

Assessment Of Skills Competency Of Hospitality Management Graduates In The Food And Beverage Services Industry Standards: Basis For Program Enhancement Of A Technological University In Cebu

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the skills competency of Hospitality Management graduates from a technological university in Cebu, focusing on their performance in the food and beverage services industry. The research employed a descriptive-correlational design using a one-shot survey with 30 graduates with experience in various food service facilities. The survey utilized a questionnaire anchored on the competencies of the TESDA Food and Beverage Services NC II Qualification and other relevant competencies from the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP) toolbox. The findings indicate that the graduates rated the appropriateness of basic, common, and core competencies as "absolutely appropriate" in their work experience. However, specific learning outcomes were identified as priorities for enhancement, including "Practice Career Professionalism" (mean score of 6.63) and "Perform Computer Operations". Additionally, "Provide Room Service" was identified as a core competency with a lower mean score of 5.20, while "Observe Intoxicated Persons" and "Manage the Responsible Service of Alcohol" from the ASEAN toolbox were also ranked as top priorities for improvement. The study found that the type of food and beverage facility, and the position of the respondent had a lesser influence on the appropriateness of competencies. The results are intended to serve as a basis for enhancing the university's Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management program to better align with industry standards.

Keywords: Food and Beverage Services, Graduate Tracer Study, Hospitality Management Skills, Program Enhancement, Skills Competency.

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is a significant driver of global and national economic growth, particularly in the Philippines, where it is closely tied to tourism recovery and expansion. The Food and Beverage Services sector, as a core component of hospitality, demands a highly skilled workforce capable of delivering quality service to meet evolving industry expectations. Higher education institutions play a critical role in producing graduates who are not only academically trained but also industry-ready.

Despite the growth of the hospitality sector, manpower shortages and skills mismatches continue to challenge the industry in the Philippines, including Cebu. Employers report that many graduates lack specific service competencies required in actual practice, particularly in food and beverage operations (The Freeman, 2023). This gap raises concerns about the alignment of university programs with both local and regional industry standards. Addressing this gap is crucial to improving graduate employability and strengthening the competitiveness of the Philippine hospitality workforce. Aligning university curricula with recognized competency standards ensures that graduates are prepared to meet industry demands, thereby contributing to tourism recovery and sustainable economic growth (Manila Standard, 2024).

Nationally, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) has established competency-based qualifications such as Food and Beverage Services NC II, which serve as benchmarks for skill development. Regionally, the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP) expands competency standards across member states, with recent extensions to MICE and Event Professionals (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau [TCEB], 2023). These frameworks emphasize the importance of integrating practical, industry-relevant competencies into higher education curricula.

This study seeks to assess the skills competency of Hospitality Management graduates from a technological university in Cebu relative to TESDA and ASEAN MRA-TP standards. Specifically, it aims to identify priority areas for program enhancement to ensure that graduates are better equipped for the demands of the food and beverage services industry.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a descriptive–correlational design using a one-shot survey method to assess the skills competency of Hospitality Management graduates. The design was intended not only to assess current competencies but also to evaluate relationships between respondents’ characteristics and their assumed skill appropriateness. The competencies were assessed using Bloom’s Taxonomy’s three domains—cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)—to provide a holistic measure of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The respondents were graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management program from Cebu Technological University–Barili Campus, all of whom were employed in food service facilities. Given time constraints, purposive non-probability sampling was applied, resulting in a sample of 30 participants with varying positions and experiences.

Data were collected through a structured, researcher-made questionnaire anchored on the competencies of the TESDA Food and Beverage Services NC II Qualification and supplemented by standards from the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP) toolbox. The instrument consisted of four parts: (1) demographic profile, (2) work information, (3) food service facility profile, and (4) skills competency assessment. Competencies were rated on a seven-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicated stronger alignment with workplace standards.

The survey was distributed both in person and via Google Forms. Responses were tallied, coded, and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics—frequency counts, percentages, and means—to profile respondents and describe competency levels. Inferential statistics, particularly Pearson’s *r*, were used to test relationships between respondents’ background variables (e.g., type of facility, position, length of service) and their assessed competencies.

Competency ratings were interpreted using defined mean score ranges, from “absolutely appropriate” (6.14–7.00) to “absolutely inappropriate” (1.00–1.86). This facilitated systematic identification of priority areas for program enhancement while ensuring comparability across basic, common, core, and ASEAN-specific competencies.

RESULTS

The study analyzed 30 Hospitality Management graduates, consisting of 19 males (63.3%) and 11 females (36.7%). The majority (93.3%) were aged 20–39, and 63.3% did not hold a Food and Beverage Services NC II qualification at the time of the study. Regarding employment, 73.3% of respondents worked as waitstaff, with over half (53.3%) having 1–3 years of experience in their current positions. Most were employed in casual dining (26.7%), catering (23.3%), or hotel outlets (23.3%).

Competency assessments showed that basic, common, and core competencies were largely rated as “absolutely appropriate”. High mean scores were observed in dining preparation (*M* = 6.87), welcoming guests (*M* = 6.83), and occupational health and safety practices (*M* = 6.80). However, specific gaps were identified: computer operations received a lower mean of 6.00 (“Appropriate”), and room service received a mean of 5.20 (“Appropriate”).

Statistical analysis using Pearson’s *r* revealed that the type of food and beverage facility had no significant influence on competency appropriateness ($p > .05$). Significant correlations were found between job position and “Provide Room Service” ($r = 0.601, p < .01$), and a significant negative correlation between length of service and the perceived appropriateness of “Computer Operations” ($r = -.599, p < .01$).

Demographic Profile

The results of the study as answer to descriptive objectives are presented sequentially based on of the study. Data in Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the participants. Of 30 respondents there were more male 19 (63.3%) than female 11 (36.7%) and 28 (93.3%) belong to the ages between 20-39 years old. There were only 6 (20.0%) respondents who are married and only 11 (36.7%) are holders of Food and Beverage Services NC II.

Table 1. Personal Characteristics of Participants

Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Entire group	30	100.00
Age		
Under 20 years old	1	3.33
Between 20-39 years old	28	93.33
40 years old and above	1	3.33
Gender		

Male	19	63.33
Female	11	36.67
Civil Status		
Single	24	80.00
Married	6	20.00
Widower	0	
Holder of Food and Beverage Services NC II		
Yes	11	36.67
No	19	63.33

Work Information and Facility Profile

As shown in Table 2, majority of the respondents worked as waitstaff (73%), while the rest were service crew and managers (10% each), cashier (3.3%), and bus person (6.7%). In terms of experience, over half (53.3%) had been in their position for 1–3 years, while 43.3% had less than one year, and only one respondent had 4 years or more. Similarly, 50% had served their company for a year or less, 47% for 1–3 years, and one respondent (3%) for more than seven years.

Employment status revealed that 43% were part-time or on-call, 36.7% were regular employees, and 20% were contractual. Regarding the type of food and beverage service facility, most respondents were connected to casual dining restaurants (27%) and catering services (23%), with others distributed across hotel outlets (23%), stand-alone facilities (23%), and mall-based establishments (14%).

In terms of service type, à la carte (47%) and buffet service (33%) dominated, while fast food (17%) and table d'hôte/set menu (3%) were less common. These findings suggest that graduates were mostly employed in entry-level positions, working in diverse facility types with varying employment arrangements.

Table 2. Summary of Respondents' Work Information and Facility Profile

Category	Details	Frequency (n=30)	Percentage (%)
Position/Designation	Waitstaff	22	73.33
	Service Crew	3	10.00
	Manager	3	10.00
	Cashier	1	3.33
	Bus Person	1	3.33
Length in Position	≤ 1 year	13	43.33
	1–3 years	16	53.33
	≥ 4 years	1	3.33
Length in Company	≤ 1 year	15	50.00
	1–3 years	14	46.67
	≥ 7 years	1	3.33
Employment Status	Part-time/On-call	13	43.33
	Regular	11	36.67
	Contractual	6	20.00
Type of Facility	Catering Services	7	23.33
	Casual Dining	8	26.67
	Hotel Outlet	7	23.33
	Stand-alone	7	23.33
	Mall-based	4	13.33
Type of Service/Menu	À la Carte	14	46.67
	Buffet	10	33.33
	Fast Food	5	16.67
	Table d'hôte/Set Menu	1	3.33

Summary of Findings on the Appropriateness of Training Competencies of HM Graduates to Food and Beverage Service Facility Standards

The evaluation of Hospitality Management (HM) graduates of CTU–Barili Campus by 30 respondents, as presented in Table 3, revealed that the competencies from the Food and Beverage Services NC II qualification were largely deemed “absolutely appropriate” to workplace standards across all competency domains.

Table 3. Summary of Appropriateness of HM Graduates' Competencies to Food and Beverage Service Facility Standards

Competency Type	Strengths (Rated "Absolutely Appropriate")	Gaps / Lower Ratings
Basic Competencies	Workplace communication (M=6.75), teamwork (M=6.67), professionalism (M=6.63), OHS practices (M=6.80)	None – all highly aligned
Common Competencies	Workplace safety (M=6.67), customer service (M=6.57), hygiene (M=6.60), industry knowledge (M=6.66)	Computer operations (M=6.00 – "Appropriate")
Core Competencies	Dining prep (M=6.87), welcoming guests & order-taking (M=6.83), promoting products (M=6.83), guest service (M=6.80), guest concerns (M=6.73)	Room service (M=5.20 – "Appropriate")
Other Competencies	Linking kitchen & service areas (M=6.70; M=6.53), advising guests (M=6.30), managing alcohol service (M=6.27–6.33)	Slightly lower ratings for alcohol-related competencies by a few respondents

Basic Competencies: A majority (73.33%) rated workplace communication, teamwork, and professionalism as absolutely appropriate. Mean scores ranged from 6.63 to 6.80, with occupational health and safety rated highest (M = 6.80).

Common Competencies: Most respondents (76.67%) considered workplace safety and customer service absolutely appropriate, though computer operations received a lower mean of 6.00, indicating it was only "appropriate." Other areas such as industry knowledge (M = 6.66) and workplace hygiene (M = 6.60) remained highly rated.

Core Competencies: The majority (83.33%) rated welcoming guests, taking orders, and providing services as absolutely appropriate, with means between 6.73 and 6.87. However, room service was notably weaker (M = 5.20), indicating only "appropriate" alignment.

Other Competencies: Skills such as managing intoxicated persons and linking kitchen and service areas were consistently rated absolutely appropriate, with mean scores from 6.27 to 6.70. Only isolated responses rated some alcohol-related competencies as slightly appropriate.

Overall, the findings indicate that HM graduates are well-prepared for the standards of the food and beverage services industry, though digital skills (computer operations) and room service delivery require program enhancement.

Significant Relationships

This section presents the analysis of significant relationships between the respondents' work information and their assessed competencies in Food and Beverage Services NC II. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was employed to examine the strength and direction of association between variables such as job position, years of service, and type of establishment with the perceived appropriateness of training competencies. This statistical approach allows for determining whether workplace characteristics influence competency alignment. The findings offer valuable insights for curriculum enhancement, ensuring that program outcomes are more closely matched with industry requirements.

Facility Type vs. Competencies

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis, as shown in Table 4, revealed that all competency areas: basic, common, core, and other, showed very weak to weak correlations with the type of food and beverage service facility. Moreover, all relationships were statistically not significant ($p > .05$), indicating that the type of facility does not influence the perceived appropriateness of the competencies. This finding suggests that regardless of the service facility where graduates are employed, their evaluation of the relevance of competencies remains consistent.

Table 4. Correlation Between Type of Facility and Competency Appropriateness

Competency Area	Correlation Strength	Significance (p-value)
Basic Competencies	Very Weak ($r < .30$)	Not Significant ($p > .05$)

Common Competencies	Weak ($r < .50$)	Not Significant ($p > .05$)
Core Competencies	Weak ($r < .50$)	Not Significant ($p > .05$)
Other Competencies	Weak ($r < .50$)	Not Significant ($p > .05$)

Position vs. Competencies

Similarly, position or designation generally correlated weakly and non-significantly (see Table 5) with most competencies. Notable exceptions included Provide Room Service (core competency), which had a moderate, highly significant positive correlation ($r = 0.601$, $p < .01$), and Advise Guests on Food and Beverage Services (other competency) with a weaker but significant correlation ($r = 0.444$, $p < .05$) indicating those in higher positions tend to regard these competencies as more appropriate.

Table 5. Correlation Between Position/Designation and Competency Appropriateness

Competency Area	Correlation Strength	Significance (p-value)
Provide Room Service	Moderate ($r = 0.601$)	Highly Significant
Advise Guests on F&B	Weak ($r = 0.444$)	Significant
All Others	Very Weak ($r < 0.200$)	Not Significant

Length of Service vs. Competencies

As presented in Table 6, in terms of length of service, most competencies again showed no significant relationships, except Perform Computer Operations (common competency), which exhibited a moderately negative and highly significant correlation ($r = -0.599$, $p < .01$), implying that longer-serving employees are less likely to see this competency as appropriate compared to newer ones.

Table 6. Correlation Between Length of Service and Competency Appropriateness

Competency Area	Correlation Strength	Significance (p-value)
Perform Computer Ops	Moderate ($r = -0.599$)	Highly Significant
All Others	Very Weak ($r < 0.200$)	Not Significant

Employment Status vs. Competencies

Regarding status of employment (see Table 7), only Provide Room Service showed a moderate negative and highly significant relationship ($r = -0.490$, $p < .01$): lower-status employees rated this competency as more appropriate than higher-status employees.

Table 7. Correlation Between Employment Status and Competency Appropriateness

Competency Area	Correlation Strength	Significance (p-value)
Provide Room Service	Moderate ($r = -0.490$)	Highly Significant
All Others	Very Weak ($r < 0.200$)	Not Significant

Business Location vs. Competencies

As for location of business, no significant correlations were observed in basic, common, or core competencies; only a weak positive trend ($r = .222$) was found for Provide the Link Between Kitchen and Service Area (other competency), suggesting those working in more urbanized settings perceive this link more favorably.

Table 8. Correlation Between Business Location and Competency Appropriateness

Competency Area	Correlation Strength	Significance (p-value)
Link Kitchen & Service Area	Weak ($r = 0.222$)	Not Significant
All Others	Very Weak ($r < 0.200$)	Not Significant

These findings largely align with the literature that suggests structural or contextual factors (e.g., facility type, tenure) often have limited influence on perceived competency relevance. For example, Okamoto (2008) found among public health nurses in Japan that while years of experience, position, and workplace setting were explanatory variables for competency, many competencies did not vary significantly by these factors (Okamoto, 2008). Similarly, "Food Service Attributes on Customer Satisfaction" in a rural university context used Pearson's correlation and found that some quality attributes strongly correlated with satisfaction, but many did not, showing that not all perceived attributes depend on contextual variables (Serhan & Serhan, 2019).

DISCUSSION

The "absolutely appropriate" ratings for the majority of competencies suggest that the bachelor of science in hospitality management program at ctu–barili effectively prepares graduates for industry core functions like guest service and dining operations. The high rating for occupational health and safety ($m = 6.80$) reflects the successful integration of safety standards into the curriculum.

However, the lower scores for room service ($m = 5.20$) and computer operations ($m = 6.00$) highlight specific "skills mismatches" or gaps. The significant correlation between position and room service perception suggests that as graduates move into higher designations, they recognize a greater need for this specific skill. The negative correlation regarding computer operations suggests that newer employees may value digital skills more than long-serving staff, or that industry-standard software training is becoming increasingly critical.

The finding that facility type does not significantly impact competency relevance reinforces the idea that these standards are "universally applicable". This supports the literature (e.g., okamoto, 2008) which suggests that standardized competency frameworks ensure flexibility and employability across diverse service environments. Consequently, these results serve as a direct basis for enhancing the university's program by prioritizing digital literacy and room service delivery.

CONCLUSION

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed that the type of food and beverage service facility does not significantly influence the perceived appropriateness of the competencies prescribed in the FBS NC II qualification. Across basic, common, core, and other competency areas, relationships were consistently very weak to weak and statistically insignificant ($p > .05$). These results highlight that the competencies are universally applicable and remain relevant across hotel, catering, casual dining, and other service establishments. Such findings reinforce the importance of maintaining a standardized competency framework, as graduates are expected to demonstrate consistent skills across varied workplace settings. This underscores the value of aligning academic programs with national and international competency standards to ensure flexibility, adaptability, and sustained employability of Hospitality Management graduates in diverse industry environments.

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Authors Contributions

MDV designed and conducted the study, including the collection of data. He also wrote the entire paper.

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Availability of Data and Materials

The data supporting the findings of this study, including the survey instruments and the processed statistical results from SPSS version 20, are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The data are maintained in accordance with the confidentiality agreements established with the respondents during the data collection phase.

Ethical Consideration

This research was conducted in compliance with ethical standards for human participant research. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all 30 graduate respondents before the administration of the survey questionnaires. To ensure privacy and confidentiality, all responses were anonymized, and personal identifiers were removed during data coding and analysis. The study was conducted for academic purposes to enhance the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management program, and all participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Competing Interest

The author declares that there are no financial or personal relationships with individuals or organizations that could inappropriately influence or bias the findings of this study. While the researcher is affiliated with the same

institution from which the respondents graduated (Cebu Technological University – Barili Campus), this study was conducted independently as part of an academic effort to identify areas for program enhancement and curriculum development. No external funding or commercial interests were involved in the preparation of this research.

AI Declaration Statement

The Author use artificial intelligence (AI)–assisted tools only to support language editing, grammar correction, and improvement of clarity and readability of the manuscript.

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