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Employability of the Graduates of Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS)

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***Abstract*—** This study assessed the employability of graduates from Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS) from the calendar years 2019 to 2022. The study employed a descriptive research method, surveying 289 graduates from Dressmaking NC II, Tailoring NC II, and Trainers Methodology Level I programs. The data were collected using a questionnaire checklist, supplemented by unstructured interviews for an in-depth understanding of employment trends and challenges. Statistical tools were used to analyze and interpret the gathered data effectively, ensuring that the findings provided valuable insights into graduate employability patterns. The results of the study serve as a foundation for policy recommendations and program enhancements that aim to improve employment outcomes for technical-vocational graduates.

The study underscores the crucial role of skills alignment in graduate employability, particularly in adapting to industry demands. The moderate proficiency in ICT and system management skills highlights an area for improvement, considering the increasing digitalization of various industries. Additionally, job market challenges suggest the need for strategic interventions that enhance both technical and soft skills to improve graduates' career outcomes. Strengthening professional development initiatives such as industry certifications, advanced training programs, and exposure to digital tools can significantly boost employability. Employers increasingly prioritize candidates who can integrate technology-driven solutions into their work, making it essential for graduates to develop digital literacy and problem-solving capabilities. Furthermore, incorporating emerging industry trends such as automation, data analytics, and e-commerce applications into vocational training programs could better equip graduates for future workforce demands.

Beyond individual skill enhancement, the study highlights the importance of institutional efforts in bridging the gap between education and employment. Integrating work-based learning experiences, industry-academe collaborations, and career development programs into technical-vocational education can ensure that graduates are well-prepared for the workforce. Establishing robust internship programs, on-the-job training, and career mentoring initiatives will enable students to gain practical exposure and build networks that facilitate job placement. Additionally, partnerships with industries and government agencies can create job-matching platforms and workforce development programs tailored to labor market needs. Schools must actively collaborate with employers to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and aligned with current workforce requirements. By fostering a proactive approach to labor market integration, educational institutions can significantly enhance employment rates and long-term career stability for their graduates.

The study recommends the implementation of a Comprehensive Employability Enhancement Plan (CEEP), which includes structured career counseling, entrepreneurship training, industry immersion programs, and digital upskilling initiatives. This plan also proposes the establishment of an ICT-based job placement and tracking system that continuously monitors graduates' employment progress. Additionally, policymakers and educational institutions should advocate for government-backed initiatives that support technical-vocational graduates. By fostering a culture of lifelong learning and adaptability, educational institutions can ensure that graduates remain competitive in the evolving job landscape. The long-term implementation of these strategies will contribute to economic development by producing a workforce that is well-equipped to meet the demands of various industries.

***Keywords*—** Employment, Competencies, Industry, Skills, and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the global fashion industry, where trends, technology, and consumer preferences rapidly evolve, vocational education and training (VET) institutions play a crucial role in equipping graduates with industry-relevant skills. The International Labour Organization (ILO) highlights that vocational training aligned with market needs significantly enhances employability and economic

outcomes. Countries with strong VET systems, such as Germany and Switzerland, have achieved high employment rates and economic resilience through structured apprenticeship programs that integrate hands-on industry experience with formal education (ILO, 2023). In Asian economies like Japan and South Korea, government-supported VET programs emphasize digital fashion design, sustainable production, and entrepreneurship, ensuring graduates remain competitive in both local and international markets. Similarly, in Australia and Canada, vocational training is closely linked to industry partnerships, providing students with direct pathways to employment and fostering innovation in fashion and textiles. As globalization reshapes labor markets, nations with adaptable and skill-focused training systems continue to produce a workforce capable of meeting industry demands while driving economic growth and sustainability.

Aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4: Quality Education, this study underscores the importance of equipping graduates with skills that meet current market demands. Quality education in vocational training not only enhances individual employability but also drives community development and economic growth. By focusing on SNAS graduates, the research highlights how tailored education programs can support sustainable livelihoods and foster regional and national development, thereby contributing to the broader objectives of sustainable development (UN, 2022).

Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS) has a rich history as a cornerstone of vocational education in Sorsogon. Established in 1974 under the direct supervision of the Director of the Bureau of Vocational Education, SNAS initially offered secondary education and a two-year technical course in agriculture. The school's programs were further strengthened through a memorandum of agreement with Bicol University, College of Agriculture, leading to the implementation of a curriculum that met TPAE minimum standards. In 1983, under the leadership of Mr. Emilio A. Tamayo, SNAS was elevated to a TESDA-administered school, and in 1997, it officially came under TESDA supervision following a joint memorandum circular. SNAS has continually evolved its TVET programs to align with emerging industries and market demands, significantly contributing to the development of skilled manpower and economic growth in the area (SNAS, 2024).

The country - Philippines has a rich tradition in the garment industry, making it a key player in the global textile and apparel sector. This study highlights how the dressmaking, tailoring, and Trainers Methodology curriculum at SNAS aligns with the country's commitment to advancing the local textile apparel and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. Legal bases from TESDA guidelines and the Philippine Development Plan emphasize the need for education responsive to industry demands. SNAS plays a distinctive role in contributing skilled professionals to strengthen the national textile industry and enhance the Philippines' global market standing (TESDA, 2023).

In Sorsogon, the garment industry is crucial to the regional economy and cultural identity. The study explores how SNAS graduates in dressmaking, tailoring, and Trainers Methodology meet local demands and significantly contribute to local business growth. These graduates foster economic development, creating value and prosperity for the community. By examining their employability, the study highlights the relationship between vocational education and regional economic vibrancy, supported by local ordinances that promote vocational education and community development. These legal supports underscore the importance of SNAS graduates in sustaining Sorsogon's garment industry (TESDA, 2023).

The inclusion of the Trainers Methodology Level I graduates further enriches this landscape. These graduates, equipped with advanced training and instructional skills, contribute significantly to the quality of vocational education in dressmaking, tailoring, and Trainers Methodology. By fostering a higher level of expertise among trainers, the methodology ensures that future dressmakers and tailors receive an education that meets industry standards and addresses contemporary challenges. This cascading effect of quality training enhances the overall competency of SNAS graduates, thereby improving their employability and aligning their skills with both national and international market requirements.

OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to determine the employability of the graduates of Sorsogon National Agricultural School Mayon Castilla, for the calendar year 2019-2022.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the graduates along?

a. Age
b. Sex
c. Civil status
d. Qualification
e. Monthly income
f. Designation/ Company Position
g. Employment status
h. NC Level

2. What is the level of employability of graduates in terms of?
   a. Basic skills/Task Skills
   b. Interpersonal skills/Job Role Environment
   c. Thinking skills/Task Management Skills
   d. Resource management skills/ Contingency Skills
   e. Communication skills
   f. System management skill
   g. ICT skills
3. Is there a significant relationship between the profile and the level of employability along the identified variables?
4. What are the problems encountered by the graduates in landing a Job?
5. What enhancement can be proposed based on the results of the study?

METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to determine the employability of graduates from Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS) from 2019 to 2022. Using a descriptive-correlational method, the study used questionnaires to gather data from 300 graduates across various programs, including Tailoring, Dressmaking, and Trainers Methodology Level 1. This approach allowed for a detailed examination of graduates' employability across different vocational fields. The use of descriptive statistics facilitated a thorough analysis of the data, providing insights into the graduates' skill levels and employment status. Additionally, correlation analysis was applied to identify relationships between different variables, such as the type of program completed and the employment outcomes. This methodological framework ensures a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employability and contributes valuable information to enhance technical-vocational education strategies.

The research design aligns with established practices in vocational education research, leveraging both quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture a broad spectrum of data. By utilizing surveys and interviews, the study not only quantified the employability outcomes but also explored underlying factors influencing these outcomes.

The employment of statistical tools such as descriptive statistics and correlation analysis is consistent with methodologies used in similar studies, allowing for robust data interpretation and meaningful conclusions.

The integration of these methods ensures that the findings are both reliable and relevant, providing actionable insights for improving the effectiveness of technical-vocational programs at SNAS and potentially influencing broader educational.

The sample in the study on the employability of graduates from Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS) were selected using a total enumeration method. This approach included all 300 graduates from SNAS's Tailoring NC II, Dressmaking NC II, and Trainers Methodology Level I programs from 2019 to 2022 as respondents.

By incorporating every graduate within these specific programs, the study ensured a comprehensive representation of the population, allowing for an in-depth analysis of employability outcomes.

Total enumeration is effective here due to the manageable size of the graduate population, eliminating potential sampling biases and providing a thorough examination of the employability factors and challenges faced by the graduates.

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Dressmaking	100	33.33
Tailoring	100	33.33
TM I	100	33.33
Total	300	100

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of respondents according to their qualifications. The study includes a total of 300 graduates from Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS), equally representing three different technical-vocational programs: Tailoring NC II, Dressmaking NC II, and Trainers Methodology Level I. Each qualification comprises 100 respondents, accounting for 33.33% of the total sample. This equal

representation ensures a balanced analysis of employability outcomes across these programs, allowing for a comprehensive comparison of skills, job placement rates, and challenges faced by graduates in their respective fields.

The research instrument used for this study, adopted from TESDA, was carefully designed to collect, measure, and analyze data on the employability of Technical-Vocational graduates from Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS). To ensure validity and reliability, the instrument was submitted to a panel of experts for evaluation. The panel reviewed its content, structure, and alignment with the study's objectives, and necessary corrections and refinements were incorporated based on their recommendations. This process ensured that the instrument effectively captured relevant employability factors and met research standards.

Part I of the survey gathers demographic information, including optional names, year of graduation, age, qualifications (Dressmaking NC II, Tailoring NC II, Trainers Methodology Level I), sex, monthly income, civil status, employment status, and company position. This profiling provides valuable insights into the respondents' diverse backgrounds.

Part II assesses graduates' employability by rating various skills on a scale from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high). It evaluates competencies in Basic Skills/Task Skills, Interpersonal Skills/Job Role Skills, Thinking Skills/Task Management Skills, Resource Management Skills/Contingency Skills, and Communication Skills. Additionally, the survey examines technology use and systems management, including software applications, cybersecurity principles, and ICT skills. With the expert-validated revisions, this comprehensive instrument ensures an accurate assessment of graduates' readiness for employment and alignment with industry standards.

The data collection process is critical for obtaining accurate observations and measurements, essential in various research applications. This study's data collection began in the first week of June 2024 and concluded after three weeks. The procedure started with obtaining permission from the head of Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS) to ensure adherence to proper protocols. Following this, the thoroughly examined and approved questionnaires were distributed. Each item was meticulously evaluated for accuracy, and the information was systematically tabulated for analysis. The structured data analysis employed statistical and analytical techniques tailored to the study's objectives, emphasizing the importance of accurate and complete data for meaningful insights.

Before the study began, the researcher sought approval from the Vocational School Administrator III and requested a list of graduates from 2019 to 2022 from the scholarship Focal in February 2024. In April 2024, survey questionnaires were distributed via personal distribution, cellphone, email, and Facebook messaging, with a letter explaining the study's goal and seeking participation. Identifiable graduates were asked to participate voluntarily, and the researcher also used Google Forms for the online questionnaire. Respondents were assured of confidentiality, and the information was exclusively used for research purposes.

The data analysis procedure for this study employs a systematic approach tailored to address specific research questions related to the employability of graduates from Sorsogon National Agricultural School (SNAS).

To answer the first question regarding the profile of graduates, variables such as age, gender, civil status, qualifications, monthly income, position, employment status, and national certificate level were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to summarize categorical data, providing a comprehensive profile of the respondents.

For the second question on the level of employability across various skills (basic skills, interpersonal skills, thinking skills, resource management skills, communication skills, system management skills, and ICT skills), a weighted mean approach was utilized. Each skill category was rated on a scale from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high). The interpretations of these ratings were categorized as follows:

Scale	Interpretation
1.00 – 1.49	Least employable
1.50 – 2.49	Less employable
2.50 – 3.49	Moderately employable
3.50 – 4.49	Highly employable
4.50 – 5.00	Very Highly employable

This approach assessed the graduates' perceived competence in each area.

The third question, investigating the relationship between employability and respondent profiles, employed correlation analysis and possibly regression techniques to identify significant associations between demographic factors and employability levels.

The fourth question concerning problems encountered in job placement involved thematic analysis of qualitative data gathered from open-ended survey responses. This analysis identified common themes and issues faced by graduates.

Finally, based on the findings, recommendations were proposed to address identified challenges and enhance employability outcomes. This comprehensive data analysis framework ensures a thorough exploration of the research objectives, leveraging appropriate statistical tools and interpretations to derive meaningful insights for stakeholders and policymakers alike.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data gathered, the following findings were revealed:

1. The profile of the graduate in terms of age there are 128 (44%) aged 20 to 25 years old, 109 (38%) are 26 to 30 years old, 31 (11%) graduates are 31 to 35 years old, and 21 (7%) of them aged 36 years old and above. Relative to sex, there are 56 (19%) male graduates than 233 (81%) female graduates in this batch. Also, 197 (68%) graduates are single whereas 92 (32%) of them are married already.

In relation to qualifications, there are 97 (34%) have Dressmaking NC II, 106 (37%) of them acquired Tailoring NC II, and 86 (29%) graduates obtained Trainers Methodology Level I. Along monthly income, 74 (26%) graduates are already receiving 15,000 pesos and below, 123 (43%) of them have 15,001 to 20,000 pesos monthly salary, 28 (10%) are earning 20,001 to 325,000 pesos, and 64 (21%) graduates have 25,0001 pesos and above salary in a month.

Relative to position, 246 (85%) attained an Entry Level/TVL trainer, 26 (9%) are in the Mid-level/Facilitator, and 17 (6%) are Advanced/Researcher. In terms of employment status, there are 157 (54%) graduates who are employed full time, 61 (21%) are employed part-time, 46 (16%) who decided to be self-employed, and 25 (9%) who are underemployed/unemployed.

2. The level of employability of the graduates are generally highly employable relative to basic skills with an overall weighted mean of 4.07. Specifically, they have high level of employability with performing the specified task within the required competencies accurately with the highest weighted mean of 4.15. In relation to interpersonal skills, the data showed that the graduates have high level of employability with an overall weighted mean of 4.01. In particular, the active listening to others without interrupting, demonstrating empathy and understanding by acknowledging perspectives and concerns has the highest weighted mean of 4.08 which makes them highly employable.

In terms of thinking skills, the graduates generally have highly employable with an overall weighted mean of 3.79. Specifically, they have high level in analyzing complex problems, identifies viable solutions, and make informed decisions in various work-related scenarios with the highest weighted mean of 3.84. Generally, the graduates are highly employable in terms of resource management skills with an overall weighted mean of 3.65. In particular, they have high level in allocating resources effectively, including personnel, equipment, and materials, to achieve project objectives, minimize waste, and enhance operational efficiency with the highest weighted mean of 3.69.

Generally, the graduates have high level of employability relative to communication skills with an overall weighted mean of 3.58. In particular, they are highly employable in actively listening to others, demonstrating attentiveness, empathy, and understanding, and asking relevant questions to clarify information and demonstrate genuine interest in others' perspectives and concerns with the highest weighted mean of 3.69. The system management skills of the graduates are generally moderate with an overall weighted mean of 2.82. Correspondingly, they are moderately employable in identifying inefficiencies and make improvements quickly with the highest weighted mean of 2.88.

The graduates have moderate level of employability of ICT skills with an overall weighted mean of 2.53. Specifically, the use of information and technology tools for different purposes – communication, data analysis, learning, etc. has the highest weighted mean of 2.67 which is interpreted as moderate level.

3. The computed values of basic skills, interpersonal skills, thinking skills, resource management skills, communication skills, system management skills, and ICT skills are 15.633, 12.687, 18.027, 13.602, 14.329, 16.828, and 28.372, respectively, which are greater than the critical value of 12.592 at 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 6. Hence, the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the age of graduates and their level of employability along the identified variables. This means that the employability level is significantly associated with their age. The sex of graduates significantly related to their level of employability along the identified variables. This can be attributed to the computed values for basic skills, interpersonal skills, thinking skills, resource management skills, communication skills, system management skills, and ICT skills of 48.540, 43.765, 6.020, 6.574, 7.752, 36.733, and 11.957, respectively, which exceeds the critical value of 5.991 at 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 2. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected which says that there is no significant relationship between the sex of graduates and their employability level relative to the identified variables. This means that male and female are affected by their being employable in terms of the skills acquired.

The computed values for basic skills, interpersonal skills, thinking skills, resource management skills, communication skills, and system management skills of 35.852, 33.975, 30.799, 21.057, 12.211, and 13.339, respectively, are greater than the critical value of 5.991 at 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 2. Hence, the rejection of the hypothesis that is stated in null form. This means that these skills are significantly related to the civil status of the graduates. It implies that the employability level is affected whether they are single or married. There is a significant relationship between the qualifications of graduates and their level of employability along thinking skills, resource management skills, and ICT skills. This can be attributed to the computed values of 11.604, 10.535, and 12.389, respectively, which exceed the critical value of 9.488 at 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 4. Therefore, the rejection of the null hypothesis which tells that there is no significant relationship between the variables mentioned. This means that qualifications of graduates' matter in their employability level relative to the skills acquired.

The monthly income of the graduates is significantly related to their level of employability along basic skills, interpersonal skills, thinking skills, resource management skills, communication skills, system management skills, and ICT skills. This association is based on the computed values of 25.162, 18.410, 19.626, 16.963, 14.330, 14.419, and 14.397, respectively, which exceed the critical value of 12.592 at 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 6. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected which states that there is no significant relationship between these variables. This means that the monthly income received by the graduates affect their being employable and the skills they acquired. The computed values of thinking skills, resource management skills, communication skills, system management skills, and ICT skills are 14.016, 26.356, 27.868, 20.410, and 30.006, respectively, which exceeds the critical value of 9.488 at 0.05 level of significant with degrees of freedom of 4. Therefore, the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the said variables. This means that the position of the graduates is significantly associated with the identified variables.

The employment status is significantly related with thinking skills, resource management skills, communication skills, system management skills, and ICT skills. This can be attributed to the computed values of 40.423, 30.398, 29.700, 25.223, and 21.386 of the identified variables, respectively, which are greater than the critical value of 12.592 at 0.05 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 12. Hence, the rejection of the hypothesis which is stated in null form. This means that employment status is significantly associated with the said variables.

4. The foremost problems encountered by the graduates in landing a job is the lack of job opportunities in the desired field with sum of ranks of 1041 in rank 1. Then, in rank 2 is the difficulty in finding job openings that match skills or interests with rank sum of 1048 and tough competition from other candidates encountered with rank sum of 1157 in rank 3. Also, the limited experience or qualifications required by employers was met by the graduates with sum of ranks of 1255 in rank 4. Likewise, the financial constraints or inability to relocate for job opportunities was faced by graduates in rank 5 with rank sum of 1365.

5. A comprehensive employability enhancement plan was proposed based on the results of the study.

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Majority of the graduates aged 20 to 25 years old, female, single, and have Tailoring NC II as qualifications. Also, they have monthly income of 15,001 to 20,000 pesos, have entry level, and full-time employment status.
2. The graduates have high level of employability along basic skills, interpersonal skills, thinking skills, resource management system skills, and communication skills. However, they have moderate employability level in terms of system management skills and ICT skills.
3. The profile of graduates is significantly related to thinking skills and resource management skills.
4. The most problems encountered by the graduates in landing a job are lack of job opportunities in the desired field, difficulty in finding job openings that match skills or interests, and tough competition from other candidates.
5. The comprehensive employability enhancement plan was proposed in order to improve the chance of the graduates in landing a job.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study, some possible recommendations are:

1. The graduates may enhance their profile by fostering interdisciplinary skills, industry certifications, networking opportunities, and continuous learning in emerging technologies.
2. The graduates may enhance their employability by strengthening their moderate skills through practical internships, soft skills training, industry-relevant projects, and mentorship programs. Emphasizing the development of communication, resource management, and system management skills will help create a well-rounded professional profile aligned with current market demands.
3. The graduates may improve the relationship between their profile and employability level by aligning with industry needs through targeted skills development, practical experience, networking opportunities, and ongoing feedback loops to ensure continuous improvement and relevance in the job market.
4. Graduates facing challenges in securing employment may be supported through targeted initiatives by concerned authorities, such as career counseling, entrepreneurship training, and job placement programs. Graduates may be encouraged to create their own opportunities by exploring self-employment, freelancing, and business ventures aligned with their skills and expertise.
5. The comprehensive employability enhancement plan may be submitted to the concerned authorities for further review and evaluation prior to its implementation and adoption.
6. An ICT-based support system may be implemented to assist graduates facing challenges in securing employment by providing job matching, skills training, and real-time career tracking.
7. May include the Tracking System in the Comprehensive Plan for Employability Enhancement.

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