



(REVIEW ARTICLE)



Employability of bachelor of science in hotel and restaurant management graduates: a tracer study in LSPU Siniloan batch 2014-2021

Emmanuel C. Maraña *, Mellie Joy V. Tenerife, Jenifer G. Aguilar, Jhon Yves D. Badong, Kent Simon A. Parducho, Jelson Ubante and Geri Lou S.L. Vicuña

Laguna State Polytechnic University, Siniloan, Laguna, Philippines.

GSC Advanced Research and Reviews, 2024, 19(03), 058-073

Publication history: Received on 23 April 2024; revised on 31 May 2024; accepted on 03 June 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/gscarr.2024.19.3.0192>

Abstract

This research aims to determine the employability of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan, spanning the years 2014 to 2021. Employing a descriptive methodology, the study focuses on unbiased observation and summarization of relevant phenomena, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The sampling technique involves 100 randomly selected respondents from the BSHRM batches, using a modified questionnaire based on the Commission on Higher Education Graduate Tracer Study. The findings present a comprehensive view of the employability landscape. Demographic analysis reveals diverse age, gender, civil status, and geographical distributions among respondents, emphasizing the need for tailored support services. Educational insights highlight the unanimous attainment of undergraduate degrees, with passion for the profession being the primary motivator for choosing the BSHRM course. Post-college training trends show a commitment to skill development, with TESDA NC2 being a key tool. Employment profiles display varied occupational roles, with a majority in the Hotels and Restaurants sector and a significant portion working abroad. Factors influencing career decisions include job retention, academic relevance, and reasons for changing jobs. This research offers valuable insights for educational institutions, employers, and policymakers to improve programs and strategies for BSHRM graduates.

Keywords: Employability; Education; Training; Careers; Graduates; Methodology; Insights; Occupations; Decisions; Relevance; Study

1. Introduction

Unemployment significantly impacts the social and economic growth of a country. Individuals who are unemployed face financial challenges and difficulties in securing future employment. According to Seth et al. (2018), unemployment is a serious issue for both developed and developing nations, leading to economic and social problems. Makaringe (2018) notes that unemployment contributes to widespread poverty and income inequality. Economically, it decreases productivity and affects tax revenue. Socially, it can lead to depression, reduced self-esteem, and increased crime rates as individuals struggle to survive (ILO, 2019). The International Labour Organisation defines unemployment as not working, being ready to work, and actively seeking a job. In 2020, youth employment declined by 8.7%, significantly increasing the global youth unemployment rate to 16.4%. In the Philippines, unemployment is a major issue, with 3.7 million individuals unemployed in 2021, the highest level in nearly a decade, up from 2.9 million in 2020 (Butiong et al., 2023).

Tracer studies are crucial for collecting and analyzing graduate employment data, helping universities assess the effectiveness of their programs and the employability of their graduates (Sabando et al., 2023). Villanueva et al. (2023) argue that despite government efforts to increase employment rates, competition for qualified graduates remains high.

* Corresponding author: Emmanuel C. Maraña

Tracer studies help universities measure the competitiveness of their graduates and identify necessary curriculum adjustments. Tapfuma et al. (2021) found that qualifications influence job choice among tourism and hospitality graduates, but high unemployment levels also play a significant role. Stemele and Sucheran (2021) highlight the seasonality of the hospitality and tourism industry, which affects employment rates.

Job mismatch is prevalent in the hospitality sector, where employers often hire applicants whose courses are not aligned with the industry as long as they possess qualifications such as communication skills and a willingness to be trained. As a result, Aguilar (2021) concludes that while the industry opens opportunities to a diverse workforce, many tourism and hospitality graduates face unemployment or underemployment, receiving lower pay than expected for their qualifications. Some hospitality establishments have shifted paradigms regarding employee regularization, which can hinder BSHRM graduates from securing permanent positions. Quario II et al. (2020) noted that high standards of service and technical skills are crucial for securing regular employment in a competitive industry. This is supported by Mejia et al. (2020), who found that 60% of BS Hospitality Management graduates from Pangasinan State University work in contractual roles, with only 10% holding permanent positions.

Globally, employability tracer studies, such as those conducted by Putra et al. (2022) among hospitality graduates, reveal that a portion of graduates remains unemployed for reasons like job searching, family matters, or further studies. In the Philippines, Sabando et al. (2023) found that 49% of BSHRM graduates are employed, primarily in food and beverage roles, while 45% are unemployed. Tracer studies are essential for evaluating the effectiveness of curricula in producing competitive graduates and for monitoring their employability, thus ensuring quality assurance in educational institutions.

Tracer studies track graduates' courses, technical training, advanced certifications, and employment status, providing valuable insights into career paths and job market success (Francisco et al., 2018). Theoretical frameworks such as Human Capital Theory by Schultz (1961) and Becker (1993) emphasize that education enhances productivity and economic output by developing cognitive and technical skills. This theory posits that better educational performance leads to higher employability and attractiveness to employers.

Employability is defined by Oliver (2015) as the ability to move self-sufficiently within the labor market, relying on knowledge, skills, and attitudes. This concept is crucial as diplomas no longer guarantee employment, making employability skills essential for competing in both local and international job markets. Higher education institutions are expected to develop these skills to fulfill their mission and enhance their graduates' job prospects (Ulanday, 2021). Skills and competencies, particularly in communication and practical training, are increasingly vital in tourism and hospitality sectors (Donina, 2020).

Monitoring employability status is crucial for assessing the quality of education provided by higher education institutions. Studies, such as those by Roman et al. (2023), show the importance of tracking employment outcomes to understand the effectiveness of educational programs. The role of higher education in nation-building and economic growth is significant, as institutions aim to equip students with the necessary skills for better job prospects post-graduation (Ulanday, 2021).

The outcome of skills training is enhanced employability, leading to better job options, higher salaries, and career mobility. The demand for higher competencies in new, high-tech job sectors emphasizes the need for technical and vocational training. Advocating for skills-based careers as a promising choice is essential for a qualified workforce (Khivotdin et al., 2019).

In today's increasingly competitive environment, employee job satisfaction is of primary concern for hospitality organizations due to the frequent interaction between service employees and customers. Employees satisfied with their jobs are more likely to deliver high-quality service (Gibbs and Slevitch, 2019). Studies show that these factors significantly impact employee retention. Frye et al. (2020) argue that treating employees as internal customers increases their satisfaction and commitment, reducing their intentions to leave. Given the substantial time and energy employees invest in the workplace, firms must ensure that employees' needs are met through adequate organizational conditions and resources (Kim et al., 2018). However, Kang (2020) highlights the high turnover rates in the hospitality industry, which negatively affect financial performance and employee morale. Low retention rates result in poor customer service, low productivity, and high labor costs, with the 2018 turnover report showing hospitality employee turnover at 31.8%, the highest of all industries (Salary.com, 2018). Additionally, Bangwal et al. (2018) note that poor workplace design can adversely affect employees' physical and psychological health, leading to absenteeism, low efficiency, and dissatisfaction.

Enhancing student competencies through technical and nontechnical training is essential for increasing employability skills, developing hospitality employees, ensuring longevity in the industry, and ultimately providing high-quality customer experiences (Gibbs et al., 2019). Kim and Jeong (2018) emphasize that hospitality and tourism programs have revised curricula to produce employees suitable for the evolving global industry. However, Pusiran et al. (2020) argue that few studies have examined the challenging relationship between academic and industry skill development. Studying in a hospitality-related program provides foundational knowledge and skills, while examinations and practical activities enhance mental and emotional capabilities for future careers.

Most universities offer experiential training as part of a hospitality degree program (Dicen et al., 2019). Hussien and La Lopa (2018) found that internship programs are increasingly essential for hospitality education. Karunaratne (2019) suggests that the industry prefers graduates with training experience, making internships crucial for securing early employability. Internships, required before graduation, allow students to apply university knowledge in real-world scenarios, enhancing decision-making skills and providing a broad perspective on their chosen careers. This experience contributes to job satisfaction and serves as an indicator of employability.

The conceptual framework, visualized by the researchers, forms the foundation for this study, encompassing three key components: input, process, and output. The input includes the general profile of BSHRM graduates from Laguna State Polytechnic University - Santa Cruz Campus between 2014 and 2021. This profile details their educational background, employment status (employed or unemployed), the relevance of the skills acquired to their respective careers, and their suggestions for the alma mater. It also examines the significant relationship between the graduates' general profile and their employability.

The process involves various methods for disseminating questionnaires and gathering data from respondents, including distributing questionnaires both in person and online, as well as conducting personal and online interviews. These methods aim to collect comprehensive information from the graduates regarding their experiences and feedback.

The output of this process is the development of a proposed curriculum and learning enhancement program aimed at increasing the competency of graduates. This program is designed to address identified gaps and enhance the skills and employability of future graduates based on the feedback and data collected during the study.

The purpose of this study is to determine the employability of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from Laguna State Polytechnic University (LSPU) Siniloan from 2014 to 2021. Specifically, it seeks to address key issues such as the general profile of BSHRM graduates in terms of age, gender, civil status, and permanent address; the educational and professional background of the respondents, including degree attainment, professional examinations taken and passed, and factors influencing their choice of undergraduate course; the training they have attained; and their employment profile, covering present employment status, occupation, nature of career industry, place or area of work, and reasons for unemployment.

This study aims to determine the employability of BSHRM graduates from 2014 to 2021, providing insights into the program's effectiveness and influencing career choices. Tracer studies support accreditation efforts by ensuring the quality of education. Higher education institutions play a crucial role in developing strategic skills and work experience, aligning training with employer standards (Bano, 2019). However, Ali and Jalal (2018) argue that institutional environments differ from the working world, offering no employment security. Aguilar (2021) adds that hospitality graduates face limited work opportunities, low salaries, and issues like sexual harassment, affecting their industry perceptions.

This study is anchored on adapting the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Graduate Tracer Survey Questionnaire, providing data for program review and revision. Results can help adjust the curriculum to meet 21st-century needs, preparing students for relevant employment and future innovation. Findings indicate that graduates claim their BSHRM program's pre-service training helped them acquire 21st-century skills, which were effective and relevant to their occupations (Kalaw, 2019). Cuadra et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of tracer studies for improving undergraduate programs, noting that feedback from graduates is crucial for curriculum enhancement. Monitoring employability rates through tracer studies helps universities understand the relevance and quality of their programs (Ramos, 2022). Periodic tracer studies are essential for institutions globally to evaluate and improve higher education quality (Setiawan et al., 2021).

Employability skills, as defined by Hernandez (2021), are the general skills and knowledge necessary for success in the labor market. The study aims to understand how respondents perceive their job experience, focusing on various aspects such as job attainment, reasons for staying or changing jobs, job rank, initial salary, and the relevance of their education

to their current job. It also seeks suggestions and recommendations to enhance the competitiveness of future LSPU-SC graduates. Additionally, the study investigates the relationship between the general profile of BSHRM graduates and their employability, hypothesizing no significant relationship.

This tracer study is significant for several reasons. For future researchers, it provides useful information for understanding the employability of graduates and serves as a reference for further studies. For students, it offers insights into alumni success, motivating them and preparing them for their careers. For the LSPU CHMT faculty, it helps improve teaching practices. For Laguna State Polytechnic University, it tracks graduates' statuses, recognizing the impact of its educational efforts and contributions to the workforce. The research focuses on assessing the employability of BSHRM graduates from LSPU between 2014 and 2021, examining their employment status, positions secured, industries entered, and career trajectories post-graduation.

2. Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research method to observe and summarize phenomena without altering them, providing an unbiased and factual depiction. Researchers gather data using surveys, interviews, and existing records, offering a comprehensive understanding without exploring cause-and-effect relationships. This approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, yields valuable insights into behaviors and patterns but is limited by its inability to demonstrate causality and potential biases in data collection. The focus is on BSHRM graduates from Laguna State Polytechnic University Siniloan Campus, specifically targeting the 2014-2021 batches. A sample of 100 respondents is selected using simple random sampling. The primary research instrument is a modified questionnaire based on the Commission on Higher Education Graduate Tracer Study, divided into sections covering general information, educational background, training or advanced studies completed after graduation, and employment data. Ethical considerations are paramount. Researchers obtain informed consent from respondents and ensure no harm comes to any participants. The confidentiality of respondents' identities is protected by presenting results in aggregate form. Data collection involves in-person and online distribution of questionnaires, along with face-to-face and online interviews. The collected data is organized and analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and chi-square tests. These tools describe the employment status of BSHRM graduates from the academic years 2014 to 2021. The study addresses key research questions, including the general profile of BSHRM graduates, their educational and professional background, training attained, employment profile, perceptions of job experiences, and suggestions for enhancing the competitive edge of future graduates. Additionally, it examines the relationship between the general profile of BSHRM graduates and their employability, testing the hypothesis that no significant relationship exists between these variables.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic profile of surveyed Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan provides valuable insights into the age distribution of the respondent pool. Among the 100 participants, 47% fall within the age bracket of 28 to 29 years, representing the largest segment. This is followed by 25% in the 30 to 31 age range, indicating a substantial portion. Graduates aged 23 to 27 make up 17% of the sample, while 11% are aged 32 to 33. This age distribution highlights the diversity within the respondent pool and underscores the need for tailored approaches that address the unique employability requirements of graduates at various career stages. Understanding these demographics provides a framework for developing focused interventions and initiatives to improve employability outcomes, considering the different stages of career development. Research by Ngoepe et al. (2023) and Agnihotri and Shiva (2023) emphasizes the importance of age in career development, resonating with the present study's findings on age distribution. The gender distribution among the surveyed BSHRM graduates shows that 45% identify as male, while 55% identify as female. This gender breakdown is crucial for understanding potential gender-specific factors impacting employability, such as career preferences, industry access, or societal perceptions. The near-equal distribution allows for the examination of gender-inclusive methods to improve employability outcomes. This demographic insight paves the way for future research on the intersections between gender and other factors influencing employability trends. Contemporary literature, such as Roma (2021) and Joshy (2023), highlights the significance of gender distribution in fields like Hotel and Restaurant Management, emphasizing the need for tailored support for male and female graduates. Regarding civil status, 78% of the respondents identify as single, while 22% are married. This breakdown is essential for understanding the different needs and considerations associated with various civil statuses in terms of career progression, job placement, and professional development. Single individuals may prioritize different career aspects compared to married individuals, who may have more responsibilities. The data

suggests that career initiatives and tailored support services should account for these nuances to effectively address the diverse needs of BSHRM graduates. Research by Kim et al. (2022) and Masduki (2022) underscores the distinct needs of single and married individuals, aligning with the present study's findings on civil status distribution. The permanent address distribution among respondents reveals that 87% have permanent addresses in Laguna, indicating a significant local concentration. Smaller percentages are from Quezon, Rizal, Manila, Makati, and Caloocan, with 1% each from the UAE, Belgium, and Qatar. This regional clustering suggests that many graduates may seek work opportunities close to their communities, which has implications for employability research. The international representation adds a unique dimension to the study, emphasizing the global distribution of graduates. Understanding this spatial allocation is imperative for customizing employment placement and career advancement strategies. Research by Healy (2023) and Byrne (2022) highlights the importance of geographic distribution in alumni engagement and targeted recruitment, resonating with the findings of the present study. The demographic profiles of age, gender, civil status, and permanent address among BSHRM graduates from LSPU Siniloan provide critical insights for developing tailored employability initiatives. By understanding these demographic factors, policymakers and educational institutions can implement strategies that address the unique needs and challenges faced by graduates, ultimately enhancing their employability outcomes. The present study aligns with contemporary literature, emphasizing the importance of demographic analysis in comprehending and addressing employability trends among BSHRM graduates.

3.2. Educational and Professional Background

The educational and professional background of the surveyed Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan reveals several critical insights. All respondents have achieved an undergraduate degree or completed an undergraduate course, with none having pursued or attained graduate-level or post-graduate qualifications at the time of the survey. This homogeneity in educational background suggests that the graduates share a common academic foundation, which may influence their employability landscape. The absence of graduate qualifications highlights potential areas for intervention or support, particularly in encouraging and facilitating continued education for professional advancement. This snapshot underscores the need for targeted strategies that address the specific educational levels and aspirations of these graduates, contributing to a nuanced understanding of their academic and professional trajectories. Cheng et al. (2022) and Cook (2022) emphasize the importance of shaping educational policies and career initiatives based on the prevalent educational background of graduates.

The professional examination status of the respondents is equally telling. Only 1% of the surveyed graduates have taken and passed the Civil Service Examination, while the vast majority, 99%, have not pursued this certification. This indicates a preference for career paths or other forms of professional validation that do not require this particular certification. The low participation rate suggests that alternative certifications or career advancement paths are more relevant or accessible to these graduates. This highlights the need for further research into the factors influencing the decisions of BSHRM graduates regarding professional certifications. Understanding these dynamics can guide strategies aimed at raising awareness and participation in certifications that enhance career development and employability. Mgaiwa (2022) and Ng (2020) underscore the competitive edge provided by professional certifications and the varied pursuit of these certifications based on individual career goals and industry requirements.

The factors influencing the choice of undergraduate course among the respondents reveal a diverse array of considerations. A strong passion for the profession is the primary motivator for 16.78% of the respondents, followed by peer influence (10.03%) and the influence of parents or relatives (8.39%). Career-related factors such as the prospect for career advancement, opportunity for employment abroad, and immediate employment prospects collectively influenced nearly 27% of respondents. Additionally, the availability of the course in the chosen institution was significant for 13.01% of graduates. Smaller percentages of respondents cited inspirations from role models, the prestige of the profession, and the prospect of attractive compensation as motivators. Notably, 3.25% indicated having no particular choice or lacking a better idea during course selection. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of decision-making in choosing a BSHRM course, emphasizing the importance of personal passion, social influences, and pragmatic career considerations. This information can guide educational institutions in refining their course offerings, support services, and career counseling to address the diverse needs and motivations of students. Hoque et al. (2022) and Tuononen (2022) highlight the importance of understanding student motivations for tailoring educational offerings and support services. The comprehensive analysis of the educational and professional background of BSHRM graduates from LSPU Siniloan provides valuable insights into their academic achievements, certification pursuits, and factors influencing their choice of course. This understanding is crucial for developing targeted strategies to enhance employability and professional development, ensuring that educational offerings and career support services meet the diverse needs and aspirations of graduates. Future research should consider variables such as career progression and

aspirations for advanced education to uncover the factors influencing the decisions and professional trajectories of BSHRM graduates.

3.3. Training Attended After College

The analysis of post-college training attended by Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan reveals a strong commitment to continuous skill development and specialization. A significant 60% of respondents participated in TESDA National Certificate II (NC2) training, underscoring the importance placed on obtaining national certification. Additionally, 15% of graduates attended training programs focused on airport and hospitality, while 5% pursued each of the following: maritime training, culinary arts, language and culture, safety training, and hotel and hospitality management. This variety in training choices highlights the diverse interests and career trajectories of the graduates after completing their formal education.

Table 1 Training Attended After College

Training Attended After College	Frequency	Percentage
Maritime Training	1	5%
Culinary Arts	1	5%
Airport and Hospitality	3	15%
Language and Culture	1	5%
Safety Training	1	5%
Hotel and Hospitality Management	1	5%
TESDA NC2	12	60%
Total	20	100%

The emphasis on TESDA NC2 training, chosen by the majority of respondents, aligns with the findings of Agboola (2022), which highlight the significant impact of national certifications on career advancement. This preference indicates a recognition of the value that such certifications add to professional credentials and employability in the hospitality industry. Meanwhile, the pursuit of specialized training in areas like airport and hospitality, maritime training, culinary arts, language and culture, safety training, and hotel and hospitality management showcases the graduates' efforts to tailor their skills to specific sectors within the broad field of hospitality and management. These varied interests reflect the findings of Ahmad et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of specialized training in meeting the dynamic needs of the industry and enhancing career development.

Understanding the landscape of post-college training is essential for educational institutions, employers, and policymakers. The data suggests that BSHRM graduates actively seek opportunities for skill enhancement to remain competitive and relevant in their careers. This proactive approach to professional development highlights the need for accessible and diverse training programs that cater to the evolving needs and interests of graduates. As Brown et al. (2022) suggested, institutions must adapt their curriculum offerings to align with the ongoing professional development requirements of their graduates.

Furthermore, the diverse training choices emphasize the importance of continuous professional development and the need for educational policies that support lifelong learning. The varied career trajectories indicated by the training preferences suggest that graduates are not only enhancing their employability but are also exploring different avenues within the hospitality and management sector. This aligns with Lo et al. (2020), who stressed the increasing importance of post-college training for employability and career prospects.

To gain a deeper understanding of the impact of these training programs on career advancement, further exploration is recommended. For instance, Garcia et al. (2022) conducted a longitudinal analysis of post-college training outcomes, highlighting the sustained benefits in later career stages. Incorporating such variables in future research could provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of continuous professional development on the careers of BSHRM graduates. This would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how post-college training influences employability and career growth, guiding future educational strategies and policies.

3.4. Employment Profile

Table 2 Employment Profile (Employment Condition) of the Respondents in Terms of Present Employment Status

Present Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Regular/Permanent	42	42%
Contractual	33	33%
Temporary	2	2%
Self-Employed	7	7%
Casual	9	9%
Unemployed	7 100	7%
Total		100%

Table 2 provides insights into the present employment status among the surveyed Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan, revealing a diverse professional landscape. Notably, 42% of respondents hold regular or permanent employment positions, reflecting stability and long-term career commitments. Contractual employment is prevalent among 33% of respondents, indicating a significant segment involved in fixed-term arrangements. Additionally, 2% are in temporary employment, implying short-term work commitments, while 7% are self-employed, showcasing entrepreneurial pursuits. Casual employment accounts for 9%, representing those engaged in irregular or part-time work, and 7% of respondents are categorized as unemployed, actively seeking new opportunities. These findings from Table 2 highlight a mix of job security, entrepreneurial ventures, and various forms of temporary or part-time work, providing a comprehensive view of the employment landscape for BSHRM graduates. Understanding these employment patterns is crucial for assessing overall employability and career trajectories. The significant portion in stable employment aligns with Lam et al.'s (2021) findings on job stability and career success, while the prevalence of contractual employment suggests industry trends or transitional phases in careers as noted by Jackson et al. (2023). The entrepreneurial endeavors reflect the impact of educational experiences and industry trends on fostering entrepreneurship, as discussed by Mtawa et al. (2021). The unemployment rate underscores the dynamic nature of the job market, necessitating further exploration of factors influencing employability and career satisfaction among graduates, as emphasized by Tamrat (2023) and Jackson et al. (2023).

Table 3 Employment Profile (Employment Condition) of the Respondents in Terms of Present Occupation

Present Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Food and Beverage	19	20.43%
Business	13	13.98%
Hospitality	12	12.90%
Retail	11	11.83%
Office Staff	10	10.75%
Seafarer	6	6.45%
Freelance Total	22	23.66%
	93	100%

Table 3 offers a comprehensive breakdown of the present occupations of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan, highlighting the diverse professional roles within this cohort. A significant portion, 20.43%, is employed in the Food and Beverage sector, underscoring the prevalence of roles within the hospitality industry. Business-related occupations account for 13.98% of respondents, showcasing a variety of roles within the business sector. Occupations directly related to the broader field of hospitality employ 12.90% of respondents, further emphasizing the industry's significance. Nearly 12% are engaged in retail occupations, contributing to the occupational diversity across sectors. Roles classified as Office Staff are reported by 10.75% of

respondents, reflecting engagement in office-based environments. Additionally, 6.45% of respondents are involved in seafaring occupations, showcasing the varied career paths taken by individuals. A notable segment, 23.66%, is engaged in freelance occupations, indicating a flexible and independent approach to work. These findings provide a rich understanding of the distribution of occupations within the surveyed cohort, emphasizing the diverse professional paths taken by BSHRM graduates, from traditional roles in the hospitality sector to freelance and business-related occupations. Understanding these employment patterns is crucial for assessing career trajectories and industry preferences. The significant portion in the Food and Beverage sector aligns with Santos' (2020) exploration of diverse opportunities and long-term career growth in this sector. The versatility in business-related occupations aligns with Gouda et al.'s (2023) research on the adaptability of business-related skills in various professional contexts. The emphasis on hospitality roles resonates with Clarke's (2023) focus on preparing graduates for the specific demands of the hospitality sector. The engagement in retail occupations aligns with Suleman's (2021) exploration of career choices in the retail sector, while the preference for office environments aligns with Ramnund et al.'s (2021) research on organizational culture and work environment. The involvement in seafaring occupations highlights global opportunities, resonating with Bui et al.'s (2021) findings on career choices in seafaring. The notable segment in freelance occupations reflects the growing trend of flexible work among graduates, as investigated by Quin et al. (2019). Further exploration of factors such as job satisfaction, career growth, and alignment with educational backgrounds is recommended for a deeper understanding of the professional experiences of BSHRM graduates, echoing Dela Cruz's (2022) emphasis on multifaceted factors contributing to professional growth and satisfaction.

Table 4 Employment Profile (Employment Condition) of the Respondents in Terms of Nature of Career Industry

Nature of Career Industry	Frequency	Percentage
Hotels and Restaurants	57	61.29%
Extra-territorial Organizations and Bodies	1	1.08%
Private Households with Employed Persons	2	2.15%
Public Administration and Defense; Compulsory Social Security	1	1.08%
Financial Intermediation	9	9.68%
Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities	10	10.75%
Health and Social Work	2	2.15%
Construction	1	1.08%
Wholesale and Retail Trade, repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods	1	1.08%
Manufacturing	3	3.23%
Transport Storage and Communication	3	3.23%
Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities	1	1.08%
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply Total	2	2.15%
	93	100%

Table 4 provides a detailed breakdown of the career industries in which Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan are currently employed, offering valuable insights into the diverse professional sectors they occupy. The dominant career industry for the respondents is Hotels and Restaurants, with 61.29% of individuals working within this sector, reflecting the strong connection between their educational background and the hospitality industry. Financial Intermediation follows, employing 9.68% of the respondents, showcasing the adaptability of BSHRM graduates to diverse professional environments. Other Community, Social, and Personal Service Activities represent 10.75% of the respondents, highlighting the versatility of career paths within this broad category. Additionally, graduates are employed in sectors such as Health and Social Work, Manufacturing, Transport Storage and Communication, Private Households, Public Administration, Construction, and Real Estate, with smaller percentages distributed across these industries. This distribution across various sectors demonstrates the graduates' ability to apply their skills in diverse settings beyond the traditional hospitality and restaurant domains. Understanding the current industries in which graduates are employed is crucial for assessing professional diversity and industry preferences. The dominant presence in the Hotels and Restaurants sector aligns with Caballero et al.'s

(2022) exploration of career trajectories in hotel and restaurant management. The representation in the Financial Intermediation sector reflects the findings of Mahajan et al. (2022) on career choices in the financial sector. Engagement in community and social service activities resonates with Wang et al.'s (2023) exploration of career choices in these industries. The overall distribution aligns with Lam et al.'s (2021) analysis of career industry preferences among recent graduates. Understanding these trends is essential for assessing the professional experiences of BSHRM graduates, and further exploration considering factors such as career satisfaction and alignment with educational backgrounds is recommended to provide a deeper understanding, as emphasized by Clarke (2023).

Table 5 Employment Profile (Employment Condition) of the Respondents in Terms of Place of Work

Place of Work	Frequency	Percentage
Local	79	84.95%
Abroad	14	15.05%
Total	93	100%

Table 5 provides insights into the geographical distribution of employment among Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan. An overwhelming majority, 84.95%, are employed locally, indicating that a substantial portion of the surveyed individuals work within their home country. In contrast, 15.05% of respondents are engaged in employment opportunities abroad, highlighting a notable segment of the workforce involved in international career pursuits. This finding underscores the dual nature of the employment landscape for these graduates, with most opting for domestic employment while a significant minority seek opportunities beyond their home country. Understanding this geographical distribution is crucial for assessing global mobility trends and the career trajectories of graduates. The majority's preference for local employment aligns with Ramos et al.'s (2022) research, which attributes this trend to cultural factors, job market dynamics, and personal preferences. Conversely, the 15.05% working abroad reflects global mobility trends and aligns with Quin et al.'s (2019) findings on the factors influencing the decision to work internationally, such as career advancement, exposure to diverse cultures, and unique professional experiences. This distribution of employment places highlights the need for further exploration into the impact of international experience on career development and job satisfaction, as noted by Wang et al. (2023), who emphasized the benefits of international work experience on career growth and cross-cultural competence. Understanding these trends is essential for educational institutions and policymakers to tailor support services that prepare graduates for diverse professional settings, as emphasized by Ramnund et al. (2021). The integration of global perspectives into educational curricula can enhance graduates' adaptability in an increasingly interconnected and globalized job market.

3.4.1. Reasons for Unemployment

The reasons contributing to the unemployment of surveyed Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan reveal important insights into the factors influencing their current jobless status. Family concerns and health-related reasons each account for 14.29% of unemployment cases, highlighting the significant impact of personal circumstances on employment status. A notable 28.57% of respondents attribute their unemployment to a lack of work experience, underscoring the challenges individuals face in securing initial employment. The largest proportion, 42.86%, voluntarily left their previous job to seek alternative employment opportunities, indicating a proactive approach to career advancement or job change. These findings emphasize the necessity of targeted support services and interventions, such as comprehensive career counseling and skill-building programs, to address the varied challenges faced by unemployed individuals. Understanding these reasons is crucial for policymakers and educational institutions in developing strategies to support individuals in managing career transitions, addressing personal circumstances that impact their professional trajectories, and facilitating initial employment. This nuanced understanding, representing a small portion of the surveyed population, underscores the importance of treating unemployment as an individual issue and customizing interventions to the unique needs and goals of job seekers. Studies by Ngoepe et al. (2023), Agnihotri and Shiva (2023), Mukundan et al. (2023), Roma (2021), and Joshy (2023) emphasize the multifaceted nature of unemployment and the importance of holistic, personalized support mechanisms to address diverse challenges and improve employability.

3.5. Employment and Career Insights

The analysis of reasons influencing BSHRM graduates from LSPU Siniloan to stay in their current jobs reveals that competitive salaries and benefits are the most cited factor (36.5%), underscoring financial considerations' significance in job retention. Career challenges motivate 21.5% of respondents, highlighting the importance of professional growth,

while 17.5% emphasize the relevance of their special skills. Proximity to residence is a key factor for 8%, indicating the role of convenience. Family influence, educational background alignment, and peer influence further contribute to job retention decisions. Understanding these motivations is crucial for employers and policymakers to develop effective retention and engagement strategies, creating environments that meet workforce needs and enhance job satisfaction. This aligns with studies by Masduki (2022), Healy (2023), Byrne (2022), and others, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of job retention. Surveyed individuals' perceptions of the relevance of their academic coursework to current jobs indicate that 60.22% believe their roles align with their studies, suggesting a perceived educational relevance, while 39.78% highlight a divergence. This feedback is essential for educational institutions to enhance curriculum relevance. Hoque et al. (2022) and Tuononen (2022) emphasize educational alignment's impact on job satisfaction, suggesting continuous curriculum improvements. The reasons prompting graduates to change their first jobs reveal that 41.72% sought better salaries and benefits, highlighting financial considerations. Career challenges influenced 24.50%, and 22.52% were motivated by the relevance of special skills to new opportunities. Understanding these motivations aids in developing strategies for employee retention and satisfaction, supported by studies from Agnihotri and Shiva (2023) and Roma (2021). The current job ranks of BSHRM graduates show that 41.94% occupy clerical positions, 43.01% hold professional, technical, or supervisory roles, and 7.53% are in managerial or executive positions. An equal proportion are self-employed, reflecting entrepreneurial pursuits. Understanding these roles is crucial for tailoring career development strategies, supported by studies from Frye et al. (2020) and Gibbs et al. (2019). Initial salaries indicate varied financial outcomes, with 37% earning between P5,000.00 and P10,000.00, and 25% earning between P15,000.00 and P20,000.00. This data informs career expectations and salary negotiations, highlighting the need for comprehensive career guidance, as emphasized by Ramos (2022) and Sabando et al. (2023). The relevance of the BSHRM curriculum to current jobs shows that 83.87% find their roles aligned with their education, suggesting a positive correlation between academic training and job demands, while 16.13% see a divergence, indicating areas for curriculum enhancement. Studies by Roma (2021) and Pusiran et al. (2020) emphasize curriculum relevance and industry collaboration. Competencies gained during BSHRM education highlight communication skills (32.61%), critical thinking (23.37%), and entrepreneurial skills (13.59%) as key areas, essential for success in the hospitality industry. This informs curriculum development to ensure graduates possess industry-demanded skills, supported by studies from Stemele et al. (2021) and Tapfuma et al. (2021). Finally, respondents' suggestions to enhance future graduates' competitive edge emphasize communication skills (40.30%), practical training (26.87%), curriculum development (16.42%), and improved facilities (11.19%). These insights highlight the importance of hands-on experience, industry-aligned curricula, and quality infrastructure, supported by studies from Masduki (2022) and Healy (2023), advocating for targeted strategies to enhance employability.

3.6. Suggestions and Recommendations for Enhancing Graduate Competitiveness

Surveyed Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan have provided valuable suggestions and recommendations to enhance the competitive edge of future graduates. A significant 40.30% emphasized the importance of focusing on communication skills, highlighting a critical awareness of the pivotal role effective communication plays in professional success. This aligns with Gibbs et al. (2019), who emphasized the impact of communication skills on interpersonal relationships, leadership, and career advancement. Additionally, 26.87% of respondents advocated for a practical training focus, reflecting Ngoepe et al. (2023)'s findings on the necessity of hands-on experience and the real-world application of knowledge to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements. Curriculum development was identified as a priority by 16.42% of respondents, underscoring the need for continuous improvement to align educational programs with industry demands, as supported by Rook et al. (2021). Recommendations for improved facilities and equipment, cited by 11.19% of respondents, emphasize the importance of investing in modern infrastructure to create a conducive learning environment, echoing Ng (2020)'s research. Smaller percentages of respondents suggested focusing on instructor and facilitator quality (3.73%) and physical activity and diligence (1.49%), highlighting the significance of effective teaching, mentorship, and holistic development in shaping student outcomes, as discussed by Hoque et al. (2022) and Joshy (2023). These suggestions offer actionable insights for educational leaders, informing strategic decisions to enhance the quality and competitiveness of future LSPU-SC graduates, ultimately contributing to their readiness and success in the professional landscape.

3.7. Relationship Between Demographic Variables and Employability

An analysis of the relationship between various demographic variables (age, sex, civil status, and permanent address) and the employability of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan reveals no statistically significant associations. Age was tested using the chi-square method, yielding a computed value of 0.24 with a p-value of 0.970, leading to the conclusion that employability is not significantly linked to age. Similarly, sex, civil status, and permanent address showed computed values of 0.00 and p-values of 1.000, indicating no significant relationship with employability. These findings are crucial for program planners, educators,

and policymakers as they suggest that demographic factors such as age, sex, civil status, and permanent address do not significantly impact employability. Instead, the focus should shift to other aspects such as skills development, practical training, and industry-relevant experiences, which are more likely to enhance employability. This aligns with Mgaiwa (2022), who emphasized the multifaceted nature of employability factors, highlighting the importance of skills and industry experience. Masduki (2022) also pointed out that chronological age is less significant than continuous skill development. Similarly, Pacleb (2021) found that gender does not impact career outcomes, underscoring merit-based evaluation and equal opportunities. Cuadra et al. (2019) and Ali et al. (2018) echoed these findings, emphasizing that civil status and permanent address are less critical than individual career efforts and relevant skills. In conclusion, these insights guide targeted interventions, ensuring resources are directed towards more impactful areas for enhancing the employability of BSHRM graduates.

4. Conclusions

The research on the employability of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan, spanning the batch from 2014 to 2021, provides valuable insights into various aspects of their professional journey. The demographic profile analysis highlights the diversity of the cohort in terms of age, gender, civil status, and geographical distribution, underscoring the need for tailored support services to meet the unique needs of these graduates. Educationally, the attainment of undergraduate degrees by all respondents, coupled with limited post-graduate engagement, points to a potential area for further academic exploration and career progression initiatives. The primary motivation for choosing the BSHRM course—passion for the profession—suggests that educational institutions should align programs with students' intrinsic motivations to enhance engagement and satisfaction. Post-college training patterns, with TESDA NC2 being the most attended program, reflect graduates' commitment to continuous skill development, showcasing their dedication to remaining competitive in the job market. The employment profile reveals a diverse array of job conditions and occupational roles, highlighting the need for adaptable strategies to support various professional trajectories. The dominance of the Hotels and Restaurants sector and trends in global mobility among graduates underscore the international dimension of their careers, suggesting that career support services should also address global employability. Motivations for job retention, such as competitive salaries and benefits, career challenges, and the relevance of special skills, provide essential insights into the multifaceted nature of workforce motivations. Perceptions of the relevance of academic coursework to current jobs and reasons for changing the first job illustrate the complex interplay between education and professional experiences, calling for continuous improvements in curriculum design. The findings on occupational distribution and initial salaries highlight the varied employability outcomes, prompting the need for refining program elements and optimizing support services to better align with graduates' professional aspirations. The competencies gained during the academic journey, particularly in communication skills and practical training, are crucial for curriculum development. Respondents' recommendations for enhancing the competitive edge of future graduates emphasize the importance of these skills and training. Furthermore, the analysis of demographic variables and employability reveals that age, sex, civil status, and permanent address are not statistically significant factors, suggesting that other nuanced considerations play a more influential role in determining employability. This research significantly enhances the understanding of the experiences and perceptions of BSHRM graduates and provides actionable insights for educational institutions, employers, and policymakers to improve programs, support services, and strategies to optimize the employability and success of graduates in the dynamic professional landscape.

Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive findings of the research on the employability of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) graduates from LSPU Siniloan, several recommendations can be proposed to enhance the effectiveness of educational programs, support services, and career development initiatives. To tailor support services effectively, it is crucial to develop gender-specific programs, acknowledging the near-balanced gender representation among graduates. Additionally, implementing programs that cater to the diverse needs of both single and married graduates is recommended, recognizing the impact of civil status on career development. In terms of geographic engagement, efforts should focus on strengthening regional connections, particularly in Laguna, through targeted alumni activities, networking events, and industry partnerships. Furthermore, exploring opportunities for global collaboration and internships is advised to align with the observed global mobility trends among graduates. Curriculum enhancement is essential, emphasizing the alignment of curriculum design with students' intrinsic motivations by incorporating experiential learning, practical training, and real-world applications. Addressing the perceived disconnect between academic coursework and job roles can be achieved through active industry collaboration and regular curriculum updates. Continuous skill development should be fostered by offering post-college training programs that extend beyond TESDA NC2 and providing avenues for graduates to pursue post-graduate qualifications, ensuring their competitiveness in evolving professional landscapes. Enhancing career counseling services is vital to

guide graduates in making informed decisions regarding job changes, emphasizing the importance of passion, skills, and career challenges. Moreover, strengthening internship opportunities is crucial to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical industry demands. To capitalize on global mobility trends, developing strategies that include fostering international partnerships, language training, and cultural competency development is recommended. Closer collaboration with industry stakeholders is crucial to ensure that educational programs align with current and future industry needs, and establishing mechanisms for employers to provide feedback on the relevance of graduates' skills is key to enhancing program effectiveness. Given the significance of communication skills, implementing targeted initiatives for their enhancement is advised, as it is frequently recommended for improvement by respondents. Encouraging occupational diversity by promoting awareness of various career paths within the BSHRM field, beyond traditional roles in Hotels and Restaurants, is essential for broadening graduates' perspectives. Lastly, establishing a systematic mechanism for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of programs and support services based on graduates' feedback and evolving industry trends is recommended. These recommendations collectively aim to address specific areas identified in the research, providing a roadmap for educational institutions, employers, and policymakers to optimize the employability and success of BSHRM graduates in a dynamic and competitive professional landscape.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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