



Received: 07-12-2024

Accepted: 17-01-2025

## International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

### Correlation between Curriculum Design and Job Readiness in Hotel and Restaurant Services Programs in Cabanatuan City

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62225/2583049X.2025.5.1.3693>

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#### Abstract

The study investigated the partnership between curriculum design and job readiness of the Hotel and Restaurant Services programs in Cabanatuan City, based on how well the programs can prepare students for the assault of the hospitality industry. The study gauged the perception of students as well as those of instructors regarding essential components of the curriculum - technical and soft skills, knowledge of the industry, and confidence of performing in the work setting. Findings indicated significant congruence with industry standards from the content of the curriculum, especially through experiential learning in developing communication, teamwork, and hands-on skills. Moreover, it was found that with rising levels of students' academic

credentials, they became confident in the workplace, meaning experience through practice and action would become an effective way to prepare students for employment. Recommendations would include the implementation of more applicable learning experiences in all levels of education, curriculum updates that cover the emerging industry trends in sustainability, technology, and customer service. It will provide valued insights for academic institutions and stakeholders in the hospitality industries to ensure that curriculum designs align with the dynamic needs of industry expectations to facilitate successful student transition into the labor market.

**Keywords:** Curriculum Alignment, Curriculum Design, Hospitality Education, Industry Standards, Hospitality Industry, Industry Alignment

#### Introduction

Higher education institutions, therefore, play a role in forming future generations in terms of knowledge and skills. The curriculum must account for any technological developments or innovations and any program review that enables graduates to perform given the requirements of 4IR. According to Lamprini and Butler-Adam (2018), some of the competitive skills needed to succeed in 4IR include innovation, creativity, and lifelong learning. The tourism and hospitality industry are always evolving with the impetus created by digital transformation and changing interactions with customers.

The hospitality industry is clearly on a growth trajectory post-pandemic but is also significantly transforming. This industry has stopped reversing to the pre-pandemic era and embracing digital transformation in the redesign of new experiences for its customers. The nature of traveler demands has changed, where personalization is one of the highest expectations of their services. Business organizations have found ways to adapt to meet these new expectations. What this reveals a rather large gap between the competencies taught in educational programs and the skills required by industry, especially in areas like Cabanatuan City. Technological advancements, such as contactless check-ins and AI-driven customer service, are new global standards in service, safety, and convenience. This shift exposes deficiencies in the training of some graduates, further widening the skills gap.

Though the demand for graduates is increasing daily, many graduates remain incompetent for most work environments. It is not limited to soft skills but also technical competencies that must be infused in the curriculum and not only within module blocks. According to Neroorkar (2022), the measurement of employability through proper metrics can never be escaped if one wants the student to be a work-ready one at graduation time. Most higher education programs lack preparing students for the skills and competencies that industry requires for success, especially in those involving the field of hospitality.

Only through the cooperation between industries and institutions can the gap in skills be bridged. The competency-based learning program must be designed to give more emphasis on practical experiences as well as meeting the industry's requirements. Partnerships with industry associations, internships, mentorship, and hands-on training can help smooth out the gap between classroom learning and real application.

This research will identify gaps in hospitality and tourism training and make recommendations for actionable curricular improvement. If the learning outcomes are matched with industry needs, then the graduates of Cabanatuan City will be much better prepared for the modern workforce, contribute to the industries' growth and success, and ensure that all positions are filled with capable employer.

Generally, this study aimed to analyze the relationship of curriculum design towards job readiness of students in Hotel and Restaurant Services Programs of Cabanatuan City. Specifically, this answered the following questions:

**1. How may the profile of the students be described in terms of:**

- 1.1 age;
- 1.2 year level;
- 1.3 degree program;

**2. How may the respondents evaluate the curriculum design in terms of:**

- 2.1. objectives;
- 2.2. content or subject matter;
- 2.3. methods or procedures;
- 2.4. evaluation or assessment;
- 2.5. alignment with industry trends within the hotel and restaurant industry;

**3. How may the students, teachers, and the hospitality industry evaluate the students job readiness:**

- 3.1. the technical skills delivered;
- 3.2. soft skills that include communication and teamwork skills;
- 3.3. confidence in performing at the workplace.
- 3.4. familiarity with industry specific tools and technologies;
- 3.5. self-rated employability in the hospitality industry;

**4. Is there significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their job readiness?**

**5. Is there significant relationship between the curriculum design and job readiness?**

**6. What curriculum design in Hotel and Restaurant Services program maybe proposed based on the findings of the study?**

**Methodology**

This study was descriptive and correlational in design, focusing on the curriculum design and job readiness of students in Hotel and Restaurant Management (HRM) programs. Data collection via surveys targeted students, faculty, and industry employers to understand the perceptions of the curriculum by students and their readiness for the hospitality workforce. Pearson correlation was used to analyze the relationship between curriculum design and job readiness.

The study was conducted in Cabanatuan City, Philippines, a fast-emerging hub for hospitality and tourism. Both public and private academic institutions that offer HRM or Hospitality Management (HM) were selected. The target subjects are third- and fourth-year students who have experienced at least one on-the-job training (OJT) as they near graduation. Faculty and industry employers were also considered. 100 respondents participated, from among whom 75 were students, 15 faculty members, and 10 employers.

This study targets the students with OJT experience as being in the final year of HRM/HM, being the closest to entering the work force. Scope: Faculty who participated in curriculum design; employers who hire graduates: Limitations This study is only focused on Cabanatuan City and thus cannot extend its inference to other regions and industry. It excluded first and second-year students as well as those who have no OJT experience as the consideration is based on being ready for the job.

Moreover, a specially prepared questionnaire with open-ended questions was directed towards understanding the issues between curriculum design and job readiness. The latter included technical skills and soft skills as well as industry-specific competencies. All these questionnaire forms captured opinions on how to improve the curriculum. The instrument is based on Constructivist Curriculum Theory and the Job Readiness Model; hence it concentrates on observed learning and experiential know-how that are pertinent to the present-day environment.

**Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data**

This chapter dealt with the analysis and interpretation of data collected concerning the study at hand. The study in question is a linked between curriculum design and job readiness among hospitality management students. It intended to assess how the curriculum prepared a student for the demands of the hospitality industry by analyzing key factors relating to his or her skills and employability.

This study analyzed the relationship between curriculum design and job readiness of students in the Hotel and Restaurant Services Programs of Cabanatuan City. Specifically, it addresses the following questions based on the results:

**1. How may the profile of the students be described in terms of:**

**Table 3.1:** Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-22	18	24.0%
23-25	57	76.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 3.1 Presents the distribution of age. About 57 or 76 percent belonged within the age range of 23-25 and 18 or 24 percent belonged within the age bracket of 20- 22 years old. Thus, most of the respondents fall into this age group, a cohort of students near graduation. This distribution suggests that the sample primarily consists of students closer to graduation, which may provide relevant insights into job readiness perceptions. The age distribution of participants in the sample closely matches those in studies by Alivio *et al.* (2024), Wang and Tsai (2014), and Dowd *et al.* (2021), which found that the perceptions of career readiness are critical among students who will graduate in a year.

Research indicates that students aged between 20-25 are best suited to evaluate their job readiness as they approach the workforce. This demographic insight therefore simply reiterates the study's requirement of testing whether the curriculum can adequately prepare students for the labor market.

**Table 3.2:** Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Year Level

Year Level	Frequency	Percent
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	9	12.0%
4 <sup>th</sup> Year	66	88.0%
Total	75	100.0%

Table 3.2 indicated that out of 100 respondents 66 or 88 percents are fourth year and 9 or 12 percent are third year. It puts that most respondents are only a few months away from graduating hence well placed in making judgments whether they are ready for jobs or not whether the curriculum has been effective.

This finding that 88.0% of respondents are fourth-year students is supported by studies such as Dowd *et al.* (2021) and Capua (2024)<sup>[6]</sup>, which state final-year students would be very well-placed to assess readiness for career because they are near graduation. Alivio *et al.* (2024) also holds a similar argument, stating these can better retrospect on readiness for the job as they prepare themselves to enter the job market. However, as per Wang and Tsai, 2014, graduating students' confidence in employability may often

sink while they get a better view of industry demands.

**Table 3.3:** Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Degree Program

Degree Program	Frequency	Percent
HRM	2	2.7%
HM	73	97.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 3.3 depicts that majority comes from Hospitality Management (HM) program with 73 or 97.3 percent and 2 or 2.7 percent for the Hotel and Restaurant Management (HRM) program. Concentration in the HM would be with a focused study on how curriculum is patterned or designed as well as the issues on job readiness pertinent to the field of HM.

The data reflected the highest preference for the HM program, only with 2.7% enrollment in the HRM program. This reflects literature emphasizing industry-relevant skills and experiential learning (Abdien, 2013; Capua, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>). But the HRM enrollment is critically low, opposing the need for specialized training in the HRM field (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005) to include more industry partnerships and soft skills development in HRM curricula (Capua, 2024<sup>[6]</sup>; Razalan *et al.*, 2021).

**2. How may the students and their teachers evaluate the curriculum in terms of:**

**Table 3.4:** Objectives

Objectives	Students WM	Teachers WM	Combined WM	Verbal Description
1. The curriculum lays out its objectives in very clear and concise terms, to the extent that I can easily perceive what is expected of them in terms of achievement.	3.95	4.27	4.11	Agree
2. The objectives of the curriculum are relevant to my needs and aspirations as learners when I enter careers in the hospitality industry.	3.75	4.33	4.04	Agree
3. My program's curriculum objectives are aligned well with the international educational objectives and outcomes for hospitality students.	3.89	4.33	4.11	Agree
4. The curriculum has stated objectives measurable enough to track and measure what I know and can do.	3.84	4.27	4.05	Agree
5. The course objectives of my curriculum are responsive and adaptable to shifting industry needs and directions in the hospitality industry.	3.87	4.33	4.10	Agree
<b>Combined Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>4.08</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree;2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.4 presents the combined overall weighted mean of 4.08 translated as "agree". Highest Mean 4.31, which is the score teachers gave for the objective "The objectives of the curriculum are relevant to my needs and aspirations." Lowest Mean of 3.86, a score from students' ratings of the same objective stating a gap in the perceived relevance to their aspirations for the career. The curricula are pertinent to my needs and aspirations," which reflects great assent that the curriculum fits well with the students' career goals and what the industry needs. The Combined overall weighted mean (4.08 %) can be taken to suggest that both students and teachers generally agree that the curriculum objectives are relevant and aligned with industry needs and are apparent. This indicates that, on average, the curriculum is regarded as effective in the training of students for careers in the hospitality industry, and the objectives are measurable, adaptable, and support professional growth. It denotes the curriculum's strength to satisfy both academic and industry standards for being clear and directly applicable in achieving the desired learning outcomes. Lowest Mean of

3.86 was presented by the students for the same objective that reflects a relatively minor mismatch in students' opinions over the relevance of the curriculum to their personal career goals. Such mismatch between student perceptions and teacher perceptions can reflect varying expectations or the perceived applicability of the curriculum.

The hospitality curriculum reveals very definite, relevant, and measurable objectives that are well in accordance with international standards and responsive to the needs of the industry. Such alignment is confirmed by a combined overall weighted mean of 4.08. Meanwhile, students report a weighted mean of 3.86 and faculty a weighted mean of 4.31, on average. Such findings point out, therefore, some key characteristics of a good curriculum as defined in the literature. For example, Alivio *et al.* (2024) asserted that curriculum objectives should be specific and relevant to the life of the students to effectively serve their preparation for careers. Wang and Tsai (2014) further observed that responding to change is a basic requirement, with both

students and faculty realizing the fact that the curriculum must change with the changing needs of the industry. Such an alignment with industry needs supports the notion that the curriculum serves as a transitional tool to allow the student flow into hospitality careers. Dowd *et al.* (2021) also make similar findings in support of the critical role that responsiveness to change within curricula plays toward industry.

These results suggest that properly structured content and proper teaching methods enhance employability skills

formation. It aligns with the reasoning proposed by Capua (2023) and Cos *et al.* (2023), who argue for the preparation of hospitality graduates via the curriculum objectives, as are expected by industry.

The implication is an industry-aligned curriculum neither only enhances technical skills but also improves job readiness as it ensures that the graduates meet the expectations of the employers. Building students' transition into the workforce through adaptive content and teaching methods further supports the curriculum.

**Table 3.5:** Content or Subject Matter

Contents	Student WM	Teachers WM	Combined WM	Verbal Description
1. The contents of my curriculum are in line with present practices and trends of the hospitality industry.	3.77	4.33	4.05	Agree
2. My curriculum encompasses a holistic scope of subject matter that equips students with an all-around knowledge of hospitality management.	3.87	4.07	3.97	Agree
3. The curriculum content is in clear alignment with the learning objectives as every one of the topics covered contributes towards the attainment of the broader educational objectives.	3.93	4.33	4.13	Agree
4. It really makes my curriculum involve theoretical concepts with practical applications relevant to the hospitality industry.	3.88	4.40	4.14	Agree
5. The content of my curriculum is updated based on changing needs and expectations in the hospitality industry.	3.84	4.20	4.02	Agree
<b>Combined Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree; 2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.5 presents the results highlight combined overall weighted mean of 4.06, meaning that the respondents agree that the curriculum content is effective. Teachers rated higher at 4.27, and students were rated lower at 3.86, showing a difference in perceptions between these two groups. An analysis of Table 2.2 reveals that the combined overall weighted mean is 4.06, where there is an agreed response from students in terms of the effectiveness of the curriculum content. With a weighted mean rating of 4.27, teachers rated the content higher, which might suggest a stronger agreement with the curriculum's effectiveness. Students, on the other hand, gave a lower rating of 3.86, representing a difference in viewpoints between the two groups on curriculum impact and relevance.

The combined overall weighted mean of 4.06 signifies that both teachers and students agree on the effectiveness of the curriculum content, aligning with findings in the RRL that emphasize the importance of designing curriculum content that meets industry standards. Teachers' higher rating of

4.27 aligns with Capua's (2024) <sup>[6]</sup> study, which highlights that educators perceive the curriculum as more aligned with industry needs due to their involvement in curriculum design and industry collaborations. Conversely, students' lower rating of 3.86 reflects findings by Razalan *et al.* (2021), which suggest that students often identify gaps in the curriculum's practical applicability to their career goals. The integration of theoretical concepts with practical applications, as reflected in the curriculum's highest combined weighted mean of 4.14, supports the experiential learning framework discussed in studies by Sebby and Brown (2020) <sup>[7]</sup>. These studies underline the necessity of bridging classroom learning with real-world applications to enhance job readiness. However, the lowest combined mean of 3.97, indicating a need for a more holistic scope, echoes Raybould and Wilkins' call for curricula to encompass a broader knowledge base to address evolving industry demands comprehensively.

**Table 3.6:** Methods or Procedures

Methods	Students WM	Teachers WM	Combined WM	Verbal Description
1. The curriculum of my program utilizes several different teaching methods including lectures, demonstrations, and group work that foster motivated learning.	3.64	4.47	4.05	Agree
2. My program teaching approaches support learning objectives defined in meeting the objectives for outcomes.	3.63	4.53	4.08	Agree
3. My program curriculum supports me with related practical experiences in the form of hands-on exercises, internships, or simulations to apply my knowledge in relevant hospitality environments.	3.91	4.27	4.09	Agree
4. The evaluation techniques used in my program can assess well the understanding and knowledge I have acquired about the topic.	3.88	4.53	4.21	Strongly Agree
5. The curriculum was providing constructive timely feedback on performance motivating me to continue my development with skills and knowledge further.	4.01	4.40	4.21	Strongly Agree
<b>Combined overall weighted mean</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree;2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree



Table 3.6 presents the combined overall weighted mean score in the evaluation of teaching methods and approaches in the programs stands at 4.13, scoring an average general agreement on the programs' effectiveness. Teachers gave higher ratings to the methods with a weighted mean of 4.44, with students rating the same lower at 3.81, pointing to a gap in the two's perceptions about the effectiveness of the methods in fostering learning and achieving outcomes.

The data shows overall positive perceptions on the teaching methods and approaches utilized in Hotel and Restaurant Services programs, with a combined overall weighted mean of 4.13, which means an agreement among the respondents on how effective the curriculum is. Students and teachers indicate a clear difference in perceptions. Results indicate the methods in favor to teachers with a weighted mean of 4.44 that they believe the approaches adopted are very effective in learning and successful at the intended outcome. Otherwise, with a score of 3.81 by the students, it could be argued that they wish the approach used was improved or applied better on what suits their learning. This gap between student and teacher perceptions has shown potential curriculum adjustments for alignment with actual expectations and experiences by students.

The difference in perception in the evaluation of teaching methods and approaches in the Hotel and Restaurant Services Programs between teachers and students is predominantly significant. Combined overall weighted mean that resulted was 4.13, with general agreement that the

teaching method were effective in enhancing learning. Teachers rated higher, however, with a Weighted Mean of 4.44, while students rated them lower at 3.81. This gap suggests that teachers view the curriculum teaching approaches as more effective than the way students experience them.

Teachers may have rated the curriculum higher because they believe in the strength of the curriculum's design and the appropriateness of the teaching methods to industry standards. Teachers are in a better position to understand the goals of the curriculum and its practical application and thus rate it better. At the same time, the students' lower rating may imply that the students do not always enjoy and are not commonly aligned to the teaching methods; this is considering the disconnection found in their perception.

According to Capua (2024) <sup>[6]</sup>, there is a need for instructional methods to change and be in line with the preferences of different learners among the students. In this regard, the perception gap could be an indication of needing something more diversified in terms of instruction, not just lectures, but the inclusion of more engaging techniques such as case studies, simulations, and industry partnerships. Similarly, Razalan *et al.* (2021) remind practitioners about the relevance of industry-aligned teaching methods, perhaps more appreciated by the teachers but may feel abstract or less realistic to the students if they are not well-connected to real-life scenarios.

**Table 3.7:** Evaluation or assessment

Evaluation	Students WM	Teachers WM	Combined WM	Verbal Description
1. Clear criteria for assessing my performance are provided with clear expectations, and thus I clearly understand exactly what is expected from me.	3.81	4.67	4.24	Strongly Agree
2. An appropriate technique for assessing my program relates to the learning objectives because it puts me to test depending on how much I have managed to achieve in terms of those same objectives.	3.72	4.47	4.09	Agree
3. Various techniques of assessments take place within the curriculum, such as quizzes, projects, presentations, and practical tests that help to evaluate learners holistically.	3.81	4.53	4.17	Agree
4. My assessments are immediately returned to me for improvements that I have in my understanding and skills.	3.84	4.47	4.15	Agree
5. Assessment results always lead to changes in the design of the curriculum and strategies of instruction.	3.77	4.60	4.19	Agree
<b>Combined Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.79</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree; 2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.7 presents the combined overall weighted mean is 4.17, which shows that respondents generally agree with the assessment techniques. The Highest Weighted Mean is 4.55, which was rated for the statement by teachers, with results showing strong agreement with the assessment techniques used. The Lowest Weighted Mean is 3.79, provided for the students, which could mean that students view the assessment methods less positively than the teachers do.

The combined overall weighted of 4.17 generally indicates agreement that assessment techniques in the curriculum work and that students and teachers both hold similar views about the quality and appropriateness of the assessment techniques. The highest mean overall weighting of 4.55 reported by teachers signifies a belief that the assessments are aligned well with the learning objectives and students' progress are appropriately assessed. Teachers' higher ratings may stem from their deeper understanding of the curriculum's assessment strategies and their role in its design and implementation.

In contrast, a lowest weighted mean of 3.79 reported by students reveals that they actually broadly agree with the assessment methods but feel that such methods are not fully gauged in their expectation or learning needs. The students might perceive the assessments as less effective when measuring their understanding and skills compared to teachers' views.

This difference in perceptions between students and teachers highlights that there might be a gap in how the assessments are seen. While teachers seem confident that these assessments are helpful, students may feel that such assessments could be improved to better reflect their personal learning experiences and provide more useful feedback to support them.

The information shows general agreement on effectiveness, with the Combined overall weighted mean standing at 4.17, meaning that students and teachers find the assessments to be effective. However, a gap is noticed regarding the ratings between the teachers and the students. The teachers rated the

Weighted Mean to be 4.55, showing much confidence that the assessments meet learning objectives and are capable of effectively analyzing progress. It is more highly rated for the fact that teachers know what the curriculum is supposed to attain and participate in assessing.

Contrastingly, students rated the assessments as 3.79, weighted mean. Thereby pointing out that they feel the assessments may not meet their expectations or measure their understanding and skills accordingly. This is consistent with Razalan *et al.* (2021), where students feel a sense of disconnection from an assessment method that does not

reflect the experience of learning. Capua (2024) [6] also highlights assessment should reflect industry standard but within meeting the needs of students so that it is relevant to their work in real life applications.

While there are indeed differences in the perceptions highlighted, the core meaning becomes the fact that students' needs must be reflected better in the assessment. According to Sebby and Brown (2020) [7], assessments must mirror the real challenges that students experience in their hospitality programs.

**Table 3.8:** Alignment with industry trends within the hotel and restaurant industry

Alignment with Industry Needs	Students WM	Teachers WM	Combined WM	Verbal Description
1. The curriculum offers new trends in the hospitality and restaurant industry, including sustainability, technology, and online marketing.	3.83	4.40	4.11	Agree
2. My courses included topics under contemporary trends and innovations of the hotel and restaurant industries.	3.85	4.53	4.19	Agree
3. Many learning opportunities were realized through courses that facilitated guest lectures, workshops, or networking with people in the industry, updating recent market trends.	3.95	4.20	4.07	Agree
4. The curriculum is flexible in relation to the changes in the market since it trains me on how I am ready for change in the industry of the hotel and restaurant.	3.77	4.47	4.12	Agree
5. The curriculum prepares me for challenges in the hotel and restaurant industry by a labor shortage or change in consumer preferences.	3.77	4.33	4.05	Agree
<b>Combined overall weighted mean</b>	<b>3.83</b>	<b>4.39</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree; 2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.8 resented combined overall weighted mean at 4.11, indicating general agreement on the alignment of the curriculum with industry needs. The Highest Weighted Mean is reported by teachers standing at 4.39, indicating they strongly believe the curriculum is well-aligned with industry trends and requirements. Lowest Weighted Mean is 3.83 from the students, which suggests that they have concurring notions with the alignment but feel that it should more closely relate to their learning needs and current imperatives for the hospitality industry.

The combined overall weighted mean of 4.11 indicates that, overall, people believe that the curriculum is well-aligned with industry needs. Nevertheless, the perceptions differ between students and teachers. The weighted mean that the teachers gave to the curriculum is 4.39, representing a strong belief in the curriculum's alignment with current industry trends, such as sustainability, technology, and evolving market demands. Teachers, who are likely to be savvier of industry standards and have a greater overview of how curricula are designed, rated the alignment very high.

Alignment ratings were found to be lower for students at 3.83 using the Weighted Mean. This means that though the students essentially agree with the overall alignment, they may think that the curriculum did not really fit their specific learning requirements and the fast pace at which changes in the hospitality industry happen. This difference in views suggests a possible mismatch between teachers' perceptions of what they provide through the curriculum and what students perceive that they receive in terms of practical applications or exposure to the latest industrial trends.

The teacher rating is higher, at weighted mean 4.39, which implies that the curriculum by them is more in line with industry trends because teachers may be relatively better informed of the prevailing needs in industries, involved in the curriculum development process, and are exposed to professional networks. Teachers probably view the curriculum as a holistic framework for preparing students to

face future challenges in the hospitality industry.

However, the lower rating by students (weighted mean 3.83) may point to a gap in how students perceive the curriculum's relevance to their actual learning experiences and future career needs. Students might feel that while the curriculum addresses theoretical industry knowledge, it may not fully engage them with practical, hands-on experiences or up-to-date content that reflects the most recent shifts in the industry, such as digital transformation or sustainability practices. This gap may indicate the necessity for more professionalizing learning in the industry, like internships, guest lectures, or simulation, to adapt the course to meet the expectations of the students and the fast-changing job market.

The ratings gap, where teachers tend to give higher ratings than the students, indicate an issue regarding the curriculum in educational settings where curriculum effectiveness is perceived differently by teachers and students. Teachers, having a more academic and broader view of the curriculum, would have greater value for alignment with industry standards and theoretical frameworks, which may not always connect with students. Therefore, students might focus on the real-life application, relevance of the content to the career goals they aim to pursue, which would explain their rating.

This gap is consistent with findings from Razalan *et al.* (2021), who noted that students often feel the curriculum is slow to adapt to rapid changes in industry trends, especially in fields like hospitality where innovation and new technologies, such as online marketing and sustainability practices, are rapidly evolving. Similarly, Sebby and Brown (2020) [7] pointed out that students in the hospitality field want more practical learning experiences, such as industry expert exposure, internships, and lively, theoretical-solution-in-practice settings.

**3. How may the students, their teachers, industry, evaluate students' readiness in the industry in terms of:**

**Table 3.9:** The technical skills delivered

The technical skills delivered	Students WM	Teachers WM	Industry WM	Combined WM	Verbal Description
1. It allows me to acquire hands-on skills with direct applicability in real hospitality jobs.	3.89	4.60	3.60	4.03	Agree
2. It will give me the opportunity to apply and fine-tune my practical skills in the more mundane work and exercises in simulated realities.	3.89	4.47	4.00	4.12	Agree
3. The practical skills I acquire are in line with the urgent needs of employers in the service industry today.	3.72	4.47	3.70	3.96	Agree
4. Field practice responses help me enhance my job-related skills because they are effective.	3.88	4.40	4.20	4.16	Agree
5. The program incorporates real-world projects or internships that strengthen my practical skills and preparation for jobs.	3.97	4.53	4.10	4.20	Strongly Agree
<b>Combined Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>4.49</b>	<b>3.92</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree;2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.9 shows the consensus emerging from the combined overall weighted mean of 4.10 is that the curriculum delivers quite effectively the technical skills required by the hospitality industry. Teachers among the respondents were granted the highest rating with a Weighted Mean of 4.49, which reflected their high confidence that the program would make the students deliver practically useful job-related skills. The industry professionals rated the curriculum to be at 3.92, indicating moderate alignment with current industry needs. Students rated lowest with a weighted mean of 3.87, indicating that although they realize the value of the technical skills learned, perhaps there is still room for improvement in the practical applicability or relevance to their future roles in the industry.

The combined overall weighted mean of 4.10 gives an implication that the curriculum effectively delivers technical skills required in the hospitality industry. Generally, responses received aligned with this view, but perceived differences are noted between the groups.

This group gave the highest rating with a Weighted Mean of 4.49, as teachers have huge confidence in the graduates being delivered by the program as practical and ready for the job. They are likely to be more influenced because of the personal involvement in curriculum design and delivery and perhaps aware of how it aligns to industry standards.

The rating for the curriculum was at 3.92, meaning it was moderately aligned with the specific skills needed in the hospitality sector, thereby suggesting that while the curriculum meets general industry expectations, there are gaps in addressing some urgent evolving needs, such as technological advancements or customer service innovations.

Students recorded the lowest rating, having a Weighted

Mean of 3.87. This may indicate that students feel that technical skills provided can be applied to everyday life or are simply better oriented towards the needs of the current job market.

While the highest weighted mean among them was 4.20, which proves the importance of real-world projects and internships in preparing students for employment, the lowest combined weighted mean of 3.96 shows a slight disconnection between what employers receive and what they need at a given time.

Results are in line with the findings about practical learning in hospitality education. As written by Capua (2024) [6], technical skills should be focused on the demands of a fast-moving changing hospitality industry.

In contrast, lower student and industry practitioner ratings coincide with other studies like Razalan *et al.* (2021) and Sebby and Brown (2020) [7], where the latter stated that technical skills are on average covered in hospitality curricula, but curricula continue to behind in terms of accommodating emerging trends such as technology integration, sustainability practices, and innovative service strategies. This is consistent with the perception made by the students that those skills delivered would be more closely matched to the present-day job and the expectations of employers.

Divergence between teacher ratings and students and industry ratings can be explained by Raybould and Wilkins, who claim that teachers more likely to rate curricula in accord with the industry requirements than students or their employers. The reason is that educators may emphasize long-term global competencies, while students and employers are more interested in short-term, practical skills.

**Table 3.10:** Soft skills that include communication and teamwork skills

Soft skills that include communication and teamwork skills	Students WM	Teachers WM	Industry WM	Combined WM	Verbal Description
1. The curriculum helps enable me to be communicated as necessary in achieving success in the hospitality industry.	3.87	4.33	3.10	3.77	Agree
2. The curriculum offers numerous opportunities for teamwork and collaborative activities necessary for the development of teamwork skills.	3.76	4.33	3.30	3.80	Agree
3. The curriculum effectively combines technical and soft skills trainings wherein the development of communication and teamwork skills is fully developed in students.	3.95	4.33	3.70	3.99	Agree
4. The soft skills covered in the curriculum meet expectations related to communication and teamwork in the hospitality industry.	3.71	4.33	3.90	3.98	Agree
5. The communication and teamwork skills I learn from the curriculum adequately prepare me to use the skills in an actual workplace environment.	3.92	4.33	3.60	3.95	Agree
<b>Combined Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>3.52</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree;2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.10 presents the combined overall weighted mean of 3.90, signifying general agreement upon the effectiveness of the curriculum in developing communication and teamwork skills. Teachers gave the highest rating among the respondents; Weighted Mean was 4.33 in their confidence level in the effectiveness of the curriculum with regards to soft skills. Students rated it a little less, that is, 3.84, but agreeing on the applicability aspect. The industry professionals rated the lowest, at 3.52, indicating that they perceive a gap between training via the curriculum and the actual communication and teamwork skills practiced in the workplace.

The combined overall weighted mean of 3.90 reflects a consensus from the respondents that the curriculum is effective in developing communication and teamwork skills. However, what this also reveals is a very large difference in perceptions:

Teachers received the highest ranking with a Weighted Mean of 4.33, indicating they overwhelmingly believe that the curriculum is rich in activities and training for the development of these critical soft skills. Teachers' satisfaction probably arises from their familiarity with the curriculum design and its integration of opportunities for collaborative learning.

Students rated the curriculum lower at 3.84, indicating they agree but that the opportunities to practice communication and teamwork skills are not fully sufficient or reflective of workplace realities. Students may perceive a gap between classroom activities and real-world demands in these areas.

The lowest rating, 3.52, came from industry professionals, who view a significant gap in relation to the abilities covered by the curriculum versus those necessary to communicate and work together on a real team in the workplace. This means that even though the curriculum

touches on these areas, perhaps it has not aligned as closely to expectations by industry or practical needs in the workplace.

It concurs with the literature on hospitality education, which stresses the significance of soft skills acquisition. Capua (2024) [6] emphasized that "communication and teamwork are crucial competencies for success in hospitality." However, many hospitality programs have been found by Razalan *et al.* in 2021 to "fail to seamlessly integrate soft skills training into the curriculum in ways that mirror industry expectations." The industry's lower rating in this study reflects this challenge, as employers may feel that students do not receive adequate hands-on exposure to actual collaborative environments.

The higher rating by teachers might be an indication of teacher confidence in the curriculum's design, probably comprising activities such as group projects, presentations, and role-playing. This is supported by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory from 1984, which was coined to exemplify interactive and hands-on activities that would develop interpersonal skills. However, the lower rating from students and industry professionals suggests that these activities do not always mirror practical work situations.

Raybould and Wilkins reported that there are gaps between academia and industry needs in soft skills when it comes to the curriculum, reflecting students' strengths in having theoretical knowledge on teamwork and communication but weaknesses in the actual application of these skills. This is mirrored with the ratings in the industry, at 3.52. Thus, the curriculum must be able to provide more practical opportunities as it relates to the workplace situation where students can undergo experience in communication and teamwork.

**Table 3.11:** Confidence in performing at the workplace

<b>Confidence in performing at the workplace.</b>	<b>Students WM</b>	<b>Teachers WM</b>	<b>Industry WM</b>	<b>Combined WM</b>	<b>Verbal Description</b>
1. I am confident that I can work in a hospitality industry workplace and perform all tasks and tackle problems specific to my job.	3.91	4.40	3.50	3.94	Agree
2. The program is designed to equip me with the skills to handle any problem that may arise in the working place.	3.73	4.33	3.70	3.92	Agree
3. The skills learned from this course will be able to overcome problems arising in the job itself.	3.88	4.40	3.80	4.03	Agree
4. I am certain of my knowledge in technical inputs so that I can behave appropriately in all hospitality operations whether food preparation or serving to guests.	3.87	4.47	3.80	4.04	Agree
5. I am sure that I can better communicate with colleagues and visitors during the working hours.	3.88	4.33	3.70	3.97	Agree
<b>Combined Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>4.39</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree;2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.11 presents the combined overall weighted mean is 3.98 that accounts the general agreement on students' confidence in performing tasks in the hospitality workplace. The highest rating was shown by teachers who rated their confidence with a Weighted Mean of 4.39, reflecting that they really believe that the program can prepare students for challenges on the workplace. Student gave ratings about their confidence level with a weighted mean of 3.85, manifested moderate agreement. The lowest rating given was by the industry professionals, 3.70, which indicates that while the program gave a good foundation, there might be gaps in addressing workplace-specific requirements entirely. Consensus for the combined overall weighted mean at 3.98 remains that the curriculum is equipping the students well

for confident performance in hospitality workplaces. Teachers demonstrated the highest confidence, giving the program a Weighted Mean at 4.39, indicating utmost confidence in being able to prepare students to meet the demands of any workplace. Students, having a Weighted Mean of 3.85, were moderately confident, indicating they still feel ready to complete but have areas for improvement. Industry operators gave the lowest rating, a 3.70, suggesting that though the curriculum covers necessary skills, it may not fully match up to the practical needs of the hospitality industry.

The strongest area of the curriculum in terms of student ratings goes to their confidence in their technical knowledge and ability to behave appropriately in hospitality operations



concerning food preparation and guest service (Combined Mean: 4.04). This would indicate the program is fulfilling the base technical skills, but the lowest ranked is the handling workplace challenges with a Combined Mean of 3.92, which points to the gaps in the curriculum concerning the proper development of advanced-level problem-solving skills on real-life scenarios.

The findings align with key insights emphasizing the importance of balancing technical and soft skills in hospitality education. Capua (2024) [6] highlights that hospitality programs must equip students with the confidence to tackle both routine and unpredictable challenges in the workplace. The good ratings reported by the teachers reflect a level of confidence in the curricular

design, indicating alignment with academic and industry standards, which are components well discussed in Ornstein and Hunkins (2017), talking about Competency-Based Education.

Sebby and Brown (2020) [7] noted that the confidence in workplace performance is significantly enhanced through exposure to high-pressure environments as well as mentorship opportunities where students can apply their skills in real-life settings. A lower rating from the industry gives a recommendation to the curriculum that will call for increased direct contact by the course with industry partners so students can be prepared to deal with the dynamic challenges of hospitality operations.

**Table 3.12: Familiarity with industry specific tools and technologies**

<b>Familiarity with industry specific tools and technologies</b>	<b>Students WM</b>	<b>Teachers WM</b>	<b>Industry WM</b>	<b>Combined WM</b>	<b>Verbal Description</b>
1. I am flexible in using industry-specific tools and technologies compared to that of the hospitality field.	3.84	4.47	3.70	4.00	Agree
2. This program really exposed me to a good exposure of tools and hospitality industry technology.	3.73	4.40	3.20	3.78	Agree
3. Confident to apply the industry-specific tools and technologies.	3.88	4.60	3.40	3.96	Agree
4. The most current up-to-date Hospitality practices trained on are Industry-specific tools and technologies.	3.82	4.40	3.50	3.91	Agree
5. Better preparation for work if considered in the curriculum - industry-specific tools and technologies.	3.91	4.47	3.90	4.09	Agree
<b>Combined overall weighted mean</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>4.47</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend: 4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree; 2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.12 shows the combined overall weighted mean is 3.95, which generally indicates agreement regarding familiarity with industry-specific tools and technologies. The Highest Weighted Mean is 4.47, represented by teachers, suggesting that this group of participants feels the program adequately equips students with the tools and technologies needed for the hospitality industry. The Lowest Weighted Mean is 3.54, which the industry professionals reported, indicating that they feel a gap in the alignment of the program with the current industry tools and technologies. Students rated the program with a Weighted Mean of 3.84, showing them to be moderately confident about the exposure and ability to apply industry-specific tools and technologies.

A combined overall weighted mean of 3.95 conveys a general perception that the program provides industry-specific tools and technologies to the students with effective exposure, but there is a variation in opinions among the three groups:

Teachers rated the program the highest, with a Weighted Mean of 4.47, reflecting their confidence in the curriculum's ability to equip students with the necessary tools and technologies required in the hospitality industry. This high rating may be due to teachers' deeper understanding of the

curriculum's design and its alignment with industry standards.

Students presented a Weighted Mean of 3.84, meaning they agree that the program exposes them to industry-specific tools and technologies but may indicate they don't feel the same level of exposure to those tools and technologies as they would in an actual workplace. They might also feel less confident in their ability to use these tools effectively on the job.

The least rating was given by industry professionals with 3.54, implying that they might find a big gap between what is taught in the curriculum of tools and technologies and what is required in the industry. This can mean that industry professionals feel that the program does not reflect the latest developments in hospitality technologies or tools currently in practice in the field.

According to Sebby and Brown (2020) [7], experiential learning opportunities such as an internship, industry collaboration, and real-world simulation are essential for equipping the students with hands-on knowledge and skills to use industry tools effectively. This implies that the program probably needs more direct cooperation with the industry for the students to use the latest technology and tools the moment they join the program.

**Table 3.13:** Self-rated employability in the hospitality industry

Self-rated employability in the hospitality industry.	Students	Teachers	Industry	Combined	Verbal
	WM	WM	WM	WM	Description
1. With the degree and training that I had, I am sure that upon graduation, I would be employed in the hospitality industry.	3.84	4.40	3.90	4.05	Agree
2. As earned, the education gained shall be sufficient to meet the needs and expectations of employers in the hospitality industry.	3.92	4.60	3.50	4.01	Agree
3. The skills and knowledge gained will be as good as those from the competition for hospitality industry jobs.	3.97	4.40	3.60	3.99	Agree
4. By graduation time, I will be prepared and ready to serve at entry-level positions in the hospitality industry.	3.96	4.40	3.60	3.99	Agree
5. The program will have provided me with sufficient support and training which will help to increase my employability in the hospitality industry.	3.99	4.40	4.00	4.13	Agree
<b>Combined Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:4.20-5.0 Strongly Agree; 4.19- 4.20 Agree;2.60- 3.39 Neutral; 1.80- 2.59 Disagree; 1.00- 1.79 Strongly Disagree

Table 3.13 shows combined overall weighted mean of 4.03, showing that the general agreement concerning self-rated employability in the hospitality industry is found. The highest weighted mean is 4.44, which was reported by teachers, indicating the latter is the most confident with the program's capability to prepare graduates for the hospitality industry. There is an Industry Professional's lowest weighted mean of 3.72, reflecting industry professionals' perception that there is a gap between program provision and the needs and expectations of industry, specifically on employability. In terms of how they rated their employability, it was at 3.94, reflecting moderate confidence in readiness for the workforce.

A combined overall weighted mean of 4.03 suggests a general agreement among the respondents, the students, teachers, and industry professionals about the fact that the hospitality program prepares students for employment in the industry. However, there are noticeable differences in perception:

Teachers provided the highest rating, with a Weighted Mean of 4.44, reflecting their strong belief in the program's ability to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary for employment. Teachers are often more familiar with the curriculum and have a broader perspective on its alignment with industry standards, which may explain their more positive assessment.

Students have a weighted mean of 3.94 with moderate confidence in their employability. This means the rating of the students' confidence, though to an extent favorable regarding employment readiness, there may still be a bit of apprehension over whether the curriculum is sufficient or not. Students might believe that curricular initiatives, for example, hands-on experience or practice of skills applied should be enhanced to levels of expectation from industry.

Program ratings from industry professionals were lower, with a Weighted Mean of 3.72, suggesting that students may not be as ready for real hospitality jobs as both teachers and students perceive. This rating may suggest an apparent discrepancy between the support provided by the curriculum and the needs of employers, particularly about adequate practical experience, newer technical skills, and proper communication skills for a workplace setting.

The gap in ratings among teachers, students, and industry

members reflects a similar scenario encountered in the literature that according to Capua (2024) [6], hospitality programs should find a balance between offering theoretical knowledge for which students are being prepared and equipping them with practical skills necessary to answer the expectations of the industry. Teachers' high rating suggests that the curriculum covers adequately the theoretical concepts and thus serves as a basis for a strong education. Lower ratings from the students and industry professionals indicate that there is a need for more practical application, simulation, internships, and on-site experience for students. This is because Razalan *et al.* (2021) stipulated that "current hospitality programs often fail to integrate hands-on and practical training in the components of hospitality in ways that reflect real-life situations". The low ratings by students could be associated with the lack of preparation that students feel they need to face the challenges and expectations of the hospitality industry, more so based on theoretical underpinnings.

The lower rating by industry professionals that is 3.72 reflects the same concerns by employers, according to Raybould and Wilkin since students fail to bridge the gap between training as provided in academia and its application in the industry. In most cases, this largely, happens with respect to practical, up-to-date technologies, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills that characterize the hospitality field. As Sebyy and Brown (2020) [7] have also noted, the program should more directly collaborate with the industry partners to equip the students with the latest tools and technologies they will encounter in the workplace.

To better align the curriculum, it should give more attention to offering more realistic, hands-on experiences like internships, industry-sponsored projects, and so on, along with feedback from partners within the industry. Infusion of real-world scenarios throughout the program can thus help to end discrepancies between preparation in academia and what is needed to be developed for employment in the hospitality industry, as implied by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory.

**4. Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and their job readiness?**

**Table 3.14:** Correlation and Job Readiness

Correlations		Job Readiness				
Profile		The technical skills delivered	Soft skills that include communication and teamwork skills	Confidence in performing at the workplace	Familiarity with industry-specific tools and technologies	Self-rated employability in the hospitality industry
Age	Correlation Coefficient	-.012	-.020	.030	.005	-.063
	p-value	.921	.868	.797	.966	.590
Year Level	Correlation Coefficient	.213	.222	.350**	.210	.172
	p-value	.066	.055	.002	.071	.139
Degree Programs	Correlation Coefficient	-.087	-.034	.032	.027	-.122
	p-value	.460	.769	.783	.818	.299

Table 4 analysis indicated that Year Level had a significant relationship with Confidence in Performing at the Workplace with a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.350$  and a p-value of 0.002, which is clearly statistically significant at a level of 0.01. This implies that as the students advance in their years, their level of confidence in performing tasks required in the hospitality industry also increases. More importantly, it shows that the only variable that correlates significantly with the confidence of students in their workplace is year level.

The r-value obtained here is 0.350 indicating the relationship between year levels and confidence at the workplace as positive moderate. This suggests that as students' progress in their learning, they tend to become more confident about their ability to function effectively in the real world of work, concerning any kind of hospitality. The p-value of 0.002 confirms that this relationship is statistically significant, meaning it is unlikely to have occurred by chance and points to a real connection between students' progression through their academic program and their self-assessed confidence in their job readiness.

This data implies that confidence increases with the increase in experience and exposure through the course of an academic career. In higher year levels, students learn through more hands-on, practical approaches that help them feel more confident in their ability to perform workplace tasks. As the only factor with significant correlations for confidence, this supports the idea that progression in the

academic year, and subsequent exposure to relevant coursework as well as other practical training, directly relates to students' self-assessments of their readiness to enter the workplace.

Such a finding aligns well with literature in student development in hospitality education, as it was found that year level is significantly correlated with confidence to perform at the workplace. Indeed, Capua (2024) [6] found that students in higher year levels tend to develop stronger confidence in their industry skills because they accumulate both theoretical knowledge and practical experience with further advancement through their studies. This is consistent with the growing confidence also seen in this study as students in the later years are more exposed to more sophisticated concepts, technical skills, and industry-specific scenarios, which increase their ease of comfort in real workplace environments.

Sebby and Brown (2020) [7] also stated that, hospitality students that get early exposure to industry practices and who engage in work experience or internships by their last year go to work with more confidence. This is consistent with the notion that year-level progression in conjunction with increased exposure to the industry, builds greater confidence in the completion of job-related tasks.

**5. Is there a significant relationship between curriculum design and job readiness?**

**Table 3.15:** Curriculum and Job Readiness

Curriculum		Job Readiness				
Correlations		The technical skills delivered	Soft skills that include communication and teamwork skills	Confidence in performing at the workplace	Familiarity with industry-specific tools and technologies	Self-rated employability in the hospitality industry
Objectives	correlation coefficient	.562**	.697**	.683**	.654**	.719**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Contents	correlation coefficient	.660**	.739**	.703**	.713**	.766**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Methods	correlation coefficient	.756**	.788**	.566**	.566**	.605**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Evaluation	correlation coefficient	.752**	.760**	.611**	.591**	.600**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Alignment with Industry Needs	correlation coefficient	.773**	.768**	.701**	.731**	.770**
	p-value	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 5 presents the correlation coefficients and the corresponding p-values for all aspects of the curriculum: Objectives, Contents, Methods, Evaluation, and Alignment with Industry Needs, in comparison with all the job readiness factors listed: Technical skills, soft skills, confidence in performing at the workplace, knowledge of industry-specific tools and technologies, and self-rated employability in the hospitality industry. All correlations are statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000.

The highest correlations are demonstrated by alignment with industry needs, ranging from  $r = 0.773$  for technical skills to  $r = 0.770$  for self-rated employability, both statistically significant at  $p = 0.000$ . This underscores the critical importance of aligning the curriculum with industry requirements to enhance job readiness. Research by Capua (2024) [6] similarly emphasizes that industry-aligned curricula equip students with the competencies demanded by employers, ensuring their preparedness for the dynamic needs of the hospitality sector.

Methods yield the second-to-highest correlation levels, ranging from  $r = 0.756$  for technical skills to  $r = 0.788$  for soft skills. This shows that teaching methods are effective in developing technical and soft skills more effectively toward gaining hospitality employees' success.

Contents yield moderate correlation levels, ranging from  $r = 0.660$  for technical skills to  $r = 0.766$  for self-rated employability. Curriculum content has a significant contribution toward preparing students for the job market.

Objectives show the second lowest correlations, ranging from  $r = 0.562$  (technical skills) to  $r = 0.719$  (self-rated employability), which point out the salience of specific curriculum objectives in building readiness to work.

Evaluation shares the lowest correlations ranging from  $r = 0.752$  (technical skills) to  $r = 0.600$  (self-rated employability). This suggests that assessment techniques help in developing technical and soft skills of learners.

The study reveals significant positive correlations among various aspects of the curriculum (objectives, contents, methods, evaluation, and alignment with industry needs) and job readiness factors like technical skills, soft skills (communication and teamwork), and confidence in performing at the workplace, familiarity with industry-specific tools and technologies, and self-rated employability in the hospitality industry. The correlations, ranked from the largest to the smallest, indicate that curriculum elements that are aligned with industry standards have the most impact on job readiness.

Alignment with Industry Needs ( $r = 0.773$  to  $r = 0.770$ ) had the highest-ranking correlation with technical skills and self-rated employability. This means that the students are better when the curriculum is aligned with the needs of the industry in the present and future. Consonance with the requirements of the industry allows the increase of technical competency along with building confidence and the perceived employability of the students. When students' learning closely matches changing needs in the industry, students are much better prepared for industry. Capua (2024) [6] emphasized that a curriculum designed with the strong industry alignment ensures students attain competencies to achieve success in changing professional contexts to improve employability readiness.

Methods ( $r = 0.756$  to  $r = 0.788$ ) the second-highest correlations were in methods, where soft skills like communication and teamwork were highly correlated ( $r =$

0.788). This indicates that the teaching methods adopted in the curriculum, which include active learning strategies such as group work, case studies, role-playing, and problem-solving exercises, are very effective in enhancing students' soft skills. In any given industry where interactions and participative learning are encouraged, communications, collaborations, and problem-solving skills become the keys to unlocking success in the hospitality industry. These findings resonate well with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory in 1984, wherein it was noted that experiences that involved hands-on and interactive learning would increase students' skills and readiness for applying their knowledge in real-world challenges.

Contents ( $r = 0.660$  to  $r = 0.766$ ), self-rated employability shows the highest relationships between variables; curriculum contents recorded third-high correlations. This implies that the delivery of the curriculum's theoretical knowledge and practical applications has a direct effect on students' confidence levels in their job acquisition. Students are better prepared for employment and can perform according to professional standards after graduation when content is aligned with industry-specific skills and knowledge. Raybould and Wilkins also emphasize that an industry-focused curriculum content builds confidence and prepares students to face the challenges of the workplace better.

Objectives ( $r = 0.562$  to  $r = 0.719$ ) were also the fourth highest in correlation, with the strongest correlation being for self-rated employability at  $r = 0.719$ . The results indicate that clearly defined learning objectives prepare the students for well-defined expectations and objectives and arm them with appropriate skills and knowledge for work. A clear curriculum definition in terms of its objectives makes the students aware of what is expected from them and how they will be evaluated to improve their readiness for the job. As Seby and Brown (2020) [7] put it, clear goals act as a guide for students, guiding them through their learning process and keeping them on track with the needs of the industry.

Assessment ( $r = 0.752$  to  $r = 0.600$ ) even though assessment has the lowest correlations, it still has a positive effect on job readiness, especially in terms of technical skills development ( $r = 0.752$ ) and soft skills ( $r = 0.760$ ). Assessment methods in the curriculum, therefore, are exam, project, presentation, and a practical task that will gauge whether students have gained the capabilities. However, this moderate level of correlation with self-assessed employability suggests there is a greater need to make the assessment method more responsive to real life in its application, thereby bringing out authentic preparedness for work. This is according to Razalan *et al.* (2021), who posit that assessments should simulate industry environments to ensure students are ready for professional roles right away after graduation. The findings of this study are well aligned with the existing literature on the importance of curriculum alignment with industry needs for enhancing job readiness. Such studies as those of Capua (2024) [6] are motivated by the idea that curricula consisting of industry-relevant content, tools, and practices give students the skills to succeed in the job market. The positive correlation between alignment with industry needs and job-readiness factors in this study confirms the critical role of industry-specific knowledge in preparing students for the workforce.

The significant relationship between curriculum content and self-rated employability also echoes the finding from



Razalan *et al.* (2021), who, based on their argument, postulated that the students who receive training that is aligned with industry standards will be ready to enter the industry. The relevance of the content being in accordance with industry tools and practices increases students' job readiness and employability, a fact reflected in high correlation with ratings from employability.

Sebby and Brown (2020)<sup>[7]</sup> also mention the need for well-defined objectives to facilitate learning and effective evaluation to adequately prepare students for their jobs. While the present findings indicate that well-defined objectives helped the students learn and gain skills, appropriate assessments assisted them in showing proof of their mastery. Though correlations are a bit lower with evaluation and objectives, they again point to these elements as constituents that shape employability.

## 6. What curriculum design in Hotel and Restaurant Services program maybe proposed based on the findings of the study?

Using the collected data and the presentation of the results gathered, a proposed curriculum framework for Hotel and Restaurant Services may follow this design with an emphasis on the following: Industry need alignment, practical application, and readiness for the hospitality workforce:

### 1. Improved Practical Training and Real-world Experience

**Extensive Field Practice:** Provide more extensive internship opportunities, job rotations, and on-site training activities to let students engage in skills that directly practice their chosen career roles. Data in the exercise scores found that practical exercises were among the highest rated by students and teachers, which proved that the curriculum contributes positively to the real-world confidence and better workplace preparation required of students.

**Simulation and Experiential Activities:** Offer the mock hotel or restaurant settings where students were immersed in simulations of real-world work, as this is a prominent weighted mean of 4.16-that reflects the words of Capua (2024)<sup>[6]</sup>, & Sebby & Brown's (2020)<sup>[7]</sup> suggestion for practical application towards workforce readiness.

### 2. Curricular Sensitivity to Industry Trends and Technology

**Industry-Aligned Tools and Technologies:** Expose students to currently used tools, including reservation systems, POS systems, and other hospitality software, with a 3.95 weighted mean for industry tool exposure. Include modules on web marketing and technology because technology adds to the relevance of curriculum and prepares students, according to study findings.

**Including Emerging Industry Issues:** This may be in issues such as sustainability, digital trend, and adaptability to changes in the industry. This has a basis in the weighted mean score of 4.19 for industry-relevant content as contended and proved with findings from Capua (2024)<sup>[6]</sup> and Razalan *et al.* (2021) on the need for change to move along with the pace of the industry.

### 3. Development of Soft Skills and Interpersonal Competencies

**Soft Skills Development:** This would be through communications, teaming, and customer service-activities.

These received a combined weighted mean of 3.98 for industry relevance, and projects on real communication scenarios, guest interactions, and teamwork exercises could reinforce the above areas in line with the focus Capua (2024)<sup>[6]</sup> places on industry-ready skills.

**Building Confidence at Work:** Since the weighted mean is 3.98 in the workplace, the curriculum should ensure workshops and practice through mock scenarios in handling customer relations, team dynamics, and workplace challenges.

## 4. Clear communication of Learning Objectives and Career Goals

**Define the Curriculum Purpose and Career Pathways:** Clearly lay out learning objectives and career outcomes for students so that they know how each module contributes to a specific set of industry roles. This was one area that needed improvement based on feedback from the students' point of view that goals were not always clearly communicated.

**Career Preparation Workshops:** Enhanced preparation for careers better resume building, interviewing skills, and job search skills culminate in giving more confidence to students at entry-level positions, with a high weighted mean score (4.13) on preparedness.

## 5. Continuous Curriculum Review and Industry Collaboration

**Regular Curriculum Review and Feedback Mechanism:** Curriculum updates will be worked upon with the help of feedback received from the students, faculty, and industry. This will ensure that the program is in line with the industrial standards and as per the needs of the emerging workforce. In one of the findings, more clarity and continued alignment would have been needed in the learning objectives. Regular review seems to be a key in such cases.

**Industry Advisory Board and Guest Speakers:** Form an advisory board consisting of hospitality professionals who can give input on the relevance of curriculum material, in addition to inviting guest speakers to present different subjects to introduce current trends and insights from the real world. This strategy is aligned with Capua (2024)<sup>[6]</sup>, Sebby & Brown (2020)<sup>[7]</sup>, and Razalan *et al.* (2021) findings that constant adaptation needs to be maintained to the industry standards.

## Conclusion

1. **Alignment with industry standards:** The curriculum design will be aligned with current industry standards in hospitality management and, therefore, able to equip students with the much-needed skills and knowledge required for effective management. Areas of improvement are, however, still left open by addressing the emerging trends that are sustainability and technological advances.
2. **Experiential Learning Impact:** Experiential learning through internships and simulations significantly contributes to job readiness, enhancing students' confidence and practical skills. Students closer to graduation report a higher level of perceived preparedness, validating the importance of hands-on experiences.
3. **Soft Skills Development:** Technical skills are well covered, but the areas of communication, teamwork, and problem-solving require much attention to match

industry expectations. Feedback from the industry employers is that these are essential skills to succeed at work.

4. **Curriculum Clarity and Access:** Students comment that despite clear curriculum objectives, more clarity can be provided regarding the relationships between these objectives and associated career paths. Such information would help the students achieve better understanding and motivation.
5. **Partnering with Stakeholders:** Good collaboration between learning centers and industry partners can support curriculum updates with relevant practice demands. Input from employers and alumni may further provide direction for improvement of specific programs.

### Recommendations

#### 1. Curriculum Update

The hospitality educational institution's modules on sustainability, digital tools, and customer-centric innovations to be included to remain in step with industry trends.

Review and update the course content periodically, using feedback from industry stakeholders and changing global standards.

#### 2. Better Practical Training

Increase the number of internship programs conducted in different hospitality settings: luxury and boutique establishments.

Advanced simulation labs for areas such as front desk operations and food service, near-real-world experiences

#### 3. Soft Skills Workshops:

Hospitality educational institutions may facilitate the conduct of workshops and role plays on emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, and customer service.

#### 4. Career Readiness Programs:

Resumes: Holding resume-building sessions, mock interviews, and career planning workshops to give students much more confidence and preparedness to secure jobs.

Entrepreneurial spirit: Entrepreneurship courses focused on hospitality management as means to encourage novel career streams.

#### 5. Strengthened Industry Partnerships:

Establish advisory boards that represent professionals in hospitality who offer frequent feedback about the pertinence of the curricula.

Hospitality education may include guest lectures and industry seminars should be conducted to make students aware of real-life problems and innovations.

#### 6. Technology Use:

Hospitality education may train students on current hospitality technologies, including property management systems, customer relationship tools, and digital marketing platforms.

Use case studies involving technology-based hospitality solutions.

#### 7. Global Exposure:

Hospitality education may promote international internships, student exchange programs, and participation in global competitions for better exposure to a globalized industry.

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