

Employability Skills of Graduates in the Hospitality Industry: Implication for Educational Enhancement

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Abstract- Employability skills are essential indicators of higher education institutions in preparing graduates for the workforce. This study determined the employability skills of graduates from the College of Hospitality and Business Management (CHBM) at VMA Global College and Training Centers, Inc. It also examined the significant differences and significant relationships between the respondents' demographic and employment-related characteristics and their employability skills. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed involving 148 graduates from School Years 2021-2024. Data were collected using an adapted and validated questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, independent samples t-test, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Chi-square test, Gamma coefficient, and appropriate post hoc tests at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that the graduates demonstrated a very high level of employability skills in terms of fundamental, personal management, and technical competencies, indicating strong workplace readiness and adaptability. Furthermore, significant differences and significant relationships were identified between selected demographic and employment-related characteristics and employability skills. These findings suggest that educational preparation, together with workplace experiences, contributes to the development of graduates' employability skills. The findings suggest that the College of Hospitality and Business Management effectively equips its graduates with the employability skills required in the hospitality industry. It is recommended that the institution continuously strengthen its curriculum, industry partnerships, internship programs, and competency-based learning initiatives to further enhance graduates' employability skills.

Index Terms- Employability Skills, Hospitality Graduates, Graduate Employability, Tracer Study, Hospitality Education, Descriptive-correlational research.

I. INTRODUCTION

Employability skills have become one of the primary indicators of the effectiveness of higher education institutions (HEIs) in preparing graduates for

successful careers. These skills encompass the knowledge, technical competencies, and personal attributes that enable graduates to secure, maintain, and progress in employment. In today's competitive labor market, employers expect graduates to demonstrate not only discipline-specific knowledge but also communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and leadership skills that contribute to workplace success. (Oliver, 2015)

In the Philippines, higher education institutions are expected to produce graduates whose competencies are aligned with industry needs. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), through CHED Memorandum Order No. 62, Series of 2017, emphasizes the development of competencies among Hospitality Management graduates to enhance their competitiveness in both local and international employment. Likewise, higher education institutions play a vital role in developing graduates' employability skills by integrating technical competencies with transferable skills required by employers (Okolie et al., 2020).

The hospitality industry continues to expand, creating increasing opportunities for qualified professionals. However, employers require graduates who possess not only technical expertise but also strong interpersonal, organizational, and customer service skills. Consequently, hospitality education institutions must continuously evaluate whether their curricula, instructional practices, internship programs, and industry partnerships effectively prepare graduates to meet the evolving demands of the hospitality sector.

Tracer studies provide valuable evidence regarding graduates' employment outcomes and the effectiveness of academic programs in preparing students for the workforce. The findings of tracer

studies serve as important inputs for curriculum enhancement, instructional improvement, policy development, and the strengthening of partnerships between higher education institutions and industry. They also help institutions identify strengths and areas for improvement in developing graduates' employability skills (Herbert et al., 2020)

Despite increasing emphasis on graduate employability, limited studies have examined the employability skills of hospitality graduates in Western Visayas. This study addresses this gap by determining the employability skills of graduates from the College of Hospitality and Business Management (CHBM) of VMA Global College and Training Centers, Inc. it also examines the significant differences and significant relationships between selected demographic and employment-related characteristics and graduates' employability skills. The findings of the study are expected to contribute to curriculum enhancement, improve internship and experiential learning programs, strengthen industry partnerships, and support the continuous improvement of hospitality education.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the employability skills of graduates from the College of Hospitality and Business Management (CHBM) of VMA Global College and Training Centers, Inc. Specifically, the study involved graduates from the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) programs. The descriptive approach was used to determine the level of employability skills of respondents, while the correlational approach was employed to examine the significant relationships and differences between selected demographic and employment-related characteristics and employability skills.

The total population consisted of 234 graduates, from which 148 respondents were selected using Slovin's Formula with a 5% margin of error. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation of graduates from both academic programs.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from Espellita, Simplicio R. Jr., and Maravilla, Vicente S. Jr. 2019. The instrument had two parts: respondents' profile and employability skills assessment in terms of fundamental skills, personal management skills, and technical skills. It underwent expert validation and obtained a validity index of 4.85, interpreted as highly valid. Reliability testing produced a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.88, indicating excellent internal consistency.

Prior to data collection, permission was secured from the concerned authorities. Participation in the study was voluntary, and confidentiality of the respondents' information was maintained throughout the research process.

Data collection was conducted through both online and offline survey administration. The data were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution, weighted mean, independent samples t-test, one-way analysis of variance *ANOVA*, Chi-Square test, and Gamma coefficient to determine the level of employability skills, significant differences, and relationships among the variables under investigation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic and employment-related profile of respondents.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	20 years old and below	0	0.00
	21–25 years old	75	50.68
	26–30 years old	73	49.32
	31–35 years old	0	0.00
	36–40 years old	0	0.00
	41 years old	0	0.00

	and above		
Sex	Male	40	27.03
	Female	108	72.97
Civil Status	Single	129	87.16
	Married	19	12.84
	Separated	0	0.00
	Widowed	0	0.00
Program Graduated	BSHM	102	68.92
	BSTM	46	31.08
Year Graduated	2021	18	12.16
	2022	33	22.30
	2023	44	29.73
	2024	53	35.81
Employment Status	Full-time	93	62.98
	Part-time	0	0.00
	Casual	21	14.19
	Seasonal	0	0.00
	Intern/Apprentice	34	22.97
Company	Hotel/Resort	115	77.70
	Tourism Office/Travel Agency	3	2.03
	Restaurant/Fast Food	13	8.78
	Café/Coffee Shop/Bar	10	6.76
	Shipping Lines	7	4.73
Company Address	Luzon	20	13.51
	Visayas	79	53.38
	Mindanao	3	2.03
	International	46	31.08
Years in Current Job	Less than a year	52	35.14
	1–2 years	66	44.59
	3–5 years	30	20.27
	6–10 years	0	0.00
Department/Area	Front Office	26	17.57
	Food & Beverage (F&B)	105	70.95

	Housekeeping	12	8.11
	Events/Banquet	5	3.38
	Management	0	0.00
Job Level Position	Entry-Level	102	68.92
	Mid-Level	44	29.73
	Senior-Level	2	1.35
Monthly Income Range	₱5,000 and below	0	0.00
	₱5,001–₱15,000	39	26.35
	₱15,001–₱25,000	54	36.49
	₱25,001–₱35,000	7	4.73
	₱35,001 and above	48	32.43

The profile of respondents provides an overview of the graduates included in the study. The distribution of respondents reflects the diversity of graduates in terms of demographic background and employment conditions. These characteristics were considered in determining whether differences and relationships exist in their employment skills.

Level of Employability Skills of Graduates

Table 2 presents the level of employability skills of the respondents in terms of fundamental skills, personal management skills, and technical skills.

Table 2 *Level of Employability Skills of Graduates*

Skill Category	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Fundamental Skills	4.43	Very High
Personal Skills	4.42	Very High
Technical Skills (Front Office/Housekeeping)	4.30	Very High
Technical Skills (F&B and Sales/Banquet)	4.46	Very High
Overall Mean	4.40	Very High

The findings revealed that the graduates demonstrated a very high level of employability skills across all dimensions. This indicates that graduates possess the competencies necessary for workplace

performance, including the ability to apply knowledge, communicate effectively, demonstrate professionalism, and perform technical responsibilities related to the hospitality and tourism industry.

The result suggests that the academic preparation, learning activities, and practical experiences provided by the institution contributed to the development of graduates' employability skills. The findings highlight the importance of integrating theoretical instruction with industry exposure to prepare graduates for professional practice.

Significant Difference in Employability Skills According to Respondents' Profile

Table 3 presents the test of significant differences in employability skills when respondents were grouped according to their demographic and employment-related characteristics.

Table 3 *Significant Difference in Employability Skills According to Respondents Profile*

Profile Variable	Interpretation
Age	Not Significant
Sex	Not Significant
Civil Status	Not Significant
Program Graduated	Not Significant
Year Graduated	Significant
Employment Status	Significant
Company Type	Significant
Company Address	Significant
Years in the Current Job	Not Significant
Department/Area	Not Significant
Job Level Position	Significant
Monthly Income	Significant

The findings revealed that significant differences in employability skills existed according to year graduated, employment status, company type, company address, job level position, and monthly income range.

The significant difference according to year graduated may indicate that graduates from different batches experienced varying academic environments,

industry conditions, and employment opportunities that contributed to the development of their skills. Likewise, differences based on employment status, company type, company address, job level position, and income range suggest that workplace exposure and professional experiences influence the application and enhancement of employability skills. On the other hand, no significant differences were found according to age, sex, civil status, program graduated, years in the current job, and department/area. This implies that these characteristics do not create substantial variations in graduates' employability skills. The result suggests that the competencies developed through academic preparation are generally consistent among BSHM and BSTM graduates.

Significant Relationship Between Respondents' Profile and Employability Skills

Table 4 presents the test of significant relationships between respondents' profile and employability skills.

Table 4 *Significant Relationship Between Respondents' Profile and Employability Skills*

Profile Variable	Interpretation
Age	Not Significant
Sex	Significant
Civil Status	Not Significant
Program Graduated	Not Significant
Year Graduated	Not Significant
Employment Status	Significant
Company Type	Not Significant
Company Address	Significant
Years in the Current Job	Not Significant
Department/Area	Not Significant
Job Level Position	Not Significant
Monthly Income	Significant

The results revealed that significant relationships existed between employability skills and sex, employment status, company address, and monthly income range. This indicates that these factors are associated with the graduates' demonstration and application of employability skills.

The relationship between employment-related characteristics and employability skills suggests that workplace experiences contribute to the continuous development of professional competencies. Graduates' exposure to different employment environments, responsibilities, and career opportunities may influence how they apply their skills in actual workplace settings.

Meanwhile, no significant relationships were found between employability skills and age, civil status, program graduated, year graduated, company type, years in current job, department/area, and job level position. These indicate that these variables are not strongly associated with the employability skills of the respondents.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the BSHM and BSTM graduates possess strong employability skills, while selected demographic and employment-related factors contribute to differences and relationships in the application of these competencies.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that graduates of the College of Hospitality and Business Management (CHBM) of VMA Global College and Training Centers, Inc. demonstrated a very high level of employability skills, demonstrating strong competencies in fundamental, personal management, and technical skills areas required by the hospitality industry. These findings indicate that the institution has effectively prepared its graduates to meet the demands of a dynamic and competitive workforce.

The findings further revealed that there were significant differences in employability skills when respondents were grouped according to selected demographic and employment-related characteristics. In addition, significant relationships were identified between selected characteristics and graduates' employability skills. These results suggest that employability skills are influenced not only by educational preparation but also by workplace experiences and employment conditions.

The study highlights the importance of continuously strengthening competency-based education, industry

immersion, internship programs, and curriculum enhancement to ensure that hospitality graduates remain prepared and competitive in the changing demands of the industry.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author sincerely expresses gratitude to La Carlota City College Graduate School for its guidance and support throughout the conduct of this research. Special thanks are extended to the research adviser, statistician, dean, and panel members for their valuable insights, encouragement, and constructive comments. The author also appreciates the administration of VMA Global College and Training Centers, Inc., particularly the College of Hospitality and Business Management and the Alumni Office for their support and assistance during the conduct of the research. Special thanks are given to the graduates who participated in the study and shared their valuable responses.

Above all, the author gives thanks to God for the wisdom, strength and perseverance throughout the completion of this research.

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