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Job Placement Challenges of Philippine TVET Graduates

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Abstract

Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a crucial role in providing individuals for the job market, particularly as global educational trends place greater importance on employability and hands-on, skills-oriented education. However, many TVET graduates in the Philippines struggle to find stable jobs. This situation highlights the deeper challenges, specifically in the ability of the graduate to find a job after graduation. It places their experiences in the broader context of the diverse global trends in higher education and employer-specific job qualifications and demands. Using a quantitative method and convenience sampling techniques, the study investigates how the graduates' competencies fit industry demands, institutional assistance's influence, and the effect of economic challenges on their ideal career, considering the role of their field of study, geographical location and English proficiency. The issues underlying deeper challenges are particularly relevant when helping graduates secure jobs. This study explores the factors affecting the job placement of Bachelor of Technical-Vocational Teacher Education (BTVTEd) graduates. Significant challenges have been identified, including the belief that fresh graduates lack experience, financial problems, and the limited networking possibilities provided by institutions. These challenges require that TVET programs adapt to remain relevant in the fast-changing job market. Strengthening collaboration in the industry, improving on-the-job (ojt) training, and deepening career assistance services are essential actions in this field. The findings are particularly relevant to BTVTEd programs in economically developing regions, and the study's primary limitation is its reliance on graduate self-perceptions, underscoring the need for future research that incorporates employer and government perspectives.

Keywords: Challenges, Employability, Job Placement, Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Introduction

The Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has traditionally been essential to UNESCO's educational mission. UNESCO has consistently shown interest in TVET, promoting a more human-centered perspective that regards TVET as a tool for fostering sustainable development. In the Philippines, TVET is an essential part of the educational system. TVET encompasses formal, non-formal, and informal learning that equips young individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary for the workforce. According to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), over 2.25 million Filipinos were enrolled in TVET programs in 2022, with a completion rate of 85%. However, national tracer studies reveal that only 65–70% of TVET graduates secure employment within one year of graduation, with significant variations by region and field of specialization. These figures underscore persistent gaps in job placement outcomes despite the expansion of technical-vocational training nationwide.

The main goal is to provide an individual with practical skills to meet the ever-changing needs of the labor market and help boost the country's economic growth (1). It was established to fill the gap, making the workforce more employable, particularly in the developing regions of Southeast Asia, where unemployed youth are a significant concern that needs immediate action. Industry-relevant skills, combined with an easy transition from the educational academe to the world of employment, are a critical factor for the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the programs (2). Despite these efforts, recent data underscore the severity of the job placement challenge for TVET graduates in the Philippines. As of 2023, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) reported an overall employment rate of approximately 76% for TVET graduates, with significant variation across sectors. While this figure is respectable, it implies

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that nearly one in four graduates still faces joblessness or underemployment. Moreover, a persistent problem of job mismatch has been shown by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), where a large percentage of employed technical-vocational graduates work in jobs not aligned with their training (3). These figures highlight a critical gap between skills supply and labor demand, weakening the expected benefits of educational investments and hindering the overall socio-economic progress that a strong TVE system was supposed to facilitate (3, 4).

The mismatch between graduates' skills and industry needs is not unique to the Philippines; similar challenges have been observed across Southeast Asia. Persistent societal biases that frame vocational education as inferior to academic routes also limit graduates' mobility and confidence, while geographical disparities in economic growth disadvantage graduates from rural regions, such as Caraga. Beyond technical competencies, employability skills—communication, adaptability, teamwork, and problem-solving—are increasingly emphasized by employers, though they are often underdeveloped in graduates. For instance, it has been found that while vocational education effectively develops computer and presentation skills, weaknesses exist in fostering responsibility and problem-solving skills, which are crucial for employability (5).

The persistence of societal biases that label vocational training as inferior to traditional academic routes creates a substantial obstacle, which may affect the self-worth of TVE graduates and restrict their access to diverse job opportunities and career growth (6). These problems are worsened by significant geographical differences in economic growth and job opportunities, which place TVE graduates in rural or economically disadvantaged regions, such as the vicinity of Caraga State University – Cabadbaran Campus, at a considerable disadvantage.

To offer a more robust conceptual lens for this investigation, the framework of Yorke's Employability Model is utilized in this study, and it is informed by the principles of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Decent Work Agenda (7). The model views employability not merely as getting a job, but as "a set of achievements – skills, understandings, and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations." This encompasses the four pillars of 'what graduates have' (knowledge and skills), 'how they use what they have' (contextual awareness and application), 'personal qualities' (self-efficacy and resilience), and 'meta-qualities' (reflection and self-management). By using this lens, the study moves beyond a simple skills-match to explore the holistic readiness of BTVTEd graduates. Furthermore, the ILO's Decent Work Agenda emphasizes that employment must be productive and deliver a fair income, security in the workplace, and social protection for families. This agenda provides a critical perspective to assess if the employment outcomes of TVET graduates, even when they secure a job, meet the standard of "decent work," particularly in terms of stability, fair wages, and career progression.

Indeed, various studies have highlighted the persistent job misalignment in the competencies under the TVE program, and the skills in demand by employers across the country and globally have changed. However, in today's highly competitive job market, possessing only technical skills does not ensure job security. Some employers seek graduates who possess employability skills, or soft skills, such as interpersonal abilities, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and leadership. Employability skills are defined as non-technical capabilities such as productivity, understanding, and personal characteristics that assist individuals in obtaining employment and achieving success in their careers (8). Past research indicates that technical and vocational education is critical to the growth of any economy because the skills of the people run the nation's economy (9).

Although existing studies have offered important perspectives on the general difficulties encountered by TVE programs in graduating employable individuals, a gap remains in a thorough understanding of the distinct challenges and prospects related to the TVE program at Caraga State University, Cabadbaran City. When the abilities and qualifications gained from TVE programs do not sufficiently align with the demands of local businesses, graduates may find it difficult to obtain significant employment, which

can delay their social and economic advancement, as well as the overall economic growth of the area (4). A recent study on employment barriers among TVET graduates revealed that difficulties in preparing resumes, cover letters, and handling job interviews are key obstacles to successful job placement (10).

This study is guided by the aforementioned Employability Model and the Decent Work Agenda as conceptual lenses. Employability extends beyond acquiring technical skills to include personal attributes and contextual opportunities, while the ILO framework highlights the role of institutions in ensuring productive, freely chosen, and fairly compensated employment (11). Using these frameworks helps situate graduates' challenges in both micro-level (individual skills) and macro-level (structural and policy) contexts.

The research gap remains in the localized, in-depth analysis of job placement challenges for Bachelor of Technical-Vocational Teacher Education (BTVTEd) graduates in a developing region like Caraga, Philippines. Although prior research highlights the broad difficulties of aligning TVET programs with labor market needs, there is limited analysis of the unique challenges faced by BTVTEd graduates at Caraga State University–Cabadbaran City. Specifically, there is a lack of empirical data regarding the degree to which demographic and academic factors impact their job success. This study, therefore, aims to: a) identify the factors (industry demands, skill alignment, graduate readiness, economic stability, and institutional support) influencing the job placement of BTVTEd graduates; b) assess whether placement results are significantly impacted by geographic location, field of study, or English proficiency; and c) propose specific, evidence-based recommendations for improving BTVTEd graduate employability.

Methodology

Research Design

A quantitative research design was used to examine the relationships between graduate competencies, institutional support, and job placement outcomes. This approach enabled the collection of measurable data on employability factors, which were analyzed statistically to establish trends and correlations (12). The value of industry-relevant training and stakeholder collaboration to improve graduate employability is also emphasized. Figure 1 presents the research concept of this study.

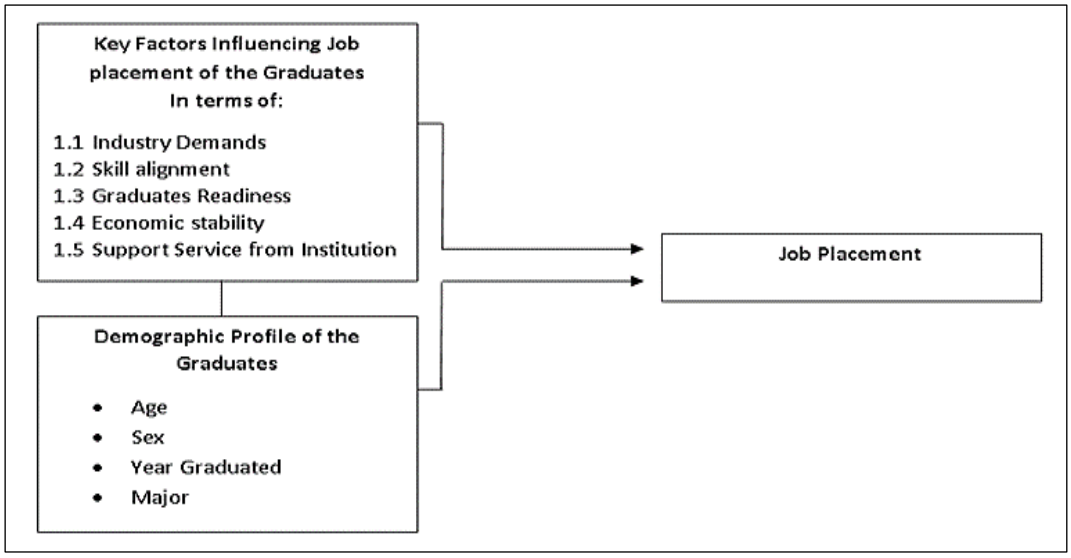

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study was conducted at Caraga State University, Cabadbaran Campus, and the participants were the BTVTEd graduates from Batch 2022-2024. A convenience sampling approach was employed, wherein the selection of participants was based on their willingness and availability to participate, given the difficulty in tracing all graduates. Among the 81 graduates of

the BTVTEd program, 55 students participated in the survey, leading to a participation rate of about 67.9%. This non-probability sampling method, while efficient, introduces a limitation regarding the generalizability of findings beyond the accessible group; however, it provides valuable, in-depth insight into the job outcomes of a substantial portion of the target population.

Data was collected through an online survey on Google Forms, with the survey link shared through the graduates' individual Facebook Messenger accounts. This approach was chosen for its accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and capacity to reach participants regardless of location. The suggestion to use digital platforms for efficient data collection was followed (13). Nevertheless, the choice to distribute the survey online may have led to the non-participation of the remaining 26 graduates, likely due to inactive social media profiles, inadequate internet access, or personal circumstances that hindered survey completion. Despite this challenge, the high participation rate achieved indicates considerable engagement from the target group, providing a strong dataset for the analysis of the study.

The demographic breakdown of the 55 participants is presented in Table 1, showing the distribution by major, year batch, and field of specialization.

Table 1: Distribution of Participants by Major Specialization

Year Batch	Total Students	Sample Size	Specialization	n	%
2022	39	22	Food Service Management and Technology (FSMT)	22	40.00
2023	25	17	Garments and Fashion Design Technology (GFDT)	9	16.36
2024	17	16	Electronics Technology (ELX)	8	14.55
			Construction Technology (CT)	6	10.91
			Electronics Learning Technology (ELT)	4	7.27
			Advanced Drafting Technology (ADT)	3	5.45
			Automotive Technology (AT)	2	3.64
			Welding and Fabrication Technology (WFT)		1.82
Total	81	55	**Total**	55	100.00

Survey Instrument

A self-administered survey questionnaire was developed to collect relevant data on factors influencing job placement among Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates of Caraga State University, Cabadbaran City. The instrument was structured into sections: the first gathered demographic information such as age, sex, major, and year of graduation, while the subsequent sections addressed factors affecting job placement, namely Industry Demands, Skill Alignment, Graduate Readiness, Economic Stability, and Institutional Support Services. Items were rated on a 4-point Likert scale to quantify participants' perceptions.

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire underwent expert review by specialists in the education field. A pilot test was then conducted with non-participant students to assess reliability. The results showed excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.947 and a standardized alpha value of 0.948 across the 53 items. These values confirmed that the instrument was adequate and appropriate for the main study involving BTVTED graduates.

Data Collection Procedures, Scoring, and Quantification of Data

A convenience sampling approach was used in the study, wherein participants were selected based on their willingness and availability to participate. Although this method may limit how broadly the findings can be applied, it offered valuable insights into the job outcomes of the reachable group of graduates. These responses offered meaningful information about the graduates' employment experiences and challenges. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are chosen based on how easily they can be accessed and their closeness to the researcher (13). The data collection for this study was carried out via an online survey designed using Google Forms. The survey link was shared with individuals who expressed their willingness and availability to participate. It has been pointed out that systematic data collection guarantees the accuracy and reliability of research results by

reducing bias and errors (14). Furthermore, it is noted that both qualitative and quantitative studies depend on well-crafted tools to gather pertinent information from participants, which helps to maintain consistency and validity (15). The scoring scale and ranges are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Scoring Scale, Range, and Interpretation are Used to Quantify Data

Scale	Score Ranges	Verbal Description
4	3.51 – 4.00	Very High Influenced
3	2.51 – 3.50	High Influenced
2	1.51 – 2.50	Low Influenced
1	1.00 – 1.50	Very Low Influenced

Results and Discussion

The following tables offer a detailed look at the factors affecting the job placement of Technical-Vocational Education (TVE) graduates, as categorized and measured in this study. Each table gives specific insights into the different aspects from the graduates' perspective.

Table 3, which shows the "Industry Demands Influence Job Placement of TVE Graduates," reveals a generally "High Influenced" (Grand Mean = 3.11) of industry-related factors on job placement. The highest mean score was 3.36 for the item "My teachers used up-to-date lessons based on industry needs," indicating graduates strongly perceive their instructors' content as current and relevant to industry demands. This implies that the core instructional delivery effectively aligns with contemporary industry knowledge. Conversely, the lowest mean score was 2.82 for "My internship or on-the-job training helped me get hired." While still interpreted as "Highly Influenced," this comparatively lower score suggests that, despite practical training, its direct impact on securing employment is perceived as less influential than classroom instruction.

The implication here is that while foundational knowledge is strong, the translation of practical experience into direct hiring outcomes may require further strengthening, perhaps through more structured internship programs, stronger industry partnerships leading to direct employment pipelines, or enhanced career services that help graduates leverage their practical experiences more effectively in job applications. This finding resonates with research indicating that while internships are crucial, their effectiveness in directly leading to employment can be inconsistent due to factors like varying quality of placements, lack of structured learning, or challenges in securing relevant opportunities (16). Collaborations between educational institutions and businesses—such as internships, co-op programs, and curriculum development led by industry—are crucial for higher education institutions and training organizations in connecting industries' needs with graduates' employability and improving graduates' preparedness for the job market (17).

Table 3: Industry Demands

a) My course prepared me well for the jobs available in my field.	0.58	3.33	High Affect
b) My teachers used up-to-date lessons based on industry needs.	0.59	3.36	High Affect
c) Industry professionals were involved in my training (e.g., guest speakers, workshops).	0.65	3.20	High Affect
d) My school partnered with companies to provide job-related experience.	0.80	3.02	High Affect
e) The certifications I received helped me find a job.	0.80	2.91	High Affect
f) My training was practical and useful for real work situations.	0.63	3.31	High Affect
g) My school updated the curriculum based on what employers needed.	0.62	3.35	High Affect

h) Job fairs and networking events helped me find employment.	0.77	3.00	High Affect
i) My school had strong connections with companies that helped graduates get jobs.	0.87	2.85	High Affect
j) My internship or on-the-job training helped me get hired.	0.88	2.82	High Affect
Grand Mean	0.52	3.11	High Affect

Table 4: Skill Alignment

a) My training gave me the right technical skills for my job.	0.59	3.38	High Affect
b) My course helped me improve my communication and teamwork skills.	0.50	3.55	Very High Affect
c) I learned how to use modern tools and equipment for my field.	0.50	3.55	Very High Affect
d) The hands-on training I received was helpful for my work.	0.57	3.49	High Affect
e) My school tested my skills before I graduated to make sure I was ready.	0.57	3.45	High Affect
f) My training prepared me to handle different tasks at work.	0.63	3.44	High Affect
g) I learned business skills that could help me start my own business.	0.64	3.18	High Affect
h) My school encouraged us to join competitions to improve our skills.	0.76	3.22	High Affect
i) Workshops on new technology helped me stay updated.	0.56	3.38	High Affect
j) I feel confident in my skills when applying for jobs.	0.65	3.38	High Affect
Grand Mean	0.43	3.40	High Affect

Table 5: Graduate Readiness

a) I felt ready to apply for jobs after graduating.	0.68	3.15	High Affect
b) My school provided career counseling to help with job searching.	0.81	3.22	High Affect
c) I practiced job interviews and resume writing before applying for jobs.	0.57	3.49	High Affect
d) My course gave me real-world experience through internships or training.	0.57	3.45	High Affect
e) I learned how to handle stress and challenges in the workplace.	0.54	3.49	High Affect
f) I was taught how to solve problems and think critically.	0.50	3.51	High Affect
g) My school helped me understand professional behavior at work.	0.57	3.58	High Affect
h) The school helped connect me to job opportunities.	0.73	3.20	High Affect
i) Extracurricular activities helped me develop work-related skills.	0.60	3.29	High Affect
j) My academic achievements made me feel more confident in job applications.	0.60	3.31	High Affect
Grand Mean	0.45	3.37	High Affect

Table 4, which shows the "Skill Alignment of TVE influences Job Placement graduates," indicates a strong overall "High Influenced" (Grand Mean = 3.40) of skill alignment on job placement. The highest mean scores, both 3.55, were observed for "My course helped me improve my communication and teamwork skills" and "I learned how to use modern tools and equipment for my field," interpreted as "Very High Influenced." It strongly implies that TVE programs are highly effective in equipping graduates with essential soft skills and technical proficiency vital for the modern workforce. Conversely, the lowest mean score was 3.18 for "I learned business skills that could help me start my own business," which, while still a "High Influenced," suggests a comparatively weaker perceived influence in entrepreneurial skill development.

It indicates that while graduates feel well-prepared for traditional employment, there may be an opportunity to further strengthen the curriculum's focus on business awareness. It is recognized that new technologies are transforming the skills needed in the workforce, emphasizing the

importance of aligning educational systems with future industry needs (18). The importance of aligning vocational education with the current demands of employers is emphasized in past research. Practical strategies for adapting VET curricula based on labor market insights to reduce unemployment and underemployment were highlighted in past research (19).

Table 5, which shows that "The Graduate's Readiness influences Job Placement of TVET Graduates," indicates an overall "High Influence" (Grand Mean = 3.37) on job placement, suggesting graduates generally feel well-prepared for employment. The highest mean score was 3.58 for the item "My school helped me understand professional behavior at work," implying that TVET programs effectively instill crucial workplace etiquette and professionalism. Conversely, the lowest mean score was 3.15 for "I felt ready to apply for jobs after graduating." While still a "High Influence," this relatively lower score suggests that, despite comprehensive preparation, graduates may still experience some apprehension or perceived lack of immediate readiness regarding the actual job application process.

This highlights a potential for institutions to provide more targeted support around the job search phase. Employability is complex, including subject expertise and skills like problem-solving and communication (7). Past research indicates that higher education institutions should integrate employability frameworks into their programs to enhance graduates' preparedness. Graduate readiness is also shaped by global labor market competitiveness, requiring graduates to develop lifelong learning attitudes (20).

Table 6: Economic Stability

a) Financial problems made it harder for me to finish my training.	0.96	2.78	High Affect
b) I had access to scholarships or financial aid while studying.	1.18	2.80	High Affect
c) My family's financial status affected my job choices.	0.95	2.80	High Affect
d) The number of available jobs in my area affected my ability to find work.	0.72	3.24	High Affect
e) Transportation and housing costs affected my ability to take certain jobs.	0.92	3.13	High Affect
f) My financial situation limited my ability to take extra training or certifications.	0.93	3.05	High Affect
g) I believe job opportunities are better in cities than in rural areas.	0.66	3.51	Very High Affect
h) Government programs helped me find a job after graduating.	0.97	2.73	High Affect
i) Support from my family helped me during my job search.	0.78	3.35	High Affect
j) The local economy affected my ability to get a job.	0.85	2.98	High Affect
Grand Mean	0.53	3.04	High Affect

Table 6, which shows the "Economic Stability factors influence Job Placement of TVET Graduates," indicates an overall "High Influenced" (Grand Mean = 3.04) on job placement. The highest mean score was 3.51 for the item "I believe job opportunities are better in cities than in rural areas," which is interpreted as "Very High Influenced." It strongly implies a significant perceived geographical disparity in employment opportunities, with graduates viewing urban centers as more promising. This has critical implications for regional development and highlights the need for targeted interventions to create more robust job markets in rural areas or to support graduates in relocating. Conversely, the lowest mean score was 2.73 for "Government programs helped me find a job after graduating." While still a "Highly Influenced," this relatively lower score suggests that graduates perceive government job search programs as less effective than other economic factors. It indicates a potential area for government agencies to re-evaluate and enhance the accessibility and efficacy of their job placement initiatives to better support TVET graduates.

A robust collaboration between the TVET sector and industry is vital for sustainable development (21). A disconnect between TVET programs and the requirements of the industry results in reduced employability for graduates, ultimately impeding economic growth. It is crucial to align curricula with the demands of the labor market and enhance

practical training opportunities to ensure both economic stability for graduates and broader social stability. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is commonly acknowledged as a route to gaining employment, becoming self-employed, and achieving financial stability. It has been highlighted that effectively structured TVET programs provide students with skills relevant to the job market and enhance their resilience in evolving economic environments, thereby supporting individual and national financial stability (22).

Table 7: Institutional Support Services

a) The school's career office helped me find job opportunities.	0.74	2.78	High Affect
b) Job fairs and recruitment events helped me connect with employers.	0.66	2.84	High Affect
c) Career counselors were available to help with job searching.	0.77	2.67	High Affect
d) Mentors helped me connect with professionals in my field.	0.84	2.82	High Affect
e) The alumni network helped me find job leads.	0.79	2.55	High Affect
f) The school partnered with companies that hired graduates.	0.84	2.69	High Affect
g) The school provided job market workshops and career advice.	0.84	2.93	High Affect
h) My school kept track of graduates and offered post-graduation support.	0.89	2.80	High Affect
i) Extra training programs were available after I graduated.	0.92	2.56	High Affect
j) My school's reputation helped me get hired.	0.81	3.16	High Affect
Grand Mean	0.61	2.78	High Affect

Table 7, which shows the "Support Services Influence Job Placement of TVET Graduates from their Institutions," indicates an overall "High Influenced" (Grand Mean = 2.78) of institutional support services on job placement. The highest mean score was 3.16 for the item "My school's reputation helped me get hired," suggesting that the institution's standing in the industry is perceived as a significant advantage for graduates seeking employment. It implies that maintaining and enhancing institutional reputation through quality education and strong industry ties is crucial for graduate employability. Conversely, the lowest mean score was 2.55 for "The alumni network helped me find job leads." While still interpreted as "Highly Influenced," this comparatively lower score highlights those graduates perceive the alumni network as the least impactful among the listed support services.

This suggests an opportunity for institutions to better leverage their alumni networks. Institutional support services, including career counseling and job placement assistance, are vital for enhancing employability (19). A past study discovered that support services provided by institutions, including career guidance and on-the-job training coordination, have a notable impact on the employment results of TVET graduates in the Philippines (23). Furthermore, the study indicates that job placement outcomes for BTVTEd graduates are highly susceptible to economic disparities associated with geographic location. Enhancing collaborations with regional industries and refining labor market information systems are essential approaches to narrowing the divide between education and job opportunities (24, 25). Additionally, successful institutional backing necessitates tracking the career paths of graduates to guide curriculum enhancement and policy changes (26).

Conclusion

The findings reveal that industry demands, skill alignment, graduate readiness, economic stability, and institutional support services all exert a generally high influence on the job placement of TVE graduates. However, the degree of impact . Skill alignment, particularly in communication, teamwork, and technical tool proficiency, is the most influential factor, underscoring TVE's effectiveness in building soft and technical skills essential for the workforce. However, comparatively lower ratings for entrepreneurial skill development suggest an opportunity to integrate stronger business-oriented competencies into the curriculum.

Graduate readiness is strengthened by strong professional behavior training, yet a gap remains in boosting confidence and preparedness for the job application process. Economic stability factors highlight a pronounced urban-rural employment disparity, with weaker perceived impact from government job placement programs, signaling a need for policy and program enhancements. Institutional support, while valuable—primarily through school reputation—shows untapped potential in leveraging alumni networks for career opportunities. The study suggests that while TVE programs are succeeding in aligning training with labor market needs and equipping graduates with key skills, strategic improvements in practical training-to-employment linkages, entrepreneurial education, rural employment initiatives, and alumni engagement could further strengthen graduate employability outcomes. Furthermore, it is indicated that job placement outcomes for BTVTEd graduates are highly susceptible to economic disparities associated with geographic location, while the influence of English proficiency and specific field of study may require further, targeted investigation to fully ascertain their impact.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study's primary limitation is its reliance on BTVTEd graduate self-perceptions, which introduces a self-report bias and lacks external validation. Specifically, the viewpoints of TESDA officials, HR professionals, and industry partners could not be incorporated, making it difficult to varies across specific factors. Industry relevance of instruction emerged as a key strength, with graduates strongly affirming that up-to-date, industry-aligned lessons significantly enhance employability

confirm if the graduates' perceived challenges align with employer expectations and industry realities.

To overcome these limitations, future research should adopt a mixed-methods approach that includes:

a) Stakeholder Triangulation: Qualitative interviews or quantitative surveys should be conducted with TESDA officials, HR professionals, and industry partners to compare their views on graduate readiness and skill gaps against the graduates' self-reports, thereby confirming perceived difficulties versus employer expectations.
b) Investigating Variable Impact: Inferential statistical analysis (e.g., ANOVA or regression) should be employed on a larger sample to robustly test hypotheses regarding how geographic location, field of study (majors), and English proficiency scores significantly impact job placement rates and starting salaries.
c) Longitudinal Tracking: Longitudinal studies should be implemented to track the career progression of graduates over three to five years, focusing on factors that influence career stability and growth beyond mere initial job placement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made to strengthen the job placement outcomes of TVE graduates. First, given the strong influence of up-to-date, industry-aligned instruction, institutions should continue integrating current industry trends into their curricula while expanding practical applications. Since internships scored lower in direct hiring influence, schools should enhance the structure of on-the-job training programs by forging deeper partnerships with industry stakeholders, creating clearer employment pipelines, and ensuring that internship experiences translate into tangible job opportunities.

Second, while communication, teamwork, and technical tool proficiency are highly developed, the relatively lower emphasis on entrepreneurial skills suggests that the curriculum should incorporate more business and self-employment modules, equipping graduates for traditional and entrepreneurial ventures. Third, although professional behavior is well-instilled, targeted programs such as career coaching, mock interviews, and job application workshops can boost graduates' confidence and readiness to enter the job market immediately after graduation. Fourth, in light of graduates' perception that urban areas offer better employment prospects, there is a need for policy interventions and institutional initiatives to stimulate rural job creation and provide relocation assistance or remote work opportunities.

Lastly, a critical, high-level recommendation addresses the coordinated efforts required from government agencies. To effectively close the gap between labor demand and training supply, the following actions are crucial:

a) TESDA must enhance its labor market information system to provide real-time, granular data on in-demand skills by region and technological discipline. This data should directly inform TVET curriculum development and program offerings, ensuring that training is perfectly aligned with industry needs.
b) The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), which oversees the BTVTEd program, should integrate mandatory, high-quality, industry-validated work-integrated learning (WIL) components into the curriculum, with clear metrics tied to graduate employability as a quality assurance benchmark for the degree.
c) Local Government Units (LGUs) play a vital role in regional economic development. They should actively partner with local TVET institutions and businesses to incentivize local employment, such as offering tax breaks for companies that hire local TVET graduates and establishing LGU-run job placement centers specifically for technical-vocational jobs, thereby mitigating the urban-rural disparity.
d) Strengthen Government Placement Program Efficacy: The low perceived effectiveness of government job placement programs highlights the need for stronger collaboration between TVE institutions and TESDA and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to improve program accessibility, relevance, and real-time alignment with the skills demanded in the local labor market.

Additionally, the low perceived effectiveness of government job placement programs highlights the need for stronger collaboration between TVE institutions and government agencies to improve program accessibility, relevance, and alignment with graduates' needs. Lastly, institutional reputation remains a key asset, but alumni networks require revitalization through active engagement, mentorship programs, and job lead-sharing platforms to serve as a dynamic resource for employment. These recommendations strengthen the bridge between training and jobs, ensuring that TVE graduates are fully equipped and supported to secure meaningful and sustainable careers.

Abbreviations

TVET: Technical-Vocational Education and Training.

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All authors have actively participated in the completion of this research endeavor.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have declared no conflict of interest.

Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

During the preparation of this work, the authors used Gemini AI and Grammarly to assist in improving the clarity and readability of the manuscript. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the final content of the publication.

Ethics Approval

All data were confidential, and the study complied with ethical standards in organizational research.

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