

# Teacher Education Graduates' Employability Skills, Job Performance and Satisfaction in Their Workplace

Jerlin Y. Ruelan., Mykah R. Abergas., Genelyn R. Baluyos., Jennie M. Hyolim

Misamis University, Ozamiz City, Philippines

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## ABSTRACT

Education graduates are expected to possess not only academic qualifications but also a wide range of employability skills that contribute to their effectiveness and satisfaction in the workplace. This study investigated the relationship between employability skills, job performance, and job satisfaction among education graduates of a private university in Ozamiz City during the School Year 2024–2025, with particular focus on the mediating role of job performance. A descriptive correlational research design with mediation analysis was employed, involving 102 education graduates selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using structured and validated survey instruments and analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation, and mediation analysis techniques. The findings revealed that respondents demonstrated high levels of employability skills, job performance, and job satisfaction. Significant positive relationships were found between employability skills and job performance, as well as between employability skills and job satisfaction. Furthermore, job performance significantly mediated the relationship between employability skills and job satisfaction, indicating that graduates with strong employability skills tend to perform better in their jobs, which in turn enhances their level of satisfaction. The study underscores the importance of strengthening employability skills development in teacher education programs to improve both performance and satisfaction outcomes among graduates, while also encouraging educational institutions and employers to implement strategies that further enhance graduates' competencies and workplace effectiveness.

**Keywords:** employability skills, job performance, job satisfaction, mediation analysis, education graduates

## INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly dynamic and competitive labor market, graduates are expected not only to hold academic credentials but also to demonstrate a range of employability skills such as communication, problem-solving, adaptability, and teamwork that enable them to perform effectively in the workplace (Asefer & Abidin, 2021). In education, where graduates often assume teaching and instructional roles, these employability skills are particularly crucial. They influence how educators navigate diverse classroom environments, collaborate with peers, and adapt to ever-changing curricular and technological demands.

Job performance, defined as the degree to which employees effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities, serves as a vital indicator of professional success (Kamal et al., 2022). In the education sector, job performance manifests in teachers' ability to plan lessons, deliver instruction, manage classrooms, assess learners, and engage in professional collaboration. When teachers exhibit high job performance, they tend to experience greater fulfillment and commitment to their roles, key ingredients of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction, meanwhile, reflects the degree of pleasure and contentment an individual derives from their work (Akhter & Alam, 2023). Among teachers, workplace conditions, administrative support, recognition, and alignment between personal values and professional expectations influence it. Empirical studies indicate that employability skills enhance both job performance and satisfaction; however, the relationship may not always be direct. For instance, job performance may function as a mediator, linking employability skills to job satisfaction (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). Graduates with strong employability skills are more likely to perform effectively, and this performance success can, in turn, increase their job satisfaction.

Despite global interest in employability outcomes, research exploring the mediating role of job performance among education graduates remains limited, especially in the Philippine context. Local studies often focus on employment rates, curriculum relevance, or skill acquisition, but few examine how these skills translate into real-world satisfaction and effectiveness (Ramos & Mendoza, 2022). Understanding this dynamic is essential for teacher education institutions (TEIs) that aim to enhance program outcomes and graduate employability.

Thus, this study aims to determine the mediating role of job performance in the relationship between employability skills and job satisfaction among education graduates. This study focuses on education graduates from teacher education institutions who are currently employed in schools or education-related sectors. It aims to assess their perceived levels of employability skills, job performance, and job satisfaction using validated survey instruments. The investigation will cover how employability skills influence job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through job performance. However, the study is limited to respondents who are actively employed; thus, unemployed graduates or those working in non-education fields are excluded. Additionally, the study will focus on graduates' perspectives and self-assessments, which may not fully capture their employers' evaluations. Despite these limitations, the results are expected to provide valuable insights into how employability skills contribute to the job performance and satisfaction of education graduates in the professional field.

This study is significant to several stakeholders in teacher education. For Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), the findings can serve as a basis for enhancing curriculum design and employability programs that develop both technical and essential skills for future educators. Strengthening these aspects will enable TEIs to produce graduates who are not only competent in content knowledge but also adaptable and effective in professional practice. For education graduates, the study provides a better understanding of how employability skills influence job satisfaction through job performance, allowing them to engage in meaningful self-assessment, identify areas for professional growth, and enhance their overall career development. Meanwhile, employers and schools may use the results to refine their recruitment, training, and retention strategies, ensuring that employees' skills are well aligned with institutional goals and performance expectations. For researchers, this investigation contributes to the expanding body of literature on graduate employability by introducing a mediational perspective that links employability skills, job performance, and job satisfaction particularly within the education sector. Lastly, the results of this study can inform policymakers, such as the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Department of Education (DepEd), in designing and implementing policies that strengthen the connection between teacher preparation, employability, and workforce outcomes.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to determine the graduates' employability in relation to their job performance in one of the tertiary schools in Ozamiz City during the School Year 2024-2025.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of graduates' employability skills in terms of fundamental skills, personal management skills, and teamwork skills?
2. What is the graduates' job performance in terms of work quality, Productivity, communication and collaboration, problem solving and decision-making, and professional development?
3. What is the level of graduates' satisfaction in their jobs in terms of workload, work-life balance, workplace culture, and opportunities for continued growth and development?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the graduates' employability skills and their job performance in the workplace?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the graduates' employability skills and their job satisfaction in the workplace?

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

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## Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design with mediation analysis. Correlational research, a non-experimental approach, was appropriate for examining predictive and explanatory relationships among variables (Seeram, 2019). As explained by Asenahabi (2019), this design utilized statistical techniques to determine the strength and direction of associations among multiple variables. In this study, the design was extended to test a mediating mechanism, allowing for the examination of both direct and indirect relationships among variables. Specifically, it examined how graduates' employability, as a mediating variable, influenced job performance. By analyzing the pathways linking employability and job performance, the design provided a more nuanced understanding of their interactions. It was deemed appropriate for achieving the objectives of a mediation-focused investigation.

## Setting

The study was conducted at a private university located in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines. The institution was known for its academic excellence, offering a wide range of programs and courses across multiple disciplines. It provided accessible education for all and maintained high-quality academic programs duly recognized by the Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and accredited by the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA). The university offered academic programs in various fields, including business, engineering, information technology, and the arts. It comprised several academic departments, including the College of Education, which played a pivotal role in shaping future educators. Its comprehensive academic offerings and strong emphasis on practical experience aimed to equip students with the knowledge, competencies, and skills necessary for success in their respective careers.

## Respondents

The study's respondents were 102 graduates from the College of Education who had completed their academic programs at the university. These graduates were selected using simple random sampling, ensuring that each eligible graduate had an equal chance of being included in the study. The inclusion criteria required that the respondents were graduates from School Year 2021-2022 to School Year 2024-2025. Graduates outside this period and those who did not complete their programs at the institution were excluded from the study.

## Instruments

This study used the following research instruments:

**Employability Skill Questionnaire.** The instrument used in this study was a researcher-designed questionnaire designed to assess graduates' levels and employability. The questionnaire consisted of a series of statements assessing various skills, including study, social, self-control, and problem-solving. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 denoted "Strongly Disagree" and 5 denoted "Strongly Agree."

Before the full-scale administration, a pilot test was conducted among a smaller group of recent graduates who were not included in the main study sample to establish the instrument's reliability and validity. Internal consistency reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The results indicated acceptable to high levels of reliability across the questionnaire and its subscales, with alpha values meeting the minimum acceptable standard of 0.83. Based on the pilot test results, necessary revisions were made to improve item clarity and ensure that the instrument effectively measured the constructs of graduate and employability relevant to the study.

**Job Performance Questionnaire.** The instrument used in this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to assess graduates' job performance in the workplace. The questionnaire consisted of 25 statements grouped into five key job performance constructs: Work Quality, Productivity, Communication and Collaboration, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making, and Professional Development.

The Work Quality construct (Items 1–5) measured graduates’ ability to produce high-quality outputs, demonstrate accuracy and accountability, manage task priorities, and seek feedback for continuous improvement. The Productivity construct (Items 6–10) assessed graduates’ efficiency in completing tasks, managing time, meeting performance targets, adapting to workload changes, and improving work processes. The Communication and Collaboration construct (Items 11–15) examined graduates’ effectiveness in professional communication, teamwork, interpersonal relationships, receptiveness to feedback, and conflict resolution. The Problem-Solving and Decision-Making construct (Items 16–20) focused on graduates’ capacity to identify workplace challenges, apply critical thinking, adapt to changing situations, and propose innovative solutions. Lastly, the Professional Development construct (Items 21–25) assessed graduates’ engagement in continuous learning, participation in training, initiative-taking, and commitment to professional growth.

Respondents were asked to rate each statement using a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 represented Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Neutral, 2 Disagree, and 1 Strongly Disagree. This scale allowed for the systematic quantification of graduates’ perceived job performance across the identified constructs.

Before full-scale administration, the instrument underwent pilot testing with a group of graduates not included in the main study sample to establish clarity and reliability. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha, and the results indicated acceptable to high reliability coefficients for the overall instrument and its subscales, meeting the minimum acceptable reliability criterion of 0.80. Based on the pilot test findings, minor revisions were made to improve item clarity and ensure alignment with the intended job performance constructs.

**Job Satisfaction Questionnaire.** The instrument used in this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to assess graduates’ workplace job satisfaction. The questionnaire consisted of 20 statements organized into four dimensions of job satisfaction: Workload, Work–Life Balance, Workplace Culture, and Opportunities for Growth and Development.

The Workload dimension (Items 1–5) assessed graduates’ perceptions of the reasonableness, manageability, and stress level associated with their job demands, including their ability to remain productive without feeling overwhelmed. The Work–Life Balance dimension (Items 6–10) measured the extent to which graduates were able to balance work responsibilities with personal life, including flexibility, stress spillover, and the ability to disconnect from work outside official hours. The Workplace Culture dimension (Items 11–15) examined graduates’ experiences of respect, collaboration, communication, inclusivity, and trust within their organizations. Lastly, the Opportunities for Growth and Development dimension (Items 16–20) focused on graduates’ perceptions of career advancement, continuous learning, organizational support for development, and clarity of career progression pathways.

Respondents were asked to rate each statement using a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 indicated Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Neutral, 2 Disagree, and 1 Strongly Disagree. This scaling enabled quantification of graduates’ perceived levels of job satisfaction across the identified domains. Before the full-scale administration, the instrument underwent pilot testing with a group of graduates not included in the main study sample to establish clarity, reliability, and internal consistency. Reliability analysis using Cronbach’s alpha yielded acceptable to high coefficients across the overall questionnaire and its subscales, meeting the minimum acceptable reliability threshold of 0.73. Based on the pilot test results, minor revisions were made to improve item clarity and ensure alignment with the intended job satisfaction constructs.

## **Data Gathering Procedure**

The data gathering process was carried out systematically to ensure accuracy, reliability, and ethical compliance. Before data collection, formal permission was obtained from the Dean of the College of Education to conduct the study. Upon approval, a list of eligible graduates who met the inclusion criteria was secured from the appropriate university office.

The sample size was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator, and the respondents were selected via simple random sampling. The selected participants were contacted and informed of the study’s purpose, the

voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Informed consent was obtained before administering the questionnaire.

The researcher-developed Graduate and Employability Questionnaire was administered either in printed form or via an online survey platform, depending on respondents' accessibility and availability. Clear instructions were provided to ensure consistent understanding of the questionnaire items. Respondents were given sufficient time to complete the instrument, and completed questionnaires were retrieved immediately for printed surveys or automatically recorded for online responses.

Before the full-scale administration, a pilot test was conducted among a smaller group of recent graduates who were not part of the main sample. The pilot data were analyzed to assess the instrument's reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, and necessary revisions were made to improve item clarity and internal consistency.

After data collection, the responses were coded, tabulated, and screened for completeness and accuracy. The finalized dataset was prepared for statistical analysis to address the study's objectives and test the hypothesized mediation relationships among the variables.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement in the study. They were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. Written consent forms were used to document their agreement to participate. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained, with personal identifiers removed from all collected data. The data were securely stored using digital encryption and were accessible only to authorized researchers. Compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 was ensured, and participants were provided with clear information about the study's purpose, benefits, and possible risks. The study upheld ethical standards in data handling and presented findings accurately and fairly.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected were analyzed using the following appropriate statistical tools with the aid of Jamovi statistical software:

The mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the respondents' level, providing measures of central tendency and variability among graduates.

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the respondents' employability, enabling the examination of the distribution of employability levels within the sample.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was applied to determine the relationship between graduates' employability skills and job performance and job satisfaction.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Level of Graduates' Employability Skills**

Table 1 presents the level of graduates' employability skills in fundamental, personal management, and teamwork. Overall, the findings indicate that the graduates demonstrated a very high level of employability skills, as reflected by the overall mean score ( $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = 0.44$ ). This suggests that, in general, the graduates strongly agreed that they possessed the essential competencies required for employability, indicating a strong readiness to meet workplace demands.

Examining the specific dimensions, fundamental skills registered a very high level ( $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = 0.42$ ), indicating that graduates perceived themselves as highly competent in basic work-related skills such as communication, problem comprehension, and task execution. Similarly, personal management skills also

obtained a very high rating ( $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = 0.45$ ), reflecting strong self-discipline, adaptability, and responsibility among the graduates. Teamwork skills likewise yielded a very high mean score ( $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = 0.45$ ), suggesting that graduates strongly agreed on their ability to collaborate effectively, work harmoniously with others, and contribute positively within group settings. Notably, all three dimensions had the same mean, indicating a consistent and balanced level of employability skills across domains.

The consistently very high ratings across all dimensions suggest that the graduates have developed a well-rounded employability skill set, likely influenced by outcomes-based instruction, experiential learning, and collaborative academic activities embedded in their academic programs. The uniformity of the mean scores implies that no single employability dimension lagged, reflecting coherence between institutional training and workplace skill expectations. However, the slightly varying standard deviations indicate minor differences in individual perceptions, suggesting that while overall employability skills were strong, some graduates may still require targeted support to further strengthen specific competencies.

The consistently very high level of graduates' employability skills supports Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993), which emphasizes that education and training enhance work-related competencies and readiness for employment. This finding is further reinforced by Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), as the graduates' strong self-assessment reflects high self-efficacy developed through academic and experiential learning. The uniformly high teamwork skills align with the Job Demands–Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), suggesting that collaborative learning environments served as key resources in preparing graduates to meet workplace demands. However, from the perspective of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), possessing strong employability skills alone may not guarantee sustained workplace satisfaction, as external factors such as organizational support and working conditions remain influential. Overall, the findings are well supported by theory, indicating that graduates are well-prepared for employment while highlighting the need for continued support to optimize career outcomes.

The findings highlight the effectiveness of the College of Education's curriculum in cultivating employability-related competencies. Academic administrators and curriculum planners may sustain and institutionalize existing best practices, particularly those that promote collaboration, self-management, and foundational workplace skills. Faculty members may further enhance employability preparation by integrating authentic workplace simulations, reflective activities, and team-based projects across courses. Despite the very high overall results, career development offices and internship coordinators may still implement enrichment activities such as advanced soft-skills workshops, mentoring programs, and industry-linked training to address subtle variations among graduates and ensure that all students achieve consistently high employability readiness. These initiatives can help sustain graduate competitiveness and long-term career success.

Table 1 Level of Graduates' Employability Skills

Constructs	M	SD	Descriptive Level
Fundamental Skills	4.54	0.42	Very High
Personal Management Skills	4.54	0.45	Very High
Teamwork Skills	4.54	0.45	Very High
Overall Employability Skills	4.54	0.44	Very High

Scale: 4.20-4.99(Very High); 3.40-4.19(high);2.60- 3.39(Moderate) ; 1.80-2.59

(Low); 1.0-1.79 (Very Low)

### Graduates' Job Performance in the Workplace

Table 2 presents the graduates' levels of job performance across key workplace dimensions: workload, work-life balance, workplace culture, and opportunities for growth and development. Overall, the findings indicate that the graduates demonstrated an outstanding level of job performance, as reflected by the overall mean score ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ). This suggests that, in general, the graduates perceived themselves as performing highly in their professional roles and were able to meet or exceed workplace expectations.

Among the specific indicators, workplace culture received the highest mean rating (6;  $M = 4.55$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ), indicating that graduates strongly perceived a positive and supportive organizational environment that enabled effective performance. This was followed by opportunities for growth and development ( $M = 4.52$ ,  $SD = 0.47$ ), suggesting that graduates recognized the availability of learning opportunities, professional advancement, and skill enhancement in their workplaces. Workload also registered an outstanding level ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ ), reflecting graduates' ability to manage assigned tasks and responsibilities efficiently. The lowest, although still within the outstanding range, was work-life balance ( $M = 4.26$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ), indicating comparatively greater variability in graduates' experiences in balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

The consistently outstanding ratings across all dimensions imply that the graduates were able to translate their competencies into effective workplace performance. The prominence of workplace culture and opportunities for growth underscores the importance of supportive environments and professional development mechanisms in sustaining high job performance. However, the relatively lower mean and higher variability observed in work-life balance suggest that some graduates may encounter challenges in managing competing demands, which could potentially affect long-term performance and well-being if left unaddressed.

The outstanding level of graduates' job performance supports Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993), suggesting that the knowledge and skills acquired through education were effectively translated into workplace productivity. The high ratings for workplace culture and growth opportunities are consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), as supportive organizational environments and advancement opportunities function as key motivators that enhance performance and satisfaction. These findings are further supported by the Job Demands-Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), which posits that positive workplace resources, such as supportive culture and development opportunities, buffer job demands and sustain high performance. Additionally, Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) explains strong performance outcomes in terms of graduates' perceived self-efficacy and adaptive behaviors in managing workload and professional roles. However, the relatively lower and more variable ratings for work-life balance suggest potential strain from competing demands, aligning with studies indicating that inadequate balance may undermine long-term performance and well-being despite high competence. Overall, the findings are largely supported by theory, highlighting the crucial role of both individual competencies and organizational resources in sustaining graduates' job performance.

These findings highlight the role of school administrators, employers, and human resource personnel in sustaining conditions that promote high job performance. Strengthening positive workplace culture and expanding opportunities for professional growth may further reinforce graduates' performance outcomes. At the same time, organizations may consider implementing work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible scheduling, wellness programs, and workload monitoring, to address emerging challenges in this area. For teacher education institutions, integrating career-readiness seminars and stress-management training into pre-service programs may help graduates better navigate workplace demands and maintain consistently highperformance levels.

Table 2 Graduates' Job Performance in the Workplace

Constructs	M	SD	Descriptive Level
Workload	4.39	0.51	Outstanding
Work-Life Balance	4.26	0.64	Outstanding
Workplace Culture	4.55	0.57	Outstanding

Opportunities for Growth and Development	4.52	0.47	Outstanding
Overall Performance	4.43	0.55	Outstanding

Scale: 4.20-4.99(Outstanding); 3.40-4.19(Very satisfactory);2.60- 3.39(Satisfactory);

1.80-2.59 (fair); 1.0-1.79 (Poor)

### Graduates’ Job Satisfaction in their Workplace

Table 3 presents graduates’ levels of job satisfaction in their workplaces across key dimensions. Overall, the graduates reported a very high level of job satisfaction ( $M = 4.35$ ,  $SD = 0.34$ ), indicating a generally positive appraisal of their work experiences. Among the specific indicators, Work Quality had the highest mean ( $M = 4.69$ ,  $SD = 0.31$ ), reflecting graduates’ strong sense of competence and pride in the quality of their outputs. This was followed by Communication and Collaboration ( $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = 0.45$ ) and Productivity ( $M = 4.52$ ,  $SD = 0.31$ ), both rated at a very high level, suggesting effective interpersonal engagement and efficient task accomplishment in the workplace. Problem-Solving and Decision Making ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.29$ ) and Professional Development ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.33$ ) ranked second, indicating very high levels and suggesting that graduates feel capable of addressing work-related challenges and perceive opportunities for continuous learning and growth.

The very high level of graduates’ job satisfaction is consistent with Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993), indicating that the skills and competencies developed through education contributed to graduates’ confidence in work quality, Productivity, and problem-solving abilities. The prominence of work quality and professional development strongly supports Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), as intrinsic factors such as achievement, recognition, and opportunities for growth function as key motivators of job satisfaction. These findings are further explained by Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), which highlights the role of self-efficacy and positive performance experiences in fostering satisfaction and career-related well-being. Additionally, the results align with the Job Demands-Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), suggesting that adequate workplace resources-such as supportive communication, collaboration, and learning opportunities-enhance engagement and satisfaction by offsetting job demands. Overall, the findings are well supported by theory, indicating that a combination of strong personal competencies and supportive organizational conditions drives graduates’ high job satisfaction.

The very high ratings across all indicators suggest that graduates are not only satisfied but also well-adjusted to their professional roles. The prominence of Work Quality underscores the alignment between graduates’ competencies and job demands, implying that their academic preparation effectively translates into workplace performance. High satisfaction in Communication and Collaboration reflects supportive work environments where teamwork and information sharing are valued, which is essential for organizational effectiveness. Similarly, strong ratings in Productivity, Problem-Solving, and Decision Making indicate that graduates perceive themselves as efficient and empowered contributors. Although still rated very high, Professional Development has comparatively lower variability ( $SD = 0.33$ ), suggesting a consistent but potentially more structured or limited exposure to advancement opportunities, pointing to an area that may benefit from further strengthening despite its favorable rating.

The consistently very high ratings across all indicators indicate that graduates are not only satisfied but also well-adjusted to their professional roles. This finding aligns with several established theories. From the perspective of Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993), the prominence of Work Quality suggests that graduates’ knowledge and skills acquired through education are effectively converted into productive workplace performance, reflecting strong returns on educational investment. This alignment is further supported by Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), which emphasizes the roles of self-efficacy and outcome expectations. High satisfaction in Productivity, problem-solving, and decision-making suggests that graduates feel confident in their abilities and perceive their efforts as meaningful and impactful. The very high ratings in Communication and Collaboration resonate with Job Demands-Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), as supportive work environments and teamwork function as key job resources that enhance engagement and

satisfaction while buffering work demands. Moreover, the overall positive appraisal of the workplace is consistent with Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959), which holds that factors such as achievement, responsibility, and recognition evident in work quality and Productivity motivate satisfaction. However, while Professional Development remains very highly rated, its lower variability suggests more uniform, possibly structured opportunities for growth, which may indicate limited differentiation in advancement pathways. This nuance partially tempers Herzberg’s emphasis on growth as a motivator, implying that although development opportunities exist, further expansion or diversification may strengthen long-term satisfaction and career progression.

The findings carry important implications for higher education institutions, employers, and human resource personnel. For academic leaders and curriculum planners, the results affirm the relevance of existing programs in developing work-ready graduates, particularly in cultivating quality performance, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Employers and HR managers are encouraged to sustain these positive conditions by maintaining clear performance standards, collaborative cultures, and supportive supervision. To address potential gaps, organizations may consider implementing structured professional development programs, such as mentoring systems, targeted skills training, career progression pathways, and regular performance feedback sessions. These initiatives can further reinforce graduates’ satisfaction, support long-term retention, and ensure continuous growth aligned with both individual and organizational goals.

Table 3 Graduates’ Job Satisfaction in their Workplace

Descriptives	M	SD	Descriptive Level
1. Work Quality	4.69	0.31	Very High
2. Productivity	4.52	0.31	Very High
3. Communication and Collaboration	4.54	0.45	Very High
4. Problem-Solving and Decision Making	4.50	0.29	Very High
5. Professional Development	4.50	0.33	Very High
Overall Satisfaction	4.35	0.34	Very High

Scale: 4.20-5.0(Very High); 3.40-4.19(High);2.60- 3.39(Moderate) ; 1.80-2.59 (Low); 1.0-1.79 (Very low)

### Significant Relationship Between Graduates’ Employability Skills and Job Performance

Table 4 presents the correlation analysis examining the relationship between graduates’ employability skills and their job performance across six performance domains. Pearson’s correlation coefficients (r) and corresponding significance values (p) were used to determine the strength and direction of these relationships.

The analysis revealed that Fundamental Skills were significantly and positively related to Work Quality ( $r = 0.45, p < .001$ ), Productivity ( $r = 0.36, p < .001$ ), and Communication and Collaboration ( $r = 0.22, p = .028$ ). The moderate associations with work quality and Productivity suggest that core competencies such as literacy, comprehension, and task-related reasoning provide a functional foundation for producing accurate, efficient, and dependable work outputs. These skills appear to support routine and performance-driven aspects of work, where clarity of understanding and procedural competence are essential. The weaker yet significant relationship with communication and collaboration suggests that while fundamental skills contribute to interpersonal effectiveness, they may serve more as enabling skills than as primary drivers of collaborative dynamics.

Personal Management Skills also demonstrated significant positive relationships with Work Quality ( $r = 0.42, p < .001$ ) and Productivity ( $r = 0.30, p = .002$ ). These findings suggest that graduates who exhibit strong self-regulation, responsibility, and time management skills are better able to maintain consistent performance



standards and meet work demands efficiently. The strength of these relationships implies that personal discipline and accountability directly translate into tangible work outcomes, particularly in environments that require autonomy and sustained effort. However, the absence of significance in more interactive or developmental domains (discussed later) suggests that personal management skills are most impactful in individual task execution rather than collective or growth-oriented functions.

Similarly, Teamwork Skills showed significant relationships with Work Quality ( $r = 0.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Productivity ( $r = 0.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and Communication and Collaboration ( $r = 0.23$ ,  $p = .024$ ). These results underscore the role of collaborative competence in enhancing both individual and group performance outcomes. The strong associations with work quality and Productivity indicate that effective teamwork facilitates coordination, shared responsibility, and mutual support, which collectively improve output efficiency and accuracy. The significant relationship between communication and collaboration further reinforces the idea that teamwork skills are inherently relational and thrive in environments that require interaction, feedback, and collective problem-solving.

Despite their overall importance, Fundamental Skills did not show significant relationships with Problem-Solving and Decision-Making ( $r = 0.03$ ,  $p = .785$ ), Professional Development ( $r = 0.19$ ,  $p = .064$ ), and Teaching Performance ( $r = 0.19$ ,  $p = .052$ ). This suggests that foundational competencies alone may be insufficient for higher-order cognitive tasks and reflective professional growth, which often require contextual judgment, experiential learning, and advanced domain knowledge. The near-significant values for professional development and teaching performance suggest a potential indirect influence, in which fundamental skills may support these outcomes only when combined with mentoring, practice, and specialized training.

In the same manner, Personal Management Skills were not significantly associated with Communication and Collaboration ( $r = 0.16$ ,  $p = .101$ ), Problem-Solving and Decision-Making ( $r = 0.08$ ,  $p = .456$ ), Professional Development ( $r = 0.08$ ,  $p = .436$ ), and Teaching Performance ( $r = 0.09$ ,  $p = .375$ ). This pattern indicates that self-discipline and responsibility, while crucial for individual Productivity, may not automatically translate into effective interaction, adaptive decision-making, or pedagogical competence. These domains often require social cognition, reflective practice, and continuous learning, which extend beyond self-management alone.

Likewise, Teamwork Skills did not demonstrate significant relationships with Problem-Solving and Decision-Making ( $r = -0.07$ ,  $p = .466$ ), Professional Development ( $r = 0.04$ ,  $p = .713$ ), and Teaching Performance ( $r = 0.09$ ,  $p = .350$ ). This suggests that while teamwork enhances collective functioning, it does not necessarily ensure individual analytical judgment, engagement in lifelong learning, or effectiveness in teaching-related roles. These outcomes may depend more heavily on individual expertise, reflective capacity, and professional identity formation than on collaborative ability alone.

The findings have important implications for higher education institutions, employers, and human resource development personnel. The significant relationships affirm the value of strengthening fundamental, personal management, and teamwork skills, particularly as they relate to work quality, Productivity, and collaborative functioning. Academic institutions may reinforce these competencies through performance-based assessments, collaborative learning tasks, structured group projects, and real-world simulations embedded across the curriculum.

The correlation results indicate that graduates' employability skills are differentially associated with specific domains of job performance, a pattern that is well supported by established theories. Consistent with Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993), the significant positive relationships between fundamental, personal management, and teamwork skills and Work Quality and Productivity suggest that investments in core and transferable competencies yield measurable performance outcomes, particularly in task-oriented, efficiency-driven roles. The findings also align with Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), as graduates who possess stronger skills are likely to have higher self-efficacy, enabling them to perform effectively in routine and collaborative work contexts; however, the lack of significant associations with higher-order domains such as problem-solving, professional development, and teaching performance implies that self-efficacy in these areas may depend more on contextual learning and experiential mastery than on baseline skills alone. From the lens of Job Demands–Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), employability skills

function as personal resources that enhance performance when job demands are structured and predictable (e.g., productivity and work quality), but they appear less sufficient in complex domains requiring cognitive flexibility, reflection, and autonomy, where additional resources such as mentoring and organizational support are critical. Moreover, the absence of significant relationships between employability skills and professional development resonates with Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), suggesting that while skills may support performance (hygiene-related outcomes), motivation for growth, learning, and teaching effectiveness may be more strongly influenced by intrinsic motivators such as achievement, recognition, and advancement opportunities. Overall, these findings support the view that employability skills are essential foundations for performance but must be complemented by experiential learning, motivational factors, and supportive work environments to influence more complex and developmental aspects of job performance.

To address the non-significant areas, targeted interventions are recommended. Employers and academic leaders may implement decision-making workshops, mentoring and coaching programs, reflective practice sessions, and structured professional development pathways to enhance graduates’ higher-order thinking, growth orientation, and teaching-related competencies. By deliberately aligning employability skills training with both immediate performance outcomes and long-term professional development goals, institutions and workplaces can support graduates’ holistic competence and sustained career success.

Table 4 Graduates’ Significant Relationship Between Employability Skills and Job Performance

Variables		Work Quality	Productivity	Communication and Collaboration	Problem-Solving and Decision-Making	Professional Development	Teaching Performance
Fundamental Skills	r	0.45***	0.36***	0.22*	0.03	0.19	0.19
	p	< .001	< .001	0.028	0.785	0.064	0.052
Personal Management Skill	r	0.42***	0.30**	0.16	0.08	0.08	0.09
	p	< .001	0.002	0.101	0.456	0.436	0.375
Teamwork Skills	r	0.45***	0.394***	0.23*	-0.07	0.04	0.09
	p	< .001	< .001	0.024	0.466	0.713	0.35

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

### Graduates’ Significant Relationship Between Employability Skills and their Job Satisfaction in the Workplace

Table 5 presents the results of the correlational analysis examining the relationship between graduates’ employability skills and their level of job satisfaction in the workplace, specifically regarding Workload, Work–Life Balance, Workplace Culture, and Opportunities for Growth and Development. Pearson’s correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) and corresponding significance levels ( $p$ ) were used to determine the strength and statistical significance of the relationships.

The results indicate that Fundamental Skills were significantly and positively related to all dimensions of job satisfaction, namely workload ( $r = 0.521$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Work–Life Balance ( $r = 0.294$ ,  $p = .003$ ), Workplace Culture ( $r = 0.389$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and Opportunities for Growth and Development ( $r = 0.503$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These findings suggest that graduates who possess strong foundational competencies—such as effective communication, comprehension, and task-related skills—are more likely to perceive their workload as manageable and their work environment as supportive. The moderate to strong relationships with workload and growth opportunities imply

that fundamental skills enable graduates to better cope with job demands and recognize or access advancement opportunities, thereby enhancing overall job satisfaction.

Similarly, Personal Management Skills showed significant positive relationships with workload ( $r = 0.458$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Work–Life Balance ( $r = 0.300$ ,  $p = .002$ ), Workplace Culture ( $r = 0.403$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and Opportunities for Growth and Development ( $r = 0.442$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This pattern indicates that graduates who demonstrate self-discipline, time management, adaptability, and responsibility tend to experience higher satisfaction across multiple aspects of their work life. In particular, the association with work–life balance suggests that personal regulation skills help graduates manage competing demands between professional and personal responsibilities, contributing to a more positive overall work experience.

Moreover, Teamwork Skills exhibited significant positive relationships with workload ( $r = 0.517$ ,  $p < .001$ ), Work–Life Balance ( $r = 0.318$ ,  $p = .001$ ), Workplace Culture ( $r = 0.557$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and Opportunities for Growth and Development ( $r = 0.570$ ,  $p < .001$ ). These findings highlight teamwork skills as a particularly strong predictor of job satisfaction, especially in relation to workplace culture and growth opportunities. Graduates who can collaborate effectively, communicate within teams, and build positive working relationships are more likely to perceive their work environment as supportive and conducive to professional development. The strong correlations suggest that collaborative competence plays a critical role in shaping positive perceptions of the workplace.

Notably, the results revealed no non-significant relationships, as all employability skill variables demonstrated statistically significant associations with all dimensions of job satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ). This indicates a consistent and robust linkage between employability skills and graduates' satisfaction with their work conditions and environment.

The findings carry important implications for higher education institutions, employers, and human resource practitioners. The consistently significant relationships emphasize the critical role of employability skills in shaping graduates' job satisfaction. For academic leaders and curriculum developers, the results underscore the need to deliberately integrate fundamental, personal management, and teamwork skills into instructional programs through experiential learning, collaborative projects, and authentic workplace simulations.

The significant positive relationships between graduates' employability skills and all dimensions of job satisfaction strongly support Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993), indicating that higher levels of skills enhance graduates' capacity to manage workload, maintain work–life balance, and recognize growth opportunities, thereby increasing satisfaction. These findings are further explained by Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994), which emphasizes the role of self-efficacy and personal agency; graduates with strong fundamental, personal management, and teamwork skills are more confident in handling job demands and navigating workplace environments, leading to more positive work evaluations. The particularly strong associations of teamwork skills with workplace culture and growth opportunities align with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), as interpersonal relations and opportunities for advancement function as key motivators of job satisfaction. Moreover, the results are consistent with the Job Demands–Resources Theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), suggesting that employability skills act as personal resources that help buffer job demands and enhance access to workplace resources. Overall, the absence of non-significant relationships underscores a robust, consistent link between employability skills and job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of continuous skill development in promoting positive, sustainable work experiences.

For employers and HR personnel, the findings suggest that investing in skills-based training, team-building activities, mentoring programs, and time-management or well-being workshops can further enhance employees' satisfaction and retention. Creating organizational cultures that promote collaboration, manage workloads, and offer clear pathways for professional growth can maximize the positive impact of employability skills. Overall, aligning skill development initiatives with supportive workplace practices can contribute to more satisfied, engaged, and productive graduates in the workforce.

Table 5 Graduates' Significant Relationship Between Employability Skills and their Job Satisfaction in the Workplace

Variables		Workload	Work-Life Balance	Workplace Culture	Opportunities for Growth and Development
Fundamental Skills	r	0.521***	0.294***	0.389***	0.503***
	p	< .001	0.003	< .001	< .001
Personal Management Skill	r	0.458***	0.300***	0.403***	0.442***
	p	< .001	0.002	< .001	< .001
Teamwork Skills	r	0.517***	0.318***	0.557***	0.570***
	p	< .001	0.001	< .001	< .001

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Future studies may further strengthen the understanding of employability skills and job outcomes among education graduates by incorporating multiple sources of data. In addition to self-reported responses from graduates, researchers may include employer evaluations, supervisor feedback, and student performance metrics to provide a more comprehensive and objective assessment of employability skills. The integration of diverse data sources may improve the reliability and validity of the findings and offer a broader perspective on how employability competencies influence workplace performance and career success. Moreover, future investigations may adopt mixed-method or longitudinal research designs to capture changes in employability skills and job outcomes over time.

To improve the generalizability of the findings, future researchers are encouraged to utilize a larger sample size that includes graduates from multiple higher education institutions. Expanding the scope of participants across different geographic locations and institutional settings may provide a more representative understanding of the employability experiences of education graduates. Furthermore, future studies may examine institutional factors such as curriculum design, teaching strategies, internship experiences, faculty support, and career guidance services to determine their contribution to the development of employability skills. The findings of future research may also serve as a basis for designing targeted intervention programs, professional development initiatives, and training activities aimed at enhancing employability competencies and improving the overall job outcomes of education graduates.

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