



## International internship and employability readiness of management students in state colleges and universities in the Philippines



Denzil I. Galon \*

*College of Management, Northern Iloilo State University, Estancia, Philippines*

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 24 January 2025

Received in revised form

23 May 2025

Accepted 4 June 2025

#### Keywords:

Employability readiness

International internships

Hospitality students

Skill development

Global employment

### ABSTRACT

This study examines the international internship experiences and employability readiness of undergraduate students in hospitality, tourism, entrepreneurship, and business administration at the State University of Negros Island Region (NIR) and Western Visayas. A total of 327 graduating fourth-year students were randomly selected to participate in the survey. Most participants were aged 17 to 18 (61.5%), and slightly more than half were male (53.2%). The analysis of departmental roles showed that students were most involved in sales and marketing (92.4%), while fewer were interested in front office and housekeeping positions (19.9%). Assessments of employability skills—such as communication, adaptability, teamwork, and work ethics—showed moderate readiness, indicating that students have basic skills but still need further development. Among business administration students, human resources and operational management were the most preferred career areas. The findings emphasize the importance of international internships in helping students build key skills for global employment, including cross-cultural communication and problem-solving. As globalization continues to impact the job market, the study highlights the need for universities to strengthen their internship programs to better prepare students for international career opportunities. Overall, this research provides useful insights into the factors that influence employability readiness in these growing and dynamic fields.

© 2025 The Authors. Published by IASE. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

### 1. Introduction

An internship is a learning opportunity for students to develop professional skills in a hands-on environment. The program complements formal learning from State University with practical knowledge and skills, with essential soft skills, and actual workplace conditions in companies or institutions. Internships are traditionally valuable for state university students to gain job knowledge and experience, and increase their employability in the competitive labor market. The Purpose of this study is to ascertain the internship program and employability readiness of selected graduating State University students (Gault et al., 2010).

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 22, Series of 2013 on the revised policies, standards, and guidelines on

student internship abroad programs in accordance by pertinent provision under Republic Act (RA) 7722 and other pertinent laws enacted guidelines for student's internship abroad programs with practicum mandated to develop and promote policies and systems, procedures and programs. The state universities provide cultural training in communication, behavioral, and attitude skills with international skillsets in training programs.

On-the-job training (OJT) program is one of the most crucial programs in higher education and is an integral part of the educational system in the Philippines, to investigate the effectiveness of integrating interactive teaching methods, such as presentations, role plays, debates, case studies, written reports, portfolios, and reaction/term papers, in enhancing the oral and written communication skills of student trainees, who were identified as needing improvement in these areas despite strong performance in adherence to company policies and other professional competencies (Tolentino, 2023). The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) supports both global and regional efforts to promote lifelong learning. A key priority in education is to provide

\* Corresponding Author.

Email Address: [denzilgalon@nisu.edu.ph](mailto:denzilgalon@nisu.edu.ph)

<https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2025.06.021>

Corresponding author's ORCID profile:

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9154-9060>

2313-626X/© 2025 The Authors. Published by IASE.

This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>)

future-ready and inclusive education and training. This includes strengthening the capacity of educators and mobilizing resources through partnerships with stakeholders. Education is seen as a powerful force for transformation among ASEAN people, contributing to the region's sustainable development.

Graduate employability has become a major concern for higher education institutions, especially in ensuring that academic programs meet the needs of industry. This study focuses on graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program from a public university in the Philippines. It evaluates their education and employability based on employers' views of graduate performance and the relevance of the curriculum. Employability is considered a key measure of a program's success, as it indicates how well the curriculum prepares students for the job market (Alera and Codod, 2023). Graduating students possess strong graduate attributes and competencies. Their credibility is a key indicator of workplace readiness, particularly in evaluating skills gaps and aligning future workers' abilities with industry needs. This study also examines the effectiveness of career readiness seminars in improving students' internship skills. It investigates how a series of workshops helped develop the knowledge and skills required for practicum and assessed students' level of career readiness. Before the intervention, students showed weak competencies and lacked the necessary skills for internships. Therefore, a series of seminars was conducted to improve their abilities. These intervention strategies significantly enhanced students' competencies and demonstrated improvements in career readiness across three key dimensions.

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of OJT as a critical platform for students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, thereby enhancing their professional competencies. OJT provides students with real-world experiences that foster skill development, improve job readiness, and enhance career prospects. Despite its benefits, there is a need to understand which career skills are most dominant among students and how these skills relate to their performance during OJT (Pascua et al., 2022). Internships in the 21st century are essential for developing personal confidence, acquiring practical skills, and gaining real-world experience. College students benefit greatly from internship opportunities, as these help them connect theoretical knowledge with real-life applications and better address workplace challenges. A noticeable gap exists between classroom learning and its practical implementation. Internships bridge this gap by offering students direct, hands-on experience in their chosen fields. The internship experience also has a synergistic effect on skill development and curriculum alignment, supporting career readiness among college students. Higher education institutions must implement holistic strategies to address the complex demands of today's

professional landscape. Early internship exposure helps prepare students for careers in the educational and professional community, offering them experiential learning, employment opportunities, and insights into workplace dynamics. These experiences are often achieved with minimal cost but provide valuable skills and a positive fieldwork experience. Internships are considered a cornerstone of employability, especially by state universities and governments, as they play a crucial role in linking academic learning with practical experience and advancing students' careers (Ndamase and Lukman, 2024).

College students play a key role in employability policies and discussions, especially in shaping how employability is perceived in business contexts. Their success depends on their ability to combine academic knowledge with practical skills before graduation, which highlights the importance of lifelong learning. Enhancing students' employment and language competencies—particularly through international internships—strengthens their professional knowledge and prepares them to navigate global workplaces (Chen et al., 2023). Curriculum design has a significant impact on internship experiences in hospitality management education. In particular, the structure of hotel management programs influences how well students are prepared for international internships (Zhu et al., 2023). The hospitality and tourism sectors require specific competencies, and educational institutions must assess these to support professional development and improve curricula for long-term effectiveness (Bagon et al., 2023). Evaluations of pre-internship expectations and actual experiences often reveal negative gaps, affecting students' overall satisfaction. Therefore, it is important for higher education institutions to ensure high-quality internship programs (Lingadkar and Sankaranarayanan, 2023). Active learning within academic settings is crucial for preparing students for the labor market, particularly in tourism and hospitality. Internship programs help students build realistic attitudes and strong competencies, which influence their decision to pursue careers in these industries (Quintela et al., 2024). Internships help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, providing clear career pathways for students and supporting effective talent development within organizations (Kukreti et al., 2024). International internships also enhance global competencies and require coordinated efforts from academic institutions to adapt their policies and strategies to meet the evolving demands of international business education (Hermann and Fauskanger, 2024).

The Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) program is designed to be interdisciplinary, combining theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Classroom-based learning is enhanced through real-world exposure, helping students better understand the demands of their chosen careers. This approach aims to improve their

competitiveness in the job market. Additionally, the program promotes communication skills across all courses by incorporating interactive and student-centered teaching methods.

## 2. Materials and methods

This descriptive study aims to assess the study the international internship and employability readiness of the College of Management of undergraduate studies of bachelor's degree in hospitality, tourism, entrepreneurship and business administration at the state university of Negros Island Region (NIR) and Western Visayas. A self-designed questionnaire was used to investigate the impact and importance of international apprenticeships at state universities, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods. A total of 327 fourth-year students of the College of Management participated in the study. [Table 1](#) shows the distribution of the participants in the study.

**Table 1:** Distribution of participants

Participants	Number of participants	Gender
Hospitality	65	19.9%
Tourism	25	72.5%
Entrepreneur and business administration	237	7.6%
Total	327	100%

### 2.1. Employment socioeconomic indicator

The percentage of the labor force that is unemployed but available for employment and looking for work is known as the unemployment rate. People who are currently employable, have recently looked for work and are currently unemployed, are also considered unemployed, as are people who have lost their job or who have terminated their employment themselves. Persons who have not been job-seeking but have future employment plans are also included in the definition of 'unemployment'. Some unemployment is inevitable, as there will always be workers in transition between jobs, and companies are looking for the best applicants while job seekers are looking for better opportunities. This indicator is based on the labor force, or the part of the population that is economically active, and not on the total population.

All people of working age (often defined as all persons aged 15 and older, but this may vary from country to country based on national laws and practices) who were a) unemployed during the reference period, i.e., not in paid employment or self-employment; b) currently available for work, i.e., available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period; and c) seeking work, i.e., having taken explicit actions in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment, are included in the unemployed category. Country-reported micro data is based mainly on nationally representative labor force surveys, with other

sources (e.g., household surveys and population censuses) considering differences in the data source, the scope of coverage, methodology, and other country-specific factors (Socioeconomic Indicators-Philippines|Market Forecast).

### 2.2. Tools and techniques

This investigation used a descriptive research method, which observes and describes current conditions without controlling variables. Statistical tools are used to determine the frequency in the distribution of the respondents, the mean, and the frequency to determine the number of scaling and ranking. Descriptive studies aim to determine, describe, or identify what exists, unlike analytical research, which seeks to explain why or how something occurs. Although often based on observation, descriptive studies are not restricted to observational data collection alone. Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis H test to determine the significance difference in the investigation. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative methods generally involve universal formulas to calculate metrics such as mean, median, and mode. In contrast, qualitative methods focus on individual data analysis, interpreting primary data with consideration for unique characteristics.

Assessment of on-the-job training practices of select colleges and universities basis for the enhancement of their on-the-job training program the level of performance of student trainees such as personal characteristics, attitudes toward their jobs, competence, job performance, and obedience to company policies and procedures and their genders and ages, and the degree of significance of the problems in the implementation of the on-the-job training program encountered by the student-trainees, OJT advisers, and college deans.

## 3. Results and discussion

The researcher examined the international internship and employability readiness of the College of Management of undergraduate studies of bachelor's degree in hospitality, tourism, entrepreneurship, and business administration of the state university of NIR and Western Visayas. [Table 2](#) provides the participants' profile according to age and sex of the participants of the study. According to [Table 2](#) present the participants' profiles were classified according to their age and sex. The results show that, out of the total study population, 61.5% of participants were aged between 17 and 18 years ( $f = 201$ ), 31.2% were between 19 and 20 years ( $f = 102$ ), and 7.3% were between 21 and 23 years old ( $f = 24$ ). In terms of gender, 53.2% were male ( $f = 174$ ) and 46.8% were female ( $f = 153$ ). Overall, male participants slightly outnumbered females among the fourth-year undergraduate students who took part in this study

on international internship and employability readiness programs in the NIR and Western Visayas.

**Table 3** presents the distribution of respondents across various departments within the hospitality and tourism industry. The assignments were as follows: Front Office and Housekeeping ( $f = 65$ ,  $p = 61.5\%$ ), Production and Food and Beverage ( $f = 262$ ,  $p = 80.1\%$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $f = 302$ ,  $p = 92.4\%$ ), and Customer Relations and Sales Agent ( $f = 237$ ,  $p =$

72.5%). The results indicate that the highest percentage of participants were assigned to Sales and Marketing (92.4%), while the lowest was in Front Office and Housekeeping (19.9%). This suggests a lower level of motivation among respondents to undertake internships that require strong multicultural communication skills, which are typically developed in front office and housekeeping roles.

**Table 2:** Age and gender profile of 4th-year students in international internship programs

Participants profile	Indicator	Frequency	Percent
Age	17 to 18 years of bracket	201	61.5%
	19 to 20 years of bracket	102	31.2%
	21 to 23 years of bracket	24	7.3%
Sex	Male	174	53.2%
	Female	153	46.8%

**Table 3:** Departmental assignments of hospitality and tourism students during international internships

Department assigned	Frequency	Percent
Front office and housekeeping	65	19.9%
Production, food, and beverages	262	80.1%
Sales and marketing	302	92.4%
Customer relation	237	72.5%
Sales agent	237	72.5%

**Table 4** presents the distribution of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship students assigned to various departments during their international internships. The assignments included Marketing ( $f = 34$ ,  $p = 10.4\%$ ), Human Resources ( $f = 126$ ,  $p = 38.5\%$ ), Operations ( $f = 20$ ,  $p = 6.1\%$ ), Business Economics ( $f = 43$ ,  $p = 13.1\%$ ), and Enterprise Management ( $f = 13$ ,  $p = 4.0\%$ ). The data indicate that the highest proportion of interns were placed in Human Resources (38.5%), while the lowest were assigned to Enterprise Management (4.0%). These results suggest that students showed greater interest and readiness for employment in human resources roles, rather than in business management positions, despite the latter being a core aspect of their program focus.

**Table 4:** Departmental assignments of entrepreneurship and business administration students during internships

Department assigned	Frequency	Percent
Marketing	34	10.4%
Human resource	126	38.5%
Operations	20	6.1%
Business economics	43	13.1%
Operate and manage an enterprise	13	4.0%

**Table 5** presents the evaluation of hospitality and tourism internship skill factors related to international internship and employability readiness. **Table 5** highlights the perceived readiness for employment and academic learning across various departments, with most indicators showing moderate levels. Communication skills were rated high in Front Office and Housekeeping ( $M = 3.64$ ) and Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.68$ ), while moderate levels were observed in Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.35$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 3.37$ ), and Sales Agent roles ( $M = 3.66$ ). Organizational skills showed moderate ratings across all departments: Front Office ( $M = 3.35$ ), Housekeeping ( $M = 3.38$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.38$ ), Marketing ( $M = 3.00$ ),

Customer Relations ( $M = 2.90$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 3.39$ ). Adaptability scores were also moderate, with Front Office and Housekeeping ( $M = 3.00$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.07$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.20$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 2.95$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 2.95$ ). Critical thinking was rated as follows: Front Office and Housekeeping ( $M = 3.04$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.07$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.00$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 2.93$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 3.06$ ). Teamwork was evaluated with moderate scores: Front Office ( $M = 3.18$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.20$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 2.85$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 2.86$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 3.21$ ). Work ethics showed moderate ratings in Front Office and Housekeeping ( $M = 3.44$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.40$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.25$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 3.13$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 3.48$ ). Technical skills were consistently rated moderate across departments: Front Office and Housekeeping ( $M = 3.15$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.15$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.05$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 3.06$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 3.16$ ). Networking was also perceived as moderate: Front Office and Housekeeping ( $M = 3.28$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.20$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.10$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 2.79$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 3.32$ ). Continuous learning had moderate scores as well: Front Office ( $M = 3.37$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 3.39$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.30$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 3.20$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 3.43$ ). Collaboration was rated lowest among all factors but still moderate: Front Office ( $M = 2.76$ ), Food and Beverage ( $M = 2.84$ ), Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.00$ ), Customer Relations ( $M = 2.77$ ), and Sales Agent ( $M = 2.77$ ). Overall, the findings suggest that the hospitality and tourism internship program offers solid preparation through good academic training and on-the-job experience. The results indicate that higher education institutions in this region provide quality education and training that supports international internships and employability. Many interns also demonstrated alignment with organizational ethics and gained relevant experience in the field of global sustainable development.

**Table 6** presents the results of the business management and entrepreneurship internship



program, focusing on employability readiness across different departments. The overall impact of the internship on employability and academic learning was found to be moderate in the areas of Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.23$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.25$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.27$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.25$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.25$ ).

Communication skills were rated highly across departments: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.65$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.68$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.74$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.66$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.67$ ). These results suggest that interns had strong international internship experiences and solid academic foundations from higher education institutions. Organizational skills

were interpreted as moderate across the departments: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.35$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.38$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.32$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.40$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.40$ ), indicating an average level of readiness in international settings.

Adaptability was also rated as moderate: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.00$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.06$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.43$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 2.96$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 2.96$ ). Similarly, critical thinking skills received moderate ratings across all departments: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.05$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.08$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.12$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.07$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.07$ ).

**Table 5:** Evaluation of employability skill factors for hospitality and tourism students in international internships

Internship skills factors	Front office and housekeeping		Food and beverage		Sales and marketing		Customer relation		Sales agent	
	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale
Communication skills	3.64	High	3.68	High	3.35	Moderate	3.37	Moderate	3.66	Moderate
Organization	3.35	Moderate	3.38	Moderate	3.00	Moderate	2.90	Moderate	3.39	Moderate
Adaptability	3.00	Moderate	3.43	Moderate	3.20	Moderate	2.95	Moderate	2.95	Moderate
Critical thinking	3.04	Moderate	3.07	Moderate	3.00	Moderate	2.93	Moderate	3.06	Moderate
Teamwork	3.18	Moderate	3.20	Moderate	2.85	Moderate	2.86	Moderate	3.21	Moderate
Work ethics	3.44	Moderate	3.40	Moderate	3.25	Moderate	3.13	Moderate	3.48	Moderate
Technical skills	3.15	Moderate	3.15	Moderate	3.05	Moderate	3.06	Moderate	3.16	Moderate
Networking	3.28	Moderate	3.30	Moderate	3.10	Moderate	2.79	Moderate	3.32	Moderate
Continuous learning	3.37	Moderate	3.39	Moderate	3.30	Moderate	3.20	Moderate	3.42	Moderate
Collaboration	2.76	Moderate	2.84	Moderate	3.00	Moderate	2.77	Moderate	2.77	Moderate
Total	3.22	Moderate	3.25	Moderate	3.11	Moderate	3.24	Moderate	3.24	Moderate

Teamwork was rated moderately: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.19$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.21$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.17$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.22$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.22$ ). Work ethics also received moderate evaluations: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.44$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.40$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.09$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.49$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.49$ ).

Technical skills showed moderate ratings across the board: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.15$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.16$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.14$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.17$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.17$ ). Networking skills were interpreted as

moderate: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.29$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.31$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.25$ ), Business Marketing ( $M = 3.32$ ), and Accounting ( $M = 3.32$ ).

Continuous learning was moderately rated in all areas: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 3.38$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 3.39$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.29$ ), Business Marketing and Accounting ( $M = 3.42$ ).

Finally, collaboration was rated as moderate but slightly lower compared to other indicators: Sales and Marketing ( $M = 2.76$ ), Product Marketing ( $M = 2.84$ ), Human Resources ( $M = 3.09$ ), Business Marketing and Accounting ( $M = 2.77$ ).

**Table 6:** Evaluation of employability skill factors for business administration and entrepreneurship students in international internships

Internship skills factors	Sales and marketing		Product marketing		Human resource		Business marketing		Accounting	
	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale	Mean	Scale
Communication skills	3.65	High	3.68	High	3.74	High	3.66	High	3.67	High
Organization	3.35	Moderate	3.38	Moderate	3.32	Moderate	3.40	Moderate	3.40	Moderate
Adaptability	3.00	Moderate	3.06	Moderate	3.43	Moderate	2.96	Moderate	2.96	Moderate
Critical thinking	3.05	Moderate	3.08	Moderate	3.12	Moderate	3.07	Moderate	3.07	Moderate
Teamwork	3.19	Moderate	3.21	Moderate	3.17	Moderate	3.22	Moderate	3.22	Moderate
Work ethics	3.44	Moderate	3.40	Moderate	3.09	Moderate	3.49	Moderate	3.49	Moderate
Technical skills	3.15	Moderate	3.16	Moderate	3.14	Moderate	3.17	Moderate	3.17	Moderate
Networking	3.29	Moderate	3.31	Moderate	3.25	Moderate	3.32	Moderate	3.32	Moderate
Continuous learning	3.38	Moderate	3.39	Moderate	3.29	Moderate	3.42	Moderate	3.42	Moderate
Collaboration	2.76	Moderate	2.84	Moderate	3.09	Moderate	2.77	Moderate	2.77	Moderate
Total	3.23	Moderate	3.25	Moderate	3.27	Moderate	3.25	Moderate	3.25	Moderate

Table 7 showed the international opportunities of internship development of hospitality/tourism and business administration/entrepreneur on cross-cultural communication ( $f=68, p=0.48, r=1st$ ), critical problem-solving skills ( $f=12, p=2.79, r=8.5$ ), initiative and proactivity ( $f=10, p=3.27, r=10$ ), time management and organization ( $f=15, p=2.18, r=8$ ), interpersonal skills ( $f=8, p=4.08, r=12th$ ), goal mind

set ( $f=12, p=2.72, r=10th$ ), digital marketing literacy ( $f=21, p=0.12, r=4.5th$ ), attention to detail ( $f=18, p=2.99, r=7.5th$ ), professional and work ethics ( $f=45, p=0.72, r=2nd$ ), international networking ( $f=21, p=0.12, r=4.5th$ ), knowledge of workplace culture ( $f=12, p=2.72, r=8.5th$ ), international skills acquisition ( $f=19, p=1.72, r=6th$ ), digital literacy ( $f=5, p=6.54, r=13th$ ), initiative and proactive ( $f=18,$

$p=1.81$ ,  $r=7.5\text{th}$ ), and lastly on management ( $f=43$ ,  $p=0.76$ ,  $r=32\text{rd}$ ). International internships are an excellent way for students to gain professional experience while immersing themselves in a new culture. With the increasing globalization of the job market, international experience has become an asset that many employers value highly. As a result, more students seek international internships to gain a competitive edge in the job market. Table 8 presents the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which showed no significant difference in perceived marketability between graduating students in

tourism and hospitality education and those in entrepreneurship/business administration when classified by sex,  $U$  ( $N_{\text{male}} = 174$ ,  $N_{\text{female}} = 153$ ) = 12061.0,  $z = -1.602$ ,  $p = 0.142$ . This suggests that both male and female students possess similar levels of knowledge and skills relevant to employment in the industry. Their strengths and weaknesses in education were also comparable. However, it is noteworthy that female students had a slightly higher mean rank, indicating higher perceived marketability, though the difference was not statistically significant.

**Table 7:** Development opportunities identified through international internship participation

Internship opportunities	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Cross-cultural communication	68	0.48	1
Critical problem-solving skills	12	2.79	8.5
Initiative and proactivity	10	3.27	10
Time management and organization	15	2.18	8
Interpersonal skills	8	4.08	12
Goal mindset	12	2.72	10
Digital marketing literacy	21	0.12	4.5
Attention to detail	18	2.99	7.5
Professional and work ethics	45	0.72	2
International networking	21	0.12	4.5
Knowledge of workplace culture	12	2.72	8.5
International skills acquisition	19	1.72	6
Digital literacy	5	6.54	13
Initiative and proactive	18	1.81	7.5
Management	43	0.76	3

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was also used to determine differences in the ability to apply learned skills in interaction with the industry, as perceived by respondents when students were classified by age. The results showed no statistically significant differences,  $\chi^2(2) = 0.850$ ,  $p = 0.654$ . The mean rank scores were 161.80 for students aged 17–18, 170.58 for those aged 19–20, and 154.46 for those aged 21–23. While the 19–20 age group had the highest mean rank, the differences were not significant, indicating that age does not significantly affect students' readiness to engage with industry sectors. Another Kruskal-Wallis H test revealed significant differences in student marketability when classified by program enrollment,  $\chi^2(4) = 25.640$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . Mean rank scores varied among the five groups: 180.12, 179.93,

79.10, 143.48, and 157.36. These results suggest that some groups of graduating students, depending on their academic program, were perceived to have higher marketability than others, with one group notably scoring the lowest.

Finally, the Kruskal-Wallis H test was applied to assess differences in marketability among technical program graduates based on assessment classifications. The test showed no significant difference,  $\chi^2(4) = 25.340$ ,  $p = 0.254$ . The mean rank scores were 133.08, 144.96, 110.25, 152.08, and 128.92. Although there were variations in mean ranks, these differences were not statistically significant, implying that the marketability of graduating students across technical programs is generally similar.

**Table 8:** Differences in employability indicators by sex, age, academic program, and internship placement

Table 8: Differences in employability indicators by sex, age, academic program, and internship placement				
Variable	Mean rank	Sum of ranks	U	P-value
Sex				
Male	156.82	27286.00	12061.0	0.142
Female	172.17	26342.00		
Age				
17-18	161.80	2	0.850	0.654
19-20	170.58			
21-23	154.46			
Hospitality and tourism assignment				
Front office and housekeeping	180.12	4	22.564	0.000
Production, food, and beverage	179.93			
Sales and marketing	79.10			
Customer relation	143.48			
Sales agent	157.36			
Business program assignment				
Marketing	133.08	4	5.340	0.254
Human resource	144.96			
Operations	110.25			
Business economics	152.08			
Operate and manage an enterprise	128.92			

#### 4. Conclusion

The study on international internship and employability readiness among undergraduate

students in hospitality, tourism, entrepreneurship, and business administration at the State University of NIR and Western Visayas revealed key demographic insights. Age Distribution: The majority

of participants were aged 17 to 18 years (61.5%), followed by those aged 19 to 20 (31.2%), and a smaller group aged 21 to 23 (7.3%). Sex Distribution: Male participants represented a slight majority at 53.2%, while female participants accounted for 46.85%. The predominance of younger students, particularly in the 17 to 18 age range, highlights a strong interest in international internships and employability readiness at an early stage in their academic careers. Additionally, the male-dominated participant pool suggests potential gender disparities within these fields, warranting further investigation into the factors influencing this trend. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of tailoring employability programs to address the unique needs of diverse student demographics, enhancing their readiness for international opportunities in hospitality and related sectors.

## Compliance with ethical standards

### Ethical considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. This study followed ethical guidelines to protect participants' rights and privacy.

### Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## References

- Alera DP and Codod CL (2023). The employability study and employers' perception of Business administration graduates from a higher state educational institution in the Philippines. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 9(8): 1022-1032.
- Bagon PM, Samillano JH, and Tinapay AO (2023). Assessing the competence and skills of hospitality and tourism management students. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Publication*, 5(8): 90-100.

- Chen T, Goodman D, Morrison AM, and Wang M (2023). International internships, language competency, and employability: Perceptions of and gaps between students and industry stakeholders. *Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 11(3): 371-391.  
<https://doi.org/10.30519/ahtr.1133594>
- Gault J, Leach E, and Duey M (2010). Effects of business internships on job marketability: The employers' perspective. *Education + Training*, 52(1): 76-88.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/00400911011017690>
- Hermann RR and Fauskanger EA (2024). Institutionalizing international internships in business education: An action research approach to overcoming barriers and driving systemic change in Norwegian business schools. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 69(5): 1042-1062.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2024.2369882>
- Kukreti R, Dani R, Negi P, and Rawat A (2024). Internship satisfaction and its relationship with career development among students of hospitality management. *AIP Conference Proceedings*, 2978: 050006.  
<https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0190464>
- Lingadkar PR and Sankaranarayanan KG (2023). Students' expectations and perception towards tourism and hospitality internship program. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(11): e01612.  
<https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i11.1612>
- Ndamase M and Lukman Y (2024). The impact of the internship programme on students in a selected public higher institution in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Research in Social Sciences and Technology*, 9(2): 246-261.  
<https://doi.org/10.46303/ressat.2024.34>
- Pascua DS, Corpuz JT, and Sadang WC (2022). Career skills and on-the-job training performance of business administration students at a state university in Isabela, Philippines. *International Journal of Humanities and Education Development*, 4(3): 222-228.  
<https://doi.org/10.22161/jhed.4.3.26>
- Quintela JA, Durao M, Veríssimo M, and Marques J (2024). Tourism and hospitality internships in higher education: A competency-based framework. In: Sharma A (Ed.), *International handbook of skill, education, learning, and research development in tourism and hospitality*: 245-267. Springer, Singapore, Singapore.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-4318-6\\_15](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-4318-6_15)
- Tolentino MQ (2023). On-the-Job training (practicum) and academic performance of the BSBA students of the College of Business, Systems Plus College Foundation. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7(3): 94-99.  
<https://doi.org/10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i03.006>
- Zhu J, Lu Y, Zhao Y, Zhang H, and Ran F (2023). International students' career construction from hospitality internship: A qualitative approach. *SAGE Open*, 13(4).  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231216164>