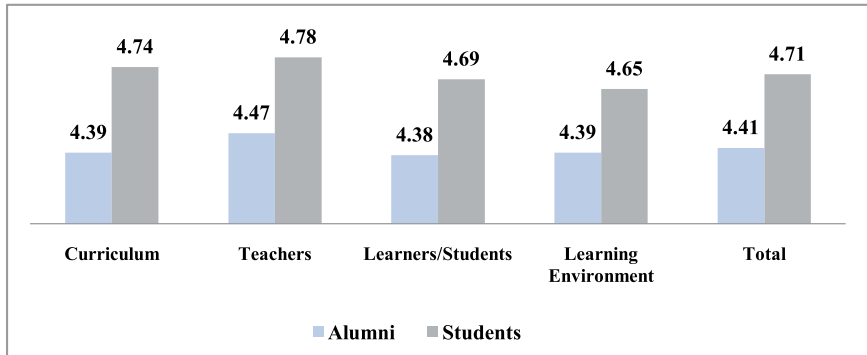


Figure 1. A Graphical Comparison of the Extent of Relevance and Responsiveness of The BSCA Program As Assessed By the Alumni and Students

The Extent of Relevance and Responsiveness of the BSCA Program as Assessed by the Industry

Table 1 presents the extent of relevance and responsiveness of the BSCA program as assessed by the 22 industry representatives. The results show that “*The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod are motivated and determined to perform their assigned tasks with less supervision*” got the highest Mean value of 4.41, interpreted as “Relevant/Responsive to a Very Great Extent.” Meanwhile, the lowest Mean value is 3.77 on “*The BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod emphasizes the development of the emotional and behavioral attributes in dealing with different work situations,*” interpreted as “Relevant/Responsive to a Great Extent.” Here, the overall Mean is 4.11 and interpreted as “Relevant/Responsive to a Great Extent.”

These findings imply that the employers regard “*BSCA graduates of JBLCF-Bacolod who are motivated and determined to perform their assigned tasks with less supervision*” as of very great relevance/responsiveness in the industry.

The results are supported by the study of Dobre (2013) on “Employee Motivation and Organizational Performance,” which states that attaining high levels of productivity in the company is influenced by the level of motivation and effectiveness of its employees.

In light of the findings of this study, it is therefore relevant for the college to train students to develop their sense of responsibility, initiative, motivation, and determination as they prepare for their future employment and answer industry needs. This may also serve teachers and mentors to raise their standards by untiringly uplifting the minds of the students to be competitive and proficient in their area of specialization to cultivate and equip students who are skilled academically and who will actively participate in a globally competitive world of work.

Table 1
The Extent of Relevance and Responsiveness of the BSCA Program as assessed by the Industry

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|--|------|-----|---|
| The BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod provides social, interpersonal, leadership, problem-solving, and other relevant skills applicable to the job. | 3.91 | .81 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |
| The BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod gives emphasis on the development of emotional and behavioral attributes in dealing with different work situations. | 3.77 | .81 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod adhere to personal and professional standards in performing their functions. | 4.18 | .80 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod possess a practical understanding of the nature of their job. | 4.09 | .75 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod demonstrate self-confidence in dealing with clients, fellow professionals, private firms, and/or various government agencies. | 4.09 | .68 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod demonstrate relevant competencies in their field of specialization/line of work. | 4.23 | .81 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Very Great Extent |
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod show initiative, self-management skills, and a sense of responsibility in completing their assigned tasks. | 4.09 | .81 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |

| Indicators | Mean | SD | Interpretation |
|--|------|-----|---|
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod are open-minded and able to adapt to changing situations. | 4.14 | .71 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod are resilient and able to handle work demands, challenges, and expectations. | 4.18 | .80 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |
| The graduates of the BSCA program of JBLCF-Bacolod are motivated and determined to perform their assigned tasks with less supervision. | 4.41 | .67 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Very Great Extent |
| Average Mean | 4.11 | .76 | Relevant/ Responsive to a Great Extent |

Initiatives Practiced by the College of Business

Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 show the collated data gathered during a separate discussion with the Dean, Program Head, Faculty, and representative students and the meeting with the alumni and the industry representatives. These initiatives were based on the four core resources. The collated data shows initiatives the College of Business practiced to make the BSCA program relevant and responsive, including the strategies/activities adopted in each initiative.

Curriculum

Table 2 shows the initiatives practiced in the curriculum by the College of Business to make the BSCA program relevant and responsive, which includes learning from the industry feedback, annual course and curriculum review, values integration in the curriculum, and application of outcomes-based education. These initiatives were assessed by the alumni and students to be effective, as shown in Figure 3 of this study.

By practicing and implementing these initiatives, the college can continuously gather suggestions from its stakeholders, particularly the alumni and the industry partners, to bridge the gap between the academe and the industry concerned. Likewise, enrichment of the curriculum by integrating the core values and OBE approaches is also effective based on institutional and regulatory requirements, respectively.

Table 2

Current Initiatives Implemented/Practiced by the College of Business in the Curriculum to Make the BSCA Program Relevant and Responsive

| Initiatives | Strategies/Activities |
|---|---|
| Learning from the Industry Feedback | Visits to industry partners every November. Conduct surveys and interviews with company representatives to gather firsthand feedback. |
| Course and Curriculum Review | Annual course and curriculum review by Students, Alumni, Industry, Faculty, Program Head, and the Dean. |
| Values Integration | Inclusion of JBLFMU's Core Values and other related values in all courses. |
| Application of Outcomes-Based Education | Inclusion of classroom activities using the Outcomes-based Teaching/Learning Approach in the syllabi. |

Presented in Table 3 are the current initiatives implemented/practiced by the College of Business for the teachers to make the BSCA Program relevant and responsive with corresponding strategies/activities for each initiative.

To improve the teacher competencies, the initiative of the college is the continuous upgrading of faculty by conducting a training needs assessment where each faculty needs to identify the competency they need to undergo training/upgrading, attendance to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs, training, and seminars to keep them abreast with the latest in their field of specialization and pursue graduate and post-graduate studies to comply with the requirements of CHED, and different accrediting agencies.

Another initiative is the efficiency evaluation of faculty through periodic classroom observation by the program head and the dean; and evaluation of faculty by students, peers, program head, dean, and administrator at the end of every semester. This is to assess the performance level of faculty, identify areas for improvement, and recommend training opportunities.

Strict implementation of the policy on selection and hiring is also an initiative practiced by the college by looking into teacher-applicants' qualifications in making relevant decisions during the hiring process and evaluating their work experiences and other competencies as needed in the program.

By practicing these initiatives, the college can identify its teachers' strengths and weaknesses and the gaps to address.

Table 3

Current Initiatives Implemented/Practiced by the College of Business for Teachers to Make the BSCA Program Relevant and Responsive

| Initiatives | Strategies/Activities |
|---|---|
| Upgrading/Continuous Improvement of Competencies | Conduct of Training Needs Assessment Attendance to CPD programs, training, and seminars Pursuit of Graduate/Post Graduate Studies |
| Conduct of Efficiency Evaluation | Periodic Classroom Observation Evaluation of Faculty by Students, Peers, Program Head, Dean, and Administrator |
| Strict Implementation of the Policy on Selection and Hiring | Proper selection of faculty based on their qualifications Evaluation of work experiences and other competencies |
| Involvement in the Curriculum/Course Review | Periodic curriculum/course review by faculty |

Table 4 shows the current initiatives implemented/practiced by the College of Business for the learners/students to make the BSCA Program relevant and responsive with corresponding strategies/activities for each initiative which is aligned with the curricular and non-curricular activities stated in the Academic Affairs Manual and Student Handbook of John B. Lacson Foundation (JBLF) System to supplement and facilitate a more meaningful learning experience for students in addition to regular classroom instructional programs that are in accordance with the program requirements. The college, however, introduced more initiatives to strengthen the learning process.

As stated in the study of Rathore et al. (2018), knowledge nourishes the human mind, and physical exercise helps the body to be in good shape, while students need an environment that offers opportunities to participate in different activities as they develop their self-confidence, communication skills, and good physical health. As proven by the results of their study, students who participate in various activities are also more engaged in school time, have better exam grades, and have motivation toward education. These initiatives were also assessed as effective by the students and faculty, as shown in Figure 2.

Table 4

Current Initiatives Implemented/Practiced by the College of Business for Learners/Students to Make the BSCA Program Relevant and Responsive

| Initiatives | Strategies/Activities |
|--|--|
| Attendance/ Participation in Enhancement Programs | Enhancement Programs On-the-Job Training (OJT) during the summer of incoming senior students. Field trip/Educational tour as required in a particular course. Familiarization Activities for specific courses. |
| Encourage participation in Activities | Conducting activities that encourage full participation of students, which may include but are not limited to Intramurals and Culminating activities. Involvement in Clubs and Organizations. |
| Providing Values Clarification Activities | Conducting activities that promote and develop JBLFMU’s Core Values and other related values. Ask students to identify and reflect on what values they learned, applied, and developed after every activity. Participation of students in spiritual/values enhancement programs like retreat/recollection. |
| Applying Interventions/ Mechanisms for Students with Academic Deficiencies | Regular monitoring of the academic performance of students through their grades. Sending students’ grades to their parents periodically Conducting academic counseling by faculty or referring student concerns to the Guidance Office. Providing peer mentoring or tutorials for students with academic deficiencies. Holding Parent-Teacher conferences to discuss student concerns. |

Finally, to complete the answer for objective number 2, shown in Table 5 are the current initiatives implemented/practiced by the College of Business in the learning environment, which includes the provision of classrooms and facilities that are conducive to learning, compliance with health, safety, and environmental standards, availability of services and support services to cater to students needs and by gathering feedback from stakeholders.

These initiatives and adopted strategies by the college are anchored in JBLFMU’s Integrated Management System (IMS) Policy: *“We are committed to continually aim for the highest standards of Quality Education and Training, taking into account relevant educational, scientific and technological developments, managing intellectual property, Health, Safety, Environmental Protection, Pollution Prevention and Social Responsibility, in our consistent drive to satisfy and strive to exceed stakeholders’ needs and expectations”.*

Table 5

Current Initiatives Implemented/Practiced by the College of Business in the Learning Environment to Make the BSCA Program Relevant and Responsive

| Initiatives | Strategies/Activities |
|---|--|
| Provision of Classrooms and Facilities that are Conducive to Learning | Regular checking of classrooms/facilities by the Services and Facilities Office Identification of areas for improvement and providing necessary recommendations |
| Compliance with Health, Safety, and Environmental Standards | Creating a core group/committee on Health, Safety, and Environmental Protection Organizing programs/activities that incorporate the JBLFMU's Integrated Management System Policy Appointment of class officers on Health, Safety, and Environmental Protection |
| Availability of Services and Support System | Providing corresponding offices to cater to students' needs and answer student concerns (e. g., Guidance Office, Library, Clinic, Registrar, Student Activity Services, Accounting, Dean's office) |
| Gathering Feedback from Stakeholders | Providing suggestion boxes in strategic areas within the campus. Annual conduct of Stakeholders' Satisfaction Survey (i.e., students, employees, parents, alumni, and industry) Parents and Employees Assembly |

The Level of Effectiveness of the Initiatives of the College of Business as Assessed by the Faculty and Students

Figure 2 presents how the faculty and students assessed the effectiveness of the current initiatives implemented/practiced in the College of Business to make the BSCA program relevant and responsive. The Teachers' Core got the highest results from both stakeholders, while the Learning Environment got a lower mean value of 4.25 for faculty compared to 4.67 for the students. It also shows that the students assessed the initiatives higher than the faculty, but both results were interpreted as "Very Highly Effective."

These results have proven that the stakeholders consider the initiatives practiced/implemented by the college effective, especially the teachers' core, as it reflects the level of effectiveness of the systems and mechanisms in place for obtaining suitable and motivated individuals who enter the teaching profession, for selection and hiring of candidates, their retention and training for effective delivery of instruction.

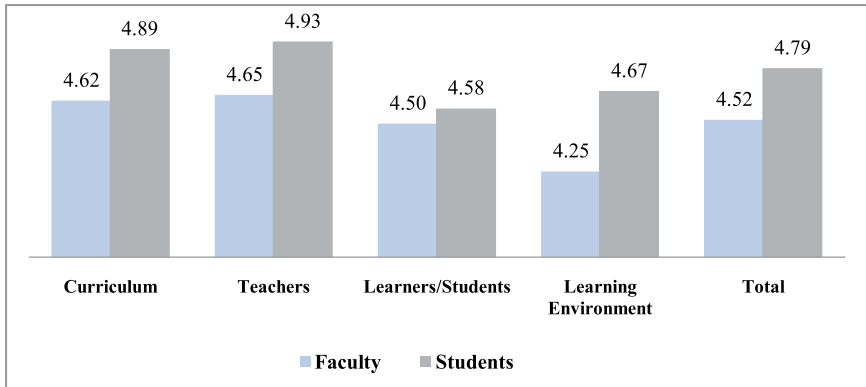


Figure 2. A graphical comparison between the faculty and students’ assessment of the level of effectiveness of the initiatives implemented/practiced by the College of Business

CONCLUSIONS

This study has shown that it is important for higher education institutions to identify the importance of a particular program it offers. As proven by the results from the data gathered, it can be concluded that the identified stakeholders consider the BSCA program relevant and responsive.

As to the teachers core with the highest average mean results, it can be concluded that without an adequate focus on teachers, the quality of education is not feasible, as supported by IBE’s General Education System Quality Analysis/Diagnosis Framework (GEQAF). As new and more complex roles are placed on teachers, coherent selection and continuous professional development strategies must be in place to endow them with the required knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values and retain them in the profession.

On the other hand, the curriculum is relevant and responsive and plays an important role in forging lifelong learning and competencies. It is increasingly called upon for revision as it contributes to developing skills and acquiring knowledge and values that students/learners need to apply in the context of their studies, daily life, future careers, and what the industry needs. The initiatives practiced and implemented by the College in the curriculum by requiring the participation of the stakeholders in its periodic review and revision and gathering feedback from industry partners through a survey and/or interview of company representatives have also been proven effective.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The present study is a valuable contribution to the field of Customs Administration and business education. The results of the study revealed that while the BSCA program has generally met the expectations of its stakeholders, there are still areas for improvement.

The College of Business may consider alignment of the curriculum, programs, and activities with the needs and recommendations of the stakeholders during the review and updating of the curriculum to continually ensure that it is relevant to the current needs of the industry. Also, the College of Business shall continue partnering with industry stakeholders to enhance teacher competencies through seminars, trainings and industry immersion programs. This could involve working with industry professionals to identify emerging trends and skills required for success in the field.

Moreover, offering more opportunities for students to gain practical experience through internships and other work-based learning opportunities is another initiative to explore because of low results in the learning environment core as shown in the results.

A Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding between the college, industry partners, and other stakeholders may be executed to answer these needs. The college may also initiate to formally organize an Academic Advisory Council for the BSCA program, composed of representatives from students, faculty, alumni, parents, industry partners and other stakeholders. Guidelines/By-laws shall be formulated stating the duties and responsibilities of the officers and members of the council. The objective is to continuously improve the program and to gather suggestions and formulate recommendations in improving the current enrolment, which is the root cause of this study.

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