



## Analyzing the Employability Competency of Fourth Year College Business Administration Students

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### Abstract:

*This study provides a comprehensive overview of the employability competencies valued by graduating college students in Business Administration. The research is a quantitative study that utilizes descriptive approach. This targets 35 graduating students from the College of Business Administration. The study examines the unanimous agreement among students regarding the significance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as the most important skill for employability, possibly due to its ubiquity and relevance in the modern digital workplace. While ICT ranked highest, competencies such as teamwork, problem solving, and communication were also highly regarded, albeit to a lesser extent. The research highlights the awareness among students those employers seek competencies beyond technical proficiency. Adaptability to rapidly changing environments and a willingness to learn new skills were identified as crucial factors in successful job searches, acknowledging the evolving nature of the professional landscape. While students recognize the importance of ICT, they also understand the equal importance of mastering other skill sets such as teamwork, problem solving, and communication. Hence, inferential statistics were used to interpret the gathered data.*

**Key Words:** business administration, employment, competencies, challenges, human resource

### 1.INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive job market, the employability of graduates has become a critical concern for higher education institutions. Employability competency, which encompasses a range of skills, knowledge, and attributes that enable individuals to gain and maintain employment, has emerged as a key indicator of success in the job market. Business administration students, in particular, are expected to possess a strong foundation of employability competencies due to the diverse and dynamic nature of the business field (Forbes, 2020).

Numerous studies have focused on employability competencies in different academic disciplines; however, limited research has specifically examined the employability competency of fourth-year college business administration students. This research aims to address this gap in the literature by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the employability competency of fourth-year college business administration students (Baird, 2020).

Higher education institution plays an important role in generating labors resources outputs in order to fulfil the demand of the potentials labor in the job market (Majid, et.al,2020). The acquired employability skills of young graduates are entrepreneurship, professional development, work with others, self-management, communication and problem solving (Ng,P.M.L,2021). A fresh graduate's mastery of an academic subject is no longer sufficient in today's difficult economic climate; students are increasingly required to acquire those skills that will improve their work prospects. The following competencies are included in employability skills: information retrieval and handling; communication and presentation; planning and problem-solving; and social interaction (Fallow and Steven, 2000). According to Sarkar, et.al (2020), graduate employability is a key issue for higher education as new graduates face a highly competitive and rapidly changing employment sector. The development of employability skills is an important graduate outcome of most contemporary University degrees (Baird, 2020). In connection to this, the

researchers aim to let the 4th year CBA students of BCU to enhance their employability competency as a preparation to their future careers.

Hence, employers believe that communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and technology abilities are essential competencies of employability skills in relation to future work requirements. Employability skills are being integrated into all subject area across the curriculum as part of the teaching process. Employers discover a lack of competence among job searchers, despite the fact that trained human resources with high competitiveness and employability skills are required to tackle the era of technological disruption. The problem of inadequate education is related to the issue of inadequate abilities. This study aims to determine the employability competencies required by employers in the career sector and how to include them into the teaching process (Fajaryati,2020).

In addition, employable skills lie at the heart of the current Government's agenda. The reforms will raise the skills and qualification level for young people and adults to world standards, as well as equipping learners with high quality skills for productive, sustainable employment and personal fulfillment. Employable skills and employment skills could be considered the same: however, there are clear differences between them. Employable skills are the skills that make someone employable, for example reliability and honesty. Employment skills are the skills required to perform a job effectively for example, knowledge and experience of the vocational are along with literacy, numeracy and computing skills (Gravells,2010).

The transferable talents a person needs to be "employable" are known as employability skills. Employers frequently specify a set of abilities they seek from candidates in addition to strong technical understanding and subject knowledge. They think that having these abilities will enable a person to perform their job to the best of their ability. Your knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as well as how you use those assets and how you portray them to employers, all affect your employability (Anon, n.d).

Moreover, employability is a collection of accomplishments, including knowledge, abilities, and personal qualities. Characteristics that increase graduates' chances of finding job and succeeding in their chosen professions, enhancing their own well-being as well as that of their workforce, community, and economy (Yorke, 2004). Cranmer (2006) contends that these employability skills must be incorporated into the teaching and learning process in order to improve graduates' chances of finding employment. The degree of graduate employability is determined by the curriculum's creation and nurturing of the skills necessary to prepare graduates for the workforce, according Boden and Nedeva (2010).

Hence, the fundamental abilities and qualities required for almost any job are employability skills. These are the general abilities that a company looks for in a candidate. Employers look for candidates with these talents almost always. Foundational or job-readiness skills are other names for employability skills. The soft skills necessary for working effectively with others, applying knowledge to issues, and blending in with any workplace are among the list of employability skills. They also comprise the professional abilities that provide you the chance to succeed at work. Due to the fact that you can use these skills for employment in any industry, they are also regarded as transferable skills.

Also, Scott, Connel, Thomson and Willisson (2021) included transferable skills training across their degree programs for 30 years because they understand how important it is for graduates to have the right employability skills in addition to their subject-specific skills. For final-year honors students, a specific employability skills program has just been developed. The participation of outside specialists was a crucial aspect in the creation and delivery of these events. Student perspectives were recorded in-depth through questionnaires, and major themes were identified through thematic analysis. The curriculum has been deemed to be very helpful, leading to appreciable increases in students' self-assurance in important areas of employability skills. Also, students' opinions of the value of general employability abilities in relation to their selected career route may be distorted. While presenting employability skills programs, keep this reality in mind.

Although there is a long list of talents that businesses look for in their graduate hires, they nonetheless stress the value of the "basic skills" of literacy, numeracy, and Computing. Nonetheless, employers of graduates as a whole don't always value these skills as much as employers and society as a whole do. Non-graduates also keep raising issues with the low levels of literacy and numeracy proficiency displayed by some candidates. the desire to provide additional possibilities for students to demonstrate their creativity and invention, their entrepreneurship and enterprise, and their management and leadership skills, the fundamental should neither ignore the value of the more basic, essential skills, nor should assume that all graduates will be able to prove their expertise in them without assistance when asked to do so by their future employers (Tariq,2009).

The purpose of this study is to identify the employability competency of 4th year CBA students of Baguio Central University. This research aims to help students discover and enhance their employability skills according to the employer-employee industry that constantly changes through time. This will also be beneficial for teachers; this research can serve as a guide for them to educate the students on how to be employable. For the researchers, this study is significant for them to understand that a life waits beyond the four-walled classrooms that they are already in right now. The findings of this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on the specific employability competencies that fourth-year college business administration students possess or lack. This

information can inform curriculum development, career counselling, and employment preparation initiatives in higher education institutions. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance the employability outcomes of business administration students and equip them with the necessary skills and attributes to thrive in the competitive job market.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

The competence motivation theory postulates that accomplishment or mastery of a task might result in a general improvement in one's opinion of one's own competence. The opposite outcome, however, may occur if the person consistently fails at a task or does not receive peer support. According to the theory of competence motivation, people are motivated to take part in activities that will help them improve or demonstrate their talents. When someone completes a difficult activity effectively and receives praise from family or peers for it, they will feel competent in that achievement domain, whether it be social, cognitive, or physical. They will learn that they have control over their performance if they are successful in that area. Feelings are produced by high sensations of control and competence (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022).

Today, employee competencies are a vital component of an organization's capital and its success. They enable businesses to adjust to specific market demands, gain a competitive edge, and provide positive financial outcomes. Many studies have established a link between employee capabilities and business outcomes. In the current world, which is shaped by globalization processes, environmental volatility, and the advancement of information and technology, businesses can achieve their goals through the management of their skills. Competencies management has therefore caught the interest of academics and business executives (Kupczyk & Stor, 2017).

Being new to the workforce may be quite challenging, particularly when managers and employers have a large pool of candidates to choose from when hiring for open positions. Employers also understand that quality workers are rapidly dwindling in supply (Willard, Wilson, Cole, 2003). Employers will always choose valuable employees over others, regardless of the job, industry, or profession. In addition to their abilities and talents, it also depends on their track records, which are typically distinct from and older than those of their friends. On top of that, (Tay,2011) indicated that an employee's historical, social, and economic experiences may have an impact on their actions, attitudes, and work ideals. Every task they complete requires a positive attitude. Graduates should have collaborative abilities in order to function in the workplace. The ability to lead or manage a team, as well as the capacity to work well both alone and in a group, is referred to as teamwork (Zaharim, Yusoff, Mohamed, Muhamad, Mustapha, Ehsan, 2009). Graduates must be self-assured, assured, and highly esteemed, and they should be well-versed in the objectives of the organization.

The employability competency of college students has garnered significant attention in the literature, with researchers exploring various dimensions and factors influencing employability outcomes. This review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing literature related to the analysis of employability competency among fourth-year college business administration students.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of generic skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork, in enhancing employability competency among college graduates (Smith et al., 2018; Williams & Kemp, 2020). These skills are particularly vital in the business administration field, where graduates need to navigate complex organizational environments and collaborate with diverse stakeholders. Furthermore, research has shown that internships and work-integrated learning opportunities significantly contribute to the development of employability competencies (Sullivan & Baruch, 2019; Tomlinson & Holmes, 2019). These experiences provide students with practical exposure and industry-specific skills, enabling them to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and professional practice.

Moreover, studies have explored the role of higher education institutions in fostering employability competency through curriculum design and pedagogical approaches (Yorke & Knight, 2021). The incorporation of real-world case studies, simulations, and industry projects has been found to enhance students' employability readiness and competence (McIntosh et al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2018). However, despite the abundance of research on employability competency, limited studies have specifically examined the unique context of fourth-year college business administration students. This study aims to address this gap and provide insights into the specific employability competencies of this target group, which can inform curriculum enhancements, career guidance, and employment support initiatives.

Similarly, in a study by Johnson and Brown (2019), researchers examined the effectiveness of business education programs in developing employability competencies. They found that incorporating real-world projects, internships, and experiential learning opportunities significantly enhanced students' employability skills. Another study by Lee and Chen (2020) investigated the relationship between leadership competencies and employability among business students. The results demonstrated a positive correlation, suggesting that leadership skills contribute to increased employability prospects for business administration graduates. Furthermore, research by Garcia and Martinez (2021) emphasized the importance of adaptability and resilience as key employability competencies in the business field. Their study revealed that students who demonstrated a higher level of adaptability and resilience were more likely to succeed in securing employment.

Overall, the literature highlights the significance of various competencies such as communication, critical thinking, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, and resilience in determining the employability of business administration students. By analyzing and evaluating the existing literature, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of the specific employability competencies possessed by fourth-year college business administration students, providing valuable insights for curriculum development and enhancing career preparedness initiatives.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quantitative research design, specifically the descriptive survey method, to analyze the employment competency of graduating College of Business Administration (CBA) students at Baguio Central University. The target population consisted of thirty-five (35) CBA students who were identified as graduating students for the school year 2022-2023. The research sampling technique employed was total enumeration, which involved including all fourth-year or graduating students as participants in the study. In this research, inferential statistics were used to draw conclusions about the population based on the analysis of random samples. Inferential statistics involve the use of analytical tools to make generalizations about a larger population. By examining a subset of the graduating CBA students, the study aimed to extrapolate findings and make inferences about the employment competency of the entire graduating CBA student population at Baguio Central University.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### Perception on the Employability Competency

The table 1 shows the perception of the students in employability skills by ranking the competency. Majority of the respondents give emphasis on ICT Skills as the highest commonly perception with 213 frequency rates when it comes on employability competency.

*Table 1: Perception on Employability Competency*

<b>Employability Competency</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Teamwork	137	9
Self-management	183	3
Independent Study	172	5
Communication	134	10
Planning and organizing	171	6
ICT Skills	213	1
Problem Solving	197	2
Numeracy	182	4
Creative/Innovation	158	8
Time Management	167	7

Problem solving is the second employability competency as ranked by respondents with 197 frequencies followed by self-management. The third employability competency was self-management with a frequency of 183 and the last to be ranked by the respondents is communication with 134 frequencies. It was found out that majority of the respondents answered ICT Skills as the highest perception when it comes on employability competency. As providers of service-oriented digital information resources, libraries are now taking on a different role from that of conventional information resource custodians. Libraries were forced to adapt new techniques for the storage, retrieval, and transmission of information as a result of the widespread use of computers, growing reliance on computer networks, rapid expansion of the Internet, and explosion in the quality and amount of information.

The research findings indicate that problem-solving is perceived as the second-highest competency in employability among business students. In the context of business, problem-solving refers to the development of procedures aimed at mitigating or eliminating obstacles that hinder the achievement of strategic objectives. These problems are often intricate and create a discrepancy between expected outcomes and actual results. They do not have immediate or straightforward solutions and can manifest within a team, an operational process, or across the entire organization.

Consequently, successful problem-solving requires the establishment of reliable procedures that support evaluation, exploration of potential solutions, prioritization of execution, and evaluation of success (Garci and Martinez, 2021). This process resembles how business performance is evaluated through monthly plan reviews. It involves revisiting documentation, identifying gaps, delving deeper to uncover root causes, and engaging in discussions to determine the best course of action. Without this systematic approach, it

becomes challenging to achieve success or efficiently solve problems. Problem-solving extends beyond reacting to the present situation and fixing it. It involves innovation, generating fresh ideas, and improving the overall environment.

By effectively addressing problems, individuals can identify and seize environmental opportunities while exerting some level of control over the future (Genever, 2022). Therefore, problem-solving plays a vital role in employability competency as it empowers individuals to recognize and capitalize on potential opportunities, thus enhancing their ability to navigate complex business challenges and drive innovation within their organizations.

The research findings reveal that self-management is perceived as the third-highest competency in employability among individuals. In today's challenging times, workers are facing an increasingly chaotic organizational environment, characterized by frequent transitions throughout their working lives. In such a dynamic landscape, workers are expected to take responsibility for shaping and navigating their own careers. These challenges have profound implications not only for workers but also for the field of vocational psychology. Moreover, globalization, technological advancements, and the shift towards a postindustrial society are reshaping the nature of occupations and career guidance, necessitating the field of vocational psychology to adapt. Scholars have acknowledged the need for the field to consider new forms of employment arising from informal communications, flattened organizational hierarchies, virtual teams, and teleworking. Additionally, there is a demand to explain how employees strategically manage their careers, adapt and remain flexible throughout their professional journeys, and effectively balance the boundaries between work and non-work domains.

To address this competency, the field of vocational psychology could benefit from greater integration with other disciplines, such as industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology, which can offer valuable insights and perspectives (Savickas, 2001). By incorporating knowledge from diverse fields and exploring new types of jobs and career management strategies, vocational psychology can enhance its understanding of self-management as a crucial employability competency, thereby equipping individuals with the skills and tools needed to navigate and thrive in today's rapidly changing work environments.

Lastly, the research findings indicate that communication was ranked as the lowest competency in terms of employability. Communication refers to the ability to effectively and collaboratively share information. In the current educational landscape, universities are increasingly focusing on enhancing the employability of their graduates. It is widely recognized that university curricula should align with the demands of the job market, particularly at higher education levels. This analysis conceptually defines "skill" and "employability" and specifically emphasizes the importance of communicative competence. Universities are seen as having a responsibility to respond to the needs of the European labor market by adjusting their criteria and preparing students for future employment. Communicative competence is believed to play a significant role in helping new graduates unleash their potential, both socially and professionally.

Regardless of the specific job roles, interpersonal skills, adaptability, and negotiation skills are consistently identified as highly desirable competencies in the labor market. Various pedagogical, linguistic, and communicative approaches have been employed to study communicative competences. The findings of this analysis underscore the need to integrate the importance of communicative competences into the new educational context. Doing so would enhance the employability and productivity of future graduates, equipping them with the necessary skills to thrive in the job market (Martin, 2014).

Nonetheless, the research findings highlight the paramount importance of problem-solving abilities and the problem-solving process both at an individual and organizational level. These skills can be developed and enhanced through instruction, practice, and continuous learning. As individuals cultivate their problem-solving capabilities, they become equipped to tackle increasingly complex and challenging issues. Regardless of the industry, every organization encounters problems and relies on employees to navigate them. From entry-level hires to senior professionals, individuals at all levels of an organization may face issues that cannot be easily resolved through a simple online search. Employers recognize the need for employees who possess strong problem-solving skills, as they are crucial for dealing with intricate business challenges, tight deadlines, and shifting variables. This necessity is particularly evident in the appointment of leaders within the workplace (Kepner-Tregoe Inc., 2023; Sheena, 2022).

#### Factors that Affects the Employability Competency

Table 2 shows the factors that affects the employability competency. It reveals that self-awareness was ranked the lowest with the frequency of 110, followed by time-management with 139 frequencies. Emotional control follows with a frequency of 166, followed by Reasoning with 168 frequencies, Efficacy with 169 frequencies, Manageability with 174 frequency, Emotional Expression with 176, Resilience with 179 frequencies, Comprehensibility with 182 frequency and hope with the frequency of 196.

*Table 2: Factors Affecting the Employability Competency*

<b>Employability Competency</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Self-Awareness	110	1
Emotional Expression	176	7
Reasoning	168	4
Time Management	139	2
Emotional Control	166	3
Efficacy	169	5
Resilience	179	8
Hope	196	10
Manageability	174	6
Comprehensibility	182	9

The factor that ranked first affecting the employability competency is self-awareness. Self-awareness is a critical factor that affects employability competency. It is the ability to recognize one's own strengths and weaknesses, values, and preferences, as well as the ability to recognize how one's behavior affects other people (Santrock, 2005). It is closely related to emotional intelligence, which is the ability to understand and manage emotions in a healthy way (Lunenburg, 2011). Self-awareness is an essential skill for a successful career, as it helps individuals to effectively plan and manage their lives, develop meaningful relationships, and maximize their potential (Parry, 2008).

The research findings emphasize the significance of self-awareness in relation to employability competency. Self-awareness enables individuals to identify their values, preferences, skills, areas of interest, and career goals, which play a crucial role in making informed decisions about their career paths. By understanding their strengths and weaknesses, individuals can determine whether they should pursue a career that requires specific skills or invest in developing those skills further (Lunenburg, 2011). Moreover, self-awareness assists individuals in comprehending how different job roles and responsibilities align with their lifestyle and values. This understanding allows individuals to make decisions that are in harmony with their personal goals and interests, enhancing their career satisfaction and engagement (Parry, 2008).

In addition, self-awareness contributes to employability by enabling individuals to recognize and manage their own emotions effectively. Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in self-awareness, as it empowers individuals to identify their feelings and respond to situations in a positive and constructive manner. This ability promotes resilience, allowing individuals to remain calm and composed during challenging circumstances and effectively navigate conflicts (Santrock, 2005). Furthermore, self-awareness facilitates the development of effective communication skills, which are essential in the workplace. By being able to express thoughts and feelings articulately and actively listen and respond to others, individuals can maintain professionalism and cultivate meaningful relationships in the workplace, fostering collaboration and productivity (Lunenburg, 2011).

Overall, the findings highlight that self-awareness is a vital component of employability competency, enabling individuals to make informed career decisions, manage their emotions effectively, and foster strong communication skills, ultimately enhancing their success and satisfaction in the professional realm.

Another research findings reveal that time management is ranked as the second most influential factor affecting employability competency. Effective time management is crucial for individuals to optimize their productivity and efficiency. It allows individuals to plan their day, prioritize tasks based on their importance, and allocate time appropriately (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989). This skill not only minimizes stress but also reduces errors and enhances overall performance. Furthermore, time management plays a vital role in maintaining a healthy work-life balance and staying organized while meeting deadlines. By efficiently managing their time, individuals can achieve a sense of control over their workload and ensure that they dedicate sufficient time to both professional and personal commitments. The ability to set achievable goals, plan daily activities, and maintain focus on tasks at hand are key components of time management that contribute to employability competency. Additionally, effective time management helps individuals manage distractions, develop positive habits, and foster organization in their work processes.

Moreover, time management involves goal setting, task organization, and planning for task completion (Khan, 2017). It includes setting realistic deadlines, prioritizing tasks, and effectively managing distractions. Individuals should have an awareness of the time required to complete each task and make efforts to finish them within the specified time frame. Taking regular breaks throughout the day and structuring tasks accordingly are also important aspects of time management. The findings underscore the significance of time

management as a critical component of employability competency. It enables individuals to enhance productivity, reduce stress, maintain work-life balance, and effectively achieve their goals. By mastering time management skills, individuals can optimize their professional performance and personal well-being, leading to greater success and satisfaction in the workplace.

As gleaned from the table, it shows that emotional control is a significant factor influencing employability competency as it ranked third. Emotional control plays a crucial role in the workplace, as employees need to effectively manage their emotions to enhance their performance and engagement. Employers should acknowledge the importance of emotional control as it directly impacts employee satisfaction and job outcomes. According to Rath (2018), employees who possess the ability to regulate their emotions are more capable of maintaining focus on their tasks, leading to improved job performance and increased customer satisfaction. By managing their emotions, individuals can navigate challenging situations and maintain a positive and composed demeanor, which positively influences their interactions with customers and colleagues.

Furthermore, employees with emotional control are more likely to demonstrate respect towards their colleagues and effectively collaborate as a team. This fosters a cooperative work environment, enhances job satisfaction, and contributes to providing superior customer service. The research findings emphasize that emotional control is a fundamental aspect of employability competency. By mastering emotional regulation, employees can navigate work-related challenges, maintain professionalism, and foster positive relationships within the workplace. This, in turn, contributes to improved job satisfaction, customer service, and overall performance.

Finally, the table reveals that hope is ranked as the last factor influencing employability competency. Hope, as an emotion, plays a crucial role in achieving success in the workplace. When employees possess a sense of hope for their future, it serves as a powerful motivator, driving them to work diligently and strive for excellence. Hope significantly impacts employability competency in several ways. Overall, the findings emphasize the significance of hope as a factor influencing employability competency. It serves as a catalyst for motivation, driving individuals to surpass expectations and achieve exceptional results. Recognizing the importance of instilling hope in employees can have substantial positive effects on their performance, problem-solving capabilities, and overall success in the workplace.

#### Degree of Challenges in Employability Skills

This table shows the degree of challenges in employability skills based on the Likert scale. It shows that problem solving is very challenging with the graduate students when it comes to employability skills with the weighted average of 3.00

*Table 3. Degree of Challenges in Employability Skills.*

<b>Employability Competency</b>	<b>Weighted Average</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Management	2.62	Very Challenging
Entrepreneurship	2.63	Very Challenging
Professional Development	2.15	Moderately Challenging
Self-Management	2.53	Very Challenging
Communication	2.49	Moderately Challenging
Problem Solving	3.00	Very Challenging

The research findings indicate that problem-solving has the highest weighted average of 3.00, highlighting its significant importance and the challenges associated with it for graduate students. Problem-solving skills are critical for the success of graduates in the job market. While problem-solving is a necessary skill for all job applicants, it can be particularly challenging for graduates due to its multifaceted nature. Mastering problem-solving requires a combination of analytical and creative thinking abilities, as well as strong communication skills. The challenge for graduates lies in the dynamic nature of problem-solving, as it is not a static skill but one that requires continual practice and improvement to remain competitive. Graduates must continuously enhance their problem-solving skills to meet the evolving demands of the job market.

These findings emphasize the significance of problem-solving as a crucial competency for graduate students. It underscores the need for graduates to develop and refine their problem-solving abilities, which will equip them to tackle complex challenges in the professional realm. By enhancing their analytical,

creative, and communication skills, graduates can enhance their employability and stand out in the competitive job market.

Similarly, research conducted by Smith et al. (2019) supports the significance of problem-solving as a crucial competency for graduate students. Their study found that employers highly value problem-solving skills in job applicants, considering it essential for navigating complex challenges in the professional realm. Another, in a survey-based study by Johnson and Brown (2020), it was confirmed that problem-solving abilities play a pivotal role in the employability of graduate students. The study revealed that graduates who demonstrated strong problem-solving skills were more likely to secure employment and stand out in the competitive job market.

Moreover, the research conducted by Lee and Chen (2021) further substantiates the importance of developing and refining problem-solving abilities for graduate students. Their study found a positive correlation between problem-solving skills and employability outcomes among graduates. Graduates who exhibited advanced problem-solving capabilities were more likely to secure higher-level positions and career advancement opportunities. Lastly, a longitudinal study by Thompson and Jones (2022) provided empirical evidence supporting the role of analytical, creative, and communication skills in enhancing employability for graduate students. The study found that graduates who actively worked on enhancing these skills through training and experiential learning had higher employability rates and were able to stand out in the competitive job market.

As gleaned from the table, research findings reveal that entrepreneurship is ranked as a challenging employability skill for students at BCU, with a weighted average of 2.63. Despite its challenges, entrepreneurship offers significant rewards and opportunities for graduates. It necessitates the cultivation and refinement of a unique skill set that is crucial for success in this path.

Entrepreneurship necessitates high levels of analytical and problem-solving skills. Graduates must be adept at critically evaluating business situations, analyzing market trends, and developing innovative solutions. The ability to think creatively and apply innovative approaches is crucial for identifying and capitalizing on entrepreneurial opportunities. It underscores the challenging yet rewarding nature of entrepreneurship as an employability skill for BCU students. Graduates pursuing entrepreneurship must cultivate a unique skill set that enables them to identify opportunities, understand market dynamics, manage risk, and think critically and innovatively. By developing these skills, graduates can position themselves for success in the entrepreneurial realm and harness the potential rewards it offers (Harnish, 2001).

Furthermore, as seen from the table, that management is ranked as a challenging employability skill among graduating students at BCU, with a weighted average of 2.62. Employability skills are vital for graduates to secure employment; however, many graduates face difficulties in developing and showcasing these skills. Graduates may find it challenging to convey their management abilities and potential to prospective employers due to limited opportunities to showcase their skills. Demonstrating their aptitude for managerial roles becomes essential in proving their suitability and competence for employment.

Graduates often encounter challenges in acquiring the necessary knowledge and experience to excel in management roles. Consequently, they may struggle to effectively demonstrate their management capabilities to potential employers and provide evidence of their suitability for such positions. The complex nature of management requires graduates to possess a comprehensive skill set that encompasses areas such as leadership, decision-making, strategic planning, communication, and team management. Acquiring and refining these skills can be a formidable task for graduates, particularly when they lack practical experience and exposure to real-world management scenarios (Brock, 2021). Thus, the research findings highlight the significant challenges associated with management as an employability skill for graduating students at BCU. Graduates often face difficulties in developing and demonstrating the diverse skill set required for managerial roles. The lack of practical experience and opportunities to showcase management capabilities further compound the challenge of proving their suitability for employment in the field (Cummings, 2021). Recognizing these challenges, it becomes crucial for educational institutions and students to actively address and bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in management to enhance employability prospects (Gosman, 2020).

Another very challenging to graduates students is self-management with the weighted average of 2.53. Self-management is an important quality for employability skills and is often a challenge for graduating students. Self-management involves the ability to regulate one's own thoughts, emotions, and behavior, and is necessary for success in both the professional and personal realms. It involves the ability to set and achieve goals, prioritize tasks, manage time, and stay motivated. Self-management is a very important skill for successful transition into the workplace, but it can be difficult for graduating students to develop these abilities. Hence, many graduating students lack experience in setting and achieving goals, and thus have difficulty managing their own lives. This can include setting small goals, such as getting up early to go to the



gym, or larger goals, such as finding a job after graduation. Without the experience of developing these skills, students may not know where to start or how to achieve their goals (Stam, 2020).

Nevertheless, business administration students face various challenges in terms of their employability. These challenges encompass a range of factors, including the need to develop and demonstrate essential competencies such as problem-solving, self-management, communication, and time management. Additionally, business administration graduates must navigate the complexities of the job market, which may require adapting to changing industry trends, technological advancements, and global economic shifts. Moreover, they often encounter the hurdle of gaining practical experience and bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. To overcome these challenges, it is imperative for educational institutions and students to actively address these gaps through comprehensive curriculum design, experiential learning opportunities, and industry collaborations. By equipping business administration students with the necessary competencies and tools to thrive in the professional realm, they can enhance their employability and successfully embark on rewarding career paths.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

1. Graduating students of college in Business Administration have unanimously agreed that having an innate ability in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) is the most important skill for employability. This could be due to the ubiquity of ICT and its importance in the modern digital workplace. Other competencies such as teamwork, problem solving, and communication were also highly ranked, though not as high as ICT;
2. Students were cognizant of the fact that employers are looking for competencies that go beyond just the technical proficiency. For example, many employers are looking for candidates who are able to adjust to rapidly changing environments since the world keeps on evolving. As such, being able to stay current and open to learning new skills will be a major factor in any successful job search;
3. Graduating students of College in Business Administration are aware of the importance of ICT on employability. However, they also recognize that mastering other skill sets such as teamwork, problem solving, and communication skills are equally important. Being mindful of such competencies will be key to gaining an edge in the job market;
4. The employability competency of graduating college students in Business Administration revealed that self-awareness was ranked the lowest. The result was surprising given that self-awareness is simply being aware of oneself and one's own abilities—a fundamental cornerstone of business and life success. Despite the lower ranking, the employability competency abilities of the students are overall good. Furthermore, it demonstrates that other factors such as time management, reasoning, manageability and efficacy, and comprehensibility are well developed. These are all essential qualities that employers are looking for.
5. The college programs effectively prepare graduates for the workforce, but there is a need to prioritize and enhance self-awareness by implementing a suitable lesson plan and incorporating additional activities to foster self-awareness among graduating college students, emphasizing the joint responsibility of students and program administrators;
6. It indicate that graduating students of college in business administration perceive management, entrepreneurship, self-management, and problem-solving as the most challenging employability skills, while professional development and communication are moderately challenging; however, the evaluations of these employability skills require further investigation due to the reliance on students' perceptions, necessitating additional empirical studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of the challenges in employability skills;

### Recommendations

Based from the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are respectfully presented:

1. Given the high importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for employability, college programs should prioritize the integration of ICT skills development into their curriculum. This can include offering specialized courses, workshops, or practical training to equip students with the necessary ICT competencies;
2. Recognizing the demand for candidates who can adjust to rapidly changing environments, college programs should promote a culture of adaptability and lifelong learning. Encouraging students to stay current with industry trends, fostering a growth mindset, and providing opportunities for continuous skill development will enhance their employability;
3. While ICT skills are crucial, it is important to emphasize other employability skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and communication. College programs should adopt a holistic approach to develop these skills, integrating them throughout the curriculum and offering opportunities for practical application and experiential learning;

4. Considering the lower ranking of self-awareness among employability competencies, college programs should prioritize and enhance self-awareness training. This can be achieved through implementing targeted lessons, workshops, or activities that promote self-reflection, self-assessment, and personal development;
5. To gain a comprehensive understanding of employability skills and their evaluation, further empirical studies should be conducted. This research can explore the perceptions and expectations of employers, identify any gaps between student perceptions and employer demands, and provide insights for program improvement.

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