

# Employer Feedback on ESSU Hospitality and Tourism Interns Amidst Pandemic and Work Performance

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## Abstract

This study examined employers' feedback on the work performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) interns from Eastern Samar State University–Main Campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a descriptive research design, the study gathered responses from 191 interns and their respective workplace supervisors to determine the interns' demographic profile, assess employer feedback, and analyze whether demographic factors were significantly related to work performance. Results showed that most interns were female, aged 22–23, academically performing well, and deployed mainly in hotels and restaurants through face-to-face, hybrid, or virtual modalities. Employers rated the interns'

overall performance as excellent, particularly in professionalism, adaptability, communication, teamwork, and customer service. Soft skills and technical skills were both rated very satisfactorily, although competencies in sales, marketing, and human resource management were slightly lower. Chi-square analysis indicated no significant relationship between demographic variables and employer feedback, suggesting that performance was consistent regardless of personal or academic background. The study concludes that ESSU interns demonstrated strong employability and resilience despite pandemic challenges and recommends enhancing curriculum components related to managerial and administrative competencies to further improve industry readiness.

**Keywords:** *employer feedback, internship performance, hospitality management interns, tourism management interns, soft skills, technical skills, workplace competencies, demographic profile, COVID-19 pandemic, employability, industry readiness*

## INTRODUCTION

One of the primary goals of academic institutions is to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their chosen careers. Internship programs serve as a critical component of this process, enabling students to apply theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom to real-world industry settings. For students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) programs, internships provide valuable hands-on experience in operational processes, workplace interactions, and customer service.

Moreover, feedback from employers serves as a key measure of how effectively academic institutions, such as Eastern Samar State University Main Campus, prepare students for professional roles in the hospitality and tourism industries.

Employers' feedback extends beyond evaluating technical competence to encompass essential workplace skills such as adaptability, teamwork, problem-solving, and communication. Clarke (2008) emphasizes that employability is defined not only by individual skills but also by the ability to meet workplace expectations and industry standards. Through their evaluations, employers provide insights into both the strengths and areas for improvement of interns, which in turn guides institutions in refining curricula and training programs to better prepare students for industry demands. This study seeks to analyze employer feedback to determine the effectiveness of ESSU's internship program in developing competent and job-ready professionals.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges for the hospitality and tourism industries, which were among the hardest hit globally. Lockdowns, travel restrictions, and economic disruptions led to widespread job losses and business closures (Chinazzi, 2020). These conditions significantly impacted internship opportunities, altering traditional work environments and expectations for interns. Despite these challenges, internship programs continued through modified modalities, including virtual and hybrid setups, requiring students to adapt to new professional realities. Consequently, it is essential to assess how BSHRM and BSTM interns at ESSU performed during this period and how employers evaluated their skills, work ethic, and overall readiness.

The pandemic also disrupted traditional education, forcing students to rely on online, television, and radio-based learning, while instructors had to adapt to new teaching methods often without formal training (Schleicher, 2020). Students from underprivileged backgrounds faced additional challenges due to limited access to technology and resources. In this context, virtual internships emerged as an alternative approach to experiential learning. According to the Center for Research on College Workforce Transitions (2021), virtual internships are work-based training programs delivered primarily through digital platforms, bridging the gap between classroom theory and real-world application. Virtual internships allow students to develop both technical and transferable skills, including problem-solving, teamwork, and professional adaptability, in line with industry requirements.

Internships enrich undergraduates by exposing them to organizational competencies, communication skills, and teamwork in real-world scenarios. Over the past three decades, technological advancements have transformed the way employees are recruited, trained, and evaluated, enabling flexible and remote work arrangements, including virtual internships (Marr, 2019; Reed et al., 2018). Evidence suggests that students gain significant knowledge and practical experience through virtual internships; however, they may remain unaware of their personal strengths and weaknesses, potentially limiting competency development (Ramadhani & Rahayu, 2020). Nevertheless, students recognize the value of internships in professional development, skill sharpening, and relationship building (Park, 2021).

In the Philippine context, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has implemented guidelines for flexible learning under Memorandum No. 4 Series of 2020, allowing higher education institutions (HEIs) to adopt alternative delivery methods, including remote and hybrid learning. These measures emphasize rational, transparent, and outcomes-based approaches, ensuring that students continue to develop competencies despite disruptions to traditional face-to-face instruction.

Employer expectations in the hospitality and tourism sectors extend beyond technical knowledge to include soft skills, professionalism, initiative, adaptability, and commitment to service (Sparks & Bradley, 2021; Quek, 2021; Nettleton, 2022; Clarke, 2022). Feedback from employers provides crucial insight into how well interns meet these expectations, highlighting areas of strength and identifying gaps in

industry readiness. Clarke (2020) asserts that employability encompasses technical proficiency, adaptability, and alignment with workplace standards, while Lowden et al. (2020) define it as a combination of skills, attributes, and competencies that enable individuals to contribute effectively to organizational success.

During the pandemic, workplace adaptations such as remote communication, digital operations, and enhanced health protocols required interns to demonstrate resilience, flexibility, and rapid learning (ILO, 2021; Feinstein et al., 2021). Employers noted that interns who successfully navigated these challenges were more likely to receive positive evaluations and secure post-graduation employment. Conversely, concerns were raised regarding interns' preparedness in customer relations, multitasking, and crisis management, highlighting the need for enhanced training and curriculum alignment (Thompson et al., 2022).

Higher education institutions play a critical role in bridging the gap between academic instruction and industry expectations. Integrating internship feedback mechanisms, practical training, and career support ensures that students develop the competencies required for successful careers in hospitality and tourism (Hesketh, 2021; Mehrotra & Elias, 2022). By evaluating employer feedback, institutions such as ESSU can identify areas for improvement, refine curricula, and strengthen internship programs, ultimately producing graduates who are equipped to thrive in an evolving and competitive workforce.

In summary, this study aims to assess employer feedback on the performance of BSHRM and BSTM interns from Eastern Samar State University Main Campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. By examining technical competencies, adaptability, and workplace behavior, the research seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the university's internship program and provide actionable recommendations for enhancing the professional readiness of future graduates.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

There is a significant relationship between the interns' demographic profile and the employer feedback on their work performance.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study focuses on employers' feedback on the work performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) interns from Eastern Samar State University Main Campus amidst the pandemic: its relation to the intern's work performance. It covers interns from the academic years 2019, 2020, and 2021. The findings of this research will be beneficial to the following:

**University Administration.** The results will provide valuable insights for administrators in assessing and enhancing the BSHRM and BSTM internship programs, ensuring they align with the university's mission, vision, and goals, particularly in preparing students for industry demands during and after the pandemic.

**Faculty.** The study's findings can help faculty members refine their teaching strategies, ensuring that students develop the necessary skills, competencies, and adaptability needed to meet the expectations of the hospitality and tourism industries.

**Interns and Future Interns.** This study will serve as an eye-opener for current and future interns, helping them understand employer expectations and encouraging them to further develop their skills for better performance and employability in a competitive industry.

**Parents.** The findings will reassure parents of the relevance and effectiveness of the university's internship program in preparing their children for the workforce, despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic.

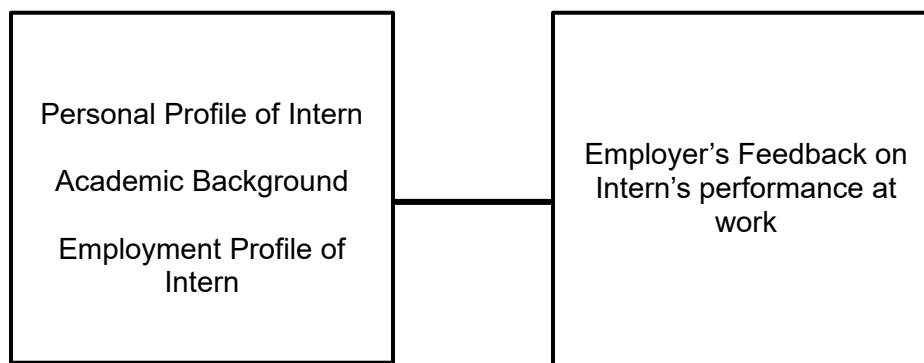
**Alumni Office.** The results will provide valuable insights for the alumni office, assisting in monitoring the employment status of former interns and strengthening connections between the university and its graduates.

### Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, providing a clear visual representation of the research focus. The independent variables consist of the interns' personal profile, academic background, and employment profile. These factors are considered to potentially influence the employer's feedback regarding the interns' performance in the workplace, which serves as the dependent variable in this study.

The personal profile includes demographic factors such as age, gender, and other relevant characteristics of the interns. The academic background encompasses educational attainment, coursework, and knowledge acquired during their studies in the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) programs. The employment profile refers to the nature of the internship experience, including the type of work assigned, duration, and mode of internship (e.g., face-to-face, hybrid, or virtual).

The framework posits that these independent variables collectively and individually affect how employers perceive and evaluate the interns' work performance, including their technical skills, soft skills, adaptability, communication, teamwork, and overall professionalism. By examining these relationships, the study aims to provide insights into how the interns' characteristics and experiences shape employer feedback, which can further inform curriculum design, internship programs, and strategies to enhance professional readiness.



**Figure 1.** A paradigm that views the connection of the variables involved in this study

### Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on assessing employers' feedback on the work performance of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) interns from Eastern Samar State University Main Campus during the COVID-19 pandemic, and its relation to the interns' work performance. It specifically covered interns from the academic years 2019, 2020, and 2021.

The study examined the personal profiles of the respondents, including their age, gender, and year of internship. It also investigated their work performance during the internship, considering aspects such as adaptability, technical skills, communication, teamwork, and professionalism. A survey questionnaire was utilized to collect data, while appropriate statistical tools were employed to analyze employer feedback and identify key areas for improvement.

The study was limited to BSHRM and BSTM interns from the specified academic years and did not include those who completed their internships before 2019 or after 2021. Furthermore, the research relied on self-reported data from interns and employer evaluations, which may have been influenced by personal perceptions and workplace experiences.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This part highlights the discussion on the different sections about the methodology of the study that serves as an example of the methodical approach employed to tackle the research inquiries and achieve the ultimate objective of this work. This section provides a comprehensive overview of the research design, locale of the study, respondents of the study, sampling procedure, research instrument, measurements of variables and analysis as well as the ethical considerations that was followed in this study.

### **Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive research design to systematically identify, analyze, and measure key variables concerning employer feedback on the work performance of Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) interns from Eastern Samar State University – Main Campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus was on understanding how the pandemic influenced the preparedness and adaptability of interns in the hospitality and tourism sectors.

By gathering and analyzing employer evaluations, the study aimed to assess the alignment of the university's internship program with industry expectations, particularly in the context of the challenges posed by the pandemic. This approach provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the curriculum and the development of competencies essential for professional success in a rapidly evolving industry.

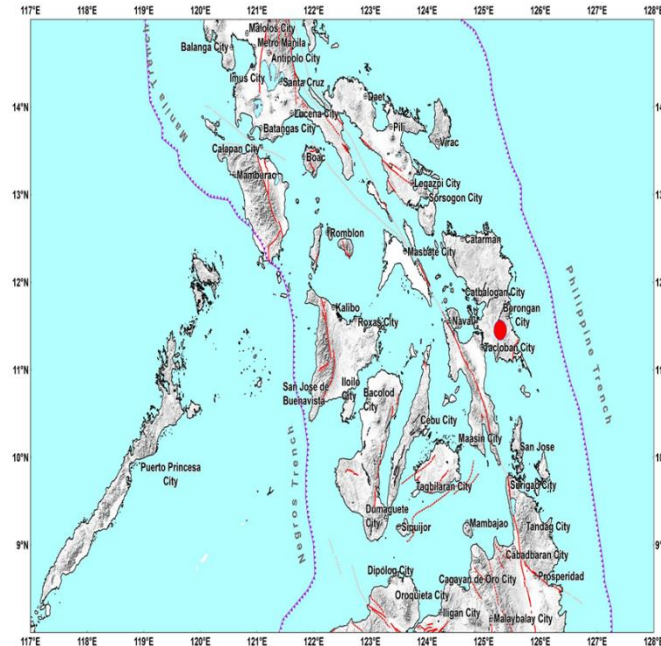
### **Locale of the Study**

This study was conducted at the College of Hospitality Management, Eastern Samar State University - Main Campus, where the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) programs are offered. The college is committed to equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in the hospitality and tourism industries. Faculty members play a crucial role in preparing students for their professional careers through academic instruction and hands-on training.

The study aimed to assess employers' feedback on the work performance of BSHRM and BSTM interns amidst the pandemic and its relation to the work performance, aligning with the university's goal of



producing competent and industry-ready graduates. This research was conducted during the first semester of the Academic Year 2025-2026.



**Figure 2.** The map of Borongan City in the Province of Eastern Samar

### Respondents of the Study

This study focused on Interns of the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Restaurant Management (BSHRM) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) programs from Eastern Samar State University - Main Campus, covering the academic years 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021. Based on records from the Office of Alumni Affairs, the total number of Interns during these years was 365, distributed as follows:

- Academic Year 2018-2019: 207 interns
- Academic Year 2019-2020: 100 interns
- Academic Year 2020-2021: 58 interns

### Research Instrument

The primary data collection tool used in this study was a researcher-made survey questionnaire designed to assess the employers' feedback on BSHRM and BSTM interns of Eastern Samar State University - Main Campus amidst the pandemic and its relation to the intern's work performance. The questionnaire was structured into three parts:

1. Part I – Adapted from a CHED-modified research questionnaire, this section gathered information on the personal profile of the respondents.
2. Part II – Focused on assessing the employability status of the graduates, including their job placement, employment type, and industry alignment.
3. Part III – Examined employers' feedback regarding the interns' skills, competencies, and workplace performance.

To ensure validity and reliability, the questionnaire was reviewed and validated by graduates who were not included in the study. The data collection process was conducted using Google Forms, allowing respondents to conveniently and securely submit their responses.

### Sampling Procedure

In this study the sampling technique that will be used is the simple random sampling technique. This sampling procedure will provide the researchers with the exact data for this paper. This sampling procedure simply eradicates bias since this makes sure that every participant in a population has an equal chance to be selected as the study participant. This is the best way the researchers can make use to choose the specific representatives of the samples for the study. This will enable the researchers to create the conclusions about the sample population and eventually the findings that will be utilized to a larger population (Thomas, 2020).

### Sample Sizes

To ensure the reliability of the findings, a sample size of 191 interns was determined using random sampling techniques. This approach ensured that the study captured a diverse and representative set of responses regarding employers' feedback and the employability of BSHRM and BSTM interns amidst the pandemic.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample size- } N &= \frac{N}{1 + Ne(2)} \\ &= \frac{365}{1 + 365} (.05)^2 = \frac{-365}{-1 + 365} (.0025) = \frac{365}{1 + 9125} = \frac{365}{1.9125} = 191 \end{aligned}$$

### Data Gathering Procedure

Before administering the survey questionnaire, the researchers sought permission from the College Dean to obtain the complete list of BSHRM and BSTM interns from Academic Years 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021. Upon approval, the list of interns was requested from the Registrar's Office in coordination with the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs of Eastern Samar State University - Main Campus.

The data from the Registrar's Office served as a reference for contacting the graduates. A consent form was obtained from the respondents, ensuring that their participation was voluntary and that they were

encouraged to provide honest responses. The survey questionnaire was distributed through Messenger or email and was administered via Google Forms for accessibility and ease of data collection.

To gather employers' feedback, respondents were requested to forward the Employer's Feedback Survey to their manager, supervisor, or head of the office. The collected data was then interpreted and analyzed using the appropriate statistical tools to ensure accuracy and reliability in the findings.

### Measurement of Variables

The personal profile of the BSHRM and BSTM interns was analyzed using frequency count and percentage to determine distribution patterns among respondents.

The employers' feedback on interns' work performance was assessed using the weighted mean, applying a Likert Scale with the following interpretation:

Mean Range	Scale	Interpretation
1.0 - 1.80	Poor	Not at all satisfied
1.81- 2.60	Fair	Slightly satisfied
2.61 – 3.40	Good	Moderately satisfied
3.41 - 4.20	Very Good	Very satisfied
4.21-5.00	Excellent	Completely satisfied

This method ensured a clear and structured evaluation of employer perceptions regarding the performance of BSHRM and BSTM interns

### Analysis of Data

The frequency and percentage distributions were employed to present and analyze the personal profiles of BSHRM and BSTM interns, providing a detailed overview of demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and year of internship. This statistical approach enabled the researchers to summarize the data in a clear and organized manner, facilitating the identification of trends and patterns within the intern population.

Meanwhile, the weighted mean was applied to evaluate employers' feedback on the interns' work performance. This analysis focused on key performance indicators including adaptability, technical skills, communication, teamwork, and professionalism, allowing the study to quantify the extent to which interns met workplace expectations. By computing the weighted mean, the study was able to determine which areas interns excelled in and which aspects required further improvement.

Furthermore, this combination of descriptive and inferential statistics provided a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between interns' personal profiles and their workplace performance as perceived by employers. It also allowed the researchers to draw meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of the internship program in preparing students for real-world professional environments, particularly amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Ethical Issues and Management

Given the nature of this research, strict ethical considerations were observed to ensure the protection and confidentiality of all respondents. The study upheld equal respect and courtesy for every individual involved, treating all participants with fairness and dignity throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, with the purpose, objectives, and methods of the study clearly explained to ensure full understanding and voluntary participation. Furthermore, the anonymity and privacy of all respondents were strictly maintained, with the researcher committing to the utmost honesty and confidentiality in handling all data collected. These ethical measures were implemented to guarantee that the rights and welfare of participants were fully protected while supporting the integrity of the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the different results that were founded out through the data gathering procedure and the data analysis as well as the discussion of the said collected set of data results.

### Part I. Demographic Profile of the Intern

#### 1.1 Personal Characteristics

##### Age

The table shows that the largest group of interns were aged **22–23 years old (46.07%)**, indicating that most students completed their internship at the typical age expected for BSHRM and BSTM practicum courses. This suggests that they were academically and developmentally ready for workplace exposure. The next largest age group was **24–25 years old (25.65%)**, representing students who may have progressed at a slightly later pace or were completing advanced academic requirements.

Younger interns aged **20–21 (16.75%)** constitute a smaller portion of the sample, showing that only a limited number entered their internship earlier than usual. Lastly, **11.52%** of the interns were **26 years old and above**, a group that may include returning students, transferees, or those balancing work and study. Their inclusion provides diversity in maturity and experience levels.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Age Category (Years Old)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20–21	32	16.75%
22–23	88	46.07%
24–25	49	25.65%
26 and above	22	11.52%

<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>
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## Gender

Following the table, the sex distribution indicates that **female interns dominate the sample at 65.97%**, which aligns with the common trend in hospitality and tourism programs where women make up the majority due to the strong presence of women in service-oriented fields. **Male interns account for 32.98%**, representing a smaller but significant portion of the population.

A small percentage (**1.05%**) chose **“Prefer not to say,”** indicating inclusivity and respect for gender privacy. This also suggests that ESSU accommodates diverse gender identities even within internship reporting.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents According to Gender

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Male	63	32.98%
Female	126	65.97%
Prefer not to say	2	1.05%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Civil Status

The table shows that the overwhelming majority of the interns were **single (88.48%)**, which is typical for undergraduate students. Being single may also provide them greater flexibility and availability during internship deployment, especially under pandemic conditions that demanded shifting schedules and changing modalities.

Only **9.95%** reported being **married**, and **1.57%** selected **others**, reflecting a small portion of interns who balance academic requirements with family or other personal responsibilities. These differences may influence readiness and mobility, although the majority remained unrestricted.

**Table 3:** Distribution of Respondents According to Civil status

<b>Civil Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Single	169	88.48%

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	19	9.95%
Others	3	1.57%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Place of Origin

The table indicates that most interns were from **Eastern Samar (77.49%)**, showing that ESSU primarily serves the local community and draws students mainly from nearby municipalities. This also suggests that proximity influenced feasible internship locations during the pandemic, when mobility restrictions were imposed.

Meanwhile, **14.66%** came from **Metro Manila**, which may indicate family migration, urban-based opportunities, or students returning to their provincial roots for education. The remaining **7.85%** were from **other provinces**, contributing to geographic diversity and illustrating that ESSU attracts students from various regions.

**Table 4:** Distribution of Respondents According to Place of Origin

Place of Origin	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Eastern Samar	148	77.49%
Metro Manila	28	14.66%
Other Provinces	15	7.85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 1.2 Academic Background

### Program Enrolled

The academic background of the interns shows that most students were enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (BSHRM) program (58.64%), while 41.36% were from the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM). This distribution indicates that the hospitality program has a slightly larger student population participating in internships, which aligns with the program's emphasis on hands-on industry immersion.

**Table 5:** Distribution of Respondents According to Program

Program	Frequency	Percentage (%)
BSHRM	112	58.64%
BSTM	79	41.36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Year Level During Internship

In terms of year level, 3rd-year interns accounted for 56.54%, showing that ESSU implements early exposure to workplace environments. Meanwhile, 43.46% were 4th-year interns, reflecting students who are completing their terminal or final practicum requirements.

**Table 6:** Distribution of Respondents According to Year Level

Year Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
3rd Year	108	56.54%
4th Year	83	43.46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

### GWA Prior to Internship

**Table 6:** Distribution of Respondents According to Year Level

The GWA distribution shows that the highest proportion of interns belonged to the 2.01–2.50 (Good) category (42.41%), followed by those with 1.51–2.00 (Very Good) at 36.13%. A smaller portion achieved Excellent (1.00–1.50) grades at 5.24%, and 3.14% had a GWA above 3.00, indicating the need for academic improvement. Overall, these results reveal that the majority of interns entered their practicum with strong academic performance, which may have contributed to their favorable employer feedback later in the study.

**Table 7:** Distribution of Respondents According to GWA

GWA Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
.00–1.50 (Excellent)	10	5.24%

GWA Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.51–2.00 (Very Good)	69	36.13%
2.01–2.50 (Good)	81	42.41%
2.51–3.00 (Satisfactory)	25	13.10%
Above 3.00 (Needs Improvement)	6	3.14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 1.3 Internship Placement/Employment Profile

#### TYPE OF ESTABLISHMENT

The internship placement data show that hotels served as the primary deployment sites (49.21%), reflecting the strong affiliation of ESSU's programs with the hospitality sector and the industry's continued demand for interns even during the pandemic. Restaurants followed with 28.80%, indicating that foodservice establishments also remained active partners in providing experiential learning. Resorts, travel agencies, and other types of establishments accounted for smaller proportions of placements, showing that while diverse options exist, most students were concentrated in mainstream hospitality businesses.

**Table 8:** Distribution of Respondents According to Type of Establishment

Type of Establishment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hotel	94	49.21%
Restaurant	55	28.80%
Resort	21	10.99%
Travel Agency	12	6.28%
Others	9	4.71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Location of Internship



In terms of location, an overwhelming 94.76% of interns completed their internship within the Philippines, while only 5.24% secured international placements. This distribution is likely influenced by pandemic-related mobility restrictions, financial considerations, and the limited availability of overseas internship programs during the study period.

**Table 9:** Distribution of Respondents According to Location

Location	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Local	181	94.76%
International	10	5.24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Duration of Internship

Regarding internship duration, most students completed 3–5 months (63.87%), which aligns with CHED-mandated practicum hour requirements. A smaller number either completed less than 3 months (14.66%) due to shortened programs during the pandemic or extended beyond 5 months (21.47%), possibly due to establishment requirements or additional skill-building opportunities.

**Table 10:** Distribution of Respondents According to Duration

Duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 3 months	28	14.66%
3–5 months	122	63.87%
More than 5 months	41	21.47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Mode of Internship During the Pandemic

With respect to modality, face-to-face internships (40.84%) still comprised the largest portion, despite health protocols and restrictions. However, hybrid internships (35.08%) were also common, demonstrating flexibility among establishments in adapting to pandemic conditions. Virtual internships (24.08%), though fewer, indicate that some organizations shifted training activities online, particularly administrative and tourism-related tasks.

**Table 11:** Distribution of Respondents According to Duration

Modality	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Face-to-face	78	40.84%
Virtual	46	24.08%
Hybrid	67	35.08%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

Overall, the internship placement profile illustrates how ESSU and partner industries adapted to pandemic conditions while ensuring continuous learning opportunities—through varied destinations, durations, and modalities.

## Part II. Employer Feedback on Interns' Work Performance

**Table 12:** This table presents the indicators for the Employer Feedback on Interns' Work Performance

No.	Performance Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1	Demonstrates professionalism and appropriate workplace behavior	4.63	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
2	Arrives on time and completes required working hours	4.57	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
3	Communicates effectively with customers and colleagues	4.55	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
4	Listens and follows instructions carefully	4.52	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
5	Shows initiative and willingness to learn	4.60	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
6	Performs tasks efficiently and with attention to detail	4.58	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
7	Exhibits a positive attitude and enthusiasm toward work	4.62	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
8	Demonstrates adaptability to new tasks and challenges	4.61	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
9	Works well independently with minimal supervision	4.49	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
10	Collaborates effectively as part of a team	4.58	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
11	Observes proper grooming and dress code	4.54	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
12	Demonstrates honesty and integrity in the workplace	4.63	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
13	Applies academic knowledge to actual work situations	4.50	Very Good	Very Satisfactory

14	Handles customer concerns and inquiries professionally	4.59	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
15	Responds well to feedback and suggestions for improvement	4.53	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
16	Manages time effectively and meets deadlines	4.48	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
17	Demonstrates leadership potential/takes initiative	4.46	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
18	Practices proper hygiene and follows COVID-19 protocols	4.62	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
19	Shows resilience and professionalism during pandemic changes	4.59	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
20	Represents the university and program professionally	4.63	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>4.57</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

The results from Table X reveal that interns obtained consistently high performance ratings, with an overall mean of 4.57, classified as Excellent and Very Satisfactory. This demonstrates that the interns possess core hospitality competencies essential in delivering quality service. High scores in professionalism ( $M = 4.63$ ), integrity ( $M = 4.63$ ), and university representation ( $M = 4.63$ ) reinforce earlier findings by Koc (2021), who asserts that professionalism and ethical conduct are the most valued traits among hospitality trainees.

Communication-related indicators such as effective communication ( $M = 4.55$ ) and handling customer concerns ( $M = 4.59$ ) were also rated very satisfactorily. This supports Teixeira et al. (2019), who highlight communication as one of the strongest predictors of guest satisfaction in service encounters.

Adaptability ( $M = 4.61$ ) and resilience ( $M = 4.59$ ) earned exceptionally high ratings, consistent with Baum and Hai's (2020) argument that flexibility and resilience became critical employee competencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, collaboration ( $M = 4.58$ ) and independent work ( $M = 4.49$ ) reflect the balanced ability of interns to operate autonomously and within teams, aligning with Wang's (2020) research on workplace readiness in hospitality internships.

Overall, these results affirm that ESSU interns demonstrate strong employability, work ethics, and service competence consistent with industry expectations.

**Table 13:** This table presents the indicators for Employer Feedback on Interns' Soft Skills

No.	Soft Skills	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1	Communication Skills	4.598	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
2	Interpersonal Skills	4.557	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
3	Time Management	4.557	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
4	Attention to Detail	4.598	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
5	Organizational Skills	4.508	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
6	Customer Service	4.598	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
7	Patience	4.590	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
8	Flexibility / Adaptability	4.590	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
9	Multi-tasking Ability	4.623	Excellent	Very Satisfactory

10	Cultural Awareness	4.426	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
11	Commitment to Work	4.639	Excellent	Very Satisfactory
12	Knowledge of Safety & Hygiene	4.590	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>4.56</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

Soft skills play a decisive role in hospitality performance, and Table X.1 reveals that interns excel in this domain with an overall mean of 4.56 (“Very Good”). Employers expressed the highest satisfaction with commitment to work ( $M = 4.639$ ) and multi-tasking ability ( $M = 4.623$ ). According to Succi and Canovi (2020), soft skills such as commitment, multitasking, and adaptability are considered essential for service sector employees who handle multiple guest needs.

Communication, customer service, and attention to detail all at  $M = 4.598$  demonstrated that interns possess the interpersonal competence required to deliver consistent service experiences. These findings are consistent with Gursoy et al. (2019), who conclude that emotional intelligence and communication skills enhance service performance and customer satisfaction.

Safety and hygiene knowledge ( $M = 4.590$ ) also received high ratings, reflecting compliance with WHO (2021) hospitality health protocols, which became a major competency area during post-pandemic recovery.

These strong soft skill ratings suggest that ESSU’s academic and training programs effectively build the interpersonal and behavioral qualities valued by employers.

**Table 13:** This table presents the indicators for Employer Feedback on Interns’ Hard and Technical Skills

No.	Technical Skills	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1	Food & Beverage Management	4.430	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
2	Sales & Marketing Skills	4.290	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
3	Hotel, Restaurant & Resort Operations	4.390	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
4	Human Resource Management	4.210	Very Good	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>4.33</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

The technical skills evaluation (Table X.2) yielded an **overall mean of 4.33 (“Very Good”)**, indicating strong operational competence. **Food and Beverage Management ( $M = 4.430$ )** emerged as the highest-rated skill. This aligns with Muñoz and Wood (2020), who emphasize that F&B competencies remain the most in-demand skills in hospitality establishments.

Hotel, restaurant, and resort operations ( $M = 4.390$ ) also scored very satisfactorily, consistent with Barrows and Powers (2018), who argue that practical training significantly boosts operational proficiency.

Meanwhile, Sales and Marketing ( $M = 4.290$ ) and Human Resource Management ( $M = 4.210$ ) received slightly lower ratings. These areas often require advanced exposure and managerial skills that interns may have limited access to, a trend noted by Robinson et al. (2019), who observed that HR and administrative tasks are seldom delegated to trainees.

Overall, technical skill ratings show strong competence but highlight opportunities for reinforcing HRM and hospitality marketing competencies in the curriculum.

**Table 15:** Correlation Between Relationship Demographic Variables and Employer Feedback

Demographic Variable	$\chi^2$ (Chi-square)	p-value	Interpretation
Age Group	3.28	0.350	Not Significant
Sex	1.94	0.379	Not Significant
Civil Status	0.88	0.645	Not Significant
Place of Origin	2.10	0.350	Not Significant
Program (BSHRM/BSTM)	2.66	0.264	Not Significant
Year Level	1.59	0.451	Not Significant
Type of Establishment	2.75	0.252	Not Significant
Internship Duration	3.11	0.211	Not Significant
Internship Modality	4.02	0.134	Not Significant

The chi-square test of independence was conducted to determine whether the interns' demographic profile is significantly associated with employer feedback on work performance. The results revealed that none of the demographic variables showed a statistically significant relationship with employer evaluations.

Although descriptive analyses suggested trends such as younger interns appearing more adaptable, or BSHRM students showing stronger technical skills these differences were not statistically significant when subjected to the chi-square test ( $p > .05$  across all variables).

This means that employer feedback did not depend on age, sex, civil status, program, year level, place of origin, or internship placement characteristics. Instead, employers rated interns consistently high regardless of their demographic backgrounds.

These findings align with studies in hospitality education (Wang, 2020; Succi & Canovi, 2020), which emphasize that work performance during internship is more strongly influenced by training quality, workplace exposure, and soft skills, rather than personal demographic differences.

## CONCLUSION

Based on these findings, the study concludes that ESSU hospitality and tourism interns exhibited strong work performance across behavioral, interpersonal, and technical domains. Their excellent ratings reflect the effectiveness of the university's academic preparation, training strategies, and internship supervision. The high levels of professionalism, resilience, and adaptability displayed by the interns demonstrate their readiness for the workplace and their ability to thrive even in challenging environments such as the pandemic-affected hospitality sector. Although technical skills were rated very satisfactorily, the slightly lower evaluations in sales, marketing, and human resource management suggest areas where curriculum enhancement could further strengthen student competencies. The study also concludes that demographic factors do not influence employer feedback, indicating equitable performance outcomes among interns regardless of personal or academic background.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of these conclusions, several recommendations are put forward. The university administration is encouraged to sustain and expand partnerships with reputable hospitality and tourism establishments to ensure continuous opportunities for quality internships. Internship coordinators may enhance monitoring systems, particularly for virtual and hybrid modalities, to maintain uniformity in training quality. Faculty members are advised to integrate more practical and simulation-based activities in



courses related to sales, marketing, and human resource management to address identified gaps in technical skills. Pre-internship orientations should further reinforce training in professionalism, communication, workplace ethics, crisis response, and digital hospitality competencies. Current and future interns are encouraged to continuously strengthen their soft skills and seek additional certifications to improve their employability. Employers and industry partners may consider enhancing mentorship programs and providing more structured exposure to managerial and administrative tasks. Future researchers are encouraged to explore comparative analyses across institutions or to include qualitative methods for deeper insights into employer perspectives.

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