

# Contributions of On-the-Job Training Program to the Skills, Personal Qualities and Competencies of Tourism Graduates

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**Abstract** – *This study ascertains the contributions of on-the-job training (OJT) program of a university to the development of skills, personal qualities and competencies of tourism students. The study is descriptive and uses survey questionnaire for data gathering. Respondents consist of 74 tourism graduates from 2009 to 2013, which is 75.5% of the total number of graduates. Results show that the OJT program of the university has significant contributions to the development of students' basic skills, thinking skills, personal qualities and competencies on resources, interpersonal, information, systems and technology. Further, the similarities of OJT contributions for males and females imply that there is no gender bias in the training places while the differences on OJT contributions for self-employed, casual, contractual and permanent employees indicate that those with more skills and competencies are more inclined to entrepreneurial activities than to employment. The OJT program is also consistent throughout the years in providing skills and personal qualities as indicated by the non-difference on OJT contributions when grouped according to graduation year. Of immediate concern, however, is the decline of OJT contributions to the competencies of 2013 graduates. The study recommends that the university should tie-up with more tourism industry partners that can give excellent trainings for students and offer more international OJT for them to be more globally competitive. The training of students should also be regularly monitored by university training coordinators. Finally, the university may also consider and study ways on how to develop the entrepreneurial skills of tourism students.*

**Keywords** – *basic skills, competencies, on-the-job training, personal qualities, thinking skills*

## INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions are expected to prepare students for employment or practice of profession. However, industries often complain that graduates lack the necessary skills and competencies they require. These skills and competencies required by employers are usually called employability skills and many studies on the enhancement of these skills had been done. For instance, a study on employability skills of business students recommended that educational practices and activities should include those that will enhance the skills of students in critical thinking and problem solving, systematic information management, group leadership and motivation, and plan or project development and implementation [1].

Entering the employment market is now becoming a big challenge for graduates of higher education institutions (HEIs). A transition from university to work environment can be very stressful for new graduates who are not well prepared. They may have lofty goals for their careers but these usually do not live up to their expectations. This mismatch between their expectations and the real world should be bridged during their studies through some forms of industry engagement like internship [2].

Further, major changes in the competitive business and education environment indicate the need for curricular reforms in tourism and hospitality management. The global economy requires more globalized perspective in education. Changes in demography, economy, politics and technology have

modified business settings. In addition, the number of degree programs in hospitality and tourism management offered in HEIs and graduates from these programs has grown tremendously leading to very competitive environment among HEIs and among their graduates. The needed reforms represent a call for new data from professionals to guide the educational process in tourism and hospitality management [3].

The changing global employment market, competition, technological advances and patterns of demand require new employability skills from graduates for them to cope with varying conditions of tourism business world [4]. This led tourism educators and professionals from different regions of the world to conduct studies on competencies acquired by tourism students and graduates, the requirement of tourism industry, and how industry-based trainings help students acquire the needed competencies.

In the United States, a study reviewed the key competencies of hospitality and tourism students emphasized by industry leaders for success in the field over a 25-year period and reported key changes in skills demanded of graduates [3]. A similar study in Austria surveyed domestic and international internship partners to assess the required employability skills from employers' point of view and suggested that HEIs should endorse professional, social, personal and activity-oriented skills of students sustainably to assure better employability prospects after graduation [4]. Results of a study in Slovenia also point out that serious measures have to be taken to boost students' future opportunities in employment [2].

In the United Kingdom, a study argued that while some skills of students can be developed in classrooms, internship can provide them a wider range and aid in the clarification of their career goals [5] while in Ghana, another study argued that for students to meet the needs of industry for employment, internship should be given priority in designing curriculum [6]. A paper presented the industry perceptions and expectations on tourism and hospitality graduates competencies in the Malaysian perspectives and suggested balance competencies between theory and practice [7]. Key findings of another research imply that the internship program effectively contributes to the development of Australian tourism and hospitality students [8].

In the Philippines, a study analyzed the level of performance of interns as evaluated by their industry supervisors and concluded that interns have satisfactory level academic performance and very good training

performance but found no significant relationship between academic and training performances [9]. Another study identified students' experiences during internship as well as the acquired knowledge, skills, attitude and personality and also found no significant difference between these attributes acquired in international internship and those acquired in local internship [10].

Considering sustainable development as the key to optimal tourism growth, the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has developed set of programs on tourism, hospitality management and related fields to support the tourism industry and address its manpower needs. CHED has identified five competencies that tourism graduates should possess such as *resources, interpersonal, information, systems and technology*, as well as skills and personal qualities namely *basic skills, thinking skills and personal qualities*. CHED also ordered Philippine HEIs to include practicum as part of the curriculum for bachelor's degree programs in tourism as it provides students opportunities to apply classroom learning to actual work in commercial establishments, government or non-government agencies [11].

In addition, CHED has also issued a memorandum order that sets policy-standard to enhance the quality assurance of Philippine HEIs through learning competency-based standards and outcomes-based system [12]. The shift to outcomes-based education (OBE) of a university was also the subject of a recent paper that presents concepts central to OBE, which is believed to provide solid framework for students to acquire the necessary competencies [13].

In most Philippine HEIs, practicum or internship is also called on-the-job training program or simply OJT. In a Philippine state university, the OJT is being managed by the Industry-Academe Cooperative Education Program Office, which is organized to provide avenue for productive and progressive partnership between the industry and the university and facilitate local and international OJT of students. For tourism program, the required OJT is 240 hours during summer term on second year and another 360 hours during second semester on fourth year for a total of 600 OJT hours.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

With the above circumstances, this study was conducted to ascertain the contributions of OJT program of a Philippine state university to the students'

attainment of needed skills, personal qualities and competencies of tourism graduates as assessed by the graduates themselves who undergone OJT during their school years. It also aimed to determine if there are significant differences on the perceived contributions of OJT to the development of skills, personal qualities and competencies when respondent graduates are grouped according to sex, graduation year and employment status. As such, the null hypothesis is: *There is no significant difference on the perceived contributions of OJT to skills, personal qualities and competencies when graduates are grouped according to sex, graduation year and employment status.*

Findings of this study may be used for the betterment of OJT in helping students develop skills, personal qualities and competencies needed to succeed in their future careers.

## METHODS

This study employs descriptive research design utilizing survey approach. Using the skills, personal qualities and competencies of tourism graduates identified by CHED, a survey questionnaire was developed by the researchers. The questionnaire was validated by tourism educators and professionals and subjected to a dry run. Thirty tourism graduates from other universities were asked to answer the trial questionnaire. The data gathered were analyzed for reliability and resulting to Cronbach's alpha of .9273.

The questionnaire is a checklist consisting of two parts where the first part is intended to determine the sex, graduation year and employment status of respondents while the second part is for their perceptions on how their on-the-job trainings contributed to the development of their skills, personal qualities and competencies using the indicators formulated by researchers base on CHED definitions of the variables.

No sampling method was employed since the goal is to solicit the participation of all 98 tourism graduates of the subject university from 2009 to 2013. However, only 74 or 75.5% of the total number of graduates were able to participate in the two-month survey. Several ways of reaching the target participants were utilized. Those who are working in nearby places were personally met by the data gatherers in their work places or residences. Those who are working in far places in the Philippines and in other countries were reached through emails and social media. Information regarding their works, residences, emails and contact

numbers were provided by the alumni office and by their former instructors or professors and classmates.

SPSS was employed to analyze the data gathered. To interpret mean, the following was used: *Very Much* (3.50-4.00), *Much* (2.50-3.49), *Little* (1.50-2.49), *Very Little* (1.00-1.49). Independent samples t-test was used to establish significant difference between the perceptions of males and females and one-way ANOVA for the differences on the perceptions of different groups segregated according to graduation year and employment status.

Some limitations of this study need to be mentioned also for these may suggest other methods for future studies. Data obtained from the survey are subjective in nature for those are only perceptions of the respondents. Other ways of determining the skills, personal qualities and competencies of graduates like examinations and actual work observations may be employed in future studies. The limited variables and indicators used in this study may also be expanded in the future.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Number of Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percent
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	18	24.3
Female	56	75.7
<i>Graduation Year</i>		
2009	5	6.8
2010	7	9.5
2011	9	12.2
2012	26	35.1
2013	27	36.5
<i>Employment Status</i>		
Permanent	14	18.9
Contractual	49	66.2
Casual	10	13.5
Self-Employed	1	1.4
Total	74	100.0

Table 1 shows the number of respondents per group as segregated according to sex, graduation year and employment status. Three-fourths of the respondents are females, more than 70% recently graduated on 2012 and 2013 and majority are contractual employees.

Table 2 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to the development of their basic skills. Results show that the graduates were able to speak fluently and improve their computer abilities *very much* during OJT. The smallest OJT contribution is on reading tourism-related codes though they still learned *much*.

Table 2. OJT Contributions to Basic Skills

Indicators	Mean
1. I learned how to read tourism-related codes.	3.04
2. I learned how to communicate well and deal with guests.	3.39
3. I was able to enhance my mathematical skills.	3.47
4. I was able to speak fluently.	3.51
5. I was able to improve my ability to use computers.	3.55
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.39</b>

The OJT experiences that contributed to the development of their basic skills included the following: actual tour guiding with the assistance of a professional tour guide, handling group of people and leading them to their destination, dealing with different requests of tourists and guests, accommodations of guests, and reservations and bookings.

Table 3. OJT Contributions to Thinking Skills

Indicators	Mean
1. I learned how to check and inspect the quality of work and output.	3.53
2. I learned how to solve problems related to my work.	3.50
3. I learned how to make right decisions.	3.42
4. I became more responsible in problem solving and decision making related to my work.	3.38
5. I became aware of the rules and regulations implemented by tourism agencies or offices.	3.42
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.45</b>

Table 3 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to the development of their thinking skills. Results show that the graduates learned how to check and inspect work quality and how to solve work-related problems *very much* in their OJT. The smallest OJT contribution is on becoming more responsible in problem solving and decision making.

In their OJT, some students were able to experience how to organize events like festivals and conventions that help them developed their thinking skills. Some also experienced being involved in tour organizing and planning. Most OJT students also experienced dealing with complaints of guests and solved office-related work problems.

Table 4 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to the development of their personal qualities. Results show that the graduates were able to improve their personal hygiene *very much* during OJT.

Table 4. OJT Contributions to Personal Qualities

Indicators	Mean
1. I learned how to manage my time properly.	3.49
2. I was able to socialize and communicate with different people.	3.38
3. I was able to enhance my personality in the presence of other employees and guests.	3.43
4. I was able to work more independently with personal initiative and less supervision.	3.46
5. I was able to improve my personal hygiene.	3.61
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.47</b>

The smallest OJT contribution is on the ability to socialize and communicate with different people although they assessed that also as *much*. The day-to day office routine of the OJT students contributed to their desirable personal qualities. These include communicating with their officemates, dealing with guests and tourists, and doing particular tasks.

Table 5. OJT Contributions to Resources Competencies

Indicators	Mean
I learned how to allocate the available resources.	3.49
I was able to use available resources creatively.	3.43
I was able to manage finances.	3.43
I was able to apply my learning on how to use resources for a particular activity.	3.39
I learned to manage my time and other resources in doing tasks assigned to me.	3.43
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.44</b>

Table 5 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to their *resources* competencies. Results show that the graduates' highest evaluation of OJT contribution is on the allocation of available resources and the lowest is on using resources for a particular activity although they learned *much* on both. During OJT, students were often asks by their supervisors to manage their time and resources, particularly in organizing events and handling different groups of people at almost the same time.

Table 6 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to their *interpersonal* competencies. Results show that the graduates during their OJT became *very much* more confident in dealing with other people and learned also *very much* on how to respect co-workers, how to practice work ethics and professionalism, and how to understand the values, ideas, beliefs, opinions, needs, and want of other people; but were able to share their ideals and aspirations to co-workers only *much*.

Table 6. OJT Contributions to Interpersonal Competencies

Indicators	Mean
1. I became more confident in dealing with other people.	3.54
2. I learned how to respect my co-workers.	3.50
3. I learned how to practice work ethics and professionalism.	3.55
4. I was able to share to my co-workers my ideals and aspirations.	3.45
5. I learned how to understand the values, ideas, beliefs, opinions, needs, and want of other people.	3.55
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.52</b>

Front office works and guest relations able the OJT students to develop their interpersonal competencies. Working with a team in an office or in organizing events and tour also helped them improve their interpersonal competencies.

Table 7. OJT Contributions to Information Competencies

Indicators	Mean
1. I learned how to use the information provided by the company in accomplishing a task.	3.47
2. I was able to use relevant information in making decisions related to work.	3.51
3. I was able to provide accurate data in my reports.	3.47
4. I learned how to handle and harmonize conflicting reports.	3.53
5. I was able to know the real environment of my chosen field.	3.53
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.50</b>

Table 7 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to their *information* competencies. Results show that the graduates during their OJT were able to know the real work environment and to use relevant information in making decisions *very much* and also learned how to handle and harmonize conflicting reports *very much*; but learned how to use available information in accomplishing task and were able to provide accurate data in reports only *much*.

Familiarization with different events and festivities in the area of assignment helped the OJT students improved their information competencies. In addition, they were able to be acquainted with and utilized tourism statistics in the promotion of their establishments and their events.

Table 8. OJT Contributions to Systems Competencies

Indicators	Mean
1. I was able to provide all the requirements needed from me by the company.	3.57
2. I learned how to supervise, assist or coordinate all activities related to my work.	3.51
3. I had developed my behaviour and ability to apply business ethics on different transactions.	3.57
4. I was able to contribute significantly to the company and became part of its success.	3.53
5. I was able to contribute to the team spirit and cooperation in the organization.	3.49
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.53</b>

Table 8 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to their *systems* competencies. Results show that the graduates during OJT were able to provide all company requirements and contribute significantly to the company, developed behaviour and ability to apply business ethics, and learned how to supervise, assist or coordinate activities *very much*; but were able to contribute to team spirit and cooperation only *much*.

Being a contributory part of a complex system is an important competency. During OJT, the students were able to be a part of a team, particularly in tourism promotion and events organization. Liaising and coordinating with different groups of people and different offices or agencies had been part of their task that contributed to the development of their systems competencies.

Table 9. OJT Contributions to Technology Competencies

Indicators	Mean
1. I was able to use the computer system effectively.	3.46
2. I learned how to make reservations through computer reservation system.	3.45
3. I learned how to make transactions through credit cards.	3.50
4. I learned how to make online transactions.	3.49
5. I learned how to effectively use the internet on my work.	3.47
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.47</b>

Table 9 presents the graduates' perceptions on OJT contributions to their *technology* competencies. Results show that the graduates learned credit card transactions *very much* during OJT. The smallest OJT contribution is on making reservations through computer reservation system although they still learned *much*.

OJT experiences of the students that contributed to their technology competencies were using hotel reservation system such as Micro Fidelio, tourism-related transactions through the internet, credit card transactions, along with the customary use of computers for information and communication purposes.

Table 10. Overall OJT Contributions to Skills, Personal Qualities and Competencies

Variables	Mean
Basic Skills	3.39
Thinking Skills	3.45
Personal Qualities	3.47
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.44</b>
Resources	3.44
Interpersonal	3.52
Information	3.50
Systems	3.53
Technology	3.47
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.49</b>

Table 10 presents the overall OJT contributions to skills, personal qualities and competencies of tourism graduates. On skills and personal qualities, the biggest OJT contribution is on personal qualities while the smallest is on basic skills. On competencies, the biggest OJT contribution is on systems while the smallest is on resources. Generally, OJT has a little greater contribution to competencies than to skills and personal qualities since trainings are usually designed for the development of needed competencies.

Table 11. Differences on OJT Contributions to Skills and Personal Qualities grouped according to Sex

Variables	Sex	Mean	t	p	Dec.	Int.
Basic Skills	Male	3.51	1.264	.210	FR	NS
	Female	3.36				
Thinking Skills	Male	3.50	.555	.580	FR	NS
	Female	3.43				
Personal Qualities	Male	3.43	-.397	.692	FR	NS
	Female	3.48				
Overall	Male	3.48	.522	.603	FR	NS
	Female	3.43				

Legend: Dec.-Decision on Null Hypothesis; FR-Fail to Reject; Int.-Interpretation; NS-Not Significant

Table 11 shows the results of t-test on the differences between the perceptions of males and females regarding OJT contributions to their skills and personal qualities. Results show that, at .05 level of significance, there is no significant difference or the perceptions of males and females are almost the same, as indicated by p-values > .05. This confirmed that males and females are really equally skilled and qualified.

Table 12. Differences on OJT Contributions to Skills & Personal Qualities grouped according to Graduation Year

Variables	Year	Mean	F	p	Dec.	Int.
Basic Skills	2009	3.44				
	2010	3.17				
	2011	3.18	2.262	.071	FR	NS
	2012	3.58				
	2013	3.34				
Thinking Skills	2009	3.80				
	2010	3.51				
	2011	3.40	1.591	.187	FR	NS
	2012	3.52				
	2013	3.32				
Personal Qualities	2009	3.76				
	2010	3.40				
	2011	3.60	1.341	.264	FR	NS
	2012	3.54				
	2013	3.33				
Overall	2009	3.67				
	2010	3.36				
	2011	3.39	1.499	.212	FR	NS
	2012	3.54				
	2013	3.33				

Legend: Dec.-Decision on Null Hypothesis; FR-Fail to Reject; Int.-Interpretation; NS-Not Significant

Table 12 shows the results of ANOVA on the differences among graduates' perceptions regarding OJT contributions to their skills and personal qualities when grouped according to graduation year. Results show that, at .05 level of significance, there is no significant difference or the perceptions of graduates when grouped according to graduation year are almost the same, as indicated by p-values > .05. This implied that the OJT program implementation was consistent as to the development of skills and personal qualities of the students throughout the five-year period under survey.

Table 13 shows the results of ANOVA on the differences among graduates' perceptions regarding OJT contributions to their skills and personal qualities when grouped according to employment status. Results show that, at .05 level of significance, there is no significant difference or the perceptions of graduates when grouped according to employment status regarding OJT contributions to their basic skills and thinking skills are almost the same, as indicated by p-values > .05.

However, there are significant differences on the perceptions of the different groups regarding OJT contributions to their personal qualities, as indicated by p-value < .05. In particular, self-employed and casual employees have higher assessments than permanent and contractual employees, as shown by the group means.

Table 13. Differences on OJT Contributions to Skills and Personal Qualities grouped according to Employment Status

Variables	Employment	Mean	F	p	Dec.	Int.
Basic Skills	Permanent	3.60	2.140	.103	FR	NS
	Contractual	3.31				
	Casual	3.50				
	Self-Employed	3.80				
Thinking Skills	Permanent	3.54	2.557	.062	FR	NS
	Contractual	3.36				
	Casual	3.70				
	Self-Employed	4.00				
Personal Qualities	Permanent	3.60	3.157	.030	R	S
	Contractual	3.36				
	Casual	3.78				
	Self-Employed	4.00				
Overall	Permanent	3.58	3.410	.022	R	S
	Contractual	3.34				
	Casual	3.66				
	Self-Employed	3.93				

Legend: Dec.-Decision on Null Hypothesis; FR-Fail to Reject; R-Reject; Int.-Interpretation; NS-Not Significant; S-Significant

This indicates that those students before who perceived that OJT contributed to the development of their personal qualities much more than the others are those who are now casually-employed and self-employed. These persons are those who are not contractually or permanently tied-up with one employer and, as such, had more acquaintances with different people in the field, working more independently and managing their own time, which is where their personal qualities direct them to.

Table 14. Differences on OJT Contributions to Competencies grouped according to Sex

Variables	Sex	Mean	t	p	Dec	Int.
Resources	Male	3.53	1.038	.30.	FR	NS
	Female	3.40				
Interpersonal	Male	3.61	.975	.333	FR	NS
	Female	3.49				
Information	Male	3.60	1.107	.272	FR	NS
	Female	3.47				
Systems	Male	3.52	-.109	.914	FR	NS
	Female	3.54				
Technology	Male	3.60	1.414	.162	FR	NS
	Female	3.43				
Overall	Male	3.57	1.013	.314	FR	NS
	Female	3.47				

Legend: Dec.-Decision on Null Hypothesis; FR-Fail to Reject; Int.-Interpretation; NS-Not Significant

Table 14 shows the results of t-test on the differences between the perceptions of males and females regarding OJT contributions to their competencies. Results show that, at .05 level of significance, there is no significant difference or the perceptions of males and females are almost the same, as indicated by p-values > .05. This may suggest, though indirectly, that there was no gender bias in the training places of the students, or at the least, they did not feel during their OJT that males and females were treated differently.

Table 15. Differences on OJT Contributions to Competencies grouped according to Graduation Year

Variables	Year	Mean	F	p	Dec.	Int.
Resources	2009	3.56	2.699	.038	R	S
	2010	3.49				
	2011	3.38				
	2012	3.62				
	2013	3.24				
Interpersonal	2009	3.92	2.712	.037	R	S
	2010	3.46				
	2011	3.64				
	2012	3.61				
	2013	3.33				
Information	2009	3.80	3.987	.006	R	S
	2010	3.40				
	2011	3.51				
	2012	3.68				
	2013	3.30				
Systems	2009	3.88	2.118	.088	FR	NS
	2010	3.51				
	2011	3.51				
	2012	3.65				
	2013	3.37				
Technology	2009	3.72	5.388	.001	R	S
	2010	3.40				
	2011	3.44				
	2012	3.71				
	2013	3.23				
Overall	2009	3.78	4.187	.004	R	S
	2010	3.45				
	2011	3.50				
	2012	3.65				
	2013	3.29				

Legend: Dec.-Decision on Null Hypothesis; R-Reject; FR-Fail to Reject; Int.-Interpretation; S-Significant; NS-Not Significant

Table 15 shows the results of ANOVA on the differences among graduates' perceptions regarding OJT contributions to their competencies when grouped according to graduation year. Results show that, at .05 level of significance, there is no significant difference or the perceptions of graduates when grouped according to graduation year regarding OJT contributions to systems competencies are almost the same, as indicated



by p-values > .05. However, there are significant differences on the perceptions of different groups regarding OJT contributions to *resources*, *interpersonal*, *information*, *technology* and overall competencies, as indicated by p-values < .05. In particular, graduates of 2009 and 2012 have higher assessments than graduates of 2010, 2011 and 2013 on *resources* and *technology* and in overall and graduates of 2009, 2011 and 2012 have higher assessments than graduates of 2010 and 2013 on *interpersonal* and *information*, as shown by the group means.

While OJT program implementation seems to be consistent throughout the years concerning the development of students' skills and personal qualities, the differences here indicate that there is somewhat inconsistency on OJT program implementation as regards improvement of needed competencies. This probable inconsistency on OJT program implementation merits further investigation, although the reasons behind may not be the program itself but the implementers and the students themselves.

Table 16. Differences on OJT Contributions to Competencies grouped according to Employment Status

Variables	Employment	Mean	F	p	Dec.	Int.
Resources	Permanent	3.46	4.384	.007	R	S
	Contractual	3.33				
	Casual	3.84				
	Self-Employed	4.00				
Interpersonal	Permanent	3.47	3.421	.022	R	S
	Contractual	3.44				
	Casual	3.90				
	Self-Employed	4.00				
Information	Permanent	3.47	2.271	.088	FR	NS
	Contractual	3.44				
	Casual	3.78				
	Self-Employed	4.00				
Systems	Permanent	3.51	2.090	.109	FR	NS
	Contractual	3.47				
	Casual	3.82				
	Self-Employed	4.00				
Technology	Permanent	3.39	3.210	.028	R	S
	Contractual	3.42				
	Casual	3.84				
	Self-Employed	3.80				
Overall	Permanent	3.46	4.107	.010	R	S
	Contractual	3.42				
	Casual	3.84				
	Self-Employed	3.96				

Legend: Dec.-Decision on Null Hypothesis; R-Reject; FR-Fail to Reject; Int.-Interpretation; S-Significant; NS-Not Significant

Table 16 shows the results of ANOVA on the differences among graduates' perceptions regarding OJT contributions to their competencies when grouped

according to employment status. Results show that, at .05 level of significance, there is no significant difference or the perceptions of graduates grouped according to employment status regarding OJT contributions to *information* and *system* competencies are almost the same, as indicated by p-values > .05.

However, there are significant differences on the perceptions of different groups regarding OJT contributions to *resources*, *interpersonal*, *technology* and overall competencies, as indicated by p-values < .05. In particular, self-employed and casual employees have higher assessments than permanent and contractual employees in the said competencies, as shown by the group means. This indicates that those graduates who perceived that the OJT contributed to the development of their competencies much more than the others are those who are inclined to a more independent employment, as casual and self-employed, or to entrepreneurial thinking.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Clear enough, the OJT program of the university significantly contributes to the development of basic skills, thinking skills, personal qualities and competencies on resources, interpersonal, information, systems and technology needed by tourism graduates as perceived by the graduates themselves. However, it is still recommended that the university, particularly those who implement the OJT program, still look for ways on how to enhance the trainings of students with particular concerns on the presented indicators with the lowest mean for each skill or competency.

The similarities of the OJT contributions to the skills, personal qualities and competencies of males and females is a clear sign that there was no gender bias in the training places of the students. Likewise, the non-difference on OJT contributions to skills and personal qualities when grouped according to graduation year indicates the consistency of trainings given throughout the years as to the development of basic skills, thinking skills and personal qualities.

However, the results of tests of differences on OJT contributions to competencies when grouped according to graduation year show that there is a decline in year 2013, which has the lowest mean in all aspects. This phenomenon needs immediate concern and perhaps the university should look closer on how the OJT program was implemented on that year. It is also recommended that the university should tie-up with more tourism industry partners that could give excellent trainings for



students and offer more international trainings in the years to come to enhance not only the skills, personal qualities and competencies of students but global competitiveness as well. Further, students undergoing OJT should be regularly monitored about their training performances by the university training coordinators.

On the other hand, the results of test of differences on OJT contributions to skills, personal qualities and competencies when grouped according to employment status, where the self-employed and casual employees (those not permanently or contractually tied-up with one employer) have higher means or assessments than the permanent and contractual employees is a good sign that those graduates who are more skilled and competent are also more inclined on entrepreneurial activities than employment. As such, the university may also consider and study ways on how to develop the entrepreneurial skills of tourism students.

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