

## **An Analysis of Employability Skills of B.Sc. Graduates of Entrepreneurship Program in Camarines Norte State College**

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***Abstract:** Tracing the employment history of graduates is an important process to assess the relevance of a particular academic program according to the needs of industry. This study utilized quantitative-descriptive method. The study revealed that majority of the students who graduated from 2016 to 2019 are female, currently aged between 21 and 25 years, and they are employed in local or regional organizations in clerical positions. Further, very few graduates took additional courses, passed government examinations, and were granted with company recognition or awards. The study also found out that they perceived their soft and hard skills as excellent in terms of teamwork, work coordination, communication, time management, sales and marketing, and use of computer in various online and offline applications. The major problems encountered while seeking employment are lack of work experiences needed for the job and low salary to compensate expenses during employment. To further enhance the graduates' employability, strategies to improve the BS in Entrepreneurship program were proposed that play a vital role in producing highly employable and quality graduates.*

**Keywords:** Employability skills, Hard and soft skills, Entrepreneurship graduates, Employment, Proposed strategies.

### **1. Introduction**

Camarines Norte State College, with its vision of becoming a premier higher education institution in Bicol Region, provides mechanisms and strategies to advance higher education in the region. Its mechanisms and strategies include its continued pursuit in the accreditation of its curricular programs evident with annual Accredited Agency of the Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACCUP, Inc.) accreditation and massive International Organization for Standardization (ISO) accreditation initiatives, from 2018 ISO certified main campus to 2019 and 2020 system-wide ISO accreditation. Among its programs that regularly undertakes accreditation processes is Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship (BS Entrep) which is subjected to Level III Phase 2 AACCUP accreditation.

In relation to the pursuit of excellence, Camarines Norte State College (CNSC) envisions a graduate to have the following attributes: professional competence, critical and creative thinking skills, technical and competitive skills, productivity, social and ethical responsibility, communication skills, interpersonal skills, and lifelong learning. Being able to trace the graduates' employment status after graduation will also serve as a basis for continuous improvement of the program on its way to a higher level of program accreditation in the coming years (Education, 2017).

To achieve this purpose, one of the strategies in getting the right information is through a thorough conduct of trace study. It is a means of evaluating curriculum relevance and rendering targeted gains of graduates to heighten the marketability of curricular programs. Students, particularly graduates of any program, are required to earn a sense of competency in their area of interest and acquire the confidence to explore new possibilities and new employment especially if there is growing competition at work (Woya, 2019).

In relation to the graduates' employability, Authority (2017) stated that by 2022, Filipinos will have more opportunities to develop their full potential wherein they will have better access to opportunities to acquire 21st century skills and competencies while at the same time, an easier transition to the workforce. There are deliberate strategies to improve the employability and income-earning potentials of individuals which include: 1) improving employability; 2) improve productivity; and 3) enhance labor mobility and income security. One of the means to improve the quality of education and research for equity and global competitiveness is to promote excellence in higher education institutions.

In a similar manner, one of the project components of Commission on Higher Education (CHED) is to align Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) programs with national development goals. Specifically, in job-skills matching project it includes formulation of master plans for priority field of study, reevaluation of curricula to make them fit to the needs of the industries, massive information dissemination on employment opportunities among students and HEIs; and continuous conduct of graduate trace studies. In support, Education (2017), otherwise known as the Revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship (BS Entrep), states that after completion of all academic requirements of the program, graduates of BS Entrep should be able to set up and pull off their own enterprise or work in any organization where entrepreneurial competencies are a requirement. They should also be able to pursue other line of work such as entrepreneurs, business developer or corporate planner, staff, or marketing assistant.

The collected data in a trace study is an important indicator of the quality of higher education. In the Philippines, the CHED requires all HEIs to conduct a trace study and

is equally reflected as one of the required documents by any higher education accrediting body such as AACCCUP, Inc. By conducting a survey among the graduates in an institution in terms of their current profession, competencies and skills development, the information provided from these can be utilized by the academia for enhancement of the curriculum and other emerging reforms (Gines, 2014).

On the other hand, graduates need hard and soft skills in their work environment. Hard skills are the technical expertise and knowledge necessary for a job. Soft skills are interpersonal qualities and personal attributes that one possesses. Private or public organizations consider soft skills as very essential attributes of a would-be employee. Employers want new employees possessing both soft and hard skills. The top ten soft skills perceived as highly significant include integrity, communication, politeness, responsibility, social skills, positive attitude, professionalism, adaptability, teamwork, and work ethic (Robles, 2012).

Similarly, Stewart et al. (2016) found out that most college students rate their levels of soft skill competencies highly. Employers and college students both agree that soft skills are of the essence to obtain jobs after graduation. Employers hire them believing that they have some level of expertise in applied soft skills, but then often newly hired employees lack these soft skills or have exaggerated assessment of their own skills.

To validate whether the graduates are employed in accordance with the expectations and aims of the program, this study was conducted. Specifically, the research objectives focused on tracing BS in Entrepreneurship graduates by determining their profile, identifying employability skills in terms of soft skills and technical skills; and determining problems encountered by the graduates while seeking for employment and during employment.

## **2. Methodology**

This study used quantitative-descriptive method. The research participants include the graduates of BS in Entrepreneurship program of Camarines Norte State College, College of Business and Public Administration from Academic Years 2016 to 2019. Total enumeration was used in selecting the respondents which comprised 179 graduates. The instrument was provided to the respondents via sending the hard copies of survey questionnaires to the graduates personally which started in November 2019. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic started it was not anymore possible due to limited to no face-to-face activities. Hence, an online survey questionnaire was formulated in May 2020 and the Google form link was sent to individual FB Messenger accounts. However, during the duration of the data collection, only 122 or 68 percent answered the survey questionnaires which is also the percentage of retrieval and 57 or 32 percent did not

answer the questionnaire despite numerous and regular follow-ups. The retrieval rate was supported by the study of Rojas and Rojas (2016) with 37.46 percent response rate on tracing their graduates.

To ensure that the ethics protocol of the college is observed, this study underwent ethics review committee evaluation procedure by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Extension. Before the conduct of the survey, each respondent was asked to fill out the informed consent form and the researchers sought their voluntary participation while observing the confidentiality of their responses. In addition, information that is considered confidential was not revealed without their permission. The researchers followed protocols to maintain ethical standards in research.

The data was collected through a structured survey questionnaire sent via Google form. The survey questionnaire was patterned in the Commission on Higher Education Graduate Tracer Study Questionnaire however, it was modified due to the specific objectives of the study. It underwent validation procedure by the experts of the study. The data coming from the responses of the alumni were gathered, tabulated, computed, and analyzed. Frequency count was utilized to determine the profile of the respondents, while the weighted mean was used to identify the employability of BS in Entrepreneurship graduates and ranking was utilized to determine problems encountered while seeking employment and during employment.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

This presents the findings of the research study on the BS in Entrepreneurship students for Academic Years 2016 to 2019.

#### **3.1 Profile of the Respondents**

Tables 1 to 11 present the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, age, year graduated, additional course/s taken, professional examination/s passed, employment profile, place of current employment and gross monthly income.

**Table 1: Sex Profile**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	86	70
Male	36	30
Total	122	100

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The results revealed that majority of students who graduated in the course are women. This shows that women choose the course when left with other choices of open courses in the college such as hospitality management, business administration with majors in human resource management, marketing management, business economics and financial management, and public administration. They were able to see opportunities for entrepreneurship course as women. In addition, they enrolled in the program with the view or possibility to earn and manage their own business enterprises while still in college because of the business plan implementation. They also assume since it is a non-quota course that they will not have difficulties in terms of passing the courses of the program being a non-board course. Also, based on the records of the Office of the Registrar, majority of enrolled students in the college are women.

This is parallel to the results of Azmi et al. (2018) wherein majority of the respondents are female with 69 percent and 31 percent are male. It was further supported by Buama (2018) in which majority of the graduates consist of female with 85 percent and 15 percent are male.

**Table 2: Age Profile**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
21-25	98	80
26 -30	20	17
31 and above	4	3
Total	122	100

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The Table implies that majority of the respondents are new graduates of the program as this survey focused on the alumni of the program from 2016 to 2019. Despite the difficulty of landing jobs because of the hypercompetition, the graduates tried their very best to be employed as early as possible through applications to various agencies and companies with chances of getting hired specifically those with announcement for vacancies. They are young and new to the work environment and some of which have their first-time experience of being employed

The least of the respondents are 31 years old and above. These are the graduates who stopped midway through college and after some time, decided to finish their degrees. These are due to financial reasons because in the past, free higher education is still not yet available specifically to alumni of batches 2016 to 2018. Another reason is that they chose to work because of the income it provides to their families but later on, they realized the importance of education especially for career growth opportunities that is why they got back to college.

It is synonymous with the study of Carag (2020) which shows that the oldest was 29 years old while the youngest was 22 years of age. The mean age of the distribution is 24.5 years old. It implies that most of the respondents finished their baccalaureate degree course as a normal or typical Filipino who finishes regular degree course in early 20s.

**Table 3: Year Graduated**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
2016	19	16
2017	27	22
2018	32	26
2019	44	36
Total	122	100

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The findings imply that graduates with most responses belong to the current batch which is 2019. These graduates are mostly active in social media especially Facebook which they used as a platform for distributing the survey questionnaire online. Also, they feel obliged to participate in the survey as they are fresh graduates. They are easier to contact as information is readily available and still updated.

The lowest belongs to batch 2016 as this are the smallest number of graduates which comprised only of 30 compared to other batches of the program covering the years 2017 to 2019 with 33, 47 and 64 graduates, respectively. They are the hardest to locate because there are others who got married already and changed their contact information making it difficult also to seek their participation.

**Table 4: Additional Course/s Taken**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
None	107	88
With TESDA National Certificate	10	8
With Professional Education Course	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The findings revealed that majority of the graduates do not pursue additional courses because they started looking for employment opportunities after graduating in college. These are breadwinners of their families who wanted eagerly to help augment their financial needs. Also, these are graduates who wanted to experience working and be able to practice their profession. In addition, dedication to work was evident, hence; pursuing additional degree or course is not their priority while on the job.

This is in conformance with the study of Campbell (2018) where the graduates indicated that they were involved to gain further education before beginning a career; to heighten possibilities for career growth or higher earnings but none of them mentioned that their purpose was to change their academic or occupation or to gear up for further education or enroll in master’s degree.

There is only one student who passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Although there are some who pursued the professional education course in the hopes of being hired in an educational institution particularly Department of Education because of mass hiring of teachers in Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) strand for junior and senior high schools. This graduate is employed as Senior High School teacher in the province teaching ABM strand subjects particularly in line with his specialization which is entrepreneurship.

**Table 5: Professional Examination/s Passed**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Napolcom Examination	4	3
Career Service Professional Examination	8	7
Licensure Examination for Teachers	1	1
None	109	89
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The Table implies that majority of the graduates did not take any government examinations which are necessary for government employment. They are mostly working in the

private companies hence; these examinations are not required to be able to be permanent in the job. In addition, as they are new to jobs being fresh graduates, they are enjoying their work in the private sector with no current plans to pursue government jobs. It is comparable with the findings of Del Rosario (2019) which found out that graduates have no professional examinations but they are willing to pursue advanced studies for professional development.

Based on the survey results, the passers of the government examinations are already working in the government sector which is a must if one is vying for permanency in the position in the future. There is only one student who passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers although there are five of them who pursued professional education course in the hopes of being hired in an educational institution particularly Department of Education because of mass hiring of Allied Business Management (ABM) teachers in the department for junior and senior high schools. The other graduates will be taking the LET examination once the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC) schedules the said examination as it was postponed in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic. The sole passer is permanently employed as Senior High School teacher in the province teaching ABM strand subjects particularly in line with his specialization which is entrepreneurship.

It is similar with the study of Campbell (2018) in which two of the graduates also tried to pass licensure examinations. While these numbers cannot be generalized to the wider population, it shows the demand to develop new skill sets in addition to the ones they initially obtained through tertiary education. While the adequateness of educational background is argued, it is recommended that advanced studies is indispensable to in the dynamic work environment.

**Table 6: Employment Profile**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Employed	91	75
Self-employed	19	15
Not Employed	12	10
Total	122	100

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The Table revealed that majority of the respondents were currently employed. This are evidence of the graduates of the program as employable despite the strong competition existing in the industry. They pursued many job opportunities upon graduation in the college and with the persistent efforts, they were able to land these jobs.

It was supported by the study of Woya (2019) which revealed that 82 percent of the graduates were employed while 18 percent were unemployed. Similarly, Albina and



Sumagaysay (2020) on tracing the graduates, findings disclose that 78.53 percent of the respondents are already working. Moreover, 69.78 percent perceived that their first job is related to the baccalaureate degree they earned.

Some graduates are self-employed and these comprise the practicing entrepreneurs. They contributed in the attainment of one of the significant BS in Entrepreneurship program outcomes which is operating and managing the enterprise observing good governance and social responsibility. Some of the business enterprises they ventured on are meat shop, motorcycle shop, cafe and boutique. These are with physical stores located in Camarines Norte while others pursue online businesses such as buy and sell of consumer goods.

The lowest belongs to unemployed graduates. Some of them left their previous employment because of the retrenchment during the COVID-19 pandemic while others ended their contracts. Because of these, they chose to stay at home fulfilling their roles because some of them were married and to provide safer environment for the family. Parallel to the results of Caricati et al. (2016) which found out that graduates are only partly cognizant of their possibility to enter the labor force and this showed that educational institutions have only partially met the goal in terms of graduates having increased chances of being hired.

In support, Zavala (2020) stated that the majority of graduates and professionals are incorporated into the occupational market; wherein some exercise their profession and others do it in occupations that do not correspond to their profession, which is justified, because one of the great problems encountered is undoubtedly the lack of demand for human resources for stable work, which based on conducted studies, for every ten people who join the economically active population, only three have real possibilities of fully joining the labor market, either in the private or public sector.

**Table 7: Current Job Level Profile**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Rank and file/Clerical	93	76
Supervisory/Managerial	10	8
Self-employed	19	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The findings imply that majority of the graduates belong to rank-and file or clerical positions since they are newly employed, in a span of one to three years beginning 2017, it is given that they occupy lower ranks in the organizations where they belong. Also, these graduates are mostly employed in private organizations such as International

Business Machine (IBM), banking institutions such as Banco de Oro (BDO), Metrobank, CARD Bank, Inc., and Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), call center agencies such as Convergys and Accenture, Inc. Comparable with the study of Chhetri and Sedai (2019) wherein graduates were proven to be proficient and competent to be employable in the schools, banks, IT industries, business industries, thus resulted in boon opportunities.

The least position being occupied by the graduates is falling under supervisory or managerial positions because very few have the competencies and qualifications needed by higher ranking positions. In addition, there are companies who promote employees based on the length of service and work experiences wherein they are lacking. These comprised some of the graduates that meet the criteria or qualifications needed by supervisory or managerial positions which imply that there are also graduates of the program that are job-ready and possess the necessary skills required.

It is in conformity with the study conducted by Ramos and Eranzo (2020) which found out that only a small size of graduates is holding supervisory positions. New graduates, most of the time, are likely be initially hired on entry-level positions mostly non-managerial posts because of deficient of professional experience and qualifications.

**Table 8: Employment Status Profile**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Permanent/Regular	57	47
Probationary	18	15
Contractual	28	23
Self-employed	19	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The Table revealed that most of the graduates are already regular or permanent in their respective workplaces which imply that they possess the requirements for an employee to be permanent in the job. Since majority of the respondents are working in the private sector, there are higher chances of being permanent as compared to those who are in the government sector where there are limited plantilla positions available.

It is in agreement with the findings of Wickramaratne (2018) which found out that graduates prefer to have a stable and secured job that they can demonstrate their expertise as well as they prefer to stay in a job that they can perform variety of tasks and demonstrate their creativity. It implies that the graduates' career preference factors play an integral role in determining their employability.

The least belongs to graduates under probationary status. These are the newly-hired

graduates in 2018 and 2019 wherein they are still complying with the requirements to be able to permanent in the job.

**Table 9: Place of Current Employment**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Local/Regional	105	86
National	16	13
International	1	1
Total	122	100

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The Table revealed that the graduates were employed in organizations located in the province and Bicol Region, in general. It implies that there are opportunities available particularly for BS in Entrepreneurship graduates in the local employment landscape. They have chosen to be employed in the province or in the region because of the proximity from home and their families. They tried as much as possible to be near as it is much more convenient for them in terms of basic needs and being able to minimize expenses as they are closer to home.

It is parallel to the study on trailing alumni wherein majority of the graduates are domestically employed. A comparatively small number of graduates are unusually working overseas. Locally based employers and companies are the primary channels of employment for entry-level employees (Ramos & Eranzo, 2020).

**Table 10: Monthly Gross Income Profile**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
P10,000 and below	63	52
P10,001 - P20,000	52	42
P20,001-P30,000	7	6
Total	122	100

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The findings imply that the graduates receive salary expected of employees working in a province or region in the country. It was supported by the results of Table 7 wherein they belong to rank-and file or clerical positions since they are newly employed. It is expected for these positions to have P10,000 or below gross monthly salary.

It is congruent with the result of the study conducted by Lucas et al. (2017) wherein 44.65 percent of the respondents are receiving a monthly income of P5, 000 to P 9,999; and 26.10 percent are earning P4, 999 and below. However, both are in contrast with the result of the study conducted by Alvarez (2020) where the findings noted that no graduate

had ever been given a salary bracket below Php 10,000. It also found out that 38.87 percent earns Php 15,000 to not more than Php 20,000 monthly salary.

**Table 11: Employment-related Awards Received**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Best New Employee	1	1
Best Employee of the Year	2	1
Top Seller	1	1
Perfect Attendance Recognition	18	14
Promotion	3	1
None	100	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* Online Survey Conducted to Alumni

The Table reveals that majority of the graduates still did not receive any recognition or awards from the organizations where they belong. They are still adjusting in the company they are working with, proving that they have the necessary skills and abilities needed by the organization, as well as they are still new to the duties and responsibilities, hence; it is comprehensible for the new graduates to not receive awards.

### 3.2 Employability of BS in Entrepreneurship Graduates in terms of Soft Skills and Technical Skills

Tables 12 to 13 present the employability of BS in Entrepreneurship Graduates in terms of soft skills and technical skills.

**Table 12: Employability of BS in Entrepreneurship Graduates in terms of Soft Skills**

Indicators	WM	Adjectival Rating
1. English ability (uses grammatically correct language and vocabulary)	3.03	VG
2. Writing (uses various form and styles of written and vocabulary communication)	2.95	VG
3. Communication (listens with objectivity to gain understanding of the ideas of others)	3.27	E
4. Presentation (demonstrates effective social behavior in different setting and different circumstances)	3.05	VG
5. Teamwork (stimulates collaborative efforts with colleagues in the workplace)	3.39	E
6. Work coordination (organizes and coordinates people and tasks to achieve the organization's goals)	3.33	E
7. Stress management (maintains self-control in the midst of stressful encounters with others)	3.16	VG
8. Leadership (takes responsibility and risks in making decisions)	3.17	VG
9. Problem solving (examines alternative solutions and strategies to make informed decision(s) on a problem)	3.06	VG

10. Time management (maintains balance in accordance with demands of both work and personal activities)	3.35	E
<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>VG</b>

*Source: (Estimated), Legend:*  
 3.26 – 4.00 Excellent (E)  
 2.51 – 3.25 Very Good (VG)  
 1.76 – 2.50 Fair (F)  
 1.01 – 1.75 Poor (P)

The Table implies that the graduates’ perception in terms of soft skills are excellent along teamwork, work coordinating, communicating, and time management. They have the ability to work in teams, work coordinate and communicate, because they are also trained while in college for team or group collaborations for research activities, peer teaching, paper presentations, and doing activities in affiliated and recognized student organizations; hence; having to work in teams is not anymore a problem despite the differences of individuals in the group. In addition, they are exposed to academic and non-academic activities while in college, making it easier to manage time and resources such as competitions and seminar-workshops. These skills are further developed upon their exposures being provided by their respective organizations.

It was corroborated by the findings of Nisha and Rajasekaran (2018) which unraveled that among the various skills being expected at workplaces are teamwork skills and self-management skills. It was supported by the study of Sandifer (2018) which found out that the skills of graduates were professionalism, teamwork, and computer/information technology skills.

In support, Stewart et al. (2016) found out that the majority of college graduates are convinced in their soft skills competencies. However, the soft skills in which college graduates feel confident they possessed are what their employers think they are lacking. Results show that graduates are confident in terms of possessing problem-solving skills, written communication skills, teamwork, and verbal communication skills.

In a similar study, Subedi (2018) discovered that in the course of looking for employment in the industry, the individual’s soft skills are as essential as hard skills. It is found that soft skills guarantee possibility of being employed and career advancement, hence, it is necessary to inculcate in the minds of students’ possession of remarkable amount of soft skills.

On the study about the importance of English proficiency and communication skills for employability revealed that good communication skills can increase employability and opportunities for promotion. The findings highlight the communication skills that the academe need to develop so that their graduates have the relevant skills to get the job and perform well in the work environment (Ting et al., 2017).

**Table 13: Employability of BS in Entrepreneurship Graduates in terms of Technical Skills**

Indicators	WM	Adjectival Rating
1. Technical writing (communicates complex ideas in a clear way, e.g. sending messages to clients, writing manuals, among others)	3.07	VG
2. Research (source checking, networking, outreach, advanced Google search)	3.20	VG
3. Customer relationship management (sales and marketing skills)	3.32	E
4. Inventory management (supervising assets or inventory and stock items)	3.15	VG
5. Information management (managing implicit knowledge, judgment, and intuitive abilities)	3.02	VG
6. Telecommunications skills (face-to-face conversations, or through email, phone and various social media platforms)	3.17	VG
7. Planning (analysis, brainstorming, decision-making, forecasting, logistics, problem-solving, cost-assessment)	3.11	VG
8. Project management skills (task management, prioritization, delegation, task separation, scheduling, risk management)	3.00	VG
9. Troubleshooting (assessment, system knowledge, analytical skills, testing, calm mindset, problem-solving, logic, collaboration, communication)	3.03	VG
10. Computer skills (MS Office, Google Drive, spreadsheets, email, PowerPoint, databases, social media, web)	3.29	E
<b>Average Weighted Mean</b>	3.14	VG

*Source: (Estimated), Legend:*

<i>3.26 – 4.00 Excellent (E)</i>	<i>1.76 – 2.50 Fair (F)</i>
<i>2.51 – 3.25 Very Good (VG)</i>	<i>1.01 – 1.75 Poor (P)</i>

The results revealed that in terms of technical skills they are excellent in terms of customer relationship management specifically sales and marketing and use of computer on various online and offline applications. As they are trained to face customers during their business plan preparation and implementation in college, they are able to practice the theories learned in terms of sales and marketing skills in their respective work assignments. Also, there are students who work while in college to augment school expenses and they are mostly in front line services as crew in fast-food chains and as student assistants making them excel in these skills as these are continuously being practiced even after graduation when they are exposed to customers of their workplaces.

It was substantiated by the study of Campbell (2018) which found out that the graduates not only expressed the need to learn sophisticated technical skills, but stressed the value of soft skills as these are necessary in two primary domain: (1) to understand client requirements and (2) to associate the technical views of jobs in the language of budgeting and decision-making.

Furthermore, it was verified by the research on graduates' attributes and employability which show that problem-solving skills, teamwork, English language proficiency, prior training, and their personality are the highly important employability skills (Belwal et al., 2017). Congruent with the study of Heang et al. (2019) which found out that the top continual skills required by the employers for the accounting/finance, administration /human resource, and sales/marketing jobs are information technology (IT) skills and communication skills.

### 3.3 Problems Encountered by BS in Entrepreneurship while Seeking Employment

**Table 14: Problems Encountered by BS in Entrepreneurship Graduates while Seeking Employment**

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
1. Lack of soft skills required by the job	14	7
2. lack of technical skills needed by the job	17	6
3. Limited job opportunities available relevant to the course taken	32	3.5
4. Family expectations and demands ( <i>e.g. job priority location near family, etc.</i> )	34	2
5. Financial constraints ( <i>e.g. lack of budget to finance job hunting, etc.</i> )	29	5
6. Lack of work experiences needed by the job	68	1
7. Difficulty in passing the required job examination ( <i>e.g. aptitude test, speed test, IQ test, among others</i> )	6	9
8. Difficulty in passing the job interview ( <i>e.g. pre-screening, final interview, panel interview, among others</i> ).	11	8
9. No professional/competency examination(s) passed required by the job ( <i>e.g. TESDA National Competency, Civil Service Eligibility, among others</i> )	32	3.5

**Source:** (Estimated), \*multiple responses

The findings revealed that the graduates ranked lack of work experiences needed by the job as the major problem encountered while seeking for employment after graduation. They fell short of expectations by employers in terms of this criteria since majority are full-time students during college. Job openings mostly require previous work experiences or related work experience as one of the requirements to be employed in the job

making it hard for these new graduates to compete although they are not behind in terms of academic backgrounds and other criteria needed. In addition, family expectations and demands also became one of the problems when seeking employment since the majority of them spent their entire lives with their families near and it is also hard for them to look for more job opportunities in other places since they prefer to work closer to home and their families, in general.

It was substantiated by the findings of Cendana et al. (2018) which revealed that most graduates identified family concerns as a hindrance in finding a job. In addition, they also believe that the lack of job opportunities and work experience hindered them from getting hired.

Similarly, having work experiences mean also added skills for the graduates, hence; Lisa et al. (2019) found out that employers perceived lack of needed skills as the biggest obstacle to hire graduates while in terms of the significance of skills, graduates reasoned only three skills to be more essential than employers did which include work experience, leadership and field knowledge.

The problem least encountered by the graduates is difficulty in passing the required job examination. It implies that they are knowledgeable enough to pass examinations being given by the prospective employers. This means that they are confident that they can pass any examination given their academic backgrounds and course taken be it testing of job knowledge, integrity, cognitive ability, personality, emotional intelligence skills assessment, among others.

### 3.4 Problems Encountered by BS in Entrepreneurship during Employment

**Table 15: Problems Encountered by BS in Entrepreneurship Graduates during Employment**

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
1. Low salary to compensate expenses	52	1
2. Difficulty in coping with work demands	25	3
3. Difficulty in coping with co-workers	13	9
4. Limited training/seminars provided	23	5
5. Limited career opportunities	21	7
6. Multiple duties/responsibilities assigned	35	2
7. Contractual work opportunity	16	8
8. Unhealthy work conditions/atmosphere	23	5
9. Job mismatch	23	5

*Source: (Estimated), \*multiple responses*



The Table reveals that the major problem encountered by the graduates while employed is low salary to compensate expenses. It is parallel to the results of Table 9 wherein the graduates are employed in the province and in Bicol Region which imply that the provincial wage rate is much lower as compared to national wage rate. It means lower salaries being given specifically when new to the job as supported by the results of Table 10 where they are having P10,000 and below monthly gross income. The findings were backed up by the Commission (2020) which shows that Bicol Region’s current regional daily minimum wage rate is P310.00 as compared with the National Capital Region with P500.00 daily wage rate.

### 3.5 Proposed Strategies to Improve the Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship Program

Table 16 presents the proposed strategies to improve the BS in Entrepreneurship program of the College of Business and Public Administration which will commence in August, 2021 onwards or the 1st semester of the academic year. The strategies are anchored on the three (3) key result areas: faculty development, curriculum development and student development which play vital roles in producing highly employable and quality graduates of the program.

**Table 16: Proposed Strategies to Improve the BS in Entrepreneurship Program**

Strategy	Objective	Activity	Persons Involved	Expected Output
1. Faculty Development	To strengthen faculty complement of the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hiring, selection and placement of vertically-aligned faculty with experiences in the field with relevant master’s degree</li> <li>Strengthening pool of faculty through continuous entrepreneurship-related trainings and seminars</li> </ul>	Personnel Selection Board/ Dean	Highly skilled and competent faculty complement
2. Curriculum Development	To implement industry-relevant curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review, design and formulation of new competency-based syllabi for entrepreneurship core subjects</li> <li>Promotion and practice of learner-centered innovative English Speaking Environment (ESE)</li> <li>Integration of soft skills into the curriculum</li> <li>Lecture-Series by practitioners in the field of entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	VPAA/ Local and Institutional Curriculum Review Committee/ Dean/ Program Chairpersons/ Faculty	Vertically-aligned curriculum needed by the industry

3. Student Development	To produce quality graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish new linkages with entrepreneurial organizations as possible partners and future employers both for IT-based and food-based enterprises</li> <li>● Continuous exposures of students to international events such as summer programs and practicum.</li> <li>● Strengthen on-the- job/practicum course for both IT and Culinary Management tracks</li> <li>● Provision of industry exposures through entrepreneurship related seminars, training and courses, local and international</li> <li>● Mentoring sessions from business practitioners</li> </ul>	VPAA/ Dean/ Local and Institutional OSSD/ Program Chairperson/ SIPP Coordinator	Highly skilled graduates
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*Source:* Authors' Compilation

#### **4. Recommendations**

In view of the findings, the study provided the following recommendations:

1. The Personnel Selection Board of the college may consider strengthening pool of Entrepreneurship Department faculty consistent with the needs of IT and Culinary Management Tracks through hiring industry practitioners and adjunct faculty.
2. The Local Curriculum Development Committee may review, redesign and reformulate new competency-based syllabi for entrepreneurship core subjects anchored in flexible learning modality.
3. The Office of Student Services and Development together with the Entrepreneurship Department may establish new linkages with entrepreneurial organizations both local and international as possible partners and future employers both for IT-based and food-based enterprises; and
4. The International Relations and Linkages Office may provide continuous international exposures of students such as but not limited to summer programs and industry immersions.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The results derived from this present study are important for varied reasons. First, the findings of the study will serve as basis for the curriculum enhancement of the program to be able to suit to the industry needs, graduates' self-assessment of soft and skills and

their current profile. Second, skills which are to be given particular attention by the Entrepreneurship Department are according to the perception of the respondent's writing skills, presentation skills, project management skills and information management skills. Lastly, the Entrepreneurship Department shall have a basis for interventions to improve employability skills of students.

In view of the findings, the study concluded that majority of the graduates are female, 21 to 25 years old, graduated in 2016, employed in local/regional organizations, occupying rank-and file positions, earning P10,000 gross monthly income. Further, very few graduates took additional courses, passed government examinations and granted with company recognition or award. The study also found out that they perceived their soft and hard skills as excellent in terms of teamwork, work coordination, communication, and time management, sales and marketing, and use of computer on various online and offline applications. The major problem encountered while seeking employment is lack of work experiences needed by the job and low salary to compensate expenses during employment.

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