

Evaluating MOL-Magsaysay Maritime Academy's Educational Program: Performance of First Graduates and Stakeholders' Feedback

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Abstract

MMMA's Educational Program provide students with an opportunity to develop the necessary technical skills (Hard skills) and personality traits (Soft skills) to become a well-rounded and a successful seafarer and individual. MMMA's Educational Program includes two areas of activities and experiences that are designed to enhance the student's learning. Specifically, this includes the approved CHED-MARINA prescribed and regulated Maritime Academic Curriculum underpinned on the STCW Convention, and MMMA's own Leadership Training Paradigm, anchored on the principle of Transformational Leadership through Coaching. This paper aims to determine whether MMMA's educational program is effective in preparing students for their careers in the maritime industry. The primary objective of the study is to evaluate MMMA's educational program by obtaining key stakeholders' and employers' feedback based on the work performance of the first graduates, and exploring whether there is a relationship between the 3-year classroom instruction performance and the 12-month onboard training performance. By examining both classroom and onboard performance outcomes and key stakeholders' and employers' feedback, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the academy's impact on its graduates' readiness for the maritime workforce. The research utilizes a descriptive-correlational approach. Preliminary findings indicate that the majority of the first graduates have demonstrated strong academic competence and skills during the 3-year classroom instruction and during the 12-month shipboard training, both in the areas of technical skills (hard skills) and personality skills (soft skills) based on the results of the document analysis. Correlation results also showed that there is a linear relationship between the manifestation of soft skills during the 3-year academic classroom instruction and the 12-month shipboard training, but there was no relationship on the technical skills. On the other hand, satisfaction ratings provided by the two groups of stakeholders, namely the faculty and the industry partners/employers expressed some serious concerns about the manifestation of the cadets' personality skills or soft skills particularly in discipline and leadership based on their interactions with cadets and occasional feedback from the ships. Nonetheless, some areas for improvement have been identified, such as the need for enhanced soft skills and further alignment of academic training with industry-specific demands. The study concludes that MOL-Magsaysay Maritime Academy's educational programs have been effective in preparing the first batch (Batch 2018) of graduates for successful maritime careers. The insights gained from the stakeholders' feedback will be instrumental in refining the academy's educational program and training methods in terms of the leadership training paradigm, anchored on the principle of transformational leadership through coaching, to better meet industry needs in general, and stakeholders' needs in particular, and enhance future graduates' employability and performance. On the technical side, new trends and regulations in the areas of digitalization and environmental regulations needs to be incorporated in the educational program.

Keywords: MMMA (MOL-Magsaysay Maritime Academy); Educational Program; Technical Skills; Soft Skills