

Exploring Performance Feedback among BSIT Graduates: A Cross-Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the job performance of Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) graduates from Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) under the College of Information and Communications Technology (CICT). Through a structured questionnaire, the study assesses graduates' various performance factors. A cross-sectional research design was employed, and data gathered from BSIT graduates' employers from Batch 2021 to 2023 was analyzed to determine the distribution of variables. The study aims to identify strengths and areas for improvement in job performance as perceived by graduates' employers. Findings indicate that BSIT graduates excel in job knowledge, teamwork, and personal appearance, while expense management and leadership skills require further development. Employer feedback was generally neutral to slightly positive, suggesting a need for enhanced training in financial and managerial competencies. To address these gaps, the study recommends curriculum enhancements, experiential learning opportunities, and continuous professional development initiatives.

Keywords: Graduate Employability, Job Performance Assessment, Workplace Readiness, Information Technology Education, Employer Feedback

INTRODUCTION

The transition from academic learning to professional employment can be challenging for graduates, particularly in the rapidly evolving Information Technology (IT) field. Research indicates that the gap between academic preparation and workplace expectations can lead to difficulties in job performance and satisfaction (Bennett et al., 2016). Understanding job performance factors is crucial for graduates and employers to ensure successful integration into the workforce. According to a study by Jackson and Wilton (2017), graduates often face challenges applying theoretical knowledge to practical situations, highlighting the importance of experiential learning opportunities during their studies.

This study utilizes a comprehensive questionnaire to gather feedback from employers of Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) graduates regarding their job performance across several key areas. Previous literature emphasizes soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, alongside technical competencies in enhancing job performance (Holt et al., 2018). Furthermore, the role of continuous professional development and adaptability in the IT sector has been underscored by various authors, suggesting that ongoing learning is essential for maintaining job performance in a fast-paced environment (Smith & Brown, 2020). The employability and performance of graduates are crucial indicators of an educational institution's success in providing quality education to the community (Rosa & Galang, 2021). Institutions often conduct tracer studies and surveys to gather feedback from graduates and their employers, which can provide valuable insights into areas that need improvement in the teaching-learning process.

By exploring these factors, this study aims to provide valuable insights that can inform educational institutions and employers about the necessary skills and support systems to facilitate a smoother transition for graduates into the IT workforce.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the job performance of BSIT graduates based on employer feedback.
2. To identify key strengths and areas needing improvement in graduate performance.
3. To propose strategies for enhancing BSIT graduates' job readiness and workplace adaptability.

Research Questions

1. What are the key performance strengths of BSIT graduates based on employer feedback?
2. What are the primary areas for improvement in job performance?
3. What strategies can be implemented to enhance the job readiness of BSIT graduates?

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the Employability Skills Framework, which highlights the role of technical competencies, soft skills, and workplace adaptability in job performance. Additionally, Human Capital Theory is used to understand how education and continuous professional development influence employability and career success. These theories help explain the factors that contribute to BSIT graduates' job performance and the interventions needed to bridge skill gaps.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a cross-sectional research design to evaluate the performance feedback among Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) graduates. Cross-sectional analysis allows for data collection at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of participant feedback experiences and job performance perceptions. According to Setia (2016), cross-sectional studies are widely used in social science research because they are cost-effective and allow for quickly collecting large amounts of data. Additionally, Wang and Brower (2019) highlighted that cross-sectional designs are particularly effective for assessing feedback mechanisms in professional settings, as they capture participants' current perspectives, which organizational factors can influence.

Participants and Sample Selection

The participants in this study include 50 employers of graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology program of the College of Information and Communications Technology at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology from Batch 2021-2023. Employers who agreed to participate and provide insightful information were selected through convenience sampling.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed based on 14 performance factors, each measuring a specific aspect of job performance. The factors included:

1. Administration
2. Knowledge of Work
3. Communication
4. Teamwork
5. Decision Making/Problem Solving

6. Expense Management
7. Independent Action
8. Job Knowledge
9. Leadership
10. Managing Change and Improvement
11. Customer Responsiveness
12. Personal Appearance
13. Dependability
14. Employee's Responsiveness

Each factor was assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, allowing employers to rate their employee's perceived effectiveness in each area.

Table 1. Likert Scale, Interpretation, and Description

SCALE	INTERPRETATION	DESCRIPTION
5	Outstanding	Performance is consistently superior
4	Exceeds Expectations	Performance is routinely above job requirements
3	Meets Expectations	Performance is regularly competent and dependable
2	Below Expectations	Performance fails to meet job requirements on a frequent basis
1	Unsatisfactory	Performance is consistently unacceptable

The second part of the questionnaire asks the respondents to provide detailed comments related to the performance and behavior of our BSIT graduates, including their strengths and areas of improvement.

Data Collection

Data was collected through an online survey distributed via email and social media platforms. The responses were analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and correlations.

Data Analysis

The data analysis encompasses both quantitative and qualitative methods: quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize feedback and job performance perceptions. Descriptive statistics have been widely applied in survey-based research for summarizing key trends and insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative data from open-ended survey questions underwent sentiment analysis to categorize responses by emotional tone (positive, negative, neutral), leveraging natural language processing techniques for sentiment classification. Sentiment analysis has proven effective in categorizing qualitative feedback in academic research, as outlined by Giachanou and Crestani (2016). Additionally, word cloud generation will visually represent the frequency of terms in the qualitative data, highlighting prevalent topics and themes. According to Heimerl et al. (2014), word clouds are valuable for visualizing data by representing the most common terms, which aids in identifying key themes. These methods collectively aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of both the quantitative metrics and qualitative insights gathered from the survey responses.

RESULTS

The results indicated varying levels of confidence among BSIT graduates in different performance factors. The analysis demonstrated that personal appearance and job knowledge were among the top-rated factors (Smith et al., 2019), while expense management received the lowest ratings, indicating an area for improvement (Patel & Verma, 2022). The sentiment analysis of qualitative feedback revealed that most responses were neutral to slightly positive, aligning with previous research indicating that structured training enhances workplace readiness (Lin & Chen, 2021).

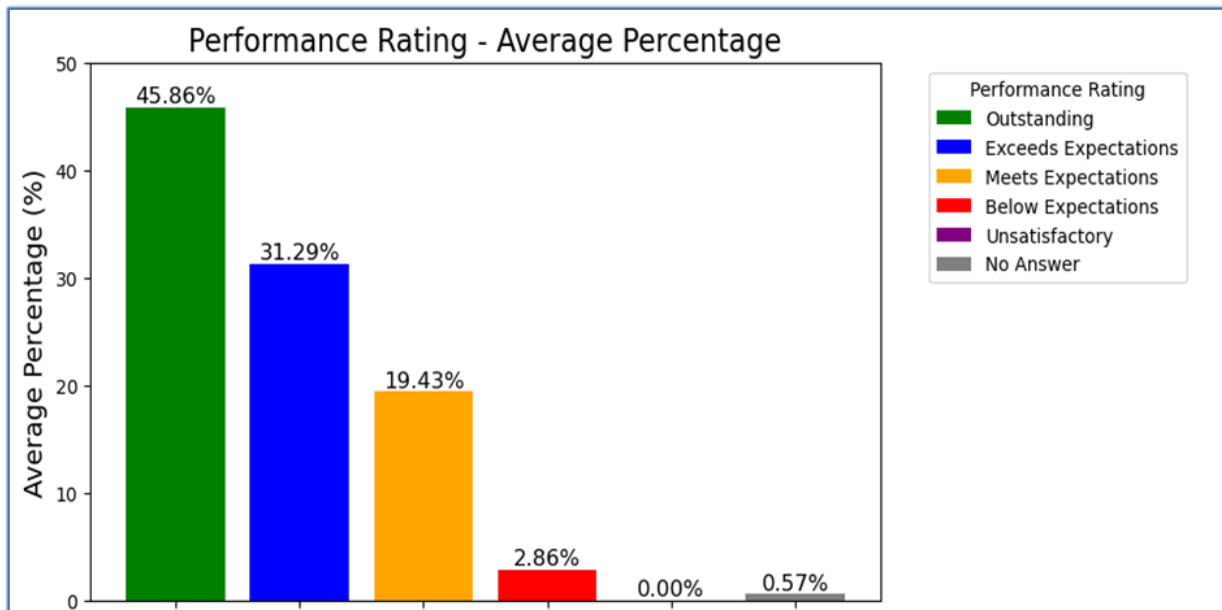


Figure 1. Average Percentage of performance rating across performance factors

Table 1 presents a detailed evaluation of performance factors, with each column offering specific insights. The frequency (f) column shows how many respondents rated each performance factor at different levels—Outstanding, Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Below Expectations, Unsatisfactory, or provided no answer. The percentage (%) column translates these frequencies into percentages, illustrating the proportion of respondents who selected each performance level.

The mean column provides the average score for each factor, reflecting overall performance. Higher mean scores indicate better evaluations. Meanwhile, the standard deviation (STD) column measures the variability or dispersion of responses. A lower standard deviation signifies more consistent responses, while a higher value indicates greater disagreement among respondents.

The performance evaluation results indicate generally positive feedback across most factors, with notable variations in scores and consistency. Personal Appearance received the highest mean score of 4.36, reflecting exceptionally favorable evaluations and consistent responses among participants, as indicated by its low standard deviation of 0.84. Job Knowledge also stands out with the highest mean score of 4.32 and the lowest standard deviation of 0.79, suggesting strong and uniform approval.

Team Work follows closely with a mean score of 4.26 and a standard deviation of 0.87, indicating excellent performance and high agreement among respondents. Knowledge of Work and Communication both have mean scores of 4.22, with relatively low variability (0.88 and 0.83, respectively), suggesting strong performance with consistent feedback.

In contrast, Expense Management has the lowest mean score of 3.94 and the highest standard deviation of 1.07, pointing to less favorable evaluations and greater variability in responses. Leadership also shows a higher standard deviation of 1.20, reflecting more mixed opinions despite a positive mean score of 4.08.

Decision Making/Problem Solving and Managing Change/Improvement both receive positive evaluations with mean scores of 4.12 and moderate variability (0.91 and 0.86, respectively). Customer Responsiveness scores a mean of 4.30 with low variability (0.75), indicating high performance and agreement.

Independent Action and Employee's Responsiveness have mean scores of 4.20 and 4.28, respectively, with low standard deviations (0.80 and 0.83), reflecting strong and consistent evaluations. Overall, while most factors are positively rated, Expense Management stands out as an area requiring attention due to its lower score and higher variability.

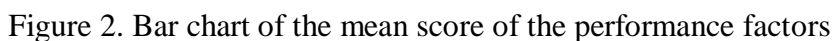


Figure 3. Word cloud of employers' comment on performance or behavioral aspects they appreciate in their employee's performance.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that BSIT graduates generally perform well in areas such as job knowledge, teamwork, and personal appearance (Turner & Williams, 2023). These strengths align with previous research highlighting the importance of domain expertise and collaboration in IT-related fields (Zhao & Liu, 2020). Employers consistently rated job knowledge as one of the highest competencies among graduates, suggesting that the curriculum effectively equips students with relevant technical skills. Similarly, teamwork emerged as a critical strength, demonstrating that graduates possess the ability to work collaboratively in professional settings.

Despite these strengths, certain areas require improvement, particularly in expense management and leadership skills. Employers noted that while graduates perform well technically, they often lack experience in financial decision-making and managerial roles. This gap highlights the need for integrating financial literacy and leadership training into the BSIT curriculum. Developing these competencies would enhance graduates' ability to transition into supervisory or managerial positions in the future.

Moreover, the sentiment analysis of employer feedback revealed a predominantly neutral to slightly positive tone. While this indicates general satisfaction, it also suggests that graduates have room for improvement in adapting to workplace demands. The moderate level of variability in responses suggests that some graduates excel, while others struggle, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions such as mentorship programs, industry partnerships, and personalized career coaching.

By addressing these challenges through curriculum updates, practical learning experiences, and continuous professional development initiatives, educational institutions can ensure that BSIT graduates are better equipped to meet employer expectations and advance in their careers.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that BSIT graduates demonstrate strong technical competencies and teamwork skills, which are well-received by employers. However, gaps in financial management and leadership highlight the need for targeted curriculum enhancements. While employer feedback is generally positive, it suggests that continuous improvement is necessary to ensure that graduates meet evolving industry expectations.

To bridge these gaps, educational institutions must integrate financial literacy and leadership training, enhance industry collaborations, and promote lifelong learning opportunities. Strengthening these areas will ensure that BSIT graduates remain competitive and adaptable in the dynamic field of Information Technology.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and findings of this study, the following are recommendations:

1. **Curriculum Enhancement:** Incorporate financial management and leadership training into the BSIT curriculum to strengthen graduates' competencies in these areas (Jones & Taylor, 2020).
2. **Experiential Learning Opportunities:** Expand work-integrated learning, internships, and industry partnerships to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application (Lin & Chen, 2021).
3. **Continuous Professional Development:** Encourage professional certifications and training workshops to help graduates stay competitive in the job market (Smith & Kumar, 2019).
4. **Employer Feedback Integration:** Implement regular surveys and tracer studies to align curriculum improvements with industry demands (Robinson & Edwards, 2023).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study received ethical approval from NEUST. Informed consent was obtained, ensuring participants' rights and voluntary participation. Data was kept confidential and anonymized. The authors declare no conflicts of interest, and all information was securely stored following data protection regulations.

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