Workplace Performance of CvSU Naic BSED Graduates: Employers' Feedback

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Abstract: - *The goal of the study was to obtain employers' feedback on the performance of graduates of Cavite State University Naic BSED from batch 2007 to 2017 on the performance attributes of graduates in nine specific areas, such as English language skills, numerical skills, information technology literacy, analytical and problem-solving skills, job attitude, inter-personal skills and technical skills required for the job. The researcher used detailed analysis methods using immediate supervisors of employers and department heads of working graduates as main informants of the sample. Results showed that BSED graduates always exceeds the required standards given by the employers. They exemplified commendable performance in their work attitudes, information technology literacy and interpersonal skills as shown in the composite mean as the top 3 performance attributes among the graduates. Employers agreed that most of the areas under survey were highly important in the delivery of their services, functions and responsibilities. Moreover, the areas on management skills, English proficiency and numerical competency ranked least among the attributes thus, recommended for further enhancement for continuous development of highly competent and globally competitive graduates.*

Keywords: - *Employers' perspective, graduate performance, workplace*

I. Introduction

The real measure of how well the educational programs are best implemented is through the feedback the university gets from the employers of its graduates. It is how well the graduates applied their acquired knowledge and skills to the real situation of the job. An example of the success of an educational program offered by an educational institution is the appearance of the competencies, expertise and skills of the graduates on their respective workplace.

With the continuous change in the demands of the changing society, it is imperative to the educational system of the country to find ways to address these needs. Market driven educational system is now necessary to produce 'work ready graduates' who has empowered and developed the necessary attributes to function as productive and responsible citizens.

The Higher Education Institutions (Universities and Colleges) are now enhancing and revising their curriculum offerings to focus on higher education

Programs that will foster and encourage skills and qualities to thrive in the workplace of the 21st century. Numerous studies have shown that more than 90 per cent of employers are looking for employees who are versatile and agile, able to learn on the job, team players, technically qualified and dedicated to success (Thompson et al, 2008). Employers have raised concerns that they can't find graduates with the skills needed (Hesketh (2000), DOLE Annual Report, 2013). Higher education mainly seeks to prepare students for the world of work, Dearing Report (NCIHE, 1997). Graduates must have the ability to establish standardized qualities, in addition to disciplinary knowledge. Common strengths include communication abilities, problem-solving skills, computer literacy, knowledge literacy, learning capacity and willingness (Scoufis, 2000), and teamwork.

Universities need to initiate the integration of basic generic attributes required by employers and effectively incorporate work in the course work to produce work-ready graduates. The current market trend is that companies are looking for graduates

with varied skills ranging from critical to soft. Due to the high demand of the employers for skilled graduates, the quality of the graduates churned out by the university is of great concern to educators. Due to the high demand of the employers for skilled graduates, the quality of the graduates churned out by the university is of great concern to educators.

The relationship between university graduates' standard of skills and the job market has been the subject of increasing theoretical and empirical studies in educational literature (Herath, 2015); much of the study sought to explore the expectations of employers on the standard of university students in terms of their hard and soft skills. Empirical studies showed that employers put great importance on the soft skills of graduates and their ability to meet work demands with empathy and performance. Soft skills help the students develop and retain their jobs. Employers' feedback about the job performance of the graduates is an essential input to the curriculum developers and educators in the academic community to execute more strategies on how the graduates could be able to perform their functions as members of dynamic organizations in national and international settings. In line with the university's dream of creating internationally competitive and morally upright individuals, employers' input on graduate success is a reasonable metric to assess our

program curriculum's sensitivity and relevance, hence this study.

II. Objectives of the Study

This undertaking was aimed at gathering employers 'input on CVSU-Naic graduates' results from 2007 through 2017. The study's specific objectives are to:

1)to assess to what degree CvSU Naic graduates displayed success attributes in the workplace;2)to decide attributes which their employers considerably value;3) to identify personal and professional qualities exemplified by CvSU –Naic graduates in their respective workplace; and 4) propose curriculum enhancement plan for the improvement of curricular offerings of the campus.

III. Method

This study utilized the descriptive type of research in which, according to Shuttle worth (2008), it is a quantitative approach involving evaluation and description of the actions of a subject without any effect on it. The descriptive aspect of the study involved the description of the respondents' profile and selected variables related to employers' feedbacks on graduates of CvSU Naic.

The respondents of this study were the employers or school managers, direct supervisors of the different institutions of graduates who are employed in both private and public sectors.
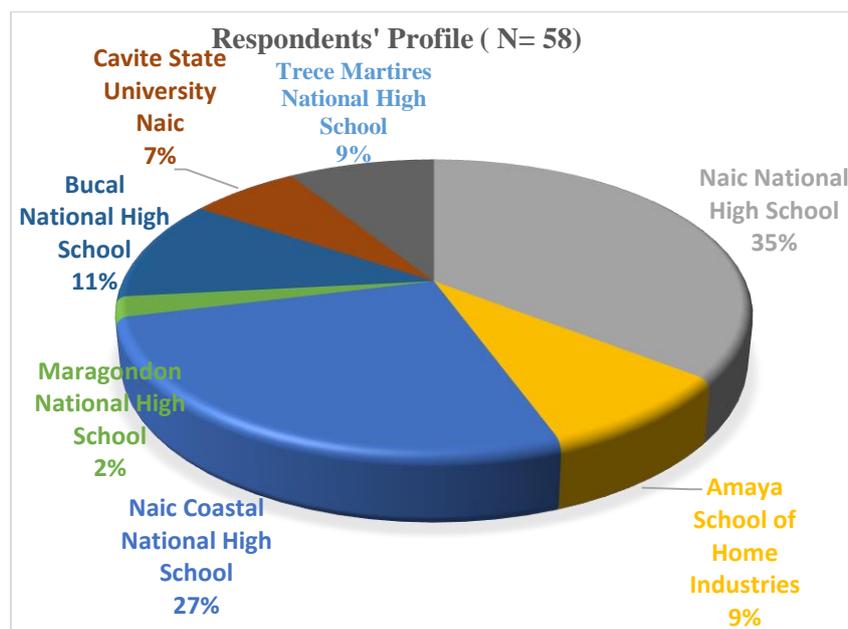

Figure 1: Respondents' Profile

Figure 1 displays the profile of the participating schools where the bachelor's degree in secondary education is in work. On the above figure it can be noted that the majority of graduates were working at Naic National High Schools, Naic, Cavite and others worked in the neighboring towns especially in Tanza, Trece Martirez and Maragondon, Cavite. Slovin's Formula has been used to determine respondents sample size. Proportionate random sampling was employed from 2007 to 2017 to obtain the number of graduates from the various program offerings. Set of questionnaires were adapted from the study of Sannadan J. 2016, intended for employers. Minor modifications were made to match the study's purpose. The instrument was personally administered by identifying the place of work and employers of the graduates. Social Media was also utilized to easy access and retrieval of the questionnaire. Frequency counts, percentages, ranking and weighted mean was used in analyzing the data.

Graduates' performance attributes were assessed in a 5-point scale in nine different fields, including English language skills, numerical skills, IT competence, analytical and problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills, record-keeping skills, management skills and technical skills required for the job.

A ranking on a 5-point scale showed the tests as follows:

Value	Limit	Performance	Importance
5	4.21-5.00	Always exceeds Employers required Standards	Highly Important
4	3.41 – 4.20	Sometimes exceeds Employers required	Much Important
3	2.61-3.40	Meet Employers Required Standards	Important
2	1.81-2.60	Sometimes fails to meet Employers required Standards	Less Important
1	1.00-1.81	Always fails To meet Employers required Standards	Not Important

IV. Results and Discussion

Table 1- Performance Attributes for Communication Skills

Communication Skills	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Ability to write communication effectively	4.25	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3rd
Ability to express ideas clearly	4.17	Sometimes exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4th
Ability to comprehend written instruction	4.27	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2nd
Ability to comprehend verbal instructions	4.35	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Composite Mean	**4.26**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

It can be gleaned from the table that the composite mean for the communication skills is 4.26. It shows that graduates always exceeds the employers required standard and considered as highly important. Among the stated attributes the ability of the graduates to comprehend verbal instruction ranked first and their ability to express their ideas ranked fourth. Communication skills are one of the basic elements of generic competencies among university students (Iksan et al., 2012). Students at our globalized world university need to learn communication skills in different cultural contexts (Penbek, Yurdakul, & Cerit, 2009).Parallel studies of Gines (2014), Aquino et al (2015) focused on the value of communication skills and public relations skills in the work of graduates of education.

Table 2 – Performance Attributes for Numerical Competency

Numerical Competency	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Comprehension of Numerical Information	4.24	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2nd
Application of Numerical Information	4.25	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Composite Mean	**4.25**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

Table 2 shows that employers perceived that BSED graduates always exceeds the required standards for numerical competency which shows in 4.25 composite mean. Students with mathematical adaptive know-how would be more effective in a rapidly evolving technical work environment. Tariq, Vicki N. Durrani, Naureen (2012)

Table 3 – Performance Attributes for Information Technology Literacy

Information Technology Literacy	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Use of standard computer software	4.43	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2nd
Adaptability to new software	4.44	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Ability to make use of the Internet & Intranet to facilitate work & business	4.41	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3rd
Locate, gather & organize information using appropriate technology and information systems	4.37	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4th
Composite Mean	**4.41**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

Table 3 provides employers input on the graduates' work results in terms of IT literacy. With the 4.41 composite mean, it shows that the employers agreed that they always exceeds their given standard. The result shows that graduates acquired and utilized well their knowledge in information and communication technology. Hogenbirk (2006) points out that teachers' ICT skills will support the following educational objectives: to make teaching versatile, to create individual learning routes, develop opportunities for part-time education, create rich learning environments, try new teaching ideas, increase teacher involvement – students, promote collaborative learning, inspire students, prepare students for lifelong learning, boost teaching performance , reduce costs , and enhance teacher career attractiveness.

Table 4 - Performance Attributes for Analytical and Problem Solving Abilities

Analytical and Problem Solving Abilities	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Ability in applying knowledge , principles and concepts in the workplace	4.37	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Ability to think globally and consider issues from a variety of perspectives	4.16	Sometimes exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	7th
Ability to apply logical and rational processes to analyze the problems	4.29	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	6th
Ability to synthesize and evaluate information gathered	4.33	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4.5th
Ability to think creatively to generate solutions	4.34	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2.5th
Ability to implement solution and act on opportunities for improvement	4.33	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4.5th

Ability to understand and apply a range of strategies to solve problems	4.34	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2.5th
Composite Mean	**4.31**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

Table 4 describes the graduates' success attrinutes about their analytical and problem-solving capabilities. They have achieved a composite average of 4.31 which considered to always surpass the requirements expected by the employers.

This finding was supported by Loquias' study (2015), which revealed that, in addition to communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving were found to be most useful for the first job done by graduates of BS Electronics Engineering at Camarines Sur Polytechnic College.

Table 5 - Performance Attributes for Work Attitudes

Work Attitudes	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Have sense of responsibility and commitment.	4.6	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3rd
Can work independently.	4.63	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2nd
Have perseverance.	4.65	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Have initiative and drive.	4.53	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	5th
Receptive and adaptable to new ideas and environment.	4.48	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	7th
Demonstrate .proper ethical practices.	4.56	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	6th
Composite Mean	**4.6**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

The performance attributes of the graduate in terms of work attitudes is revealed in Table 5 which shows a composite mean of 4.6 interpreted to always exceeds the employers required standard. Among the attributes having perseverance ranked first, an essential quality in the practice of the profession. According to Duffy.et al 2012, this relationship's

sense of vocation to work also has a significant influence on job satisfaction, but dedication to work is a critical moderator. Positive attitudes towards employment (career sense) often tend to encourage positive work results, such as job satisfaction and a reduced willingness to leave work (Berg, Grant, Johnson, 2010).

Table 6 - Performance Attributes for Inter –Personal Skills

Inter – Personal Skills	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Practice good inter-personal relationship.	4.46	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2.5th
Can work in a team.	4.49	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Can sustain intellectual curiosity.	4.33	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4th
Appreciate and understand individual differences	4.46	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2.5th
Accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner.	4.25	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	5th
Composite Mean	**4.4**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

The interpersonal skills of the graduate is presented in table 6. They gained a composite mean of 4.4 which is perceived by the employers to always exceed their required standards. This result is an example of the value of learning soft skills in workplace perfecting activities. (Parsons, 2008).

Employers stress that educators should teach their students how to work in the workplace to cooperate with others and develop their customer service capabilities (Even son 1999). Interpersonal skills are very important for work performance in any field, as considered soft skills.

Table 7 - Performance Attributes for Record Keeping Skills

Record Keeping Skills	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Observe Proper Procedures	4.37	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1.5th
Organize files correctly.	4.33	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3rd
Assess information through proper channels.	4.37	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1.5th
Composite Mean	**4.36**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

Table 7 presents the skills of the graduates in record keeping with the composite mean of 4.36 the employers stated that it always exceeds they given

standards. Inherent to the job of being a teacher is to keep records and with the data presented it shows that the graduates performed their best in this aspect.

Table 8 - Performance Attributes for Management Skills

Management Skills	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Work are organized.	4.23	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3.5th
Can appropriate manage and resolve conflict.	4.19	Sometimes exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	5th
Demonstrate necessary leadership skills.	4.14	Sometimes exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	6th
Can motivate team members.	4.27	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2nd
Can manage available resources and can seek resources and assistance.	4.23	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3.5th
Can deliver ideas/solutions to colleagues.	4.29	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Composite Mean	**4.23**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

Table 8 shows the management skills of the graduates, earning a composite mean of 4.23 , employers believed that they always exceeds the given standards. The ability to deliver ideas and solutions to colleagues ranked first among the attributes stated with a mean score of 4.29. Handling

skills are one form of "social" or "people" skills. Social skills are generally referred to as a person's ability to effectively communicate with others (Borghans et al., 2014), and we define people management skills as teachers' ability to interact effectively with their managers, colleagues and students in the educational context.

Table 9 - Performance Attributes for Technical Skills Required for the Job

Technical Skills	Weighted Mean	Description	Importance	Rank
Have Technical knowledge.	4.46	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Can handle technical demands in work.	4.28	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	6th
Can solve technical problems.	4.3	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4.5th
Can select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task or project.	4.34	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2nd
Can work to agreed standards and specifications.	4.23	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	7th
Aware of occupational health and safety practices and procedures.	4.3	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4.5th
Can apply international standards and practices within a discipline or professional area.	4.33	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3rd
Composite Mean	**4.32**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

With the composite mean of 4.32 table 9 shows the attributes of the graduates in terms of their technical skills required for the job. Among the qualities listed as having first rated technical competence with a mean score of 4.46 and the lowest rank with a mean score of 4.23 is the ability to work with accepted standards and specifications. Both have an interpretation of always exceeding employers required standards. It only manifests the preparedness and learnings gained by the graduates in their chosen profession.

Hard skills are one's technical capabilities and experience, whereas soft skills are other intangible personal and interpersonal attributes. While it is important to identify and develop soft skills, hard skills on the job are also required. While employers especially want good soft skills for new recruits, they have to balance each other with hard and soft skills (Robles M. 2012).

Table 10: Summary of Performance Composite Mean and Level of Importance along the Nine Areas of Attributes

Performance Attributes	Composite Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Importance	Rank
English Language Proficiency	4.26	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	7th
Numerical Competency	4.25	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	8th
Information Technology Literacy	4.41	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	2nd
Analytical and Problem Solving Abilities	4.31	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	6th
Work Attitudes	4.60	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	1st
Interpersonal Skills	4.40	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	3rd
Records Keeping Skills	4.36	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	4th
Management Skills	4.23	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	9th
Technical Skills Required for the Job	4.32	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	5th
TAWM	**4.35**	Always exceeds the employers required standard	Highly Important	

The top three attributes of BSED graduates can be gleaned in table 10, namely work attitude, information technology literacy and interpersonal skills gaining a mean of 4.6, 4.41, and 4.40 respectively. It means that they successfully developed soft skills which is very significant in the performance of their roles as educators. On the other hand, the attributes that ranked lowest is their management skills with a mean of 4.23. It only shows that they still need to exert more effort in developing this skills which can be done as they go along with the practice of the profession. As a whole, the employers express they appreciation of the attributes of the graduates which always exceeds their standards as reflected in their given ratings. And Javier S. (2018) stated that the employability of graduates was a feature of a number of individual characteristics. Employability characteristics include significant skills that can be managed such as adaptability, analytical experience, communication and interpersonal core skills and their usefulness to the students in their job. The results are supported by Dench S research et.al 2012) concluding that, in order to be competitive, it is crucial that students have the skills that employers want and should be seen to do so.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the study's results, the researcher concluded that CvSU Naic graduates demonstrated outstanding performance that often exceeded the expectations set by employers on the job. Employers recognized the importance of their work attitudes, information technological literacy and interpersonal skills in the delivery of their services, functions and responsibilities in their respective workplace , these are also the same attributes that are significantly valued by their employers, , Moreover, the areas on management skills, English proficiency and numerical competency ranked least among the attributes thus, recommended for further enhancement for continuous development of highly competent and globally competitive graduates.

In today's workforce soft skills are critical and should be seen as an investment. Organizations need to train current workers to grow their soft skills. And this is where the strategic attitude of the University comes into play. Besides having many obstacles, there are still plenty of opportunities to train our pre-service teachers for today's workplace. Educators need to understand the value of their students' interpersonal skills and incorporate soft competencies into their curriculum.

Considering the significant results, the researcher suggested that the University expand the curriculum to further improve graduates' skills and personal attributes especially in the lowest rated areas. Curriculum review of the BSED programs to determine the importance of the subject that could be regarded as a subject that will enhance students' management skills, English proficiency and numerical competency. Follow up study is also recommended to further gain insights on the improvement of the performance of the graduates in their respective workplace, furthermore. Active participation of the external stakeholders particularly the representatives of employers from different educational institutions is highly encouraged in the process of revising the curriculum offerings for BSED programs to ensure quality and relevant course offerings.

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