

# EMPLOYERS' FEEDBACK OF GRADUATES' EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH ORGANIZATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

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*This study aims to assess the employer's perception of the employability skills of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration (BSOA) graduates at Saint Francis Xavier College, Inc., San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, and their significant relationship to the employers' demographics. Utilizing a descriptive survey method of research with the application of the quantitative approach. Data were collected from 35 employers across various sectors, with findings revealing a strong representation of large organizations. Most organizations have been operating for 1 to 20 years, indicating that younger businesses make up a substantial part of the sample. Employers rated graduate competencies, especially Interpersonal Skills, Teamwork, and Communication Skills, as Highly Evident. Statistical analysis revealed no significant correlation between organizational characteristics and employability skills, indicating the universal applicability of office administration competencies across various industries. In conclusion, the BSOA program at SFXC produces graduates who meet industry expectations and contribute effectively to diverse organizational settings. However, an enhancement plan is recommended to further align academic training with evolving labor market demands, thereby sustaining graduate relevance and reinforcing the college's commitment to excellence in office administration education.*

**Keywords:** Employability Skills, Graduate Employability, Employers Demographic, Office Administration, Motivation and Career Growth

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) played a vital role in shaping future professionals by providing quality education and instilling core values essential for national development. Their performance had long been assessed through the effectiveness of their academic programs and the professional success of their graduates. Saint Francis Xavier College (SFXC), as the sole provider of the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration (BSOA) program in Agusan del Sur, held a strategic position in contributing to regional growth through education. The study emphasized graduate employability and job readiness as significant indicators of curriculum relevance and institutional effectiveness. This focus reflected the institution's continuous efforts to adapt to evolving industry demands and maintain academic excellence. Although Toquero and Ulanday (2021) reported that graduates' competencies generally aligned with workplace expectations, studies by Tutor et al. (2021) and Abelha et al. (2020) revealed persistent gaps in communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, suggesting a need for deeper analysis of the curriculum's responsiveness to labor market realities.

The Philippine labor market has been challenged by high unemployment and underemployment rates, with the Philippine Statistics Authority (2024) reporting that recent graduates accounted for 43% of the

unemployed. This situation underscored the growing concern that academic programs may not fully equip students with the skills required in today's competitive job landscape. Moreover, academic institutions remained largely unaware of how their graduates performed professionally, leading to missed opportunities for curriculum enhancement. These circumstances called for a closer examination of employer perceptions regarding the employability skills of BSOA graduates. By tracking graduates' career trajectories and workplace outcomes, the study aimed to provide valuable insights for curriculum review, enhance educational quality, and strengthen the alignment between academic instruction and real-world demands, ultimately elevating the relevance and impact of the Office Administration program.

## 1.2 Graduates' Employability Skills

Graduate employability skills play a pivotal role in gauging the effectiveness of higher education institutions (HEIs). Employers today emphasize not only academic knowledge but also the demonstration of critical competencies such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, and technological proficiency. As industries evolve, employers expect graduates to be workforce-ready, capable of integrating into fast-paced environments and contributing to organizational goals from the outset. Studies reveal that many employers value candidates who exhibit initiative, a willingness to learn, and resilience in navigating workplace dynamics (Benitez, 2024; Ganiera et al., 2024). In the local context, graduates are expected to go beyond the theoretical by showcasing practical skills, such as records management, written correspondence, and interpersonal communication, which are integral to office and administrative functions (Valiente, 2022; Zapanta, 2025). Thus, industry satisfaction hinges on whether academic programs succeed in bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world job demands.

## 1.3 Employers Feedback

Feedback from employers serves as a valuable metric in shaping academic programs that align with labor market requirements. Higher education institutions must actively engage with industry partners to ensure their curricula remain responsive and relevant. When employers observe that graduates possess the skills necessary to meet organizational expectations, it reflects positively on the institution's capacity to produce competent professionals. However, concerns persist, employers often report that some graduates lack essential soft skills, such as effective communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities (Tutor et al., 2021). These gaps suggest a need for curricular adjustments and experiential learning opportunities that hone these competencies. Ultimately, HEIs must foster close collaboration with industries to not only keep pace with the shifting skill demands but also to instill a sense of professional preparedness in students thereby enhancing graduate employability and satisfying employer expectations.

## Purpose of the Study

Specifically, this study would like to:

1. Determine the demographic profile of the employers as to number of years in operation, number of employees, and corporate/industry size.
2. Identify the level of the employer's feedback on the graduate employability skills in terms of technical skills, communication skills, organizational and time-management skills, problem-solving, critical thinking skills, interpersonal skills, and teamwork.
3. Analyze the significant relationship between the demographics and the employability skills as perceived by the employers.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In this study, a descriptive quantitative research design was employed to examine employers' feedback on the employability skills of BSOA graduates from 2018 to 2021. A structured questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool, featuring closed-ended items measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument was adapted from the study of El-Sakran (2024), Ezamma et al. (2020), and Valiente (2022), and underwent reliability testing, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.75 or higher indicating acceptable internal consistency. A total of 27 employers across various industries in Agusan del Sur were purposively selected to ensure representation and relevance to the target population. Data were gathered both in person and through online distribution, depending on the respondents' accessibility and preference. The data analysis involved descriptive statistics to summarize employer feedback and Pearson's correlation to identify possible relationships between demographic variables and perceived employability skills.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Demographics

The table below presents the distribution of respondents based on the number of years in operation, size of employees, and corporate size.

**Table No. 1**  
**Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Number of Years in Operation	No. of Years	Frequency	Percentage
	1 to 20 years	15	43%
	21 to 40 years	10	29%
	41 to 60 years	6	17%
	61 to 80 years	3	9%
	81 years and above	1	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>
Size of Employees	Size	Frequency	Percentage
	Micro (1-9 employees)	7	20%
	Small (10-99 employees)	13	37%
	Medium (100-199 employees)	1	3%
	Large (200 and above employees)	14	40%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>
Corporate/Industry Size	Size	Frequency	Percentage
	Micro (Up to P3,000,000 assets)	6	17%
	Small (P3,000,001-P15,000,000)	4	11%
	Medium (P15,000,001-P100,000,000 assets)	9	26%
	Large (P100,000,001 and above assets)	16	46%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data showed that a significant portion of the surveyed organizations were relatively young, with 43% operating for 1 to 20 years, while only 3% had been established for over 81 years. In terms of workforce size, large organizations with 200 or more employees dominated the sample at 40%, whereas medium-sized firms with 100 to 199 employees made up just 3%. Similarly, in terms of corporate or industry asset size, 46% of the organizations reported assets exceeding P100 million, compared to only 11% with assets ranging from P3 million to P15 million.

These findings imply that the sample was largely composed of younger, larger, and more resource-rich organizations. This composition could reflect the growing presence and influence of large corporations in the business landscape, which may shape expectations regarding graduate employability, workplace readiness, and recruitment priorities.

According to Defalla and Choong (2022), younger organizations often exhibit greater adaptability and responsiveness to market changes, which can influence their expectations regarding graduate employability and workplace readiness. They noted that while older firms possess accumulated experience, newer companies may prioritize innovation and agility, affecting their recruitment priorities.

On the other hand, Walker et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis examining the relationship between organizational size and public service performance. Their findings suggested that larger organizations might have more structured processes and resources, potentially shaping their expectations for graduates to possess specific competencies and readiness levels.

### Employers' Feedback on Graduates Employability Skills

The table below presents the employers' feedback on the employability skills of the BSOA graduates.

**Table No. 3**  
**Employers' Perception on Employability Skills**

Indicators	Mean	Adjectival Rating
Technical Skills (Computer/Keyboarding Skills)	4.25	Highly Evident
Technical Skills (Record Management/Filing Skills)	4.45	Highly Evident
Communication Skills	4.40	Highly Evident
Organizational and Time Management Skills	4.40	Highly Evident
Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Skills	4.30	Highly Evident
Interpersonal Skills and Teamwork	4.46	Highly Evident
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.38</b>	<b>Highly Evident</b>

The data showed that employers had a very positive perception of the graduates' employability skills, with an overall mean of 4.38, described as highly evident. Notably, Interpersonal Skills and Teamwork emerged as highly evident, with a mean of 4.46. Meanwhile, Technical Skills such as computer and keyboarding abilities, though rated slightly lower at a mean of 4.25, still fell within the highly evident range.

This suggests that while employers expect graduates to have basic technical competencies, they place even greater emphasis on interpersonal strengths, skills that enable individuals to work effectively in teams, communicate well, and contribute positively to workplace relationships. This reinforces the notion that interpersonal skills and teamwork, often categorized as soft skills, are not merely supplementary but are foundational to achieving success in today's collaborative and dynamic work environments.

These findings echo what Jackson (2021) pointed out, that interpersonal and teamwork skills are seen by employers as key indicators of workplace readiness, often as important as, or even more important than, academic credentials. Moreover, Modrić, Samardžija, and Vejzagić (2024) highlighted how these skills contribute to a healthier organizational climate by promoting trust, collaboration, and employee morale. Overall, the data reflect a strong level of satisfaction among employers, suggesting that higher education institutions are equipping graduates with the essential skills to meet real-world demands.

### Relationship of Employers' Demographics and Employability Skills

The table below presents the relationship between employers' demographics and graduates' employability skills.

**Table No. 3**  
**Employers' Demographics and Graduates' Employability Skills**

Variables Tested		Computed r	P-Value	Decision	Conclusion
Technical Skills (Computer/Key boarding Skills)	No. of Years in Operation	0.050	0.777	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Size of Employees	0.016	0.925	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Corporate/Indus try Size	0.016	0.927	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
Technical Skills (Record Management/Fi ling Skills)	No. of Years in Operation	0.155	0.373	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Size of Employees	0.058	0.739	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Corporate/Indus try Size	0.027	0.879	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
Communication Skills	No. of Years in Operation	0.263	0.127	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Size of Employees	0.055	0.752	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Corporate/Indus try Size	0.186	0.284	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
Organizational and Time Management Skills	No. of Years in Operation	0.058	0.741	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Size of Employees	0.031	0.861	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Corporate/Indus try Size	0.009	0.957	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Skills	No. of Years in Operation	0.043	0.805	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Size of Employees	0.016	0.927	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Corporate/Indus try Size	0.253	0.142	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
Interpersonal Skills and Teamwork	No. of Years in Operation	0.082	0.640	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Size of Employees	0.111	0.525	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant
	Corporate/Indus try Size	0.116	0.509	Failed to reject the null hypothesis	Not significant

Table No. 3 presents the relationship between the industry profile and the employability skills of graduates. Based on the results, there is no significant relationship between the selected industry characteristics that include industry type, years in operation, employee size, corporate size, and level of government, with the various employability skills assessed. All computed p-values were greater than 0.05, indicating that these employer profile variables do not have a statistically significant influence on the graduates' employability skills. This suggested



that graduates demonstrated similar levels of basic employability skills regardless of the characteristics of the industry in which they were employed

As to Technical Skills (Computer/Keyboarding Skills), employers from different sectors assessed these competencies in a relatively uniform manner. The finding reflected that SFXC had likely succeeded in equipping students with essential computer and keyboarding skills that were broadly applicable across various work environments. However, the absence of a significant relationship also indicated that industry-specific technical needs may not have been addressed through general education alone. As a result, industries may have needed to provide additional training to ensure that new hires were prepared to use specialized systems or tools relevant to their particular field.

For Technical Skills (Record Management/Filing Skill), this highlighted the effectiveness of SFXC in delivering consistent training in record management skills, ensuring that graduates met a general baseline competency valued across all employment sectors. Further, the results suggested a possible opportunity for curriculum enhancement, particularly in tailoring record management competencies to meet industry-specific practices or government protocols, especially since the level of government approached statistical significance. This could better equip graduates for specialized demands in sectors that rely heavily on structured information handling and administrative processes.

In communication skills, the results pointed out the success of SFXC in instilling foundational communication skills that met the general expectations of diverse employers. However, while the skills were adequate across sectors, the absence of significant variation also implied that industry-specific communication demands may not have been fully addressed. Therefore, the BSOA programs might consider integrating contextual communication training, such as technical writing, intercultural communication, or public sector documentation practices, to enhance the adaptability of graduates in specialized work environments.

For organizational and time management skills, suggested that SFXC had effectively developed core organizational and time management skills among students, equipping them with abilities that are broadly applicable and transferable across different professional settings. This reflected a baseline level of preparedness among graduates in handling workplace responsibilities and deadlines. However, the lack of variation also implied that context-specific demands related to time management, such as fast-paced industries or bureaucratic settings, may not have been fully addressed in academic training. Therefore, the BSOA program may consider enhancing its curriculum by incorporating simulated work environments, case-based learning, or industry-aligned internships that emphasize time-sensitive task execution and strategic planning to better prepare students for the realities of diverse workplaces.

In problem-solving and critical thinking skills suggested that while certain industries may place a higher value on problem-solving competencies, the skills provided by BSOA program have not yet been differentiated enough to meet specialized industry expectations. This inferred a need for curricular enrichment that cultivates more advanced, industry-specific critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities. While the foundational skills were present, academic programs might consider integrating real-world case studies, interdisciplinary projects, and industry collaborations to help students better adapt to complex challenges specific to different sectors. This could enhance not only employability but also job performance in roles that demand higher-order cognitive skills.

Lastly, interpersonal skills and teamwork suggested that BSOA program had successfully prepared students with foundational abilities in collaboration and communication that were transferable across various workplace settings. This underscored the importance of continuing to develop interpersonal skills in academic curricula, as these skills remained vital across all sectors. However, since no significant differences were observed, there might be a need to further tailor teamwork and communication training to meet specific industry cultures or organizational dynamics. Incorporating more experiential learning opportunities, group projects, and cross-sector collaborations could better prepare graduates for the diverse interpersonal demands they will face in different work environments.

From a practical standpoint, this means that graduates are not confined to a single industry. Their training prepares them to be effective in various environments, from government offices to large private corporations,

highlighting the course's relevance and flexibility in the labor market. Several studies, including that of Pramesti et al. (2024), support this by noting that many employers now require at least a diploma or a bachelor's degree in office administration or related fields.

Moreover, these findings resonate with Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes the role of education in increasing an individual's productivity and economic value (Okolie et al., 2021). The ability of Office Administration graduates to perform well across industries confirms that the educational program is successfully equipping them with foundational competencies that meet real-world expectations. It also emphasizes the need for continued alignment between educational programs and evolving workplace demands to maintain this high level of employability.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Office Administration graduates are perceived by employers as well-prepared for the workforce, particularly in terms of interpersonal skills and teamwork—competencies that are increasingly recognized as essential in today's collaborative work environments. Despite slight variations in ratings across skill categories, the consistently high mean scores reflect a strong level of employer satisfaction. This affirms that the educational program in Office Administration has effectively aligned its curriculum with the practical needs of the workplace, equipping graduates with both soft and technical skills necessary for professional success. The prominence of large, resource-rich organizations in the sample further suggests that such employers actively seek well-rounded individuals who can contribute meaningfully to organizational goals.

Moreover, the absence of a significant relationship between industry profile and perceived employability skills indicates that these competencies are valued universally, regardless of sector or organization size. This highlights the versatility and marketability of Office Administration graduates, whose training enables them to adapt across various industries. These findings support the principles of Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes education as a key driver of individual productivity and economic value. As such, the study underscores the importance of maintaining responsive, skills-based curricula that can evolve with the changing demands of the labor market, ensuring that graduates remain competitive, employable, and impactful across diverse organizational contexts.

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