EMPLOYERS' FEEDBACK OF BACHELOR OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY GRADUATES OF GUIMARAS STATE COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT This study examined employers' feedback on the performance of Bachelor of Industrial Technology (BIT) graduates of Guimaras State College from 2017 to 2018. Specifically, it determined the degree to which graduates demonstrated key performance attributes in the workplace and identified the attributes most valued by employers. A descriptive research design was employed, involving 85 employed BIT graduates and their respective supervisors. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, ranking, and weighted mean. Findings revealed that graduates were predominantly male, with Automotive Technology as the most common specialization. Employers rated graduates' overall performance as commendable, particularly in terms of attitude, teamwork, and responsiveness to supervision. However, lower ratings were observed in technical competencies such as troubleshooting, planning, and application of trade skills. These results indicate that while graduates possess strong work ethic and interpersonal skills, there is a need to strengthen practical, industry-based competencies. The study underscores the importance of aligning curriculum with industry expectations and enhancing experiential learning to improve graduate performance and employability.

Keywords: Employability Skills, Employer Feedback, Graduate Performance, Industrial Technology Graduates, Tracer Study

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) play a critical role in developing human capital and preparing graduates for the demands of the workforce. In the Philippine context, HEIs are expected to produce graduates equipped with both technical competencies and employability skills that meet industry requirements. The quality of education delivered by these institutions significantly influences the employability and performance of their graduates (Butler, 2003; Aquino et al., 2015).

Employers increasingly emphasize not only technical proficiency but also transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving. These generic attributes are essential in modern work environments characterized by rapid technological changes and evolving job demands (Scoufis, 2000; Sannadan et al., 2016). According to Cai (2012), employers value graduates who demonstrate positive attitudes, willingness to learn, and the ability to adapt to organizational culture, highlighting that employability extends beyond academic knowledge.

Tracer studies and employer feedback mechanisms are widely used to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of academic programs. These approaches provide insights into graduate performance, skill utilization, and alignment between education and industry needs (Gines, 2014; Orejana & Resurreccion, 2010). Employer feedback, in particular, serves as a critical indicator of how well graduates are prepared for professional practice and how responsive the curriculum is to labor market demands (Chavez, 2014; Singh, 2012).

Despite the growing emphasis on employability, there remains a need to assess whether graduates possess the competencies required by employers. Previous studies have shown that while graduates often demonstrate strong work attitudes, gaps exist in technical and practical skills (Gonzales et al.,

2017; Mehrotra & Elias, 2016). These findings underscore the importance of continuous curriculum evaluation and industry collaboration.

In response to these concerns, this study aims to evaluate employers' feedback on the performance of BIT graduates of Guimaras State College. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Determine the degree to which BIT graduates demonstrate performance attributes in the workplace.
2. Identify the attributes that are significantly valued by employers.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive research design to assess employers' feedback on the performance of Bachelor of Industrial Technology graduates. The respondents consisted of 85 employed BIT graduates from 2017 to 2018 and their immediate supervisors from both public and private institutions.

The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, and proportionate random sampling was applied to ensure representation across different specializations. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered in person to respondents at their respective workplaces.

The instrument measured performance attributes across behavioral, technical, and interpersonal domains using a Likert scale ranging from poor (1.0–1.49) to exceptional (4.50–5.0). The use of employer evaluations enhances data validity, as it reflects actual workplace performance.

Ethical considerations were observed by obtaining respondents' permission and ensuring the confidentiality of responses. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, ranking, and weighted mean, providing a comprehensive description of graduate performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS AND AGENCY OF EMPLOYMENT

Table 1. Profile of the Employed Bachelor of Industrial Technology Graduates (n = 85)

Sex	Male	71	83.53
	Female	14	16.47
	Total	**85**	**100.00**
Year Graduated	2017	53	62.35
	2018	32	37.65
	Total	**85**	**100.00**
Field of Specialization	Automotive Technology	30	35.29
	Electrical Technology	18	21.18
	Food Technology	16	18.82
	Electronic Technology	11	12.94
	Mechanical Technology	10	11.76
	Total	**85**	**100.00**

The profile of the respondents reveals that the majority of employed BIT graduates are male (83.53%), indicating a strong gender imbalance in industrial and technical education. This pattern is consistent with findings in technical programs where male dominance is often attributed to the nature of the discipline and societal perceptions of technical occupations (Balingbing, 2014).

Most graduates completed their degree in 2017 (62.35%). This suggests that a larger proportion of respondents had more time to secure employment compared to more recent graduates. This also supports the notion that employment opportunities increase with time after graduation as individuals gain experience and exposure to the labor market (Macadangdang, 2019).

In terms of specialization, Automotive Technology (35.29%) had the highest representation, followed by Electrical Technology (21.18%) and Food Technology (18.82%). This distribution reflects the demand for automotive and electrical skills in local industries. However, concentration in a specific field may also increase competition among graduates, potentially affecting job placement and alignment with specialization (Montuerto & Mauring, 2019).

Overall, the profile indicates that graduates are primarily trained in technical fields aligned with industry needs, but their demographic and specialization characteristics may influence employment outcomes and opportunities.

Table 2. Agency of Employment of Bachelor of Industrial Technology Graduates (n = 85)

Gee-Yan Enterprises	14	16.47
ICEO	6	7.06
Century 21 Hotel	5	5.88
SMG Computer	5	5.88
GSC Agri-Eco	4	4.71
GSC Steel & Metal Fabrication	4	4.71
M. Galvez	4	4.71
Damasco Marketing	4	4.71
Shop Tony's Fast Food	4	4.71
Auto Smart	3	3.53
GUIMELCO	3	3.53
Hongkong Kitchen	3	3.53
TESCO Services Incorporated	2	2.35
MM Auto Repair Shop	2	2.35
Harder Machine Shop	2	2.35
GSC Automotive Department	2	2.35
RCG	2	2.35
Playa de Paraiso	1	1.18
Emilion 2	1	1.18
Bossing EG	1	1.18
Fast Track Car	1	1.18

DSLG	1	1.18
DEKA Sales	1	1.18
ITRDC	1	1.18
Nuñez Car Clinic	1	1.18
KH Electronic Shop	1	1.18
MRM Electronic Shop	1	1.18
KRJ Electronics	1	1.18
Mando's Machine Shop	1	1.18
JC Electronics	1	1.18
Total	85	100.00

The distribution of agencies shows that BIT graduates are predominantly employed in local private enterprises, with Gee-Yan Enterprises accounting for the highest proportion (16.47%). This indicates that local industries play a significant role in absorbing graduates of technical programs.

The presence of graduates across multiple small- to medium-sized enterprises, such as repair shops, fabrication units, and commercial establishments, suggests that employment opportunities are largely fragmented and decentralized. This pattern is typical in provincial economies where large-scale industries are limited, and employment is driven by small businesses and service-oriented sectors (Eroa, 2019).

The concentration of graduates in automotive, electrical, and mechanical-related establishments reflects the alignment of their technical training with available job opportunities. However, the dispersion across various non-industrial establishments (e.g., food services, hotels) indicates that some graduates may be employed outside their field of specialization. This supports findings that graduates often accept available jobs regardless of alignment due to economic necessity and limited job opportunities (Centillas, 2019).

The fact that all graduates are employed locally in Guimaras and Iloilo City highlights limited geographic mobility, which may restrict access to higher-paying or more specialized positions. According to Infante et al. (2014), graduates from Guimaras tend to remain within the locality, influencing both employment opportunities and career progression.

Overall, the agency distribution suggests that while employment opportunities exist, they are largely dependent on local economic conditions. This underscores the need for stronger industry linkages and expanded employment networks to enhance graduate employability and career advancement.

Degree to which BIT Graduates Demonstrate Performance Attributes in the Workforce

Table 1. Employer Evaluation of BIT Graduates' Performance Attributes

Interest and good attitude toward work	4.38	Commendable	1
Listens attentively to supervisors	4.36	Commendable	2
Is generally a good follower	4.33	Commendable	3
Cooperates well with others	4.30	Commendable	4
Displays interest in work	4.23	Commendable	5
…	…	…	…
Knowledge in trade / troubleshooting	3.87	Commendable	23
Ability to plan activities	3.83	Commendable	24
Overall Mean	**4.12**	**Commendable**	**---**

Results

The results reveal that BIT graduates demonstrated an overall commendable level of performance (Mean = 4.12) as evaluated by employers. The highest-rated attributes were related to work attitude, responsiveness to supervision, and teamwork, while the lowest-rated attributes were associated with technical competencies such as troubleshooting, planning, and application of trade skills.
The findings indicate that BIT graduates possess strong behavioral and interpersonal competencies, which are essential in workplace integration and organizational effectiveness. The high ratings in attitude toward work, cooperation, and attentiveness to supervisors suggest that graduates are well-prepared in terms of work ethics and professional conduct. This supports the assertion that employers prioritize soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and adaptability when evaluating employee performance (Cai, 2012; Singh, 2012).

From a theoretical perspective, these results align with Employability Theory, which emphasizes that employability extends beyond technical knowledge to include personal attributes and social skills that enable individuals to function effectively in professional environments (Harvey, 2001). The strong performance of graduates in these areas indicates that the program successfully develops essential transferable skills.

However, the relatively lower ratings in technical competencies highlight a critical gap between academic preparation and workplace requirements. Attributes such as troubleshooting, planning, and application of trade skills are fundamental in industrial and technical occupations. The lower scores suggest that graduates may lack sufficient hands-on experience or exposure to real-world applications of their knowledge.

This finding is consistent with previous studies, which report that graduates often demonstrate strong work attitudes but require further development in technical and practical skills (Mehrotra & Elias, 2016; Gonzales et al., 2017). The gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application suggests the need for enhanced experiential learning opportunities, such as internships, laboratory work, and industry immersion.

Moreover, the results highlight the importance of aligning curriculum with industry expectations. According to Chavez (2014), industry-academe partnerships play a crucial role in developing relevant competencies and ensuring that graduates are prepared for the demands of the workforce. Strengthening such collaborations can help bridge the gap between education and employment.

Overall, the findings suggest that while BIT graduates are commendable in terms of behavior and interpersonal skills, they need to enhance their technical competencies to improve overall performance and employability.

Attributes that are Significantly Valued by Employers

Table 2. Most Valued Performance Attributes of BIT Graduates (Top and Bottom Indicators)

Most Valued (Top 5)	Work attitude	4.38	Commendable
	Responsiveness to supervision	4.36	Commendable
	Teamwork	4.30	Commendable
	Initiative and cooperation	4.23	Commendable
	Responsibility	4.19	Commendable
Least Emphasized (Bottom 5)	Technical troubleshooting	3.87	Commendable
	Planning skills	3.83	Commendable
	Trade knowledge application	3.94	Commendable

The results show that employers highly value behavioral and interpersonal attributes, particularly work attitude, cooperation, and responsiveness. In contrast, technical skills and planning abilities received relatively lower emphasis, although still within the commendable range.

The findings reveal that employers prioritize soft skills over technical competencies when evaluating graduate performance. This trend reflects the evolving nature of the labor market, in which interpersonal skills, adaptability, and work ethic are increasingly recognized as critical components of employability.

According to Cai (2012), employers value graduates who demonstrate positive attitudes, willingness to learn, and the ability to adapt to organizational culture. These attributes are essential for workplace integration and long-term career success. Similarly, Singh (2012) emphasized that communication and interpersonal skills are among the most important competencies sought by employers.
The emphasis on soft skills may also reflect the entry-level status of most graduates. At this stage, employers may prioritize trainability and attitude over technical expertise, as technical skills can be developed through on-the-job training. This perspective aligns with Harvey's (2001) findings, which noted that employability involves a combination of skills, knowledge, and personal attributes.

However, the relatively lower emphasis on technical skills should not be interpreted as a lack of importance. Instead, it highlights the need for a balanced skill set that integrates both technical and transferable competencies. The lower ratings in technical areas suggest that graduates may require additional training and exposure to real-world applications.

The findings underscore the importance of curriculum enhancement, particularly in integrating practical training and industry-based learning experiences. By strengthening technical competencies while maintaining strong soft skills, institutions can produce graduates who are both competent and adaptable.

The study's results highlight that BIT graduates demonstrate commendable performance in the workplace, particularly in behavioral and interpersonal competencies. Employers highly value attributes such as work attitude, cooperation, and responsiveness, which are essential for organizational effectiveness and workplace integration. However, the findings also reveal a gap in technical competencies, particularly in areas such as troubleshooting, planning, and application of trade skills. This indicates the need for enhanced practical training and stronger alignment between curriculum and industry requirements. Overall, the study emphasizes that employability is a multidimensional construct that requires a balance between technical expertise and transferable skills. Strengthening this balance is essential to improving graduate performance and ensuring alignment with labor market demands.

CONCLUSION

This study examined employers' feedback on the performance of Bachelor of Industrial Technology graduates of Guimaras State College. The findings reveal that graduates demonstrate commendable performance, particularly in terms of work attitude, cooperation, and responsiveness to supervision. These attributes reflect the program's effectiveness in developing essential employability skills.
However, the study also identified gaps in technical competencies, particularly in troubleshooting, planning, and the application of trade skills. This indicates that while graduates are well-prepared in terms of behavioral and interpersonal skills, there is a need to strengthen practical and industry-based training.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of aligning academic programs with industry requirements to ensure that graduates possess both technical and transferable skills. Enhancing experiential learning opportunities and strengthening industry-academe collaboration are essential strategies to improve graduate performance and employability.

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