

# Graduate Employability and Program Impact of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management in a Rural Campus Context

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**Abstract:** The tourism and hospitality sector is becoming increasingly competitive and rapidly evolving, particularly in rural and regional areas where tourism is essential for economic development. This tracer study examines the employability, competencies, and industry relevance of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) graduates from Cebu Normal University Balamban Campus. The research evaluates employment outcomes, alignment between job roles and degree, perceived competencies, and employer feedback to assess the effectiveness of the BSTM program in preparing graduates for the workforce. A descriptive mixed-methods approach was employed, utilizing quantitative data from 116 BSTM graduates (2013–2024) collected through a tracer study questionnaire, and qualitative data from open-ended responses by graduates and selected employers. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were conducted. The majority of graduates obtained permanent employment, often soon after graduation, and are employed in both tourism-related and non-tourism sectors, indicating diverse career trajectories. Both graduates and employers reported strong professional competence, communication, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, leadership, and teamwork. Nevertheless, deficiencies in digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and foreign language proficiency were identified, highlighting areas for curriculum enhancement. The findings indicate that the BSTM program supports graduate employability and industry readiness, although continuous curriculum development is necessary. Recommendations include strengthening digital skills, expanding entrepreneurship education, enhancing industry partnerships, and improving career placement support to maintain alignment with industry needs and to promote sustainable tourism development and regional growth.

## 1. Introduction

There has never been a greater need for highly qualified, flexible, and industry-

ready workers in the fiercely competitive, rapidly changing tourism and hospitality sectors today (Zsarnoczky, 2018). One of the fastest-growing industries in the world

and a major force behind economic growth, particularly in rural and regional areas, the tourism sector demands graduates who are not only academically prepared but also possess the practical skills, inventiveness, and resilience necessary to succeed in a variety of work environments (Sofronov, 2018). A key factor in developing the human capital required to satisfy these business demands is the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) program (CMO no. 62, s. 2017). But depending only on conventional indicators of academic achievement is no longer adequate. Assessing the program's practical impact by analyzing its results and the caliber of its graduates using an empirical, data-driven methodology is becoming increasingly necessary (Buama, 2018; Punzalan et al., 2024).

An impact study will yield important information about the employability, career advancement, and applicability of the skills and competencies that BSTM alumni have learned (Felicen, 2022). It will enable the school to assess how well the curriculum equips students to meet the needs of the local and international tourism and hospitality industries (Aguado, 2019). Additionally, it will help identify gaps between industry demands and academic training, allowing curriculum architects and institutional leaders to improve career support services, strengthen ties with industry partners, and adjust program content (Buama, 2018; Aguado, 2019; Punzalan et al., 2024). This tracer study is a vital research tool used by educational institutions to assess the employability and career trajectories of their graduates. It provides empirical data on how graduates transition from academic training to the labor market and evaluates the relevance of the academic curriculum to their professional success. Tracer studies help

universities and colleges in decision-making processes concerning curriculum improvements, policy-making, and institutional accreditation. By understanding alumni employment status, job relevance, and professional development, institutions can align their programs with industry needs and ensure their graduates remain competitive in the workforce. Furthermore, these studies serve as a feedback mechanism that fosters continuous quality enhancement in higher education.

In rural areas, where tourism serves as a platform for promoting local culture, heritage, and sustainable development in addition to providing a means of subsistence, such a study is particularly crucial. Cebu Normal University-Balamban Campus can better support regional development, produce globally competitive professionals, and ensure that its academic programs remain current, responsive, and transformative by understanding the impact of its graduates. Cebu Normal University (CNU) – Balamban Campus is one of CNU's extension campuses, a premier higher education institution in the Philippines recognized for its commitment to academic excellence. The Balamban Campus was established to cater to the educational needs of the western region of Cebu, particularly in response to the growing demand for specialized programs. The BSTM program was introduced to equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies for careers in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Given the Philippines' growing economic significance as a tourism destination, the program aims to develop professionals capable of contributing to the industry's sustainable growth. Over the years, the program has expanded its curricular offerings to include experiential

learning, industry immersion, and competency-based training, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared for diverse career opportunities. Understanding the impact of an academic program on its graduates and their employers is essential in evaluating its effectiveness. The need to assess the BSTM program's contributions to graduates' professional and personal lives is paramount for shaping future educational strategies. By tracking alumni's career progress, this study identifies gaps between academic training and industry requirements. Employers' feedback also plays a crucial role in determining whether graduates meet industry expectations, enabling curriculum developers to introduce necessary enhancements. Moreover, insights from graduates regarding skill application, career challenges, and industry adaptability can serve as valuable references for prospective students and educators. Such findings ensure that educational institutions remain relevant in an evolving job market.

Despite the recognized value of tracer and impact studies in higher education, there remains a limited body of empirical, institution-specific research that systematically examines the outcomes of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management program in rural and regional campus contexts, particularly at Cebu Normal University Balamban Campus. Existing studies often focus on urban-based institutions or rely on generalized employability indicators, leaving gaps in understanding how program competencies translate into actual workplace performance, career progression, and industry relevance within localized tourism economies. Moreover, employers' perspectives, which are critical in validating graduate preparedness, are frequently underrepresented in program evaluation.

Addressing these gaps is essential to generating evidence-based insights that can inform curriculum enhancement, strengthen industry-academe linkages, and ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of the BSTM program. Thus, this study seeks to assess the employability, competencies, and industry relevance of BSTM graduates of Cebu Normal University Balamban Campus.

## 2. *Objectives*

This study aims to assess the employability, competencies, and industry relevance of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) graduates of Cebu Normal University Balamban Campus as a basis for curriculum enhancement and program improvement.

It specifically addresses the following:

1. to assess the employability profile of BSTM graduates, including employment status, job acquisition methods, industry sector of employment, alignment of current job with the BSTM program, and the time required to secure employment after graduation;

2. To evaluate the competencies and skills developed by BSTM graduates, as well as their satisfaction with the program's career preparation, particularly in professional competence, communication and interpersonal skills, critical thinking and problem-solving, leadership and teamwork, ethical and social responsibility, and digital literacy; and

3. to examine industry and employer feedback, as well as graduates' recommendations, regarding the industry readiness of BSTM graduates, including

strengths in communication, professional competence, leadership, and teamwork, and identified gaps in specialized skills, digital competency, entrepreneurship, and language proficiency.

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1 Research Design*

This study employed a descriptive mixed-methods research design integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the employability, competencies, and industry relevance of BSTM of CNU Balamban Campus. The quantitative component focused on describing graduates' employment characteristics and perceived competencies, while the qualitative component provided in-depth insights from graduates and employers regarding industry readiness, workplace performance, and areas for program improvement. This design is appropriate for tracer and impact studies, as it allows for comprehensive analysis of both measurable outcomes and experiential perspectives.

#### *3.2 Sampling Procedure*

The respondents consisted of 116 BSTM graduates from academic years 2013 to 2024, who participated in the tracer survey and open-ended questionnaire. In addition, 20 employers of the graduates were purposively selected to provide qualitative feedback on graduates' workplace performance and industry readiness. The inclusion of both graduates and employers enabled triangulation of findings and strengthened the validity of the study by capturing perspectives from both supply and demand sides of the labor market.

#### *3.3 Research Instrument*

Two primary research instruments were utilized. The first was a tracer study questionnaire, adapted from established tracer study models developed by Sanchez et al. (2024). This instrument gathered quantitative data on graduates' employment status, job acquisition methods, industry sector of employment, alignment of current job with the BSTM program, duration of job search, perceived competencies, and satisfaction with career preparation. The second instrument was an open-ended questionnaire, also adapted from Sanchez et al. (2024), designed to elicit qualitative feedback from graduates and employers regarding program strengths, industry readiness, workplace performance, and recommendations for curriculum enhancement. Both instruments were administered online using Google Forms to ensure accessibility, efficiency, and broader participation.

#### *3.4 Data Collection Method*

Data collection was conducted using an online survey platform. Initially, graduates were identified through institutional records and contacted via email. An informed consent form, including a brief explanation of the study objectives and procedures, was provided prior to participation. Upon granting consent, graduates completed the tracer study questionnaire and the open-ended questionnaire. Following the collection of graduate responses, employers were invited via email to complete the open-ended questionnaire focusing on graduates' competencies, professional behavior, and industry readiness. Follow-up reminders were sent to ensure timely and complete

responses. The use of an online platform facilitated efficient data gathering while ensuring participant convenience and data security.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from the tracer study questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage, to summarize graduates' employability profiles, employment characteristics, job alignment, and perceived competencies. These analyses provided an overview of graduates' early career outcomes and labor market integration. Qualitative data from the open-ended questionnaires were analyzed using thematic analysis following the framework of Braun and Clarke. This process involved familiarization with the data, coding, theme development, and interpretation to identify recurring patterns related to industry readiness, program strengths, and areas for improvement. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the BSTM program.

### 3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and confidentiality of responses was ensured. Identifiable information was excluded from analysis and reporting. Data were securely stored and used solely for academic and research purposes in accordance with institutional and data privacy guidelines.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Employability Status

Table 1 summarizes the employability profile of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) graduates, including employment status, job acquisition methods, employment sector, degree-job alignment, and the time required to secure employment.

Most respondents (69 graduates or 59%) reported permanent employment, indicating that many BSTM graduates secure stable positions after graduation. This finding is consistent with previous research showing that tourism management graduates often find stable roles in both public and private sectors due to their versatile skill sets (Smith & Roberts, 2021). Contractual employment was reported by 28 graduates (24%), while 9 graduates (8%) identified as self-employed or freelancers. Additionally, 10 graduates (9%) started their own businesses. The presence of contractual, self-employed, and entrepreneurial graduates reflects labor market flexibility, as some pursue alternative arrangements that offer autonomy, adaptability, and diversified income sources (Jones et al., 2022).

Fifty-four graduates (50%) obtained employment through personal application, followed by 22 graduates (20%) using online job portals and 20 graduates (19%) through referrals. Only 2 graduates (2%) secured jobs through networking, while 18 graduates (17%) used other methods. The predominance of personal application shows that direct job-seeking remains effective in tourism and hospitality (Lee & Park, 2023). The use of online job portals highlights the growing digitalization of recruitment, especially as virtual platforms have become

Table 1. Employability of the BSTM Graduates

Employment Profile	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Permanent	69	59%
Contractual	28	24%
Self-employed/Freelancer	9	8%
Others (have their own business)	10	9%
<b>Job Acquisition</b>		
Personally Applied	54	50%
Online Job Portal	22	20%
Network	2	2%
Referral	20	19%
Others	18	17%
<b>Job Sectors Employment of the BSTM Graduates</b>		
Travel Agency & Tour Operations	5	4%
Airline & Airport Operations	12	10%
Cruise & Maritime Industry	2	2%
Hospitality	15	13%
Government	22	19%
Academe	20	17%
Other Fields	34	29%
No response	6	5%
<b>Alignment of Job to BSTM Course</b>		
Very Aligned	42	36%
Somewhat Aligned	33	28%
Not Aligned	34	29%
No response	7	6%
<b>Time Frame Before Landing a Job</b>		
Less than 3 months	44	38%
3 to 6 months	24	21%
6 months to 1 year	12	10%
More than 1 year	27	23%
No response	9	8%

central in the post-pandemic labor market (Chen & Liu, 2022). Limited reliance on networking suggests a gap in professional connections and career placement, emphasizing the need to improve graduates' access to industry networks. BSTM

graduates are employed across diverse industries. The largest group (34 graduates or 29%) work outside traditional tourism sectors, indicating that many pursue careers beyond tourism-specific roles. This supports previous research showing that tourism

graduates often transition into related fields such as sales, marketing, administration, and business services, where transferable skills are valued (Narvaez & Roldan, 2020).

Among tourism-related sectors, government employment accounted for 22 graduates (19%), academe for 20 graduates (17%), hospitality for 15 graduates (13%), and airline and airport operations for 12 graduates (10%). Smaller proportions were employed in travel agency and tour operations (5 graduates or 4%) and the cruise and maritime industry (2 graduates or 2%), while 6 graduates (5%) did not specify their sector. This distribution demonstrates the expanding range of employment opportunities related to tourism development, public service, education, and infrastructure (Deng et al., 2021).

Forty-two graduates (36%) reported that their current employment is highly aligned with their academic background, indicating effective application of program-acquired skills, consistent with the importance of curricular relevance in graduate employability (Alvarado et al., 2019). Another 33 graduates (28%) reported partial alignment, while 34 graduates (29%) indicated no alignment between their jobs and the BSTM program; 7 graduates (6%) did not respond. The relatively high incidence of degree–job mismatch underscores persistent concerns regarding the alignment between higher education training and labor market demands (Gonzalez & Cruz, 2021).

In terms of job search duration, 44 graduates (38%) secured employment within three months of graduation, followed by 24 graduates (21%) within three to six months and 12 graduates (10%) within six months to one year. However, 27 graduates (23%) required more than one year to obtain

employment, while 9 graduates (8%) did not respond. These findings suggest that although many graduates transition to employment promptly, a notable proportion experience delayed entry into the labor market, potentially due to economic conditions, sectoral competition, or skills mismatches (Rodriguez & Patel, 2022; Lee & Park, 2023).

In summary, BSTM graduates experience diverse employment outcomes. While most secure permanent positions and many find employment soon after graduation, a significant proportion work outside the tourism sector or face limited job alignment and delayed employment. These results highlight the need for ongoing alignment of academic training with industry requirements, enhanced career guidance, stronger industry partnerships, and structured professional networking opportunities to support graduates' transition from education to employment. employment. market where virtual platforms have become central to job matching (Chen & Liu, 2022). The relatively low reliance on networking suggests potential opportunities to strengthen graduates' professional connections and career placement support.

#### *4.2 Perceived Competencies and Skills Development*

Table 2 presents the perceived competencies and skills developed by Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) graduates, as well as their reported satisfaction with the career preparation provided by the program. These data highlight the strengths of the BSTM curriculum in fostering essential professional and transferable skills required

Table 2. Perceived Competencies and Skills Development of BSTMN Graduates

Competencies and Skills Developed	Frequency	Percentage
Professional Competence	88	83%
Critical Thinking Problem Solving	74	70%
Communication and Interpersonal Skills	85	80%
Leadership and Teamwork	78	74%
Ethical and Social Responsibility	73	69%
Digital Literacy and Technological Adaptability	68	64%

  

Perceived Satisfaction with the Career Preparation Provided by the BSTM Program		
Very well	58	50%
Well	38	33%
Moderately	18	16%
Poorly	2	2%

for entry into the tourism and hospitality workforce, as evidenced by graduates' self-assessment of their preparedness for employment.

A majority of respondents (83%) reported having developed professional competence, indicating that the BSTM program effectively provides foundational knowledge and skills relevant to tourism-related careers. This result aligns with previous research highlighting the significance of professional and technical competence for career advancement in specialized fields such as tourism management (Smith & Roberts, 2021). Similarly, 80% of respondents reported strong communication and interpersonal skills, which are essential in tourism and hospitality settings where client interaction, service quality, and cultural sensitivity are prioritized (Chaudhuri, 2022). Furthermore, 70% of graduates indicated well-developed critical thinking and problem-solving skills, reflecting the program's focus on analytical and decision-making abilities necessary for

addressing operational and managerial challenges in the tourism industry (Gonzalez & Cruz, 2021).

Additional competencies identified include leadership and teamwork (74%), which underscore graduates' readiness to collaborate and assume leadership roles in dynamic work environments. Ethical and social responsibility (69%) further indicate that the program promotes values-based and responsible professional practice (Rodriguez & Patel, 2022). Moreover, 64% of respondents reported digital literacy and technological adaptability, emphasizing the increasing importance of technological skills as tourism organizations adopt digital tools for operations, marketing, and customer engagement (Lee & Park, 2023).

Regarding satisfaction with career preparation, 50% of respondents indicated that the program prepared them very well for their careers, while 33% rated the preparation as good. In contrast, 16% assessed their preparation as moderate, and 2% felt poorly prepared. Although the

majority of graduates reported adequate preparation for employment, the presence of moderate and low satisfaction responses highlights areas for improvement, particularly in aligning academic training more closely with evolving industry requirements (Chaudhuri, 2023).

In summary, the findings indicate that the BSTM program is effective in developing core competencies, including professional competence, communication skills, and critical thinking. However, the relatively lower rating for digital literacy and the variation in satisfaction levels suggest opportunities for curriculum enhancement. Increasing technology-focused training, expanding industry exposure, and improving experiential learning opportunities may further strengthen graduates' preparedness and adaptability to the evolving demands of the tourism industry (Rodriguez & Patel, 2022; Gonzalez & Cruz, 2021).

#### 4.3 Employees Feedback

##### Theme 1. Strong Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Employers consistently highlight the communication and interpersonal skills of CNU-Balamban's BSTM graduates as a key strength. Graduates are praised for their ability to effectively interact with diverse clients, manage guest relations, and convey information clearly in both verbal and written formats. These skills are crucial in the tourism and hospitality industry, where professionalism, cultural awareness, and guest satisfaction are paramount.

*"One of our recent hires from CNU-Balamban is an excellent communicator. She handles customer inquiries with confidence, making*

*our guests feel welcomed and valued. Her ability to adjust her communication style depending on the nationality and preferences of our clients sets her apart from other employees." – Manager, Hotel and Resort Industry*

*"We prioritize hiring graduates who can engage with people effectively, and we have noticed that CNU-Balamban graduates demonstrate exceptional hospitality and service-oriented communication. Whether they are working at the front desk, coordinating travel arrangements, or handling customer concerns, their interpersonal skills contribute significantly to our company's reputation." – Human Resource Officer, Travel and Tour Agency*

##### Theme 2. Professional Competence and Industry Readiness

Employers commend CNU-Balamban's BSTM graduates for their professional competence and readiness to work in the industry. Many graduates demonstrate strong problem-solving skills, adaptability, and knowledge of hospitality management. Employers note that they require minimal training, as they already possess a solid foundation in tourism operations, customer service, and business strategies.

*"We've hired several graduates from CNU's tourism program, and they integrate seamlessly into our operations. Their understanding of event management, tourism marketing, and hospitality service standards enables them to take on responsibilities with*

*confidence and professionalism." – Director, Events and Conventions Management*

*"The graduates we employ from CNU show great problem-solving abilities. In situations where guest complaints arise, they quickly assess the issue and provide effective solutions without needing constant supervision. This level of competence is rare among fresh graduates." – Supervisor, Airline and Airport Operations*

### Theme 3. Leadership and Teamwork Capabilities

Employers emphasize that CNU-Balamban's BSTM graduates excel in leadership and teamwork. Many graduates quickly take on supervisory roles due to their ability to lead teams, delegate tasks, and foster a collaborative working environment. Employers also appreciate their willingness to take initiative and contribute ideas to improve workplace efficiency.

*"In just a few months, one of our CNU-Balamban graduates was promoted to team leader in our cruise operations department. Her ability to coordinate teams, resolve conflicts, and ensure smooth service delivery has been outstanding. She leads with enthusiasm and motivates her colleagues to perform better." – Senior Manager, Cruise and Maritime Industry*

*"We value graduates who work well in a team setting, and those from CNU's BSTM program exhibit exceptional teamwork. Whether organizing tours, handling*

*guest services, or managing events, they collaborate efficiently and contribute positively to the work environment." – General Manager, Travel and Tourism Services*

Graduates effectively interact with clients and colleagues, demonstrating excellent hospitality and service-oriented communication. Graduates possess essential tourism management skills and problem-solving abilities, allowing them to perform well with minimal training. Graduates show leadership potential and excel in teamwork, often progressing to supervisory roles quickly. These themes illustrate how CNU-Balamban's BSTM program prepares graduates for success in the tourism industry, highlighting the importance of curriculum relevance, industry collaboration, and hands-on training in shaping well-rounded professionals.

#### 4.4 Graduates Recommendations

### Theme 1. Strong Foundation in Communication and Customer Service Skills

Graduates recognize that the BSTM program effectively developed their communication and customer service skills, which are critical in the tourism and hospitality industry. Many alumni highlighted how courses such as Tourism Marketing, Business Communication, and Front Office Management prepared them to engage with clients, resolve concerns efficiently, and provide high-quality service. The ability to converse confidently, handle guest relations, and adapt communication styles was noted as one of the most valuable takeaways from the program.

*"During my time in the BSTM program, we were constantly trained*

*in effective communication, both written and verbal. Now, as a front office supervisor at a hotel, I realize how crucial these skills are in handling guests from different backgrounds. Thanks to my education at CNU-Balamban, I feel confident in engaging with clients and providing exceptional customer service." – Class of 2018 Graduate, Hospitality Industry*

*"One of the best aspects of the program was the emphasis on interpersonal skills. I learned how to handle customer concerns professionally, manage conflict situations, and ensure guest satisfaction. This has been particularly useful in my job as a tour guide, where I interact with travelers daily." – Class of 2021 Graduate, Travel and Tour Operations*

## Theme 2. Industry Readiness and Practical Application of Knowledge

Graduates expressed appreciation for the program's industry-relevant curriculum, which equipped them with the practical knowledge and skills needed in the workplace. Subjects such as Tourism Planning, Events Management, and Sustainable Tourism provided them with real-world insights, while internships and fieldwork allowed them to gain hands-on experience. Alumni noted that these experiences minimized the learning curve when they entered the workforce, giving them an advantage in securing jobs.

*"The BSTM program at CNU-Balamban didn't just focus on theories—we had fieldwork, case studies, and internship opportunities*

*that allowed us to apply what we learned in actual business settings. When I started working in the airline industry, I felt prepared because I had already encountered many of the concepts during my coursework and OJT." – Class of 2017 Graduate, Airline and Airport Operations*

*"I was worried that transitioning from college to the corporate world would be difficult, but my education prepared me well. The program's strong emphasis on tourism operations, hospitality management, and sustainability made me job-ready. During my internship, I was able to apply what I had learned, and this experience helped me secure a permanent job shortly after graduation." – Class of 2019 Graduate, Government Tourism Office*

## Theme 3. Need for More Specialized Skills and Digital Competency

While graduates praised the program's core curriculum, many expressed the need for additional specialized courses that focus on digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and advanced business management. Alumni working in tourism-related businesses and startups recommended integrating subjects such as e-commerce in tourism, digital marketing, and financial management for tourism enterprises to help students become more competitive in the modern workforce. Others emphasized the importance of learning new languages, particularly Mandarin, Nihongo, and Spanish, to cater to an increasingly diverse tourist market.

*"The program gave me a strong foundation, but I believe*

*students would benefit more if there were additional courses on digital tools used in tourism, such as GDS (Global Distribution Systems), social media marketing, and online booking platforms. These are now essential in our industry, and having this knowledge early on would make graduates more competitive." – Class of 2020 Graduate, Travel and Tour Operations*

*"I have always dreamed of managing my own tourism business, but I found that my knowledge of financial management and entrepreneurship was limited. It would be great if the program could offer more courses on how to start and manage a tourism-related business, including budgeting, investment strategies, and marketing." – Class of 2022 Graduate, Self-Employed in the Tourism Industry*

It can be deduced from the narrative accounts of select alumni that the BSTM although they reported to have developed those skills relevant to their career in the hotel and management industry, there are areas that program delivery can still be enhanced to prepare the graduates of the industry need. The program has indeed developed strong foundation in communication and customer service skills manifested by the graduates' ability to interact with clients, handle guest relations, and provide exceptional customer service. The combination of theoretical learning, fieldwork, and internships ensures that graduates are well-prepared for careers in tourism, hospitality, and related fields. In spite these, graduates expressed a need for more specialized skills and digital competency by expanding the curriculum to

include digital tools, business management, and language courses to enhance their competitiveness in the modern tourism landscape.

### **5. Conclusion and Recommendation**

The Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) program at Cebu Normal University–Balamban Campus contributes significantly to graduate employability and skills development, though areas for improvement remain. Most graduates secure permanent employment soon after graduation. However, some experience contractual work, delayed job placement, or employment outside the tourism sector, reflecting varied labor market outcomes and the evolving nature of the tourism and hospitality industry. These results emphasize the importance of maintaining alignment between academic preparation and industry needs.

The study confirms that the BSTM program develops key competencies needed in the tourism and hospitality sector. Graduates report strong professional competence, communication, critical thinking, leadership, teamwork, and ethical responsibility. Employer feedback supports these findings, highlighting graduates' industry readiness, problem-solving skills, effective communication, and ability to work independently and collaboratively. These outcomes demonstrate the value of experiential learning, such as internships, fieldwork, and applied coursework, in preparing students for professional roles.

Despite these strengths, the findings identify areas needing improvement. Inconsistent job-degree alignment and lower ratings in digital literacy and technological adaptability suggest the curriculum should be strengthened. Graduates recommend

more training in digital tools, entrepreneurship, business management, and foreign languages to better address current industry demands. These suggestions reflect the growing importance of technology, innovation, and global engagement in tourism.

In conclusion, the BSTM program advances Cebu Normal University's mission by producing competent, industry-ready, and socially responsible graduates, supporting national goals in tourism development, employment, and sustainability. To further improve outcomes, the program should increase digital skills integration, strengthen industry partnerships, expand entrepreneurship education, and enhance career guidance and placement services. These steps will help the BSTM program remain responsive to industry needs and continue contributing to workforce development and regional economic growth.

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