



EMPLOYABILITY OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT GRADUATES OF GORDON COLLEGE

Jason M. Bagason¹, MBA
Jhoannah Grace Ballon-Bagason², EdD

¹*College of Hospitality and Tourism Management*

²*College of Education, Arts, and Sciences*

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic made a significant impact on all people worldwide. Many workers were unemployed due to the closure of businesses and shutdowns of companies everywhere. Employability of the Hotel and Restaurant Management from 2015 – 2021 was the primary concern of this study to set innovations to strengthen not only the academic performances of the hospitality management students but also upskilling present and future HM students facing and serving the industry with the culture of excellence. The study reveals that most HRM graduate respondents were from the age group of 21-23 males who are single and have a college degree. Most are employed permanently and work as waiters/waitresses/food servers. This only shows that the employability of HRM graduates from batch 2015 to 2021 is very satisfying, as they are employed in a very related job. However, some of the graduate respondents have jobs unrelated to their specialization. This will be considered as a percentage of mismatch. It is hard to cope with or get a better job during this pandemic. However, the HRM graduates made it through even the highest salary they received, ranging from the minimum wage. Though they received a minimum amount with maximum service provided, graduate respondents managed to deal with daily life challenges.

Keywords: Employability, Hotel and Restaurant Management, Hospitality, Tracer Study, Innovation, Upskilling

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INTRODUCTION

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic struck the whole world, finding a perfect job that would match your dream career was already challenging. The number of COVID Patients marks the lockdown in most places worldwide that affects the livelihood, businesses, lifestyles of people, and financial status of every family. The pandemic added to the situation and caused changes for millions of families. Many workers were unemployed due to the closure of businesses and shutdowns of companies everywhere. As death rises due to the virus, more children, youth, and adults are stuck inside their homes,



thinking of their safety. With many hindrances blocking the road to success, HRM graduates made reasons to reach their goals in life and make things happen.

Literature shows that graduate employment and employability are now issues of both national and global concern owing to the ever-rising number of unemployed graduates (Aida et al., 2015). The above is confirmed by Samuel et al. (2012), who argued that the issue of graduate employment is now a phenomenal topic of discourse across professional gatherings, media, commentary reviews, employer surveys, national economic debates, political gatherings, social networks, and employee forums. Many countries are facing economic challenges at the moment. Hence, according to literature, immense pressure is being put on higher education to produce quality graduates who can turn around economies with their specialist knowledge and skills (Adesnia, 2013; Teichler, 2007; Bezuidenhout, 2011; Garwe, 2013).

On the other hand, employment means having a job (Garwe, 2013). Graduate employability is further defined by Kim (2012) as referring to a wide range of attributes and competencies that enable a job seeker to gain and maintain employment. The importance of non-academic skills in aiding graduates to get employment is also vividly articulated in a study by Samuel et al. (2012), which found that besides academic qualifications, employers now look for the presence of non-academic skills such as analytical skills, communication skills, good interpersonal and social skills, teamwork, motivation, time management, problem-solving, among others. Further emphasizing the relevance of nonacademic skills in the graduate employment equation, a study by Aida et al. (2015) found that diplomas and degrees are no longer worth what they used to be in the labor market in enhancing the employment prospects of a graduate, it is now soft skills that matter.

As the Hospitality Management Department Coordinator handling HM Instructors, the researcher challenged himself to know the employability of Hotel and Restaurant Management Graduates from batch 2015-2021 and set innovations to strengthen not only the academic performances of the hospitality management students but also upskilling present and future HM students facing and serving the industry with the culture of excellence.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used the quantitative, qualitative, and descriptive structures of research that determined the Employability of Hotel and Restaurant Management Graduates of Gordon College Olongapo City from S.Y. 2015-2021. This study utilized a descriptive method of research through a survey questionnaire. A quantitative research method attempts to collect quantifiable information for statistical analysis of the population sample, and a qualitative research method contains respondents' satisfaction with their present jobs. It is a popular market research tool that allows researchers to collect and describe the nature of the demographic segment. This aims to classify features, count, and construct statistical models to explain what is observed.



The study was conducted in Olongapo City, where most Graduates work. The researcher gathered data from the Hotel and Restaurant Graduates of Gordon College from batch 2015-2021.

The Convenience Sampling Method was used to gather information from the respondents within the limited time of two (2) to three (3) weeks. This sampling method involves getting participants based on the availability of the respondents, resources, and time, regardless of the selection criteria for respondents. The study adopted a structured survey questionnaire.

The first part of the survey questionnaire consisted of the respondent's profile in terms of their age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, and year graduated. The second part included the employment status of the respondents, together with their present job, job relevance, and monthly salary. The third part had the job satisfaction of the respondents. These questions were answered using Google Forms, which provided the link to Hotel and Restaurant graduates.

The data gathered from the questionnaire were tabulated for statistical processing. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the profile of the respondents in terms of their present age, sex, civil status, highest educational attainment, year graduated, employment status, job relevance, and monthly salary that would determine the success of the respondents' present employment. A qualitative method was used to describe respondents' job satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Age

Age (as of last birthday)	Frequency	Percentage
21 – 23 years old	115	44.2
24 – 26 years old	110	42.4
27 – 29 years old	25	9.6
30 years old and above	10	3.8
Total	260	100.00

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by age, which reveals that the highest number of respondents is the age group 21-23 with 44.2% or 115. The lowest age group was 30 and above, with 3.8% or 10.

The study by Gagalang et al. (2017) reveals that most AB English and AB Political Science graduates are in the bracket of 22-26 years old, or 75 and 80 percent, respectively. This signifies that they are at the height of their young age, enabling them to work in places far away from home that are close to the result of this study by age. Chauhan (2014) expressed that hiring new graduates gives them a chance to mold a new professional rather than training them to adjust or completely discard pre-conceived habits and notions, which is powerful.



Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	135	51.9
Female	125	48.1
Total	260	100.00

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents according to their sex, which revealed that 135 or 51.9% percent of the respondents are male. In comparison, 125 or 48.1% are female.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Civil Status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	250	96.2
Married	10	3.8
Total	260	100.00

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of their civil status. It shows that 250 or 37% of the respondents are single, while 10 or 3.8% are married.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
College Graduate	245	94.2
College Graduate with MA units	15	5.8
Total	260	100.00

Table 5. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to the Year Graduated

Year Graduated	Frequency	Percentage
2015	13	5
2016	22	8.5
2017	30	11.5
2018	26	10
2019	86	33
2020	35	13.5
2021	48	18.5
Total	260	100.00



Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of educational attainment. It shows that 245, or 94.2% of the respondents, are College Graduates, and only 15, or 5.8%, have their MA units after graduation.

Table 5 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents according to the year they graduated, which shows that the highest respondent frequency, with a total of 86 or 33%, was from the year 2019. The lowest percentage of graduate respondents is from the year 2015.

Table 6. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Employment Status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Permanent	115	44.2
Casual	5	1.9
Contractual	55	21.2
Contract of Service	35	13.5
Self-Employed	35	13.5
Unemployed	15	5.8
Total	260	100.00

Table 6 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents according to employment status, which shows that 115 or 44.2% of the respondents were employed permanently. In comparison, there were 15 or 5.8% of unemployed graduate respondents.

Table 7. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Present Job

If employed, what is your present job?	Frequency	Percentage
Admin Assistant	6	2.3
Baker	4	1.5
Bank Service Associate	4	1.5
Barista	15	5.8
Bartender	11	4.2
Call Center Representative	7	2.7
Cashier	9	3.5
Chef/Cook	4	1.5
College Instructor	3	1.2
Content Moderator	2	0.8
Courier/Food Delivery	28	10.8
Executive Assistant	21	8.1



Hotel Manager	3	1.2
Marketing Assistant	11	4.2
Photo Editor	2	0.8
Production Operator Sewer	2	0.8
Receptionist	7	2.7
Sale and Marketing	22	8.5
Spare Parts Technical Support	4	1.5
Store Shift Manager	9	3.5
Teller	7	2.7
Waiter/Waitress/Server	29	11
Self-Employed	33	12.6
Business Owner	2	0.8
None/No Work	13	5
House-Parent	2	0.8
Total	260	100.00

Table 7 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents according to their present job. It shows that the highest graduate-respondent's current job was being waiter/waitress/food server, with 29 or 11% of the total respondents. The content moderator, photo editor, and production operator sewer have the same respondents, 2 or 0.8% of the total graduate respondents. A total of 210, or 80.8%, are employed, plus 35, or 13.4%, are self-employed, making a 94.2% employability of HRM graduates from batch 2015 to 2021, and only 15, or 5.8%, are unemployed.

The dominant sub-themes that emerged out of the qualitative inquiry included the need for multiskilling and professional development of the employees, increased sense of hygiene, sanitation, and related SOPs, optimism toward the revival of the industry, media roles, and need for better crisis preparedness, (Kaushala & Srivastavab, 2020). This only reflects that due to the training of students, they can easily find different jobs after graduation as long as they can perform their duties as employees.

Table 8. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Job Relevance

How related is your job or business to your major or field of specialization?	Frequency	Percentage
Very Related	85	32.7
Related	65	25
Slightly Related	60	23.1
Not Related	50	19.2
Total	260	100.00



Table 8 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents according to job relevance. It can be gleaned from the table that 85, or 32.7%, of the graduate respondents have a job significantly related to their course, and 50, or 19.2%, of the graduate respondents have jobs unrelated to their specialization. This will be considered as a percentage of mismatch.

Table 9 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents according to monthly salary, where Php 10,001-Php 15,000 was the highest take-home salary of graduate respondents with 85 or 32.7%. On the other hand, 15 or 5.8% of graduate respondents received a monthly salary of Php 5,000 and below.

Due to the pandemic, graduates cannot choose a better job because many establishments are closing.

Table 9. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the respondents when grouped according to Monthly Salary

Monthly Salary	Frequency	Percentage
Php 5,000 and below	15	5.8
Php 5,001-Php 10,000	40	15.4
Php 10,001-Php 15,000	85	32.7
Php 15,001-Php 20,000	50	19.2
Php 20,001-Php 25,000	30	11.5
Php 25,001-Php above	40	15.4
Total	260	100.00

Job Satisfaction among HRM Graduates

The HRM graduate respondents were asked: “Are you satisfied with your present job/work? Why? Why not? Among the two hundred sixty (260) graduate respondents, 235 or 90.4% said that they were **Very Satisfied** with the following comments:

- Yes, I am very satisfied to have this job! Thank you, Lord.
- Yes, super satisfied! I can buy whatever I want because I now have money and can help my parents pay bills.
- Yes, I'm very satisfied with my work. I am happy to create an environment with my partners (employees) and our customers. Our company also gives us a good benefit to feel that we are important to them.
- Yes. Very Satisfied.
- Yes! I feel awesome satisfaction! Super Satisfied! Getting paid for doing what I love to do.
- Yes. Very satisfied! Aside from the competitive salary, it helped me in my daily life because I can achieve a work-life balance.
- Very satisfied *kasi hawak ko oras ko walang amo* at I can do whatever I want
- Yes! In terms of the nature of work and my co-employees and boss.



- Yes, I'm definitely satisfied, even though we are lack of employee because of the pandemic I think I'm satisfied with my present work. But sooner or later I'll be going to pursue my dreams when everything will be going back the way it is
- Yes, I am very satisfied.
- Yes, because even during crisis i can earn
- Yes, Super Satisfied because of the salary.
- Yes. More experience for me
- Yes! Magnificently Satisfied because I am earning above the average salary in the Phil.
- Yes, very satisfied! I can now share my master knowledge shared by Sir Jason Bagason and many other Instructors in GC.
- Yes, Very Satisfied! I am now helping my family.
- Yes, super dooper satisfied because it was actually my passion.
- Yes, this will help me to gain more experience and skills, that I can use someday when I work at the cruise ship.
- Yes! right now it becomes my passion and looking forward to have my own coffee shop soon.
- Yes! because I can apply on what I learned from Sir Jason and from the college
- Yes, very satisfied 'coz it is related to my course
- Yes. Healthy Environment! That is why I am very satisfied.
- Yes! I am very satisfied with my present job/work because it suffices my needs and my family's needs.
- DEFINITELY YES! Very satisfied with the salary and benefits.
- Yes, too satisfied because of salary!
- Yes. Lots of benefits. I love it!
- Yes, because I'm applying all skill I have to my present job. Very related to my field
- Yes, because I am able to enjoy every gatherings and personal events while earning.
- yes, super satisfied! I can now handle my own money and budget it for my needs and some will be shared to my family.
- Yes. It helps me improve my communication and customer service skills
- Yes! I'm very satisfied. I learned many things that I did not know before.

Among the two hundred sixty (260) graduate respondents, 3 or 1.2% said that they are **Satisfied** with the following comments:

- At some point satisfied, because I can pay the bills with my salary but Can be a yes and/or no. I'm happy that I do have a job to support my family but I'm still looking forward to have a job which is more related to my major
- Yes, I am satisfied because I am earning above the minimum wage/average salary in the Phil. But I am still looking forward for a higher salary.
- Yes, satisfied because I have a work even with low salary. At some point satisfied because I can pay the bills with my salary



Among the two hundred sixty (260) graduate respondents, 22 or 8.4% said that they were Not Satisfied with the following comments:

- No, Not enough salary.
- No, because it's not even close to what I studied for 4 years in college
- Not satisfied because this is not the work I want, though this is my choice due to pandemic but I miss working at hotel
- No, though I'm happy that I do have a job to support my family but I'm still looking forward to have a job which is more related to my major
- Not satisfied, because I don't have a job.
- No. Need higher salary.
- I don't know. Not satisfied *siguro, wala po akong work. Hirap maghanap tas pandemic pa.*
- No. This is just a stepping stone towards my dream.
- No! because of the salary
- No, the course itself is not suitable for my mental, emotional, and physical health.
- No, no work
- Not satisfied because this is not the work I want, though this is my choice due to pandemic but I miss working at hotel

The majority of the Job satisfaction of Hotel and Restaurant Management batch 2015-2021 has a very satisfactory result as the result of the study made by Kayaalp, (2021), where their survey first examined the satisfaction of older employees in South Dakota with their jobs. Overall, the findings show high job satisfaction. The high levels of job satisfaction could be attributed to the ability of our respondents to maintain employment during the uncertain period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study reveals that most HRM graduate respondents were from the age group of 21-23 males who are single and have a college degree. Most are employed permanently and work as waiters/waitresses/food servers. This only shows that the employability of HRM graduates from batch 2015 to 2021 has very satisfying results, where they are employed in a very related job. However, some of the graduate respondents have jobs unrelated to their specialization. This will be considered as a percentage of mismatch.

It is hard to cope with or get a better job during this pandemic, but the HRM graduates made it through even the highest salary they received, ranging from the minimum wage. Though they received a minimum amount with maximum service provided, graduate respondents managed to deal with daily life challenges.

As recommendations, the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management – Hospitality Management Department is expected to strengthen and enhance the on-the-job training for Hospitality Management students for future evaluation. Another is to continuously supervise evident programs that would upskill the HM students from their first year in the



college until they reach the final term to enhance services and eventually may help them after graduation seeking for employment.

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