

Employability Skills and Work Ethics Among the Hospitality Management Related Establishments in Bislig City

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Abstract: This study examined the employability skills and work ethics of personnel in hospitality management-related establishments (HMREs) in Bislig City, Surigao del Sur. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, the study assessed respondents' profiles, levels of employability skills and work ethics, their relationships with demographic variables, and differences between food and accommodation establishments. Results showed that employability skills were rated High ($M = 4.13$), while work ethics were rated Very High ($M = 4.35$). Workplace competencies and adherence to laws received the highest ratings in their respective categories. Significant relationships between demographic variables and employability skills or work ethics were limited and varied across establishment types. No significant difference was found in employability skills between food and accommodation establishments; however, differences were observed in selected work ethics indicators, including efficiency, social responsibility, and code of conduct. The study concluded that employability skills and work ethics are strongly demonstrated among HMRE personnel and are vital for professionalism, workforce readiness, and organizational effectiveness. An intervention program was proposed to further strengthen these competencies and ethical practices in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: Employability Skills; Work Ethics; Hospitality Personnel; Workplace Competencies; Hospitality Industry

1. Introduction

Employability skills combined with a strong work ethics form the foundation of a productive, dependable, and successful workforce in any industry. Employees who work in an establishment that prioritizes the development of work ethics pertinent to their concerns will behave ethically. Work ethics among food and accommodation hospitality management related establishments (HMREs) significantly influence service quality, employee performance, and customer satisfaction, underscoring its critical role in the success and sustainability of hospitality establishments. Work ethics play a significant role in shaping employee behavior and service quality in hospitality establishments. Employees who demonstrate honesty, responsibility, punctuality, and respect are more likely to contribute positively to the organization and satisfy customers.

Many studies have shown that thorough employability skills significantly enhance an individual's ability to secure and retain meaningful employment, adapt to workplace demands, and contribute effectively to organizational success in an increasingly competitive job market (Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023). According to (Villegas, 2024), employability skills play a crucial role in preparing individuals to meet the dynamic needs of the labor market, fostering adaptability, critical thinking, and collaboration, which are essential for long-term career success and workforce readiness. Othman et al. (2022) found that the employability skills differ due to factors such as educational background, industry demands, cultural context, and individual experiences, highlighting the need for tailored skill development approaches to effectively prepare diverse populations for the workforce.

Building on previous research, this study is one of the few attempts to collect and analyze longitudinal data on the relationship between employability skills and work ethics—specifically among hospitality management in the City of Bislig, Surigao del Sur. A gap remains in understanding whether the level of work ethics serves as a residual outcome of employability skills (Kruja et al., 2024). Despite the crucial role of hospitality establishments in delivering quality and competitive hospitality services, their personnel level of employability skills is scarce based on empirical evidence. Personnel in the hospitality establishments of the city often struggle to secure permanent job opportunities and frequently turn to job mismatch due to inadequate employability skills, limited career development support, and the dynamic demands of the industry. Recent reports from the last quarter of 2023 by Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) revealed a decline in income balances across all income groups. Additionally, hospitality management may not fully align with specific job requirements or evolving industry standards, leading to gaps between graduates' capabilities and employers' expectations (Tushar et al., 2023). As a result, many job seekers face challenges in securing suitable employment, highlighting the need for continuous upskilling and alignment of employability training with current labor market demands (Tolondon et al., 2024). Thus, this study aims to examine the employability skills and work ethics and to come up with an intervention program among the hospitality management related establishments in Bislig City.

1.1. Literature review

1.1.1. Employability skills

Employability skills are considered essential competencies that enable individuals to perform effectively and adapt to changing workplace demands. These skills include basic skills, thinking skills, personal traits, and workplace competencies that influence employee preparedness and organizational performance. Foreign studies emphasized that employability skills help employees improve career development, workplace adaptability, and decision-making abilities. Saad Fadhil et al. (2021) explained that employability skills guide employees in aligning their competencies with professional goals, while Kruja et al. (2024) highlighted that these skills strengthen workplace productivity and long-term career advancement.

Basic skills and thinking skills are essential employability competencies that contribute to employees' workplace effectiveness and adaptability. Basic skills include communication, literacy, numeracy, and technological abilities necessary for performing hospitality-related tasks efficiently. According to Mainga et al. (2022), employees with strong basic skills are more capable of adapting to organizational demands and maintaining service quality in hospitality establishments. Similarly, thinking skills involve problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making abilities that enable employees to respond effectively to workplace challenges. Thornhill-Miller et al. (2023) emphasized that thinking skills improve employees' capacity to analyze situations, solve problems, and make responsible workplace decisions. In hospitality establishments where employees constantly interact with customers, these competencies are important in maintaining operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Several studies further emphasized the importance of basic and thinking skills in improving workplace effectiveness among hospitality personnel. Rini and Aldila (2023) found that these competencies increase employees' preparedness and performance in hospitality establishments, while HEBECI and USTA (2022) observed that these skills are associated with organizational characteristics such as years of operation and workforce size. Similarly, Lukitasari et al. (2025) noted that thinking skills help employees solve problems responsibly and reduce mental stress. These findings collectively suggest that hospitality personnel require continuous enhancement of technical and cognitive competencies to remain competitive and adaptable.

Personal traits and workplace competencies are important factors influencing employees' professionalism and workplace behavior. Personal traits refer to employees' attitudes, values, adaptability, responsibility, and interpersonal behavior that affect workplace relationships and organizational culture. Sagiv and Schwartz (2022) explained that positive personal traits contribute to emotional stability, teamwork, and professional conduct in the workplace. Meanwhile, workplace competencies involve technical skills, teamwork, leadership, and the ability to perform tasks according to organizational standards. Rakowska and de Juana-Espinosa (2021) noted that workplace competencies improve employee productivity, adaptability, and organizational effectiveness.

Studies revealed both similarities and differences regarding the influence of personal traits and workplace competencies on employability skills. Garcia-Esteban and Jahnke (2020) observed that personal traits and workplace competencies vary depending on organizational conditions, while Batdi et al. (2024) emphasized that employee profiles positively affect employability competencies. Although foreign studies focused more on adaptability and innovation, local findings highlighted the need for stronger workforce preparation and skills training. The researcher believed that these employability skills are necessary in hospitality establishments because employees are expected to maintain professionalism, adaptability, and customer-oriented service. Thus, the present study examined how employability skills vary among hospitality personnel in food and accommodation establishments.

1.1.2. Work Ethics

Work ethics refer to the moral principles, professional standards, and responsible behaviors demonstrated by employees in the workplace. In hospitality establishments, work ethics are important because they influence service quality, professionalism, teamwork, and customer satisfaction. Foreign studies revealed that employees with strong work ethics are more likely to become productive, dependable, and committed workers. Saban et al. (2020) defined work ethics as responsible and morally guided workplace behavior, while Astrachan et al. (2020) emphasized that ethical practices contribute to positive workplace morale and organizational stability.

Self-interest, efficiency, and team attention are important dimensions of work ethics influencing employee performance and workplace relationships. Self-interest refers to employees' motivation to achieve personal and professional goals while maintaining organizational responsibilities. According to Schiff (2022), self-interest may positively influence employee motivation and productivity when balanced with organizational values and ethical standards. Efficiency refers to employees' ability to perform tasks productively and effectively within workplace expectations. Diawati et al. (2023) emphasized that efficient employees contribute significantly to organizational productivity and service quality in hospitality establishments. Meanwhile, team attention involves collaboration, teamwork, and collective responsibility among employees. Woolley et al. (2023) explained that strong team attention enhances communication, cooperation, and organizational effectiveness within workplace environments.

Social responsibility and personal morality are significant components of ethical workplace behavior among hospitality personnel. Social responsibility refers to employees' awareness of their obligations toward customers, coworkers, organizations, and society. Robayo-Avenidaño and Prato-García (2024) emphasized that socially responsible behavior promotes ethical decision-making, workplace harmony, and organizational sustainability. Personal morality, meanwhile, pertains to employees' individual beliefs and ethical principles that guide workplace behavior and professional conduct. Goering et al. (2024) noted that employees with strong moral values are more likely to demonstrate honesty, accountability, and professionalism in the workplace. These ethical dimensions are essential in hospitality establishments because employees directly influence customer satisfaction and organizational image.

Studies further revealed that work ethics are influenced by company rules, code of conduct, and organizational culture. Lebni et al. (2021) found that company rules and procedures significantly affect work ethics among accommodation establishments, whereas Saban et al. (2020) observed no significant relationship between demographic profile and work ethics in food establishments. Rizky Mahaputra and Farhan Saputra (2021) explained that company rules and procedures promote compliance and professionalism, while Aydemir and Kıpçak (2024) highlighted that code of conduct guides employees in maintaining proper behavior and ethical standards.

Company rules and procedures, laws, and code of conduct serve as important organizational mechanisms that guide employees' ethical behavior and workplace discipline. Green and Varburgh (2024) emphasized that legal compliance is important in maintaining workplace order and protecting organizational reputation in hospitality industries. Moreover, code of conduct provides employees with ethical guidelines regarding workplace behavior, professionalism, and customer interaction. These findings imply that workplace ethics are shaped more by organizational practices and leadership than by demographic characteristics alone.

Foreign studies commonly focused on ethical behavior as a factor of organizational success, while local literature emphasized workplace discipline, compliance with rules, and professionalism. The researcher believed that these dimensions of work ethics are highly relevant in hospitality establishments because employees constantly interact with customers and represent the image of the organization. Therefore, the present study aimed to determine the level of work ethics among hospitality personnel in Bislig City, Surigao del Sur.

1.1.3. Theoretical framework

The present study asserted that employability skills significantly influence the work ethics of hospitality management-related establishments (HMREs) personnel. The researcher believed that employees who possess strong employability skills, such as basic skills, thinking skills, personal traits, and workplace competencies, are more likely to demonstrate professionalism, responsibility, discipline, and positive workplace behavior. Furthermore, the study claimed that employability skills and work ethics contribute to workforce preparedness, organizational effectiveness, and quality service delivery among hospitality personnel. Thus, the study aimed to examine the relationship between employability skills and work ethics among hospitality management-related establishments personnel in Bislig City, Surigao del Sur.

The study was anchored on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) proposed by Ajzen (1991). This theory explained that an individual's behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of the present study, work ethics were influenced by employees' beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions toward professional conduct and workplace behavior. According to Hagger et al. (2022), TPB is effective in explaining behavioral intention and ethical decision-making. Supporting this theory, the study of Al Halbusi et al. (2021) revealed that ethical leadership and organizational justice significantly influence employees' ethical behavior and workplace conduct. The strength of TPB lies in its ability to predict workplace behavior and explain how individuals regulate their actions based on internal and external influences. However, its weakness is that it may not fully explain long-term skill development and environmental factors affecting employee behavior.

Supporting the study was the Human Capital Theory (HCT), which emphasized that education, training, experience, and skill development improve employee productivity and employability. According to Pant et al. (2022), HCT viewed knowledge and competencies as valuable investments that contribute to organizational performance and career success. Supporting this theory, Aman-Ullah et al. (2022) found that human capital development and innovative leadership significantly contribute to organizational performance and employee productivity. The strength of this theory lies in its emphasis on continuous learning and workforce development. However, the theory mainly focused on economic productivity and may not fully capture ethical and social dimensions of workplace behavior.

The study also utilized the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which explained that behavior is influenced by personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. This theory emphasized that individuals learn through observation, interaction, and workplace experiences. Supporting this theory, Elnadi and Gheith (2021) emphasized that environmental influences, self-efficacy, and social interaction significantly affect behavioral intention and professional development among employees. The strength of SCT lies in explaining how social environment and organizational culture shape employee behavior and ethical practices. However, the theory may not fully explain individual differences in motivation and decision-making processes.

The integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior, Human Capital Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory provided a comprehensive framework for understanding how employability skills and work ethics influence hospitality management-related establishments personnel. These theories complemented one another by explaining behavioral intention, workforce competency development, and environmental influences affecting employee professionalism and workplace behavior. Through these theoretical foundations, the study gained a clearer understanding of how employability skills and work ethics contribute to workforce preparedness and organizational effectiveness among hospitality personnel.

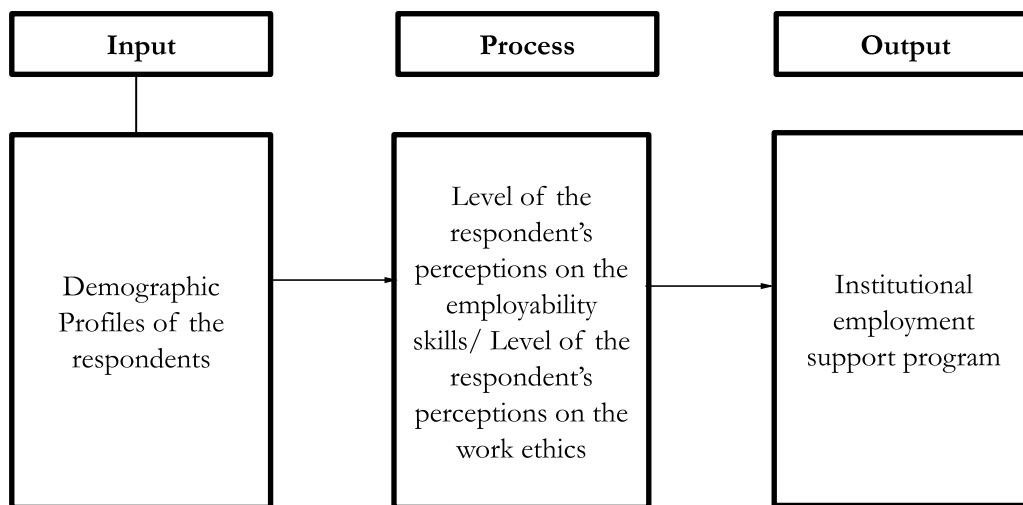


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

2. Research Methods

The study utilized the quantitative research method employing a descriptive-correlational research design. This design was appropriate in determining the relationship between employability skills and work ethics among food and accommodation hospitality management-related establishments (HMREs) personnel. According to Chunta (2020), descriptive-correlational research identifies the relationship between two or more variables without establishing cause-and-effect relationships. This method involved the systematic collection and analysis of quantitative data to determine whether significant relationships existed among the variables of the study.

The study utilized the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation as the primary statistical tool in determining the significant relationship between employability skills and the respondents' profile among food and accommodation HMREs personnel. Specifically, the indicators of employability skills included basic skills, thinking skills, personal traits, and workplace competencies. The same statistical tool was also used in determining the significant relationship between work ethics and the respondents' profile among food and accommodation HMREs personnel. According to Dorta-González (2023), Pearson Product-Moment Correlation is appropriate in identifying the degree of relationship between variables and determining whether associations exist among indicators included in the study.

Furthermore, this correlational statistical technique enabled the researcher to determine the association between employability skills, work ethics, and the respondents' profile in terms of years in operation and number of employees among food and accommodation HMREs personnel. A researcher-made survey questionnaire served as the primary instrument in gathering data. Hence, the descriptive-correlational research design was considered appropriate in determining the relationship between employability skills and work ethics among hospitality management-related establishments personnel in Bislig City, Surigao del Sur.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Level of the Respondents' Perception on the Employability Skills among the Hospitality Management Related Establishments

Table 1 presents the perceived level of employability skills among workers in hospitality management-related establishments in Bislig City, integrating both accommodation and food establishments. The table covers four major indicators: basic skills, thinking skills, personal traits, and workplace competencies.

Table 1. Level of the respondents' perception on the employability skills among the hospitality management related establishments

Indicators	Accommodation Mean	Descriptive Level	Food Mean	Descriptive Level	Grand Mean	Overall Level	Descriptive
Basic Skills	4.02	High	4.02	High	4.02	High	
Thinking Skills	4.04	High	4.04	High	4.04	High	
Personal Traits	4.23	Very High	4.23	Very High	4.23	Very High	
Workplace Competencies	4.25	Very High	4.25	Very High	4.25	Very High	
Overall Mean	4.13	High	4.13	High	4.13	High	

Among the indicators, workplace competencies obtained the highest grand mean described as very high. This means that respondents from both accommodation and food establishments strongly perceived workers as capable of performing workplace tasks, working with others, following procedures, managing responsibilities, and adapting to operational demands. This is an important result because hospitality establishments depend heavily on the actual performance of employees during service encounters. In accommodation establishments, workplace competencies may be reflected in front office operations, housekeeping coordination, guest assistance, and service recovery. In food establishments, these may be observed in order taking, food preparation support, customer handling, cleanliness, cashiering, and teamwork. The very high rating implies that workers are perceived to be practically prepared for the routine and multi-tasking demands of hospitality work. This is consistent with Fang and Liou (2024), who emphasized the importance of practitioner-based assessment of hospitality workforce employability, and Fraser (2020), who noted that hospitality employers value work-ready employees who can meet actual industry requirements.

The lowest indicator was basic skills, with a grand mean as described as high. Although still favorable, this result suggests that basic skills are the least developed among the four employability indicators. These skills include oral and written communication, listening, reading comprehension, numeracy, and basic information processing. In both accommodation and food establishments, basic skills are essential because employees must understand instructions, communicate with guests or customers, process transactions, explain services, take orders, prepare simple records, and coordinate with co-workers. The lower rating implies that foundational skills should be continuously strengthened, especially communication and comprehension skills, because these directly affect customer satisfaction, service accuracy, and operational efficiency. In hospitality settings, even minor communication errors may lead to incorrect orders, guest dissatisfaction, service delays, or workplace misunderstanding. This supports the findings of Varra et al. (2021), who emphasized that hospitality employment requires both general and technical skills, and Hussain et al. (2024), who highlighted communication, interpersonal skills, and soft skills as essential competencies in tourism and hospitality workplaces.

The perceived level of employability skills among hospitality management-related establishments, integrating both accommodation and food establishments, was generally high, as reflected in the overall grand mean. This indicates that respondents from both sectors perceived workers as possessing the necessary employability skills needed in hospitality operations. Since the mean scores for accommodation and food establishments were identical across all indicators, the result suggests that both types of establishments have similar expectations regarding employee readiness, work behavior, and service performance. Whether in lodging, hotel, restaurant, café, catering, or other food-service operations, workers are expected to demonstrate basic communication ability, problem-solving skills, desirable personal traits, and practical workplace competencies. This supports the view that employability in hospitality is multidimensional and includes both technical and non-technical skills needed in service-oriented work environments (Varra et al., 2021; Hussain et al., 2024).

3.2. Level of the Respondents' Perception on the Work Ethics among the Hospitality Management Related Establishments

Table 2 presents the respondents' perception of work ethics among hospitality management-related establishments in Bislig City, integrating both accommodation and food establishments. The indicators include self-interest, efficiency, team attention, social responsibility, personal morality, company rules and procedures, laws, and code of conduct

Table 2. Level of the Respondents' Perception on the Work Ethics Among the Hospitality Management Related Establishments

Indicators	Accommodation Mean	Descriptive Level	Food Mean	Descriptive Level	Grand Mean	Overall Descriptive Level
Self-interest	4.25	Very High	4.29	Very High	4.27	Very High
Efficiency	4.26	Very High	4.26	Very High	4.26	Very High
Team Attention	4.34	Very High	4.34	Very High	4.34	Very High
Social Responsibility	4.30	Very High	4.30	Very High	4.30	Very High
Personal Morality	4.36	Very High	4.36	Very High	4.36	Very High
Company Rules and Procedures	4.40	Very High	4.40	Very High	4.40	Very High
Laws	4.48	Very High	4.48	Very High	4.48	Very High
Code of Conduct	4.41	Very High	4.41	Very High	4.41	Very High
Overall Mean	4.35	Very High	4.36	Very High	4.35	Very High

Among the indicators, laws obtained the highest grand mean of 4.48, described as very high. This indicates that respondents strongly perceived workers as highly aware of and compliant with legal expectations in the workplace. In hospitality-related establishments, compliance with laws may include observance of labor standards, health and sanitation requirements, food safety regulations, customer protection, occupational safety, and other rules governing service operations. The result implies that both accommodation and food establishments recognize legal compliance as a critical aspect of ethical work behavior. This is particularly important because violations of laws and regulations may lead to penalties, customer dissatisfaction, reputational damage, or operational disruption. The finding suggests that hospitality workers are expected not only to perform their duties efficiently but also to act within legal and institutional boundaries. This supports the view that hospitality employability requires responsible workplace behavior, professional discipline, and adherence to organizational and industry standards (Fraser, 2020; Varra et al., 2021). It is also consistent with studies emphasizing that hospitality work depends on ethical conduct, service responsibility, and professional behavior because employees directly influence customer trust, workplace order, and organizational reputation (Hussain et al., 2024; Ramirez et al., 2022).

The lowest indicator was efficiency, with a grand mean of 4.26, although it was still described as very high. This means that respondents strongly perceived workers as efficient, but compared with the other work ethics indicators, efficiency was the least rated. This result suggests that while workers are viewed as ethical, compliant, and responsible, there may still be room to improve speed, productivity, time management, accuracy, and resource utilization. In accommodation and food establishments, efficiency is critical because delayed service, slow response, poor coordination, or wasted resources can immediately affect customer satisfaction and business performance. The implication is that hospitality establishments and training institutions should continue strengthening operational efficiency through skills training, workflow familiarization, time management exercises, and actual workplace exposure. Work-integrated learning and mentoring may help students and workers develop the efficiency expected in real service environments (Wang et al., 2023; Williamson et al., 2021).

The overall grand mean as described as very high, indicates that respondents strongly perceived work ethics as evident among workers in both types of establishments. This suggests that hospitality-related establishments place strong value on ethical behavior, discipline, compliance, teamwork, responsibility, and adherence to workplace standards. In service-oriented industries such as hospitality, ethical work behavior is essential because employees

directly affect customer experience, organizational reputation, and service quality (Ramírez et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2023).

4. Conclusion

Based from the summary of findings presented, the following conclusion statements were drawn:

The study concludes that hospitality management-related establishments in Bislig City need workers who are adaptable, multi-skilled, and service-oriented. Since most of the establishments are small food-service businesses, employees are often expected to handle different tasks and work directly with customers. This means that employability in the local hospitality sector is not limited to technical skills alone, but also includes flexibility, customer service, and the ability to perform several functions in a small workplace setting.

The employability skills of hospitality workers are concluding generally satisfactory. However, some foundational skills still need continuous improvement. Although workers are perceived to be capable in performing workplace tasks and showing positive personal qualities, communication, listening, comprehension, numeracy, and documentation should still be strengthened. Improving these skills can help reduce errors, improve customer interaction, and support more reliable service delivery.

In terms of work ethics, the study concludes that ethical behavior is strongly valued in hospitality management-related establishments. Workers are perceived to observe legal requirements, workplace rules, and professional conduct. However, efficiency remains an area that needs further attention. This means that workers should not only be ethical and compliant, but should also be able to deliver services promptly, accurately, and productively.

The study further concludes that establishment characteristics influence employability skills only in certain situations. In food establishments, years in operation and number of employees appear to support the development of basic skills and thinking skills. In accommodation establishments, workforce size appears to contribute to workplace competencies. This shows that workplace exposure and organizational structure may help develop some skills, but they do not automatically improve all areas of employability.

The work ethics concludes that are not mainly determined by how long an establishment has operated or how many employees it has. Ethical behavior appears to be influenced more by supervision, training, workplace culture, management practices, personal values, and compliance expectations. For this reason, ethical conduct should be intentionally taught, monitored, and reinforced rather than assumed to develop naturally over time.

The food and accommodation establishments concludes thave similar expectations when it comes to employability skills. Basic skills, thinking skills, personal traits, and workplace competencies are useful in both types of establishments. This means that hospitality management education should provide students and workers with a common set of employability skills that can be applied in different hospitality work settings.

However, the study also concludes that some areas of work ethics require sector-specific training. Efficiency, social responsibility, and code of conduct differ between food and accommodation establishments because their daily operations are different. Food establishments may focus more on fast service, food safety, sanitation, and customer handling, while accommodation establishments may emphasize guest privacy, room readiness, front office conduct, and service recovery. More so, work ethics training should be adjusted according to the actual work environment.

The main developmental needs of hospitality workers in Bislig City concludes are not serious weaknesses, but areas that need reinforcement, standardization, and contextualized improvement. These include basic skills, thinking skills, efficiency, social responsibility, professional conduct, workplace procedures, accommodation workplace competencies, personal traits, and stronger industry-academe collaboration.

Finally, the study concludes that the proposed Hospitality Workforce Readiness and Ethical Service Enhancement Program for Food and Accommodation Establishments in Bislig City is a relevant and necessary intervention. The program provides a practical way to improve workforce readiness, strengthen ethical service behavior, standardize workplace practices, and align hospitality management education with the actual needs of local industry partners.

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