



An Employer-Based Evaluation of the Job Performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management Graduates

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Article Info

Article history:

Received May 12, 2026

Revised Jun 11, 2026

Accepted Jun 25, 2026

Online First Jul 17, 2026

Keywords:

Employer-Based Evaluation
Graduates
Hospitality Management
Job Performance
State University

ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aimed to evaluate the job performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management graduates of Kalinga State University as assessed by their employers.

Methodology: This study employed the survey research method and descriptive research design to assess the job performance of BS Hospitality Management graduates. The respondents consisted of owners, managers, and supervisors of 75 graduates from the academic years 2017–2020. Data were collected through the administration of a standardized questionnaire whose validity and reliability had been previously established, ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the responses obtained from the participants.

Main Findings: The majority of Bachelor of Science Hospitality Management graduates are regularly employed (47%), mostly in entry-level positions within 5–8 months of service (48%). Employer evaluations of 75 respondents revealed that graduate performance generally met expectations across all five job criteria: abilities, knowledge, and skills (60%); judgment and analysis (75%); communication skills (73%); leadership skills (75%); and attitude and behavior (62%). However, specific areas including accountability, advanced communication, and initiative were rated unacceptable by 7–10% of employers.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study advances existing knowledge by providing localized, employer-based evidence on the job performance of hospitality management graduates from a state university. Unlike generalized graduate studies, it identifies specific performance gaps in accountability, communication, initiative, and leadership, offering actionable recommendations for curriculum enhancement. By centering the employer's perspective over self-reported competencies, the study introduces a more objective lens in assessing graduate outcomes. Furthermore, its five-criteria performance framework with quantified ratings establishes a measurable institutional baseline for tracking graduate performance improvements in future studies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a critical determinant of organizational success, particularly in the labor-intensive hospitality industry where service quality is directly linked to workforce competence [1]. As higher education institutions continue to produce graduates for this sector, the alignment between academic preparation and industry expectations remains a persistent concern [2]. Employer feedback serves as a vital mechanism for

evaluating this alignment, providing academic institutions with evidence-based insights for curriculum development and program improvement [3].

Kalinga State University has been producing Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management graduates since 2013; however, no study has previously examined how these graduates perform in the workplace as assessed by their employers. This gap in institutional research limits the university's capacity to make informed, evidence-based decisions regarding curriculum enhancement. Thus, this study investigated employer feedback on the job performance of BS HM graduates of KSU to address this gap and contribute to the broader discourse on graduate employability in the Philippine hospitality sector.

The transition from academic training to professional practice remains a challenge for many hospitality graduates. A study emphasized that graduates often possess practical skills sufficient for their roles but lack the broader employability skills necessary to thrive in dynamic workplace environments [4]. This observation is supported by another findings of 300 Malaysian youth graduates found that English proficiency deficits and job mismatches significantly increase unemployment, while strong employability skills reduce it [5]. Similarly, this is argued that graduate employment concerns extend beyond job placement to encompass performance and excellence once employed [6].

Employability skills, broadly defined as soft skills and core competencies such as communication, problem-solving, and initiative, are recognized as essential bridges across disciplines and industries [7],[8]. Another study warned that entering the workforce without adequate employability skills often results in underemployment, job hopping, and limited career advancement, consequences that also affect graduates' earning potential and long-term prospects [9], [10].

Within the hospitality sector, core competencies extend beyond general employability skills to encompass domain-specific capabilities. Marneros, Papageorgiou, and Efstathiades [11] identified six dimensions of core competencies critical to hospitality management: hospitality skills, interpersonal skills, supervisory skills, food and beverage management skills, leadership, and communication skills. Their analysis revealed significant differences in how managers and students perceive the importance of food and beverage management, interpersonal skills, and leadership, underscoring the need for employer-informed curriculum design.

Seibert, Kraimer, and Heslin [12] further highlighted that the capacity to adapt to evolving work environments provides graduates with a competitive advantage in employability. In the context of organizational performance, Widyastuti, Supartha, and Dewi [13] demonstrated that organizational culture and transformational leadership significantly shape employee performance, findings that resonate with the present study's examination of how workplace environments influence graduate outcomes.

Employer feedback has been widely recognized as an essential input for academic program development. Brits [14] asserted that tertiary institutions must continuously evaluate employer feedback to enhance graduate employability. Batuto et al. [15] similarly established that employer assessments of graduate performance represent a critical source of information for academic institutions. This view is reinforced by Gurel [16], who identified stakeholder feedback as a reliable measure of program curriculum responsiveness and relevance.

Dawaton [17] further emphasized that the formulation of academic programs must incorporate contributions from diverse stakeholders, including employers, government representatives, and industry practitioners, to ensure that graduates are adequately prepared for professional roles. The findings of Prasetyo [18] additionally support this perspective, demonstrating that education aligned with industry expectations strengthens graduates' confidence, competencies, and workplace readiness.

Studies consistently indicate that hospitality graduates enter the workforce with adequate foundational knowledge but require further development in higher-order competencies. Jiang and Alexakis [19] confirmed that hospitality graduates typically perform well at entry-level positions due to their strong theoretical preparation. However, Lu [20] noted that higher-order thinking, problem-solving under pressure, and innovation require reinforcement through experiential learning and professional development opportunities.

In the area of communication, Sonnenschein and Ferguson [21] found that employers expect stronger communication skills from graduates, particularly in professional documentation and interpersonal interaction. Regarding leadership, Preko and Anyigba [22] argued that leadership skills in hospitality develop progressively through workplace experience, suggesting that early-career evaluations reflect an expected developmental trajectory. Tsai et al. [23] further confirmed that adaptability and teamwork are among the most valued graduate qualities in the hospitality industry, while accountability and initiative remain areas requiring continued attention. Taken together, these studies provide a robust foundation for examining and interpreting the employer-based performance evaluations of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management graduates at Kalinga State University.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The employed a quantitative research approach, which was deemed most appropriate because it allowed for the systematic and objective measurement of graduate job performance, enabling the generation of numerical data that could be analyzed statistically to produce clear, comparable, and generalizable findings. This approach

is consistent with the goal of the study to assess the extent to which program graduates meet industry performance standards in a measurable and structured manner. Furthermore, the study utilized the survey research method, employing a job performance evaluation form commonly used by human resource managers in the hospitality industry as the primary data collection instrument. To further ensure that the results were precise and directly responsive to the study's objectives, a descriptive research design was adopted within the quantitative framework. Descriptive research is a scientific method that involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way, with the subject observed in a completely natural and unchanged environment [24]. This design was therefore appropriate for capturing an authentic and unmanipulated account of graduate job performance as evaluated by their respective employers.

2.1. Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-quantitative research design. The quantitative dimension allowed systematic and objective measurement of graduate job performance, enabled the numerical data to be analyzed statistically to produce clear, comparable findings. The descriptive dimension provided the framework for observation and described the performance of the subjects in their natural work environment without any form of manipulation or intervention [24]. This design was most appropriate to capture an authentic and structured account of the extent to which program graduates meet industry performance standards, as evaluated by their respective employers.

2.2. Research Participants

The subject of study consisted of graduates of the BS Hospitality Management and their respective employers and human resource managers. The graduates served as the subjects of performance evaluation, while the employers and human resource managers acted as the evaluators, providing firsthand assessments of the graduates' job performance based on direct workplace observation and professional experience.

2.3. Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a job performance evaluation form, which is utilized by human resource managers in the hospitality industry. This instrument was specifically selected to ensure that the performance criteria reflected authentic industry standards and practices, thereby enhancing the relevance and validity of the data collected. The study utilized the survey research method as its primary data collection technique. Employers and human resource managers were requested to accomplish the evaluation form with respect to the performance of the graduates under their supervision. This approach allowed for the systematic gathering of performance-related information from multiple respondents across different establishments.

2.4. Data Analysis Techniques

The statistical tools used in this study were used to present a comprehensive, objective, and structured analysis of the degree to which program graduates met established industry performance standards. The data gathered through the job performance evaluation forms were analyzed using descriptive statistics, which were deemed appropriate given the descriptive-quantitative nature of the study. Specifically, the mean was used to determine the average performance ratings of the graduates across the evaluated competency areas, providing a clear indication of their overall job performance level. The standard deviation was computed to measure the degree of variability in the performance ratings, revealing the extent to which individual graduate performance scores deviated from the group mean. This allowed for a more nuanced interpretation of the data, as it indicated whether the ratings were closely clustered around the average or widely spread across the performance scale. Frequency counts and percentage distributions were further utilized to describe the profile of the respondents and to present categorical data in a clear and organized manner.

2.5. Research Procedures

The conduct of this study followed a systematic sequence of procedures to ensure the integrity and reliability of the research process. Initially, the job performance evaluation form was identified and reviewed for its appropriateness and alignment with the study's objectives. Subsequently, the instrument was distributed to the identified employer-respondents in the hospitality industry who had direct supervisory experience with the program graduates. Upon collection of the accomplished evaluation forms, the data were tallied, encoded, and subjected to statistical analysis. The results were then interpreted in relation to the study's objectives and research questions. Throughout the entire process, ethical considerations were observed, including the confidentiality of respondents' information and the voluntary nature of participation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the results, organized and presented in the order in which they address the stated objectives: employment profile and job performance evaluation as to abilities, knowledge, and skills, judgment and analysis, communication skills, leadership skills, and attitude and behavior.

3.1. Employment Profile

Table 1. Employment Profile

1. What is the employment profile of the graduates as to?	Frequency	Percentage
1.1. Employment Status		
a. Regular	35	47%
b. Contractual	28	37%
c. Part-time	12	16%
Total	75	
1.2. Years of Service		
a. 0-4 months	7	10%
b. 5-8 months	36	48%
c. 9 months-12 months	19	25%
d. 12 months and above	13	17%
Total	75	
1.3. Department		
a. Housekeeping	9	12%
b. Food and Beverage	6	8%
c. Kitchen	5	7%
d. Front Office	2	3%
e. Reservation	8	11%
f. Banquet and catering	19	25%
g. Others: _____	26	34%
Total	75	

Table 1 presents the employment profile of the graduates. In terms of employment status, most graduates hold regular positions (47%), while others work on a part-time basis (16%). This distribution suggests that BS Hospitality Management graduates are not merely entering the workforce but are securing stable, long-term employment a finding that carries significant implications for program relevance and graduate competitiveness. This outcome aligns with the theoretical proposition of human capital theory [25], which suggests that investment in education and skills development directly enhances an individual's productive capacity and employability. The relatively high proportion of regular employment among graduates suggests that the knowledge and competencies acquired through the BS Hospitality Management program are recognized and valued by industry employers, consistent with the theory's assertion that formal education functions as a form of capital that yields returns in the labor market. These findings are further corroborated by empirical evidence at the macro level. The International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that as early as 2019, tourism accounted for one in ten jobs worldwide [26], while the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) projects the sector to support 449 million jobs globally by 2034 [27]. On hospitality program graduates in the Philippines have similarly reported high rates of regular employment, attributing this to the sustained demand for skilled hospitality workers in both domestic and international labor markets.

As to the length of service, most graduates have been with their respective companies for 5–8 months (48%), while the few have been employed for only 0–4 months (7%). The concentration of graduates in the 5–8-month bracket indicates that most have successfully navigated the critical probationary period typically three to six months in the Philippine labor context and have been retained by their employers. This finding is particularly meaningful considering research suggesting that early job retention is a reliable indicator of initial job performance and employer satisfaction [28]. It also reflects positively on the graduates' capacity to meet entry-level role requirements, lending empirical support to the program's ability to produce work-ready graduates. This is consistent with the findings of Robles [29], who emphasized that the ability to adapt and sustain performance during the early employment period is closely linked to the development of both technical and interpersonal competencies during formal education.

For departmental assignment, the largest group of graduates were placed in other departments (34%), while the fewest were assigned to the front office (3%). The wide distribution of graduates across various operational departments including food and beverage, housekeeping, sales, and others reflects the broad, multi-competency preparation that the BS Hospitality Management curriculum provides. This is consistent with the

concept of transferable skills in hospitality education, which holds that effective hospitality programs should equip graduates with competencies applicable across diverse operational contexts rather than a single functional area [30]. The diverse departmental representation in this study also strengthens the validity and generalizability of the findings, as performance evaluations were drawn from a wide cross-section of industry roles rather than a single operational setting. This methodological breadth aligns with calls in the hospitality education literature for tracer studies and performance assessments [31] that capture the full spectrum of graduate deployment.

3.2. Level of Abilities, Knowledge, and Skills of Graduates as Perceived by the Employers

Table 2. Level of abilities, knowledge, and skills of graduates as perceived by the employers

Job Criteria	Mean	SD	Description
Does he/she exhibit the required knowledge, skills, and techniques	2.63	0.49	Exceeds Expectation
Does he/she complete his/her work with the expected degree of quality?	2.32	0.47	Meets Expectation
Is he/she attentive to detail?	2.19	0.69	Meets Expectation
Does he/she consider accuracy of work, neatness & adherence to the standard of the company?	2.08	0.51	Meets Expectation
Does he/she complete his/her assigned workload?	2.16	0.52	Meets Expectation
How well does he/she manage his/her time?	2.07	0.60	Meets Expectation
General weighted mean	2.24	0.58	Meets Expectation

Table 2 presents the employer assessment of BS Hospitality Management graduates in terms of abilities, knowledge, and skills across six performance criteria. The overall mean of 2.24 (SD = 0.58) indicates that graduates generally Meet Expectations, a result that affirms the foundational competence of the program's graduates while simultaneously identifying specific areas warranting curricular attention. The highest-rated criterion was knowledge, skills, and techniques (M = 2.63, SD = 0.49), the only indicator that Exceeded Expectations. This finding suggests that the BS Hospitality Management curriculum has been effective in transmitting domain-specific technical knowledge aligned with entry-level industry requirements, a result consistent with Mesa [32], who found that hospitality graduates generally demonstrate sufficient technical skills for their designated roles. The low standard deviation further indicates strong employer consensus on this assessment. Raybould and Wilkins [33] and Zopiatitis and Constanti [34] similarly identified technical skill acquisition through structured coursework and supervised practicum as a core strength of outcome-based hospitality programs, validating the program's emphasis on laboratory-based and practicum components.

The remaining five criteria fell within the Meets Expectations range. Quality of work output ranked second (M = 2.32, SD = 0.47), reflecting adequate employer satisfaction with graduates' general performance, consistent with evidence that quality consciousness is more readily developed through structured academic instruction than through informal workplace exposure alone [35]. Attentiveness to detail ranked third (M = 2.19, SD = 0.69) but registered the highest standard deviation, suggesting variability in employer perceptions across different workplace contexts, possibly reflecting differences in task complexity or inconsistencies in how this competency is cultivated during practical training.

The most educationally significant findings concern the lower-rated criteria: accuracy, neatness, and adherence to company standards (M = 2.08, SD = 0.51), completion of assigned workload (M = 2.16, SD = 0.52), and time management (M = 2.07, SD = 0.60), with time management receiving the lowest score overall. These results are consistent with the broader literature identifying self-management, organizational efficiency, and task prioritization as persistent competency gaps among entry-level graduates [36], [37]. Baum [38] noted that deficiencies in self-management and time discipline are among the most frequently reported employer concerns regarding entry-level hospitality workers, while other study found that personal organization and reliability are critical determinants of long-term employability in service industries [39].

These findings underline a significant gap: while the program succeeds in building technical knowledge, it may not yet provide sufficient opportunities for graduates to develop the self-regulatory behaviors that workplace performance demands. This reflects a well-documented challenge in hospitality education, where curriculum design has historically prioritized knowledge transmission over the deliberate cultivation of behavioral competencies [40]. Addressing this gap calls for purposeful curriculum enhancements, including experiential learning, workplace simulation, and industry-mentorship opportunities that expose students to real workplace demands [41], and may serve as evidence-based input for program review and outcome alignment processes.

3.3. Level of Judgment and Analysis of Graduates as Perceived by the Employers

Table 3. Level of judgment and analysis of graduates as perceived by the employers

Job Criteria	Mean	SD	Description
How well does he/she analyze and solve problems?	1.99	0.39	Meets Expectation
Does he/she act on decisions promptly?	2.21	0.60	Meets Expectation
How well does he/she adjust to new directives and procedures?	1.87	0.45	Meets Expectation
Does he/she suggest new methods and approaches?	2.08	0.43	Meets Expectation
General weighted average	2.04		Meets Expectation

Table 3 presents employer ratings of BS Hospitality Management graduates across four judgment and analysis criteria. The overall mean of 2.04 (SD = 0.49) reflects a satisfactory but modest level of performance in areas requiring independent judgment, adaptability, and proactive thinking. Acting on decisions promptly received the highest rating (M = 2.21, SD = 0.60), though its elevated standard deviation suggests considerable variability in employer perceptions across different workplace contexts. Suggesting new methods (M = 2.08, SD = 0.43) and analyzing and solving problems (M = 1.99, SD = 0.39) both approached the lower boundary of the Meets Expectations range, indicating that graduates' capacity for creative problem-solving and higher-order thinking, while adequate, remains an area for development consistent with findings that these competencies are among the most frequently underdeveloped among entry-level hospitality graduates [42], [43]. The lowest-rated criterion, adjusting to new directives and procedures (M = 1.87, SD = 0.45), points to measurable challenges in adaptability a competency gap widely documented in the literature on graduate readiness in fast-evolving service sectors [44]. These results collectively underscore the need for curriculum interventions that foster scenario-based learning, critical thinking, and adaptive problem-solving to better prepare graduates for the dynamic demands of hospitality workplaces.

3.4. Level of Communication Skills of Graduates as Perceived by the Employers

Table 4. Level of communication skills of graduates as perceived by the employers

Job Criteria	Mean	SD	Description
Does he/she communicate clearly and effectively?	1.81	0.39	Meets Expectation
Can he/she clearly express himself/herself both orally and in writing?	1.84	0.37	Meets Expectation
Does he/she listen well and respond appropriately?	2.07	0.66	Meets Expectation
Does he/she submit report clear and accurate?	1.75	0.50	Meets Expectation
General weighted average	1.87	0.51	Meets Expectation

Table 4 presents employer ratings of BS Hospitality Management graduates across four communication criteria. The overall mean of 1.87 (SD = 0.51) indicates that graduates Meet Expectations; however, this is the lowest mean recorded across all performance dimensions in the study, positioning communication as the area of greatest concern in graduates' workplace performance profile. Listening and responding appropriately received the highest rating (M = 2.07, SD = 0.66), suggesting greater competence in receptive than expressive communication. Expressing oneself clearly orally and in writing (M = 1.84, SD = 0.37) and communicating clearly and effectively (M = 1.81, SD = 0.39) both recorded low standard deviations, reflecting strong employer consensus that graduates' expressive communication skills are adequate but not exceptional. Notably, neither item received any Exceeds Expectations rating across all 75 respondents, indicating a consistent performance ceiling in this area.

The lowest-rated criterion was submitting reports clearly and accurately (M = 1.75, SD = 0.50), highlighting a specific gap in graduates' ability to produce structured, professional written output a competency particularly critical in hospitality operations where accurate documentation and reporting are integral to daily practice. These findings corroborate research identifying oral and written communication as among the most persistently underdeveloped employability competencies among fresh graduates [45] and carry significant operational implications in a sector where service excellence is largely mediated through effective interpersonal interaction and clear communication [46].

3.5. Level of Leadership Skills of Graduates as Perceived by the Employers

Table 3.5. Level of Leadership Skills of Graduates as Perceived by the Employers

Job Criteria	Mean	SD	Description
Does he/she demonstrate an ability to encourage and/or inspire others?	2.21	0.53	Meets Expectation
Does he/she have the respect of his or her work group?	2.08	0.27	Meets Expectation
Does he/she possess the ability to direct others toward a common goal?	2.13	0.38	Meets Expectation
Does he/she consistently demonstrate an ability to lead others?	2.11	0.56	Meets Expectation
How well do the employees plan and organize work duties?	1.89	0.58	Meets Expectation
Does he/she coordinate well with other workers and departments?	1.97	0.52	Meets Expectation
Does he/she establish priorities appropriately and anticipate future needs?	2.36	0.54	Meets Expectation
Does he/she ensure that company policies are adhered to?	2.11	0.31	Meets Expectation
General weighted average	2.11	0.49	Meets Expectation

Table 5 presents employer ratings of BS Hospitality Management graduates across eight leadership criteria. The overall mean of 2.11 (SD = 0.49) reflects a satisfactory but moderate level of performance in areas requiring interpersonal influence, task coordination, and organizational foresight. Establishing priorities and anticipating future needs received the highest rating (M = 2.36, SD = 0.54), suggesting reasonable capacity for forward planning and organizational awareness. Encouraging and inspiring others (M = 2.21, SD = 0.53), directing others toward a common goal (M = 2.13, SD = 0.38), and ensuring adherence to company policies (M = 2.11, SD = 0.31) followed, with the notably low standard deviation on policy adherence reflecting strong employer consensus that graduates reliably respect workplace norms — consistent with findings from Mindoro State University, which similarly reported high employer ratings for hospitality graduates in professionalism and organizational compliance [45]. Demonstrating leadership (M = 2.11, SD = 0.56) and earning the respect of the work group (M = 2.08, SD = 0.27) registered moderate scores, with the latter's low standard deviation suggesting a broadly shared perception that graduates command basic professional respect, even if active leadership behaviors remain modest [46].

The lowest-rated criteria coordinating with other workers and departments (M = 1.97, SD = 0.52) and planning and organizing work duties (M = 1.89, SD = 0.58) indicate measurable challenges in systematic task management and cross-departmental collaboration, competencies indispensable to seamless service delivery in the hospitality industry [44]. These gaps are corroborated by Moussa, Saber, and El-Yamani [47], who identified planning, organizing, and coordinating as among the most pronounced skill deficiencies detected by hotel operators in newly hired hospitality graduates. Taken together, the findings reveal that graduates perform more confidently in roles requiring personal conduct and rule adherence than in those demanding proactive organizational and collaborative leadership competencies best cultivated through experiential exposure and structured industry immersion rather than classroom instruction alone [45], [48].

3.6. Level of Attitude and Behavior as Perceived by the Employers

Table 6. Level of attitude and behavior as perceived by the employers

Attitude and Behavior	Mean	SD	Description
Does the employee accept new ideas with relative ease?	2.11	0.42	Meets Expectation
Does he/she report to duty on time?	2.19	0.59	Meets Expectation
Does he/she actively seek out and assume additional responsibilities without being asked to do so?	2.29	0.59	Meets Expectation
Does he/she accept accountability for his or her work?	2.26	0.66	Meets Expectation
Does he/she follow through on commitments and job duties consistently?	2.04	0.62	Meets Expectation
Does he/she work well with peers and supervisors?	2.11	0.56	Meets Expectation
Does he/she exhibit consideration for others, willingness to help, and maintain a rapport with co-workers?	2.29	0.51	Meets Expectation
Does he/she display a positive and cooperative attitude about the job role, assigned work, and the company?	2.28	0.61	Meets Expectation

Is he/she open-minded and accepting of constructive feedback from peers and supervisors?	2.11	0.63	Meets Expectation
General weighted average	2.19	0.58	Meets Expectation

Table 6 presents employer ratings of BS Hospitality Management graduates across nine attitude and behavior criteria. The overall mean of 2.19 (SD = 0.58) indicates that graduates Meet Expectations, with all nine indicators clustering within a narrow mean range of 2.04 to 2.29 the most evenly distributed performance profile among all dimensions assessed. Two criteria tied for the highest rating: actively seeking additional responsibilities (M = 2.29, SD = 0.59) and exhibiting consideration for others and maintaining rapport with co-workers (M = 2.29, SD = 0.51). The low standard deviation on the latter reflects strong employer consensus on graduates' cooperativeness and relational competence qualities recognized as direct drivers of service quality and guest satisfaction in hospitality contexts [49] and empirically linked to positive employee performance in service delivery [50]. The willingness to assume additional responsibilities further signals professional initiative aligned with what hotel managers actively seek from entry-level graduates [51]. Displaying a positive and cooperative attitude (M = 2.28, SD = 0.61) and accepting accountability for work (M = 2.26, SD = 0.66) followed closely, with the latter's high standard deviation suggesting variability in how graduates' sense of responsibility is perceived across supervisory contexts. These findings are consistent with Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron [43], who found that positive attitude and organizational fit are frequently prioritized over technical qualifications during hospitality recruitment, and with the Mindoro State University study, which similarly reported high employer ratings in teamwork, ethical conduct, and professionalism [45].

Mid scores were recorded for reporting to duty on time (M = 2.19, SD = 0.59), working well with peers and supervisors (M = 2.11, SD = 0.56), accepting new ideas (M = 2.11, SD = 0.42), and openness to constructive feedback (M = 2.11, SD = 0.63). The low standard deviation on accepting new ideas indicates broad employer consensus on graduates' receptive disposition toward workplace changes a competency increasingly critical in a rapidly evolving industry [52]. The high standard deviation on openness to feedback, however, suggests considerable individual variability in this area, which is educationally significant given that receptiveness to feedback is consistently identified as a key driver of professional growth and self-improvement [16].

The lowest-rated criterion was following through on commitments consistently (M = 2.04, SD = 0.62), pointing to a modest but meaningful gap in dependability. Espellita and Maravilla [46] emphasized that sustained commitment and follow-through are among the behavioral attributes most valued by hotel supervisors in the Philippine context, while Moussa, Saber, and El-Yamani [47] identified self-management of which consistent follow-through is a core component as a frequently flagged deficiency among newly hired hospitality graduates globally, suggesting this gap extends beyond KSU graduates alone. Overall, while this dimension presents the most encouraging performance profile in the study, the relatively lower scores in follow-through and openness to feedback underscore the value of embedding reflective practice, professional ethics modules, and mentorship frameworks into the curriculum to further strengthen graduates' behavioral resilience and professional disposition [3], [14].

3.7. Support from Previous Studies and Implications

The findings of this study are broadly consistent with prior research on hospitality graduate performance and employability. The strong performance in technical knowledge corroborates Mesa [32], Raybould and Wilkins [33], [34], who collectively identified technical skill acquisition through structured coursework and supervised practicum as a consistent strength of outcome-based hospitality programs. The performance gaps identified in communication, self-management, and time management [38], [39], that identified these as among the most frequently reported employer concerns regarding entry-level hospitality workers. The weaknesses in problem-solving, initiative, and adaptability mirror recurring findings across the graduate employability literature [42]-[44], while the low ratings in planning, organizing, and cross-departmental coordination are directly corroborated by Moussa, Saber, and El-Yamani [47], who identified these as the most pronounced skill gaps detected by hotel operators in newly hired graduates. Espellita and Maravilla [46] further affirmed that while hospitality graduates in the Philippine context possess foundational interpersonal qualities, active leadership capacity and consistent follow-through require further development. At the institutional level, the Mindoro State University tracer study [45] reported comparable performance profiles among BS Hospitality Management graduates, reinforcing the generalizability of the present findings within the Philippine hospitality education context.

However, several studies present contrasting results that merit acknowledgment. Sibulan, Dela Cruz, and Del Monte [53] found that BSHM graduates from Palawan State University performed well in soft skills such as teamwork, adaptability, communication, and interpersonal skills, with employers expressing high levels of satisfaction directly contrasting the present study's finding that communication was the lowest-rated performance dimension. Similarly, a study on hospitality graduates from private higher education institutions in Cabanatuan City found that graduates demonstrated an intermediate level of proficiency in problem-solving, collaboration, and communication, suggesting more balanced soft skill development [54] than what was observed among KSU

graduates. In terms of leadership, Ngoepe and Wakelin-Theron [55] found that hotel managers prioritized communication skills and social intelligence over critical thinking, innovation, and creativity when assessing graduate employability implying that the leadership gaps identified in this study may carry less operational weight in certain industry contexts. Furthermore, a post-pandemic study on graduate and hotel manager expectations found that employers primarily sought graduates with positive, open-minded attitudes and readiness to change, suggesting that attitudinal competencies; an area where KSU graduates performed well, may be weighted more heavily by some employers than the technical and organizational competencies where gaps were identified in this study [56], [57]. These contradictions may be attributable to differences in institutional contexts, industry settings, regional labor market conditions, and the specific performance frameworks employed across studies. Thus, the convergent and divergent findings across diverse research contexts underscore the complexity of graduate employability assessment and reinforce the need for continued tracer and employer feedback research across diverse hospitality education contexts in the Philippines.

3.8. Impact and Limitations of the Study

This study contributes to the growing literature on graduate employability and outcomes-based education in the Philippine hospitality sector. By systematically documenting employer assessments across five performance dimensions, it provides an empirical foundation for evidence-based curriculum review, program improvement, and institutional quality assurance processes at Kalinga State University and similarly situated higher education institutions. The findings also offer practical value to curriculum planners, program administrators, and accrediting bodies seeking measurable indicators of graduate readiness and industry alignment. Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study was conducted within a single institution, which constrains the generalizability of the findings to other hospitality programs in the Philippines. The exclusive reliance on employer assessments as the sole source of performance data introduces the possibility of evaluator bias, as ratings may be influenced by workplace-specific standards, supervisory styles, and organizational cultures that vary across establishments [58], [59]. The absence of a complementary graduate self-assessment instrument further limits the depth of interpretation, as a triangulated perspective would have produced a more balanced and holistic employability profile. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the data collection means that the findings reflect a single point in time and do not account for the performance trajectory of graduates as they accumulate industry experience. Future studies addressing these limitations through longitudinal designs, multi-institutional samples, and mixed-method approaches would substantially strengthen the evidence base for hospitality graduate performance research in the Philippines.

4. CONCLUSION

The study confirms that employer feedback serves as a reliable mechanism for evaluating the alignment between academic preparation and industry expectations. And, that the curriculum given to them was effective for them to perform as workers in hospitality industry. Graduates demonstrated relative strengths in technical knowledge and interpersonal attitudes; however, measurable performance gaps were identified in communication, adaptability, and consistency of follow-through. These results are consistent with the other literature on graduate employability, which identifies deficiencies in soft skills such as self-management, communication, and problem-solving as significant barriers to career advancement and long-term professional growth. Collectively, the findings position graduate job performance within the larger discourse on higher education accountability and underscore the need for curriculum-level responses to the competency gaps identified.

Longitudinal studies tracking the performance trajectory of BS Hospitality Management graduates over time are recommended to clarify whether the identified gaps in communication, adaptability, and time management are products of academic preparation or characteristic of the early career stage. Also, a comparative study between graduates of the second revised curriculum and those of subsequent revisions would provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of curriculum reforms in addressing the performance deficiencies identified in this study, thereby strengthening the basis for outcome-based curriculum evaluation in Philippine higher education institutions.

Given that communication ranked as the lowest-rated performance dimension, a dedicated study on the communication competencies of BS Hospitality Management students is necessary, with particular focus on oral and written proficiency in industry-specific contexts. Such research could directly inform the design of targeted communication enhancement programs and language-integrated curricula. Furthermore, future studies may employ a complementary graduate self-assessment instrument to enable triangulation of employer and graduate perspectives, producing a more holistic understanding of the employability profile of KSU BS Hospitality Management graduates.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author acknowledges the participation of the managers, supervisors and owners of BS Hospitality Management graduates who made this study possible.

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