

Evaluating Job Performance Competence of Hospitality Management Graduates: Employer Perspectives from a Philippine State University

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ABSTRACT

This study examined employer feedback on the job performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM) graduates of Mindoro State University–Bongabong Campus, focusing on competence, commitment, collaboration, and credibility. A descriptive–correlational research design was employed to determine the level of graduates’ job performance and to examine the relationship between their length of service in the hospitality industry and workplace performance. Data were collected from thirty (30) employers who served as immediate supervisors, managers, or establishment owners of BSHM graduates employed in hospitality establishments within and outside the province of Mindoro. A standardized Employer’s Feedback on Job Performance Questionnaire was used, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson’s r correlation. The findings revealed that the graduates demonstrated a very good level of job performance across all dimensions, indicating strong workplace readiness despite limited industry experience. High ratings were noted in teamwork, ethical conduct, professionalism, and participation in organizational operations. Lower-ranked indicators included adapting to new operating technologies, prioritizing organizational concerns over personal matters, respecting individual differences, and responsible use of organizational resources; however, these areas remained within the very good descriptive level. Correlation analysis showed no significant relationship between years of service and job performance, suggesting that length of industry experience alone does not determine employee effectiveness. The results highlight the importance of employer feedback as a reliable indicator of graduate preparedness and curriculum relevance. The study emphasizes the need for higher education institutions to further strengthen technology integration, ethical development, and career readiness initiatives to enhance graduate employability and alignment with hospitality industry demands.

Keywords: Collaboration, Commitment, Competence, Employers, Feedback

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions play a vital role in preparing students for future employment by strengthening their skills, competencies, and professional values. This holistic approach enables graduates to effectively meet workplace demands. Moreover, employers’ feedback supports organizational development by serving as a basis for performance evaluation and the identification of areas for improvement, thereby contributing to the achievement of institutional goals.

State colleges and universities play a critical role in preparing students through education and relevant training aligned with workforce needs. Graduate success is widely recognized as an important indicator of institutional performance, reflecting the effectiveness of higher education in meeting labor market expectations (Alyahan, 2020). In the global context, managerial feedback has been shown to significantly influence employee motivation and performance. Gallup (2022) reported that employees are 3.6 times more likely to be motivated when they receive meaningful feedback from their managers. Consistent with this, organizational studies emphasize that feedback provides individuals with a more accurate understanding of their performance, as self-evaluation alone is often insufficient across all professional levels (Leapsome, 2022).

Organizations today operate in a highly dynamic and competitive environment that requires a workforce equipped with relevant knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors. To assess employee effectiveness, employers increasingly rely on systematic feedback and performance evaluations that reflect actual workplace performance and readiness. Recent studies show that employer evaluations of graduates provide valuable insights into how well academic preparation translates to industry needs, particularly in terms of competency, adaptability, and professional conduct (Quimosing-Ocay et al., 2024; Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023).

Research on employability further highlights a persistent mismatch between the competencies expected by employers and those possessed by new graduates, underscoring the importance of employer feedback in curriculum review and instructional improvement (Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023). In essence, employer feedback not only informs organizational human resource decisions but also serves as a critical mechanism for higher education institutions to evaluate and enhance the relevance and quality of academic programs in meeting evolving industry demands.

Employers are increasingly recognized as key partners of higher education institutions (HEIs) in developing graduates who demonstrate competence, commitment, teamwork, and professional credibility. Recruitment decisions are commonly based on graduates' capacity to contribute to organizational goals and adapt to workplace demands. Beyond hiring, employers provide systematic feedback that evaluates graduates' readiness, effectiveness, and performance in real work settings. Such feedback serves as an important indicator of how well graduate competencies align with industry requirements and offers evidence of curriculum relevance and instructional quality. As graduates represent the outcomes of higher education, their workplace performance plays a significant role in shaping the reputation and public perception of their respective institutions (Abelha et al., 2020; Jackson, 2021; OECD, 2023).

Despite ongoing efforts, higher education institutions (HEIs) continue to face challenges in aligning academic preparation with rapidly evolving industry demands. In the tourism and hospitality sector, studies have reported persistent gaps between the competencies developed in academic settings and those required in professional practice. Employers increasingly expect graduates to demonstrate transferable skills such as leadership, effective communication, critical thinking, and sound decision-making; however, many graduates still require additional training upon employment to meet workplace standards (Abelha et al., 2020; Hussein et al., 2023). These gaps highlight the need for stronger coordination between academic curricula and industry expectations.

Education extends beyond the development of technical skills and includes the cultivation of values, attitudes, and professional dispositions essential for holistic development. As labor market requirements become more complex, the quality and relevance of higher education play a decisive role in graduate employability. Recent studies indicate that employers prioritize graduates who exhibit adaptability, self-management, teamwork, communication competence, and strong interpersonal skills (Jackson, 2021; OECD, 2023). Consequently, graduate employment outcomes and employer feedback have become practical indicators of how effectively HEIs prepare students with competencies aligned to current labor market needs.

Graduate employment performance has direct implications for the sustainability, quality, and market relevance of academic programs. Workplace experiences provide institutions with valuable feedback on the applicability and responsiveness of learning outcomes to specific professional contexts.

Mindoro State University offers a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management program structured to address diverse career opportunities within the hospitality industry. The curriculum encompasses food and beverage services, tourism, lodging, and recreation, while emphasizing communication and interpersonal skills vital for fostering positive customer relationships.

Investigating employer perspectives on the job performance and competencies of Hospitality Management graduates is essential in determining the alignment between academic preparation and industry requirements. Such investigations directly support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 (Quality Education), which emphasizes outcomes-based education, relevance of skills, and the alignment of learning with labor market needs (UNESCO, 2017).

Employer feedback also contributes to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by promoting workforce readiness, employability, and productivity through the development of job-relevant competencies (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2021). Furthermore, this inquiry aligns with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) by strengthening partnerships between higher education institutions and industry stakeholders, fostering innovation, and ensuring that academic programs respond to evolving industry demands (United Nations, 2015). Through these linkages, higher education institutions play a critical role in advancing sustainable national development and global competitiveness.

Given these considerations, systematic tracking of graduates and the collection of employer evaluations are necessary for assessing program effectiveness. As HEIs prepare individuals for professional practice, graduate performance in the workplace serves as a reliable measure of acquired skills, competence, collaboration, credibility, and commitment. Employer assessments thus function as an essential feedback mechanism, guiding institutions in refining curricula and developing strategies to further enhance graduate attributes.

Aim of the Study

This study aimed to determine the employer's feedback on the job performance of Hospitality Management Graduates in Mindoro State University - Bongabong Campus.

Specific Objectives

- To know the profile of the graduates;
- To analyze the level of job performance of Hospitality Management Graduates of Mindoro State University-Bongabong Campus;
- To test a significant relationship between the number of years of employees in the industry and the level of job performance of the employees as perceived by the employers, and
- To propose an enhancement plan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices play a significant role in enhancing employee performance in the workplace. In a Philippine study, Melchor (2024) found that effective HRM practices, particularly training, performance appraisal, and employee engagement, positively influence employees' productivity and work efficiency. The study emphasized the importance of employer evaluation and feedback in assessing employee competence and readiness for organizational demands.

These findings are relevant to the present study, as employer perspectives are used to evaluate the job performance competence of Hospitality Management graduates. Employers' assessments provide valuable insights into graduates' skills, work values, and overall preparedness, reflecting how effectively state universities align academic training with industry expectations.

Graduate employability has been used as an indicator of the effectiveness of hospitality education. In a Philippine tracer study, Melchor et al. (2025) found that the employability and career progression of Hospitality and Tourism Management graduates were closely linked to the competencies developed during their academic training. The study emphasized the value of employer assessments in determining graduates' workplace readiness. These findings support the present study, which examines employer perspectives in evaluating the job performance competence of Hospitality Management graduates from a Philippine state university.

Employer feedback has been widely recognized as a valuable basis for evaluating the job performance and competencies of Hospitality Management graduates, particularly within state university contexts. In a mixed-methods study conducted at Palawan State University, Sibulan et al. (2025) reported that employers generally expressed satisfaction with graduates' communication skills, teamwork, and adaptability in the workplace.

Despite these strengths, employers also identified areas requiring further improvement, such as professional ethics and industry-specific technical competencies. The study highlighted the importance of employer evaluations in determining graduates' workplace readiness and overall job performance.

Similarly, De Asis and Castro (2025) examined employer feedback on the work performance of hospitality and tourism interns from Eastern Samar State University. Their findings demonstrated that employer assessments effectively captured graduates' competence, work attitude, and adaptability under actual workplace conditions. The study emphasized that feedback from industry supervisors serves as a reliable indicator of students' professional performance and provides essential input for curriculum enhancement and stronger industry-academe collaboration.

These studies collectively emphasize that employer perspectives are crucial in assessing the job performance competence of Hospitality Management graduates from state universities. Employer feedback not only reflects graduates' readiness to meet workplace demands but also serves as a meaningful basis for higher education institutions in refining academic programs, strengthening graduate attributes, and ensuring alignment between educational outcomes and industry expectations.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on Human Capital Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Competency-Based Theory, which collectively explain employee job performance and employer evaluation of graduates.

Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1962) posits that education and training enhance individuals' knowledge and skills, which contribute directly to job performance. In this study, the competencies acquired by Hospitality Management graduates through academic preparation are expected to influence their competence, commitment, collaboration, and credibility at work, regardless of length of service.

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) explains that workplace behavior is shaped by reciprocal relationships between employees and organizations. Employer feedback reflects this exchange, as graduates who receive guidance, supervision, and fair treatment are more likely to demonstrate commitment, collaboration, and ethical behavior in the workplace.

Competency-Based Theory emphasizes that job performance is determined by specific competencies—such as technical skills, teamwork, professionalism, and ethical conduct—rather than tenure alone (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). This theory supports the assessment of graduates' job performance in terms of competence, commitment, collaboration, and credibility as key indicators of workplace effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive-correlational research approach was used in this study to investigate the connection between job performance and employee length of service in the hospitality sector. The study was carried out at hospitality enterprises both inside and outside the province of Mindoro that employ recent graduates of Mindoro State University-Bongabong Campus with a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHM). The respondents were thirty (30) employers who had direct responsibility for assessing the work performance of BSHM graduates from the 2020–2023 cohorts. These employers included managers, supervisors, and establishment owners. Because it was difficult to identify the entire employer population and the study only included participants who fulfilled certain inclusion requirements, a purposive sample technique was used.

Dotong et al. (2017) designed a standardized Employer's Feedback on Job Performance Questionnaire, which was used to gather data. Twenty items total, graded on a four-point Likert scale from very poor (1) to very good (4), measure the four aspects of work performance: competence, dedication, collaboration, and credibility. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire was 0.84, indicating acceptable reliability. After gaining informed consent from each participant, data were collected online using Google Forms. While Pearson's *r* correlation was utilized to ascertain the association between years of service and job performance, descriptive statistics, such as weighted mean, frequency, and percentage, were employed to describe employer feedback in the collected data.

Strict adherence to ethical guidelines guaranteed respondents' anonymity, voluntary participation, and institutional consent before data collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results and discussion of the study are presented in the following sections to further describe, examine, and comprehend the data gathered.

1. Profile of the Graduates

The results indicate that most of the Hospitality Management graduates evaluated by their employers had been employed in the industry for only one to six months, while the rest had less than one year of work experience. This implies that employer evaluations were conducted during the graduates' early employment stage, when adjustment to work demands and learning of job responsibilities are still ongoing. As such, employer feedback primarily reflected graduates' initial work performance, adaptability, and compliance with workplace standards.

This finding aligns with the study of Narayanan et al. (2022), which reported that employers commonly assess fresh graduates during the probationary period to determine their competence, work behavior, and readiness for continued employment. In relation to the present study, the result underscores the importance of early job performance as a meaningful basis for employer evaluation and as an indicator of how effectively graduates apply their academic preparation in actual work settings.

2. Level of Job Performance of Hospitality Management Graduates of Mindoro State University-Bongabong Campus in terms of:

2.1 Competence

The results show that the Hospitality Management graduates of Mindoro State University–Bongabong Campus demonstrated a very good level of competence, with an overall weighted mean of 3.63. Among the specific indicators, the graduates were rated highest in professionally collaborating with the team and applying appropriate hospitality competencies in completing assigned tasks, indicating strong teamwork and practical skill application in the workplace.

High ratings were also observed in the graduates' use of proper hospitality techniques, wise decision-making in response to organizational and customer needs, and effective communication with stakeholders, customers, and co-workers, reflecting their ability to perform core hospitality functions competently.

In contrast, the indicator on adjusting to new operating technology with ease obtained the lowest mean score, although it still fell under the "very good" descriptive level. This suggests that while graduates are generally competent, adaptation to emerging technologies may require further enhancement. These findings imply that the academic program effectively develops essential hospitality competencies, particularly in communication, teamwork, and operational skills, but may benefit from strengthening technology-related training to keep pace with industry advancements.

These results are consistent with the study of Sibulan et al. (2025), which reported that employers of Hospitality Management graduates expressed high satisfaction with graduates' teamwork, communication, and operational competence, while also emphasizing the need for continuous improvement in technical and technological skills to better align with evolving industry requirements.

2.2 Commitment

The results show that the Hospitality Management graduates of Mindoro State University–Bongabong Campus demonstrated a very good level of commitment, with an overall weighted mean of 3.67. Among the specific indicators, the highest mean rating was recorded for taking part in decision-making and carrying out the organization's operations, indicating that the graduates actively contribute to organizational processes and

support the achievement of institutional goals. High ratings were also observed in accepting leadership roles with responsibility, providing customer-focused assistance, and demonstrating urgency and passion in completing tasks, reflecting strong work engagement and dedication.

The lowest mean score was noted for placing organizational concerns ahead of personal ones, when necessary, although it still fell within the “very good” descriptive range. This suggests that while graduates exhibit a strong sense of commitment, prioritizing organizational interests over personal concerns may still be developing, particularly as many of them are relatively new employees. These findings imply that the graduates possess a high level of work commitment characterized by responsibility, participation, and service orientation, which aligns with the core values promoted by the university.

These results are consistent with the study of Melchor (2024), which found that employees who demonstrate active involvement in organizational decision-making, responsibility, and customer-oriented behavior exhibit higher levels of commitment and overall job performance. In relation to the present study, the findings affirm that Hospitality Management graduates display commendable commitment during the early stage of employment, contributing positively to organizational effectiveness.

2.3. Collaboration.

The results indicate that the Hospitality Management graduates of Mindoro State University–Bongabong Campus demonstrated a very good level of collaboration, with an overall weighted mean of 3.69. The highest rating was recorded for encouraging a sense of family among coworkers by helping those who need assistance in completing tasks, suggesting that the graduates actively promote teamwork and mutual support in the workplace. High ratings were also observed in maintaining harmonious relationships with colleagues and supervisors, enhancing departmental reputation through efficient customer service, and demonstrating alignment with organizational core values, reflecting strong interpersonal skills essential in hospitality settings.

The lowest mean scores were noted in respecting individual differences and demonstrating pride and enthusiasm in completing tasks on schedule, although both indicators remained within the “very good” descriptive level. This implies that while collaboration among the graduates is generally strong, continued exposure to diverse work environments may further enhance interpersonal sensitivity and sustained work engagement.

These findings are consistent with the study of Hussein et al. (2023), which reported that employers in the hospitality industry highly value teamwork, interpersonal competence, and collaborative behavior as critical components of effective job performance. In relation to the present study, the results highlight collaboration as a key strength of Hospitality Management graduates and an important contributor to a cohesive and productive workplace.

2.4. Credibility

The results show that the Hospitality Management graduates of Mindoro State University–Bongabong Campus demonstrated a very good level of credibility, with an overall weighted mean of 3.66. The highest rating was obtained for maintaining integrity, fairness, and openness in business dealings with stakeholders, indicating that ethical conduct is a strong attribute among the graduates. High ratings were likewise observed in assuming exemplary leadership roles, demonstrating moral and ethical behavior, and acting professionally when interacting with coworkers, suggesting consistent adherence to workplace ethics and professional standards expected in the hospitality industry.

The lowest mean score was noted for utilizing organizational resources responsibly to protect company property, although this indicator remained within the “very good” descriptive level. This implies that while graduates exhibit strong ethical awareness and professionalism, responsible resource management may further improve with continued workplace exposure.

These findings align with the International Labour Organization (2021), which emphasized that employee credibility in service industries is closely linked to integrity, ethical behavior, accountability, and

professionalism, as these attributes are essential in building trust with stakeholders and sustaining organizational performance. In relation to the present study, the results affirm that Hospitality Management graduates possess a strong ethical foundation that supports credibility and trustworthiness in the workplace.

3. The significant relationship between the number of years of employees in the industry and the employee's job performance level.

The results of the Pearson r correlation analysis indicate that there is no significant relationship between the number of years of service in the hospitality industry and the level of job performance of Hospitality Management graduates of Mindoro State University–Bongabong Campus in terms of competence, commitment, collaboration, and credibility. The obtained correlation coefficients for all performance dimensions were low and did not exceed the critical r -value at the 0.05 level of significance, suggesting that length of industry experience alone does not significantly influence job performance.

This finding implies that job performance among the graduates is not primarily determined by tenure in the industry. Despite most graduates having relatively short work experience, particularly within their first six months of employment, they were still rated highly across all job performance dimensions. This suggests that employers prioritize competence and readiness over length of service, and that newly hired employees can demonstrate strong job performance when they possess the necessary skills, work values, and professional attitudes. The result supports the notion that effective recruitment and selection processes allow organizations to identify competent individuals who can perform well even at the early stage of employment.

The present finding is consistent with the study of Azis et al. (2021), which reported that employee competence has a significant positive influence on job performance, regardless of length of service. This indicates that competence plays a more critical role than tenure in determining workplace performance. Furthermore, the result suggests that other factors, such as work environment, job design, interpersonal relationships, and organizational support, may have a stronger influence on employee performance than years of experience alone.

However, this finding does not fully support Human Capital Theory proposed by Becker (1962), which posits that employees' knowledge and skills increase with longer tenure, leading to improved performance. One possible explanation is the nature of the hospitality industry, which emphasizes service delivery, customer interaction, and operational efficiency—competencies that are already developed through academic training and simulated learning experiences prior to employment. As evidenced by the present study, Hospitality Management graduates were able to demonstrate strong job performance despite limited industry experience, indicating that academic preparation plays a significant role in shaping early workplace performance.

CONCLUSION

The respondents' length of service in the hospitality industry ranged from one month to one year. Despite limited work experience, the graduates received generally high job performance ratings, although some indicators ranked lower than others. In terms of competence, the graduates demonstrated strong workplace skills; however, adapting to new operating technologies emerged as the lowest-ranked competency. About collaboration, performance was rated very good overall, though lower rankings were noted in respecting individual differences and demonstrating enthusiasm in completing tasks on schedule. In terms of commitment, the graduates showed a high level of dedication, but prioritizing organizational concerns over personal matters ranked lowest among the indicators. While, in terms of credibility, the graduates were perceived as ethical and professional, with responsible use of organizational resources receiving the lowest ranking, despite still being rated very good.

Based on these, the University, faculty, and department heads should continue reinforcing competence, commitment, collaboration, and credibility among students, emphasizing that these qualities should be developed early and sustained regardless of industry experience. Also, greater emphasis should be placed on strengthening students' technological skills, particularly those relevant to hospitality operations, through enhanced laboratory use and technology-based instruction.

Moreover, seminars and training programs focusing on teamwork, respect for diversity, and professional behavior should be conducted to further improve collaboration and interpersonal skills. Next, the BSHM Department should continue guiding students on ethical conduct, professionalism, and responsible resource management to strengthen credibility in the workplace.

Lastly, the College of Business and Management may implement career readiness and skills enhancement programs for graduating students and alumni to better prepare them for local and international workplace demands. Moreover, an extension program for the alumni, particularly on skills enhancement and career development, may be proposed.

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