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Employers' Feedback on the Job Performance of B.S. Information Technology Graduates of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology

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Abstract: This study determined the employability and employers' feedback of BS Information Technology graduates of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija academic year 2015-2016. The descriptive method of research was used, data gathering was done Google forms, and face-to-face distribution of the questionnaire. Majority of the BSIT graduates were employed, female, single, working in Nueva Ecija as service workers. Job performance was determined based on the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order 52, series of 2006, categorized as personal, interpersonal, and technical understanding skills. The job performance of employed BSIT graduates was high as perceived by their employers meaning their performance is consistently above normal expectations and standards. The findings of this study indicated that there is a high rate of employability and high job performance of the BSIT graduates, but the university must work on addressing the job title landed by these graduates.

Keyword: job performance, employer, technical understanding skills, employability, feedback.

I. INTRODUCTION

Employers' feedback on the performance of new college graduates is an important piece of information that schools must consider to determine the relevance and responsiveness of their curriculum, programs, and services (Tudy, 2017). This information is also one of the parameters of the program to be acknowledged as adherence to a set of standards. More than that, the credibility of employees cultivates the trust and confidence of the employers. It is one of the basic attributes anyone should possess to gain the respect of the entire organization (de Castro, et.al, 2016). Modern economy needs highly trained and skilled human resource, and higher education institutions (HEIs) are required to produce qualified graduates to meet the needs of national development and employers. The industry defines the characteristics and skill requirements of its workforce which may or may not be matched by the graduates being produced by HEIs (Gonzales, et.al., 2017).

What exactly employers looking for employees were interactive attributes like communication, interpersonal and teamwork skills; they equally sought personal attributes from their prospective employees, which include intellect and problem-solving, analytic, critical and reflective ability; willingness to learn and to continue learning; flexibility and adaptability; risk-taking and self-skills (Noval, 2012). The success of any organization or institution requires the positive force of teamwork because it helps the employees to empower and develop themselves and their potentials, as well as learning the proper strategies to achieve the required tasks efficiently (Sanyal & Hisam, 2018).

From the perceived qualities of employees done with the different researchers, it is a fact that the CMO 53. S 2006 stated that competency standards refer to specific skills, knowledge and attitude that may be demonstrated through

performance. Graduates of BSIT are expected to have acquired, but not limited to personal, interpersonal, and technical understanding skills. It is also considered that the field of Information Technology (IT) is ever dynamic; its advancement and development had been rapid and its evolvement is a continuous process. The trend in Information Technology is fast changing but the qualities that employers are looking at employees remain the same.

The Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus, the origin and one of the satellite campuses of the university started producing BSIT graduates in 2004. Graduates were hired in different companies for this program prepares students to be IT professionals, be well versed on application installation, operation, development, maintenance and administration, and familiar with hardware, software installation, operation and maintenance (CMO 53, s 2006). There are lots of job opportunities for BSIT graduates for Information Technology (IT) can be termed as a backbone to all the industries because of wide-scale use of computers, internet and telecommunications systems.

As soon as the BSIT graduates landed their first job, the university consider feedback from employers or hiring companies to realize its mission to develop new knowledge and technologies and transform human resources into productive citizenry to bring about development impact to local and international communities.   The researcher conducted this study to have officially documented feedbacks from employers as perceived by CMO 53, s 2006 that may help in curriculum enhancement and job placement activities.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study was to profile the employability and feedback from employers of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology-San Isidro Campus BS Information Technology graduates during the academic year 2015-2016.

Specifically, it sought to answers the following:

1. What is the profile of the BSIT graduates in terms of:

    1.1 Sex

    1.2 Civil Status

    1.3 Work Status

    1.4 Place of Work

    1.5 Job Title

2. What are the employers' feedback on the job performance of BSIT graduates in terms of:

    2.1 Personal Skills

    2.2 Interpersonal Skills

    2.3 Technical Understanding Skills

3. What other skills that are not included in this survey that should be addressed?

4. What are the employers' other comments on the job performance of BSIT graduates?

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher used the descriptive method of research. Descriptive research can be explained as a statement of affairs as they are at present with the researchers having no control over variables. Moreover, this type of study can be characterized as simply the attempt to determine, describe, or identify what is (Ethridge, 2004).

The researcher sought permission from the Campus Director to conduct this study. The BSIT lists of the academic year 2015-2016 were retrieved from the Registrar's office, containing eighty-seven (87) respondents. The instruments used were the modified Commission on Higher Education Graduate Tracer Study questionnaire and the competency standards from CMO 53. S 2006 contains three expected to have acquired but not limited to personal skills, interpersonal skills, and technical understanding skills.

Data gathering was done in two methods, the first method was through Google forms. The first survey question link https://tinyurl.com/2p8vfz7w was sent to BSIT graduates' e-mail addresses for them to answer. One of the fields required is the e-mail address of their employer. Once the employability was confirmed, the second part of the survey link https://tinyurl.com/455rmk2w was sent to employers' e-mail addresses for them to assess the job performance of employed BSIT graduates.

The second method of data gathering was the face-to-face survey, the researcher distributed the printed questionnaire to employed BSIT graduates and employers. The researcher assist the respondents in answering the questionnaire and had a chance to meet in person some of the employers.

The employers' feedbacks from Google form and printed questionnaire were tallied, analysed, and interpreted using frequency counts, percentages and mean. The employers' rating on the job performance of employed BSIT graduates on the personal, interpersonal, and technical understanding skills was determined using the five scale Likert scales presented below:

Scale Interval	Description	Verbal Description
4.21-5.00	Very High	Performance is superior, far above what is required. The employee consistently exceeds highest standards
3.41-4.20	High	Performance is consistently above normal expectations and standards, excels when compared to others performing the same job.
2.61-3.40	Moderate	Performance is consistent with what is expected and considered acceptable.
1.81-2.60	Low	Performance is generally below the minimum requirement for the job
1.00-1.80	Very Low	Performance does not meet minimum job requirements.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1 The Employability of Graduates

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Sex		
Male	40	45.97%
Female	47	54.02%
Civil Status		
Single	79	90.80%
Married	8	9.19%
Work Status		
Employed	65	74.71%
Unemployed	22	25.28%
Place of Work		
Nueva Ecija	62	71.26%
Manila	21	24.13%
Abroad	4	4.59%
Job title		
Service Worker	24	27.58%
Clerks	13	14.94%
Professional	12	13.79%
Plant and Machine	8	9.19%
Technician	3	3.44%
Trade and Related Work	1	1.14%

Table 2 Employers' Feedback on Employee's Personal Skills

Factor	Variables	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Personal Skills	Personal-discipline	4.13	High
	Critical thinking	3.90	High
	Inter and Intra person motivation	4.36	Very High
	Problem-solving	4.18	High
	Planning and organizing	4.00	High
	Ethical thinking	4.13	High
	Entrepreneurial thinking	4.13	High
	Innovative	4.09	High
	Perseverance in pursuing goals and continuous improvement	4.59	Very High
Overall weighted mean		4.16	High

Table 1 shows the employability of BSIT graduates. Majority are female and single, meaning women today are career-oriented. This is a good indicator that women in the Philippines appear to have high levels of access to economic opportunities and participation in the labor market (David, et. al, 2018).

Majority are employed in Nueva Ecija, meaning they prefer to work and stay in their hometown, which may be associated with less geographical mobility since ties are more useful if people live close to each other (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010).

The job title of the graduates is interpreted based on the 2012 Philippine Standard Occupational Standard. Majority of employed graduates are service workers, meaning workers in this group provide personal and protective services related to travel, housekeeping, catering, personal care, or protection against fire and unlawful acts, or demonstrate and sell goods in wholesale or retail shops and similar establishments, as well as at stalls and on markets. This is matches with the employment rate of the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2018, where workers in the services sector comprised the largest proportion of the population who are employed. Business firms need a lot of computer literates to operate their business well. Being computer literate is to know how the computer functions and operates (Laguador & Dotong, 2013). It implies that the broad sector of service workers is the easiest job to land for fresh graduates.

Table 2 shows the employers' feedback on the personal skills of employed graduates. from the sixty-five (65) employed, forty six (46) employers or 71% participated in the second part of study, where they are requested to rate the employee based on the personals skills with nine (9) variables. based on the table, employed graduates are very high in inter and intra person motivation with mean of 4.36 and perseverance in pursuing goals and continuous improvement with a mean of 4.59. it implies that employed graduates are capable of working in harmony with others. According to vetrivel (2018), the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are, to some extent, innate in each person or acquired at an early age, job seekers and those looking for promotions can take steps to improve their skills and thereby make themselves more valuable to an organization.

Employed graduates are competent and capable of resolving work related problems as manifested on the 4.18 mean on problem solving. Their personal, moral and trade attributes are equally regarded with a mean of 4.13. This shows that their personality and values system are important by their employers, (Archer & Davidson, 2008)

Innovation (4.09), Planning and Organizing (4.0) and Critical Thinking (3.9) are also interpreted as high. Organizational design, or product development all spring from the individual capacity for creative thinking and are part of occupational competencies required for success in particular occupations (Carnevale & Smith, 2013). This denotes that employers highly recognize the character, skills,and abilities of BSIT graduates.

Table 3 The Employers' Feedback on Employee's Interpersonal Skills

Factor	Variables	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Interpersonal Skills	Teamwork and collaborative	4.31	Very High
	Oral and written communications	4.00	High
	Conflict resolution	3.95	High
Overall weighted mean		4.08	High

Table 3 shows the employers' feedback on the interpersonal skills of employed graduates. This shows the employees' social skills and attitude towards working with others. Their teamwork and collaborative are very high with a weighted mean of 4.31. It implies that they can achieve a goal more efficiently by sharing out the workload evenly and delegating tasks to those with the most suitable skill set (n.a., 2018). Teamwork as any kind of cooperation with colleagues or have a clearer idea of a team that works on a common goal, makes joint decisions on what action to take and takes responsibility for the task (n.a., 2007). Fostering teamwork involves creating a work culture that values collaboration; where people understand and believe that thinking, planning, decisions and actions are better when done cooperatively (Fapohunda, 2013).

Oral and written communication has a mean of 4.00. The ability to communicate effectively with superiors, colleagues, and staff is essential, no matter what industry you work in. Workers in the digital age must know how to effectively convey and receive messages in person as well as via phone, email, and social media (Doyle, 2017).

Conflict resolution received a mean of 3.95. Disagreements usually arises and management of conflict is extremely important for the effective functioning of organizations and for the personal, cultural, and social development of individuals (Howel, 2014). Conflict when resolved positively could stimulate a productive outcome of a team.

Interpersonal skills are vital in a dynamic and challenging work area. NEUST graduates are considered team players which are assets and highly valued by their supervisors.

Table 4 The Employers' Feedback on Employee's Technical Understanding Skills

Factor	Variables	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Technical Understanding Skills	System Analysis and Design	4.09	High
	Operation of database, network and multimedia systems	4.04	High
	Software integration, testing and documentation	4.04	High
	Systems management and administration	4.04	High
	Principles of Accounting	3.86	Moderate
Overall weighted mean		4.01	High

Table 4 shows the employers' feedback on employees' technical knowledge and understanding that they acquired from the university. Skills in system analysis and design received a high appraisal with a mean of 4.09. IT graduates have the bird's eye view to break down situations, are capable of examining a business situation with the intent of improving it through better procedures and methods, and provides a framework for visualizing the organizational and environmental factors that operate on a system (Jawahar, 2012).

Automated and operational system mastery are equally looked upon by employers as manifested in the equal mean of 4.04 for operation of data base, network and multimedia systems, software integration, testing and documentation and systems management and administration. The use of these variables in the workplace contributes to improved productivity. Database management system provide an environment that is both convenient and efficient for users to retrieve and store information (Watt, A. & Eng, N., 2014).

Graduates contributes to management and administration at work by incorporating information technology and system solutions to cover a wide array of tasks. Advertisements thru audio-visual means, on-line shopping platforms and the like are utilized nowadays. Information technology fosters innovation in business. Innovation results in smarter apps, improved data storage, faster processing, and wider information distribution. Innovation makes businesses run more efficiently. And innovation increases value, enhances quality, and boosts productivity. (BusinessVibes., 2015) Further, software integration and testing for employed graduates are capacities of putting together sub-system, testing from inexperienced to expert and have the skill to write up project's progress. Certain kinds of interactions among computer systems resemble interactions among people; thus, it is important to consider all levels when integrating those systems (Hasselbring, W., 2000).

The principles of accounting received a moderate mean of 3.86. The result can be attributed to the majority of employers of the graduates that belongs to the service sector that are involved in selling goods in wholesale or retail establishments, as well as at stalls and or markets and demonstrating goods to potentional customers (ILO 2008, 2012) which does not require the utilization bookkeeping knowledge.

Table 5 Other Skills that are Not Included in This Survey that Should be Addressed

No	Suggested Skills
1	Customer Service Skills
2	Social skills and building reports should be recognized
3	Personality Development Skills
4	Time and People Management Skills
5	Editing Skills

Table 5 shows the other skills that are not included in the survey that should be addressed, this question is an open-ended question and optional. Majority of the skills suggested by the employers can be learned in real work situations only. Each organization is unique and has different personnel preferences that match the product and services that they deliver to their customers. Since most of the graduates are employed as service workers, they can acquire and improve the addressed skills when they meet and talk to their clients, with constant feedback and supervision from their employers.

Table 6 Employers' other Feedback on Employee's Job Performance

No	Other Feedback
1	Employee has good attendance standing and customer service skills. She is very flexible and always willing to learn
2	She is quick learner with excellent ability to learn and apply new skills with minimal assistance from others.
3	Organized, competitive and a very innovative.
4	He is one of the team's top performers and is a consistent goal hitter
5	He can handle any problems about his work he can also finish his work load ahead of time
6	Punctual, Responsible, Good Employee, Friendly
7	She is very responsible and very discipline person
8	She is a self motivated person showing eagerness to learn and adopt in corporate world.
9	She is always interested to her job, very cooperative, always on time to her attendance for work
10	He has shown competence in his field of work; besides, he is found being dependable and hardworking. He is also open to criticisms and suggestions while while keeping ardent desire for further nurturing and enhancement of his potentials and capabilities in his field work

Table 6 shows the employers' other feedback on employees' job performance, majority of the comments pertains to the progressive job performance of BSIT graduates. It implies that the university is producing competent graduates that are fond of different companies.

V. Conclusion

The BS Information Technology graduates of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus are highly employable. It means that the program can produce graduates that can cater to the needs of different companies. This is similar to the results of the study of Wanya (2016) where BSIT graduates of S.Y. 2010-2014 at Cagayan State University are 82% employed considering that the respondents are living in the province.

The employers' feedback on the job performance of BSIT graduates as categorized in personal, interpersonal, and technical understanding skills is equally interpreted as high. Meaning employers rated the job performance of BSIT graduates as consistent above normal expectations and standards, excels when compared to others performing the same job. The graduates produced by this university can be an asset to the organization because of the distinct working harmony, perseverance, teamwork and analysis skills.

This is similar to the study of Nisperos (2016) where she surveyed companies hiring IT applicants. The company respondents showed the most preference for personal skills in terms of personal-discipline, problem-solving, and perseverance in pursuing goals, critical thinking, planning and organizing. For interpersonal skills, much preference was reflected in teamwork and collaborative skills and oral and written communication skills. For technical understanding showed that the company respondents had much preference for research in computer science related areas, system analysis and design, computer system architecture, operation database, networks and multimedia systems, computer application skills and understand input and output system.

The study of Lumauag (2018) about the Employer Feedback on B.S. Information Technology Graduates of Iloilo Science and Technology University (ISAT U) Miagao Campus, used a diffent instrument to gather data from the 54 employers but the general qualities, knowledge and understanding, attributes and general skills of the ISAT U graduates are extremely satisfied which are comparable to the personal skills, interpersonal and technical understanding skills of NEUST BSIT graduates,

The study of Tudy (2017) on the job performance of new college graduates of Cor Jesu College, Philippines were rated very satisfactory by managers and personnel in-charge in terms of 19 skills related to computer skills, teamwork, being adaptable, responsible which are all also synonymous to the intruments adopted by the researcher.

The conduct of annual tracer study and employers' feedback must be annually done to confirm the trust of employers, HR officers and other IT hiring companies. A specific standard occupational classification for IT graduates may also be considered and an in-depth employability study to further analyze the undertakings of BSIT graduates to enhance the curriculum and job placement activities.

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