

## Employers' Feedback on Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology (DOSCST) Professional School Graduates in their Workplaces

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**ABSTRACT.** This study was conducted to determine how the Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology (DOSCST) Professional School graduates performed in the real work environment as perceived by their employers. It utilized the quantitative method with 52 employers as the respondents and the qualitative method with 11 employers as the key informants. The study was conducted at the different workplaces of the DOSCST Professional School graduates within the province of Davao Oriental. Findings reveal that the level of employers' satisfaction with the education exemplified by DOSCST Professional School graduates is highly satisfactory. The degree of importance for the successful performance of the graduates in terms of the four indicators: knowledge and understanding of the job, general skills, specialized skills, and qualities of graduates, is extremely important. However, the employers' satisfaction and the DOSCST Professional School graduates' performance indicate an overall significant positive moderate relationship towards each other. Among the demographics given in this study, only the length of service exhibits a significant difference in the employer's satisfaction. Moreover, future researchers may study students' academic performance versus the teaching performance of the DOSCST Professional School graduates. Likewise, they may also look into the ethics and commitment of the teachers who graduated from the DOSCST Professional School.



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## INTRODUCTION

The mission of higher education is geared towards the pursuit of better quality of life for all Filipinos by emphasizing the acquisition of knowledge and formation of skills necessary to make the individual a productive member of society (Commission on Higher Education, 2009). Indeed, Professional School graduates need to be provided with worthy opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in their field of specialization (Ng et al., 2009). Nowadays, the problem of Professional School graduates' performance remained a continuing policy priority for higher education policymakers in many advanced western countries (Tomlinson, 2007). Thus, they continued to emphasize the importance of acquired knowledge and skills in order for professional graduates to be fully equipped in meeting the challenges of an increasingly flexible job (Dius, 2008).

Recently, the job performances of the graduates were greatly shaped by the acquired knowledge and specialized skills from higher education institutions (Ramirez et al., 2014). Now, the higher education systems across the globe are evolving in conjunction with wider structural transformations with advanced technology (Brown and Lauder, 2009). Hence, these global transformations result into a wider body of graduates into crowded labor market which adds on the concerns on the equity of the graduates' economic opportunities, as well as the traditional role of higher education credentials in facilitating access to desired forms of employment (Scott, 2005).

To meet the demands in the market and to be able to compete in these global advancements, these graduates should hasten up their knowledge, and skills. Furthermore, the range of experience and skills of the employees should be developed first in the higher institutions before they will be employed (Pew Research Center, 2017). It is also clearly identified that a major source of competitive advantage in a global market is having improved capabilities, knowledge, and skills of the talented workforce (McKinsey,

2006). As a result, to develop these desired knowledge, skills and abilities of the employees, and to perform well on the job, an institution in higher education should be required with effective programs that may increase employee's motivation and commitment to their job (Elnaga and Imran, 2013). With these fast pace global development and contemporary issues and problems, these changes and challenges must be addressed. To find solutions to these emergent problems, more improved and effective Professional School programs are needed by all the graduates to help train them to cope with the upcoming challenges more easily and timely (Tegegne, 2017).

The Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology (DOSCST) as one of the higher education institutions in Region XI was mandated to promote relevant and quality higher education that is, higher institutions and program are at par with the international standards and the graduates and professionals are highly competent and recognized in the international arena. Therefore, the DOSCST was required to prepare the students in the world of work, to produce competent and value-laden graduates, and to develop a future professional workforce with a high level of knowledge and skills needed by the different agencies and industries due to the demand in the workplace (Commission on Higher Education, 2011). This research aimed to determine how the DOSCST Professional School graduates performed in the real work environment as perceived by their employers. Importantly, it accentuated the gap between the graduate's acquired knowledge, specialized skills, and personal qualities to the application of their acquired knowledge, and skills in their work environment specifically to the graduates of the DOSCST Professional School.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized quantitative method. It involved a descriptive survey type

of research design in order to analyze the level of satisfaction of the employers on the performance of DOSCST Professional School graduates from school year 2014 to 2019. The research questions as stated by Creswell (2012) were specific and measurable, as quantitative analysis assigns numerical values, statistical analysis, and calculated results.

The respondents of this study were the employers specifically the immediate supervisors of the Professional School graduates of DOSCST for school year 2014 to 2019 that were employed in higher education institutions, in two Divisions of Davao Oriental namely, Mati City and Davao Oriental, and other agencies. The researcher used complete enumeration of respondents for this study since it provided a true measure of the population or no sampling error (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009).

A total of ninety-eight DOSCST Professional School graduates were the respondents to this study who were denominated by fifty-two graduates of Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Management, eight graduates of Master of Arts in Education major in Teaching English, twenty-five graduates of Master of Science Teaching major in General Science, and thirteen graduates of Master of Science Teaching major in Math.

An adopted questionnaire from Noel Levitz Employer Satisfaction Survey was used. A five-point ordinal Likert scale was utilized to measure the attitudes used by the respondents to rate their level of satisfaction and degree of importance towards the DOSCST Professional School graduates' successful job performance (Sullivan and Bauerschmidt, 1990). Employers' satisfaction and degree of importance for the successful job performance of the DOSCST Professional School graduates had indicators that included knowledge and understanding of the job, general skills, specialized skills, and qualities of graduates.

Questionnaires were systematized through the same pattern and utilized identical range interval, description rating

and interpretation. It was used to assess needs, evaluate demands, and examine the impact of the performance of the Professional School graduates to the satisfaction of the employers (Steger et al., 2006). Likert Scale was also utilized to determine the level of satisfaction and degree of importance for the successful job performance of the graduates in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the job, general skills, specialized skills, and personal qualities (Table 1). The range interval of 4.20 to 5.0 implied as extremely important and extremely satisfied. This meant that the Professional School graduates always demonstrated the given criterion under each indicator. The range interval of 3.4 to 4.19 indicated as very important and very satisfied. This connoted that the Professional School graduates oftentimes demonstrated the given criterion under each indicator. Somewhat important and somewhat satisfied is the descriptive rating that belonged to the range interval of 2.6 to 3.9. It inferred that the Professional School graduates sometimes demonstrated the given criterion under each indicator. Furthermore, the range interval of 1.8 to 2.59 had a descriptive rating of little importance or little satisfaction which meant that the Professional School graduates rarely demonstrated the given criterion under each indicator. Finally, the range interval of 1.0 to 1.79 had a descriptive rating of not at all important and not at all satisfied which implied that the Professional School graduates did not demonstrate the given criterion under each indicator.

The data gathered from the employers' satisfaction of the DOSCST Professional School graduates served as the independent variable of this study while the performance of DOSCST Professional School graduates served as the dependent variable. The mean was used to determine the level of employers' satisfaction with the education exemplified by the DOSCST Professional School graduates, and standard deviation was used to determine the variation of data from the mean. A small value of standard deviation meant the responses are closer to the mean. The mean and standard deviation were used to determine the degree of

importance for the successful performance of the job by the DOSCST Professional School graduates. Since the data being analyzed in this study were not normally distributed and Anderson-Darling test of normality was small with a p-value less than 0.05, Spearman rho was used to determine the relationship that exists between the employers' satisfaction and the performance of DOSCST Professional School graduates. Converted values are normally distributed. The ANOVA was used to test the significant difference between categorical and continuous data (Norman, 2010). This study determined the significant difference between employers' satisfaction and performance of DOSCST Professional School graduates when grouped according to course, year graduated, position, and length of service.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Shown in the Table 1 is the level of employer's satisfaction with the education

exemplified by the DOSCST Professional School graduates in terms of knowledge and understanding, general skills, specialized skills, and personal qualities. Among the four indicators listed on Table 1, personal qualities of DOSCST Professional School graduates earned the highest mean of 4.12 that is described as very much satisfied. It means that the personal qualities of DOSCST Professional School graduates are always demonstrated. On the other hand, although knowledge and understanding got the lowest mean score of 3.89, it is still described as very much satisfied, which means that the knowledge and understanding were also always demonstrated. Indeed, the teachers' knowledge, expertise, and skills are central to success on the job, and they require specific attention in the performance-appraisal process. Moreover, the overall mean of these factors was 4.04 which described as categorically high level which means that employer's satisfaction with the education exemplified by the DOSCST Professional School graduates was always demonstrated.

**Table 1.** Level of employers' satisfaction with the education exemplified DOSCST professional school graduates.

Satisfaction	SD	Mean	Descriptive rating
Knowledge and Understanding	0.70	3.89	Very Much Satisfied
Personal Qualities	0.75	4.12	Very Much Satisfied
General Skills	0.68	4.06	Very Much Satisfied
Specialized Skills	0.70	4.04	Very Much Satisfied
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0.71</b>	<b>4.04</b>	<b>Very Much Satisfied</b>

Shown in Table 2 is the degree of importance for the successful performance of the job of the DOSCST Professional School graduates in terms of knowledge and understanding, personal qualities, general skills, and specialized skills. With the data given, the personal qualities of the graduates earned the highest mean score of 4.57 which means that the degree of importance in terms of personal qualities of DOSCST Professional School graduates was always demonstrated.

However, the indicator that obtained the lowest mean score of 4.36 was knowledge and understanding. It is also described as extremely important which means that the knowledge and understanding of DOSCST Professional School graduates were always demonstrated. The overall mean of these factors was 4.47, described as extremely important. It implied that employers foresee the four indicators stated as very important for a Professional School

graduate to acquire. This would also infer that these four indicators were always observed

and manifested by the graduates in their performance to their respective workplace.

**Table 2.** Degree of importance for the successful job performance of DOSCST professional school graduates.

Importance	SD	Mean	Descriptive rating	Description
Knowledge and Understanding	0.74	4.36	Extremely Important	Always demonstrated by the graduates
Personal Qualities	0.68	4.57	Extremely Important	Always demonstrated by the graduates
General Skills	0.68	4.46	Extremely Important	Always demonstrated by the graduates
Specialized Skills	0.66	4.47	Extremely Important	Always demonstrated by the graduates
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0.69</b>	<b>4.47</b>	<b>Extremely Important</b>	<b>Always demonstrated by the graduates</b>

Shown in Table 3 is the information about the relationship that exists between the employers' satisfaction and performance of DOSCST Professional School graduates. There was an overall significant positive moderate relationship between satisfaction and performance. This implied that when performance increases, employers' satisfaction moderately increases. Therefore, there was sufficient evidence that employer's satisfaction was based on the per-

formance of the DOSCST Professional School graduates. Furthermore, the relation between the satisfaction of the employers under general skills does not have any significant relationship with the knowledge and understanding and qualities of the performance of the graduates. It goes the same with the employers' satisfaction's knowledge and understanding to the personal qualities and specialized skills of the performance of the graduates.

**Table 3.** Relationship between employers' satisfaction and performance of professional school graduates.

Performance of DOSCST Professional School Graduates	Employers' Satisfaction				
	Knowledge and Understanding	Qualities	General Skills	Specialized Skills	Overall Satisfaction
Knowledge and Understanding	0.429**	0.429**	0.241	0.318*	0.292*
Personal Qualities	0.368** (0.007)	0.461** (0.001)	0.216 (0.123)	0.344* (0.010)	0.434** (0.001)
General Skills	0.225 (0.108)	0.371** (0.007)	0.467** (0.000)	0.298* (0.032)	0.479** (0.000)
Specialized Skills	0.328* (0.019)	0.307* (0.070)	0.454** (0.001)	0.367** (0.007)	0.395** (0.004)
<b>Overall Performance</b>	<b>0.294* (0.034)</b>	<b>0.483** (0.000)</b>	<b>0.320* (0.021)</b>	<b>0.314* (0.023)</b>	<b>0.472** (0.000)</b>

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Shown in Table 4 is the significant difference of employers' satisfaction when grouped with specific demographics. It showed that employers' satisfaction had a significant difference towards length of service. It has F-value of 2.09 with p-value of 0.038 which is less than 0.05. However, the remaining demographic profile displayed no significant difference. It entailed that the

employers of DOSCST Professional School graduates did not enthralled their satisfaction on what courses they took up in their master's degree, year graduated, their position before their enrolment in the Professional School and even after completing the course they took up. Hence, employers' satisfaction was perceived with the graduates' length of service rendered in their workplace.

**Table 4.** Analysis on employers' satisfaction.

Demographics	Employers' Satisfaction		
	F-value	P-value	Remarks
Course	0.13	0.934	No significant difference
Year Graduated	0.71	0.742	No significant difference
Position (Before)	1.21	0.313	No significant difference
Position (Current)	0.55	0.865	No significant difference
Length of Service	2.09	0.038	There is significant difference

**Table 5.** Analysis on graduates' performance.

Demographics	Performance		
	F-value	P-value	Remarks
Course	0.44	0.723	No significant difference
Year Graduated	0.45	0.921	No significant difference
Position (Before)	1.52	0.169	No significant difference
Position (Current)	0.53	0.882	No significant difference
Length of Service	1.39	0.206	No significant difference

Table 5 showed that the p-value is greater than 0.05, implying that there was no significant difference to the graduates' performance towards the given specific demographics. It also implied that the performance of these DOSCST Professional School graduates were not contingent on their course, year graduated, position and length of service with regards to their knowledge, general skills, specialized skills and personal qualities. It proved that such specific demographics may not solely serve as basis on arbitrating Professional School graduates' performance.

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