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## EMPLOYABILITY OF THE 2014 and 2015 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY GRADUATES OF CAGAYAN STATE UNIVERSITY AT LAL-LO

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study aimed to determine and evaluate the employability of the graduates of Bachelor of Science in Information Technology of the Cagayan State University at Lal-lo batches 2014 and 2015.*

*The descriptive correlational method was used to collect data. As to the personal background of the respondents, most of them were single and female, fell under the age range of 24-26 years old and majority of them were from Lal-lo, Cagayan. In terms of educational attainment of the respondents, most of them were hold their Bachelor's Degree and there three respondents earned units of MSIT. Majority of them were permanent in private company. The employability of the graduates depends not only on the attributes of the individual graduates such as subject knowledge, experience, skills and personality traits, but also on the faculty, curriculum and pedagogy in the university systems.*

*Though the graduate is young or old, male or female, single or married, they have similar chances of employment. When the graduates have potential for advancement, his or her employability is greater. Whether the graduate developed problem solving skills, collaboration or teamwork, communication skills, opportunity for specialization, and confidence in unfamiliar problems, their employment status remains the same. The employability of the graduate is not affected by their involvement in school activities. Regardless of the qualities emphasized in the campus environment, the employment status of the graduate is the same.*

*The employability of the graduate is not affected by their involvement in school activities. Regardless of the qualities emphasized in the campus environment, the employment status of the graduate is the same. Whether the graduates are competent in their interpersonal skills or not, their employment status is not varying. The higher the critical thinking skill of the graduate, his/her employability is lower. Whether the graduates show teamwork or collaboration among themselves; and whether they possess skills in oral and written communication; and whether they show skills in resolving problems, their employability is the same. The technical understanding acquired by the graduates does not guarantee their employability. The status of employment of the graduates does not vary regardless of who their lecturers, employers or supervisors are and even who they are. When the training acquired by the students in his workplace is great, their employment status becomes worst.*

**KEYWORDS:** *IT Graduates, graduate employability, graduate tracer study*

**INTRODUCTION** Employability is a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labor market participants should possess to ensure that they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy.



Graduates are faced with the challenge of acquiring employment right after graduation not only because of no employment history but mainly on lack of adequate skills that suit the needs of the industry. Findings suggest that employers often criticize the standard of new graduates saying they lack sense and understanding of the real world. In determining institutional capability and in preparing graduates to meet the demands of the workplace, the use of a graduate tracing study is an appropriate tool. Today we have an oversupply of graduates and students-graduates with problems in job mismatching. It is noted upon that the reason by which graduates do not get the job is simply the disparity between the educational system produces and the industries' needs which remains to be a critical issue among graduates. Are IT graduates employable? Are they productive? Do they receive salaries or wages commensurate to their skills and abilities? Because of these critical questions, a motivation to know the employability, job earnings and relevance of the IT graduates is very necessary in order to draw from the findings policies and technical inputs to improve and make the IT program relevant to the graduates, the clients and the community in general. Having a concrete record of the graduates' profile and employment status could possibly come up with some substantial recommendations which may bring about improvements of university management particularly Information Technology program of the Cagayan State University at Lal-lo, and the students' social and economic perspective. The problem between IT education and the employment sector has become one of the imperative issues in the employability of graduate students today.

### **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

This study aimed to determine the employability of the Information Technology graduates of Cagayan State University at Lal-lo batches 2014 and 2015. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the graduates in terms of:
  - a. Age
  - b. Sex
  - c. Civil Status
  - d. Highest Educational Attainment
2. What is the employment status of the graduates?
3. What factors affect their seeking for employment?
4. How do graduates assess the IT course in terms of:
  - a. Course Experience
  - b. Involvement in School Activities



- c. Campus Environment
  - d. Competencies Obtained
  - e. Transferable Skills
  - f. Tacit Knowledge
5. What is the relationship between the employment status of the graduates and the following variables:
- a. Profile Variables
  - b. Factors that Affect Employability
  - c. Degree Course Assessment

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study used the descriptive correlational research since the study determined the employment of the BSIT graduates. In this study, the profile background in terms of age, sex, civil status, the employment status and the assessment of degree program of the respondents, as well as the relationship between the employment status and the profile variables and the assessment of IT Course, were described.

The descriptive design was used because the study involved answering questions concerning the current status of the respondents and it is also correlational as it determined the relationship between the graduate's employment status to their profile variables, factors affecting employability and the assessment of the degree program.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Socio-Economic Background of the Graduates**

The personal background of the graduates such as age, sex, civil status and highest educational attainment is presented in Table 1.

The table clearly shows that there are 70 or 52.24 percent of the graduates were at the age ranging from 24-26, followed by 60 or 44.78 percent were at the age range from 21-23, 2 or 1.49 percent were at age range from 27-29 and only one or 1.43 percent were at the age range 30-33 and 34-36 respectively. The results indicate that the graduates are on their early 20's. Finding implies that the graduates are young in age.

As gleaned in the table, 79 or 58.96 percent were female and there are 55 or 41.04 percent were male. Results indicate a greater number of female than the male. Finding implies that the IT course is female-dominated.



The table also shows that 111 or 82.84 percent of the graduates were single while 23 or 17.16 percent were married. Results indicate a greater number of respondents who were single. This finding may be attributed to their ages. Marriage is not their priority since they just graduated from college.

The table also shows that there were 131 or 97.14 percent are BSIT and there were three or 2.86 w/ MIT units. Results indicate that majority of the respondents did not pursue their higher education after their baccalaureate degree.

**Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Socio-Economic Background of the Graduates**

Category	Frequency	Percent
<b>Age</b>		
21-23	60	44.78
24-26	70	52.24
27-29	2	1.49
30-33	1	0.75
34-36	1	0.75
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	55	41.04
Female	79	58.96
<b>Civil Status</b>		
Single	111	82.84
Married	23	17.16
<b>Highest Educational Attainment</b>		
BSIT	131	97.14
MIT units	3	2.86

#### Current Employment of the Graduates



Table 2 presents the current employment of the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology graduates categorized as permanent, temporary, casual, and contractual and others.

The highest frequency was 46 or 34.33 percent under the category of permanent, 38 or 28.36 percent of the respondents were contractual, 31 or 23.13 percent were temporary followed by casual having the frequency of four or 4.3 percent and there are 14 or 10.45 percent were unemployed.

Results show that the BSIT graduates in the year 2014 and 2015 had a greater number of employed than unemployed. The nature of employment of most graduates is Data Entry Operation and Business Process in private institutions and others specify that they are casual and temporary in public institutions like teaching and database operator. This result reveals that the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) graduates found employment after graduation.

**Table 2. Current employment status of the graduates.**

Category	Frequency	Percent
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Permanent	46	34.33
Temporary	31	23.13
Casual	5	3.73
Contractual	38	28.36
Unemployed	14	10.45

#### **Factors Deemed Necessary to Employment**

Table 3 shows the factors affecting employment of the graduates. The table clearly shows that among the various factors, relevant work experience had the highest weighted mean of 3.36 (Strongly Agree), followed by specialist subject knowledge with a weighted mean of 3.33 (Strongly Agree), transferable skills and personal interest with a weighted mean of 3.31 (Strongly Agree), and the lowest is enthusiasm for position with a weighted mean of 3.09 (Agree). The obtained overall weighted mean was 3.28 which means that the stated factors were considered necessary to their employment. Findings imply that the factors identified are helpful towards their employment.



**Table 3. Factors affecting employment.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
a) Personal Qualities/Persona	3.29	Strongly Agree
b) Transferable Skills	3.31	Strongly Agree
c) Good Academic Record	3.26	Strongly Agree
d) Specialist Subject Knowledge	3.33	Strongly Agree
e) Enthusiasm for Position	3.09	Agree
f) Potential for Advancement	3.29	Strongly Agree
g) Relevant Work Experience	3.36	Strongly Agree
h) Personal Interests	3.31	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Strongly Agree
2.51 – 3.25	Agree
1.76 – 2.50	Disagree
1.00 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree

#### **Assessment of the IT Course as regards to Course Experience of the Graduates**

In Table 4, the data show the assessment of the IT course in terms of course experience of the graduates. The statements, “The course improved my communication skill” got the highest weighted mean of 3.23, but “I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems” had the lowest weighted mean of 3.14. As the table shows, the overall weighted mean of 3.17 was described agree. This result indicates that the course improved the abilities of respondents.



**Table 4. Assessment of the IT course in terms of course experience of the graduates.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
1) The course developed my problem-solving skills	3.20	Agree
2) The course helped me develop my ability to work as a team member.	3.16	Agree
3) The course improved my communication skills (written, communication, presentation, etc.	3.23	Agree
4) The course gave me the opportunity to socialize with others	3.13	Agree
5) As a result, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems.	3.14	Agree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Strongly Agree
2.51 – 3.25	Agree
1.76 – 2.50	Disagree
1.00 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree

#### **Assessment of the IT course as to Involvement in College or Campus Activities**

Table 5 shows the assessment of the IT course in terms of involvement in school activities. They claimed that they often developed role plays, case studies, or simulations in class and participated with other students during discussions with one or more faculty members outside of class as reflected in the highest weighted mean of 2.91. They too applied materials learned in class to other areas (job or internship, other courses, relationships with friends, family, etc); used information or experience from other areas of your life (job, internship, interaction with others) in class discussions or assignments; used a computer or word processor in making reports or paper prepared, e-mail, presentation, information searching, etc); participated and attended meetings of campus clubs, college, committees, student government, groups, etc); and played a team sport (club, inter-college, intramurals, etc). The item, worked on a campus or college committee, student



government groups, or project (organized projects, activities, or special event) have the lowest weighted mean of 2.57.

It is observable that all of the assessment of the IT course in terms of involvement in school activities had an overall weighted mean of 2.80 described often. This finding implies that respondents often participate in all school activities and they apply their skills learned in campus activities.

**Table 5. Assessment of the IT course as regards to course experience of the graduates.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
a) Contributed to class discussions	2.84	Often
b) Developed a role play, case study, or simulation in class	2.91	Often
c) Worked on a class assignment, project, or presentation with other subject	2.84	Often
d) Applied material learned in class to other areas (job or internship, other courses, relationships with friends, family, etc)	2.84	Often
e) Used information or experience from other areas of your life (job, internship, interaction with others) in class discussions or assignments.	2.90	Often
f) Used a computer or word processor (reports or paper prepared, e-mail, presentation, information searching, etc)	2.67	Often
g) Participated with other students in a discussions with one or more faculty members outside of class	2.91	Often
h) Socialized with a faculty member/lecturer outside of class (had a snack or soft drink, etc)	2.90	Often
i) Went to a lecture or panel discussion (seminar, forums, conferences, etc)	2.71	Often
j) Met campus outsider to complete the assignment or project	2.80	Often





k) Played a team sport (club, inter-college, intramurals, etc)	2.76	Often
l) Participated and attended a meeting of campus clubs, college, committees, student government, groups, etc)	2.67	Often
m) Worked on a campus or college committee, student government groups, or project (organized projects, activities, or special event)	2.57	Often
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>Often</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Very Often
2.51 – 3.25	Often
1.76 – 2.50	Sometimes
1.0 – 1.75	Never

#### Assessment of the IT course as regards to Campus Environment

Table 6 shows the assessment of the IT course in terms of campus environment. The overall weighted mean of 3.20 reflects that the graduates agree that campus environment was contributory to the employability of the graduates.

Among the six items assessed, majority claimed that they strongly agreed to item, emphasis on developing academic, scholarly, and intellectual qualities as reflected by the weighted mean of 3.27 described Strongly Agree.

**Table 6. Assessment of the IT course in terms of Campus Environment**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
a) Emphasis on developing academic, scholarly, and intellectual qualities	3.27	Strongly Agree
b) Emphasis on developing aesthetic, expressive, and creative qualities	3.17	Agree
c) Emphasis on developing critical, evaluative, and analytic qualities	3.21	Agree
d) Emphasis on developing information literacy skill	3.21	Agree



(using computers, other information resources)		
e) Emphasis on developing vocational and occupational competence	3.16	Agree
f) Emphasis on the personal relevance and practical value of your course	3.20	Agree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Strongly Agree
2.51 – 3.25	Agree
1.76 – 2.50	Disagree
1.0 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree

The result indicates that majority of the respondents emphasized the development of their academic, scholarly, and intellectual qualities in campus environment.

#### Assessment of the IT course as regards to Transferable Skills

Table 7 shows the extent of progress made in the transferable skills of the graduates. It is shown that the variables obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.14 which means that their transferable skills were gained quite a bit.

**Table 7. Assessment of the IT course as regards to transferable skills.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
a) Communication skill	3.17	Quite Bit
b) Team work	3.23	Quite Bit
c) Problem solving	3.21	Quite Bit
d) Human relation/interpersonal skills	3.14	Quite Bit
e) Numeracy/application of numbers	3.03	Quite Bit
f) Computer literacy/IT skill	3.21	Quite Bit
g) Leadership	2.86	Quite Bit
h) Initiative skill	3.10	Quite Bit
i) Being adaptable	3.14	Quite Bit
j) Acquiring skills applicable to a specific job or work	3.16	Quite Bit



k) Gaining a range of information that may be relevant to a career	3.21	Quite Bit
l) Acquiring knowledge applicable to a specific job or work	3.21	Quite Bit
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>Quite Bit</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Very Much
2.51 – 3.25	Quite a Bit
1.76 – 2.50	Sometimes
1.0 – 1.75	Very Little

### Competencies as regards to Personal Skills

Table 8 shows the competencies under personal skills. The critical thinking skills got the highest weighted mean of 3.27 described very much and the other competencies ranged a weighted mean of 3.06 to 3.24 described quite a bit.

As the table clearly shows, the overall weighted mean is 3.14. The results in the standards mandated by the commission on higher education under personal skills are quite a bit. This finding implies that the respondents have a good performance in their personal skills.

**Table 8. Competencies as regards to personal skills.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
1. Personal discipline skills	3.16	Quite a Bit
2. Critical thinking skills	3.27	Very Much
3. Inter and Intra-person motivation skills	3.23	Quite a Bit
4. Problem-solving skills	3.06	Quite a Bit
5. Planning and organizing skills	3.07	Quite a Bit
6. Ethical thinking	3.06	Quite a Bit
7. Entrepreneurial thinking	3.07	Quite a Bit
8. Innovative	3.09	Quite a Bit
9. Perseverance in pursuing goals and continuous improvement	3.24	Quite a Bit
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>Quite a Bit</b>



### Competencies as regards to Interpersonal Skills

Table 9 shows the competencies under interpersonal skills. Each of the variables obtained a rating of along 3.03 to 3.11 which gave an overall mean rating of 3.94 described as quite a bit. This finding implies that the respondents have a good performance in interpersonal skills. It is contradicted by Kantrowitz [2011] who stressed out that insufficient preparation gives students a sense of not belonging and a deficit in their own perspectives as academic beings when it comes to the skills most needed by employers. He observed that students are lacking most in written and oral communication skills, adaptability and managing multiple priorities, and making decisions and problem solving. Moreover, the results of the study support Green and Knight (2012) exclaimed that oral communication is very important competency in the recruitment and selection process of would-be employees, this does not mean that not having excellent communication skills would not employ a graduate in the job market.

**Table 9. Assessment of the IT course in terms of competencies under interpersonal skills.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
1. Team work and collaborative skills	3.04	Quite a Bit
2. Oral and written communication skills	3.11	Quite a Bit
3. Conflict resolution skills	3.03	Quite a Bit
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>Quite a Bit</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Very Much
2.51 – 3.25	Quite a Bit
1.76 – 2.50	Sometimes
1.0 – 1.75	Very Little

### Competencies as regards to Technical Understanding

Table 10 shows the competencies under technical understanding. The table clearly shows that the Operations of Databases has the highest weighted mean of 2.96 and other competencies have mean rating ranges 2.84 to 2.94 which has an overall weighted mean of 2.90 described quite a bit.



**Table 10. Assessment of the IT course in terms of competency under technical understanding.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
1. System Analysis and Design	2.89	Quite a Bit
2. Operations of Databases	2.96	Quite a Bit
3. Networking Management and operations	2.94	Quite a Bit
4. Operation of Multimedia Systems	2.91	Quite a Bit
5. Software integration, testing and documentation	2.93	Quite a Bit
6. System management and administration	2.84	Quite a Bit
7. Principles of accounting	2.81	Quite a Bit
8. General programming	2.94	Quite a Bit
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>Quite a Bit</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Very Much
2.51 – 3.25	Quite a Bit
1.76 – 2.50	Sometimes
1.0 – 1.75	Very Little

This finding implies that the respondents have good understanding in their IT subjects. In supports to this, Whilst Dearing (1997) states that explicitly refrained from producing a list of skills, because of the nature of individual programmers of study and their learning objectives, it is probably useful for students to see the sort of skills that the programmer is aiming to develop so that they are more aware of their own personal development. It is also useful for students to see the type of skills which employers are typically seeking from graduates.

This means that students can be aware of any gaps in their own personal development well in advance of getting to the stage of applying for jobs

#### **Tacit Knowledge of People Responsible for the Development of Transferable Skills among Students**

Table 11 shows the tacit knowledge of people responsible for the development of transferable skills to students. Results show that lecturers have the highest weighted mean of 3.26 described strongly agree and employers and student had the same weighted mean of 3.18 described strongly agree. The obtained overall weighted mean of 3.21 was described strongly agree. The finding implies that people are readily available to help students develop their transferable skills.



**Table 11. Tacit Knowledge of people responsible for the development of transferable skills among students.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
a) Lecturers	3.26	Strongly Agree
b) Employers/ supervisors	3.18	Strongly Agree
c) Student themselves	3.18	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Strongly Agree
2.51 – 3.25	Agree
1.76 – 2.50	Disagree
1.0 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree

**Tacit Knowledge of People Responsible for the Development of Transferable Skills among Students**

The Table 12 shows the programs or situations can give ample opportunity for student to gain work experience and the development of transferable skills during their study. The OJT has the highest weighted mean rate of 3.29 as described Strongly Agree and the other Tacit Knowledge have a weighted mean range 2.99 to 3.13 as described Agree with an overall weighted mean of 3.08 as described Agree. These findings imply that all programs of Tacit Knowledge have helped the respondents to developed their knowledge and skills during their study.

**Table 12. Tacit knowledge of people responsible for the development of transferable skills among students.**

Category	Weighted Mean	Description
a) Industry training (OJT/Practicum)	3.29	Strongly Agree
b) Part-time job	3.13	Agree
c) Involve in college or campus activities (club, college committee, etc)	3.01	Agree
d) Specific transferable skill program or course	3.07	Agree
e) Learning approach (case study, off	2.99	Agree



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campus project or assignment, etc)		
f) Simulations	2.99	Agree
g) Work-place visit	3.03	Agree
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>Agree</b>

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Legend:

3.26 – 4.0	Strongly Agree
2.51 – 3.25	Agree
1.76 – 2.50	Disagree
1.0 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree

This finding implies that the factors identified earlier give ample opportunity in developing the transferable skills of the graduates.

#### **Relationship between Perceived Employment Status Outcomes and Select Profile Variables**

Table 13 shows the relationship between perceived employment status outcomes and select profile variables. Results show that the age, sex, and civil status were not significantly related to their employment status.

Findings imply that the regardless of the sex, age, and civil status of the graduates, their employability remains the same. It means further that though the graduate is young or old, male or female, single or married, they have similar chances of employment.

However, educational attainment significantly affected their employment status. Finding means that the higher the educational attainment of the graduate, the greater is his/her chance of employment. This result was supported by the study of Harvey (2010) who stated that higher education institutes provides a range of employability improvement opportunities for students including self-presentation, life-long learning and many others. Certain developments are implicit and embedded in degree programs while others are explicitly visible and developed as add-on modules. Further, Cryer (1997) stated that very few PhD students do themselves justice in the job market, often underselling themselves to prospective employers because they fail to appreciate the value of the skills they have developed during their research. Students who are aware of the additional skills that they have attained during the course of their research should have the competitive edge in the job market.



**Table 13. Relationship between perceived employment status outcomes and select profile variables.**

Profile Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
Age	-0.144	0.280	Not significant
Sex	-0.071	0.599	Not significant
Civil Status	-0.021	0.875	Not significant
Highest Educational Attainment	1.000	0.000**	Significant

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

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

#### **Relationship between the Employment Status and Factors that Affect Employability**

Table 14 shows the relationship between employment status and factors that affect employability. Findings reveal that there was significant relationship between employment status and the potential for advancement of the graduate as reflected in the probability value of 0.048.

Findings imply that when the graduate has potential for advancement, his/her employability is greater. This finding is contradicted by the findings of Kanfer et al. (2001) stating that personal characteristics have a strong relationship to job search behavior and employment outcomes.

**Table 14. Relationship between the employment status and factors that affect employability.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
Personal Qualities/Personality	0.032	0.811	Not significant
Transferable Skills	-0.126	0.346	Not significant
Good Academic Record	0.135	0.313	Not significant
Specialist Subject Knowledge	-0.079	0.554	Not Significant
Enthusiasm for Position	0.031	0.819	Not Significant
Potential for advancement	0.048	0.048*	Significant
Relevant work experience	-0.065	0.627	Not Significant





Personal Interests	.0141	0.291	Not Significant
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\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

### Relationship between Employment Status and Course Experience

The relationship between employment status and course experience of the graduates is presented in Table 15. Results reveal that there was no significant relationship between employment status and the course experience of the graduate. It means further that whether the graduate developed problem solving skills, collaboration or team work, communication skills, opportunity for specialization, and confidence in unfamiliar problems, their employment status remains the same. This finding is supported by Ehiyazaryan&Barraclough (2009) stating that the value of enterprise education was clearly identified and integrated into academic curriculums through suitable pedagogical changes in a manner that will match students' academic degree programs to their intended further employability experience. Clearly the real-world experience is an essential step in employability while students are motivated when the subject matter is presented in a manner that is similar to real-life business situations. Furthermore, improvements in student behavior results in improved confidence and decision making. Also the design of learning environment impacts the way in which students work together in their learning activities which reflects work environments.

**Table 15. Relationship between employment status and course experience.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
The course developed my problem-solving skills	-0.107	0.423	Not significant
The course helped me develop my ability to work as a team member.	-0.133	0.318	Not significant
The course improved my communication skills (written,	-0.092	0.493	Not significant




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communication, presentation, etc)			
The course gave me the opportunity to socialize with others	-0.075	0.577	Not Significant
As a result, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems.	-0.012	0.930	Not Significant

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

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

#### **Relationship between employment status and Involvement in College or Campus Activities**

Table 16 highlights the relationship between employment status and involvement in college or campus activities. Results indicate that there was no significant relationship between employment status and involvement of the graduates during college or campus activities.

Findings imply that the employability of the graduates is not affected by their involvement in school activities. Moreover, according to Pool & Sewell (2007) Career EDGE model presents a practical and simple overview of the relevant factors included in the employability process. Career EDGE model is an alternative model that combines all the main factors of USEM, and employability skills models while bringing much needed clarity and simplicity. The model explains the manner in which five lower order factors, namely; career development learning, experience, degree subject knowledge understanding and skills, generic skills, and emotional intelligence that allow students to reflect and evaluate these experiences. Employability is achieved through a complex interaction with social concepts such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-confidence.



**Table 16. Relationship between employment status and involvement in college or campus activities.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
A. Contributed to class discussions	-0.157	0.240	Not significant
Developed a role play, case study, or simulation in class	-0.114	0.393	Not significant
Worked on a class assignment, project, or presentation with other subject	-0.026	0.847	Not significant
Applied material learned in class to other areas (job or internship, other courses, relationships with friends, family, etc)	0.050	0.711	Not Significant
Used information or experience from other areas of your life (job, internship, interaction with others) in class discussions or assignments.	0.154	0.250	Not Significant
Used a computer or word processor (reports or paper prepared, e-mail, presentation, information searching, etc)	-0.120	0.369	Not Significant
Participated with other students in a discussions with one or more faculty members outside of class	0.014	0.914	Not Significant
Socialized with a faculty member/lecturer outside of class (had a snack or soft drink, etc)	-0.029	0.829	Not Significant
Went to a lecture or panel discussion (seminar, forums, conferences, etc)	0.033	0.807	Not Significant
Met campus outsider to complete the	0.157	0.239	Not



assignment or project			Significant
Played a team sport (club, inter-college, intramurals, etc)	0.187	0.159	Not Significant
Participated and attended a meeting of campus clubs, college, committees, student government, groups, etc)	0.139	0.298	Not Significant
Worked on a campus or college committee, student government groups, or project (organized projects, activities, or special event)	0.162	0.223	Not Significant

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

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

#### Relationship between Employment Status and Campus Environment

The relationship between employment status and Campus Environment of the graduates are presented in Table 17. Results show that there was no significant relationship between employment status and campus environment.

Finding implies that regardless of the qualities emphasized in the campus environment, the employment status of the graduate is the same. The findings support by Skilbeck and Connell (1996), a vital determinant as to whether or not graduates choose to become lifelong learners is the climate of intellectual inquiry in their institution. Lifelong learning perspectives are leading to a view of the first cycle of education as an enabling device for future learning – with an emphasis on generic achievements – rather than a vocational passport. Individual, self-directed learning is an important element of this agenda.

**Table 17. Relationship between employment status and campus environment.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
Emphasis on developing academic, scholarly, and intellectual qualities	-0.175	0.190	Not Significant



			significant
Emphasis on developing aesthetic, expressive, and creative qualities	-0.146	0.273	Not significant
Emphasis on developing critical, evaluative, and analytic qualities	-0.108	0.418	Not significant
Emphasis on developing information literacy skill (using computers, other information resources)	-0.140	0.295	Not significant
Emphasis on developing vocational and occupational competence	-0.161	0.226	Not significant
Emphasis on the personal relevance and practical value of your course	-0.172	0.196	Not significant

#### Relationship between employment status and Transferable Skills

The table 18 shows that the relationship between employment status and Transferable Skills of the graduates. Results reveal that the employment status was not affected by the competencies in interpersonal skills of the graduate.

Findings imply that whether the graduates are competent in their transferable skills or not, their employment status does not vary. It supports by (Wickramasinghe&Perera, 2010). Clearly, the male and female graduates have different perceived levels of employability skills while their focus towards employability also appears to differ significantly. For instance, female graduates demonstrate higher level of importance to all employability skills apart from oral communication compared to male graduates. Also it was noted that female graduates demonstrate higher level of “self-confidence” and “learning skills” compared to male graduates. Study identified the need to improve the quality of transferrable skills since both male and female graduates appear to perceive their actual skill levels as less than ideal level required for employment. Also the study revealed that apart from problem solving skills, level of skills possessed by graduates and level of skills expected by employers do not differ for other employability skills. Accordingly, graduates can assess their skill levels by comparing with skill requirements for each job position prior to applying for that new post. The study done by Ariyawansa (2008) contradicts with previous employability studies and states IT skills and English language is not the focus for universities. In a context where many graduates



consider training / experience as an important aspect in private sector, an improvement in IT skills, leadership qualities, team-work, analytical ability, and interpersonal relationships is vital parallel to university degree related learning. The mismatch of demand and supply for graduates in employment sector has in fact resulted in the variation of employability among university graduates. Accordingly, the study on employability of Sri Lankan university graduates appear to be parallel to similar employability studies done overseas such as connected model which considers both the graduate and their environment that interact with each other in creating employability. Supported also by Cherry S.Wanyathe leadership experiences of students are vital to their employment.

**Table 18. Relationship between employment status and transferable skills.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
Communication Skill	-0.119	0.372	Not significant
Team Work	-0.043	0.750	Not significant
Problem Solving	0.128	0.337	Not significant
Human Relation/Interpersonal Skills	-0.088	0.510	Not Significant
Numeracy/Application of Numbers	0.086	0.519	Not Significant
Computer Literacy/IT Skill	-0.078	0.563	Not Significant
Leadership	-0.115	0.390	Not Significant
Initiative Skill	0.052	0.700	Not Significant
Being Adaptable	-0.102	0.445	Not Significant
Acquiring Skills Applicable to a Specific Job or Work	-0.030	0.823	Not Significant
Gaining a Range of Information That May Be Relevant to a Career	-0.198	0.136	Not Significant
Acquiring Knowledge Applicable to a Specific Job or Work	-0.248	0.061	Not Significant

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

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

**Relationship between Employment Status and Competency in Personal Skills**



The table 19 shows the relationship between employment status Personal Skills. Results show that the critical thinking skill was significantly related to the employment status of the graduates.

Findings imply that the higher the critical thinking skill of the graduate, his/her employability is lower. Supports by Wellman, (2010) study can be considered significant since it clearly identified the interplay between various elements of knowledge, skills and personal attributes in developing an integrated competence model of employability.

**Table 19. Relationship between employment status and competency in personal skills.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
Personal discipline skills	-0.070	0.601	Not significant
Critical thinking skills	-0.0336	0.010**	Significant
Inter and Intra-person motivation skills	-0.120	0.369	Not significant
Problem-solving skills	-0.146	0.275	Not Significant
Planning and organizing skills	0.063	0.637	Not Significant
Ethical thinking	0.089	0.508	Not Significant
Entrepreneurial thinking	0.088	0.510	Not Significant
Innovative	0.063	0.637	Not Significant
Perseverance in pursuing goals and continuous improvement	-0.110	0.412	Not Significant



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

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

### Relationship between Employment Status and Interpersonal Skills

Table 20 shows the relationship between the employment status and interpersonal skills of the graduates. Findings show that there was no significant relationship between interpersonal skills and employability of the graduate.

Findings imply that whether the graduates show teamwork or collaboration among themselves, whether they possess skills in oral and written communication; and whether they show skills in resolving problems, their employability is the same. This result is supported by Green and Knight (2012) when they exclaimed that oral communication is a very important competency in the recruitment and selection process of would-be employees. This does not mean that not having excellent communication skills would not employ a graduate in the job market. Area of interest became a determinant factor affecting employability.

**Table 20. Relationship between employment status and interpersonal skills.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
Team work and collaborative skills	-0.103	0.440	Not significant
Oral and written communication skills	0.010	0.942	Not significant
Conflict resolution skills	0.050	0.709	Not significant

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

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

### Relationship between Employment Status and Technical Understanding

Table 21 shows the relationship between the employment status technical understanding. Results reveal that system analysis and design, operation of databases, networking management and operations, operation of multimedia systems, software integration, testing and documentation, system management and administration, principles of accounting, general programming did not affect the employment status of the graduates.





**Table 21. Relationship between employment status and technical understanding.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
1) System Analysis and Design	0.140	0.295	Not significant
2) Operations of Databases	0.035	0.796	Not Significant
3) Networking Management and operations	0.030	0.823	Not significant
4) Operation of Multimedia Systems	-0.015	0.910	Not Significant
5) Software integration, testing and documentation	0.116	0.385	Not Significant
6) System management and administration	0.069	0.607	Not Significant
7) Principles of accounting	0.115	0.392	Not Significant
8) General programming	0.008	0.952	Not Significant

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

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

Findings imply that the technical understanding acquired by the graduates do not guarantee their employability. This finding contradicts with the findings of Abdullah (2012) as he pointed out that area of specialization affects employability in the Malaysian context. Active involvement in extra-curricular activities affected the employability of the IT graduates.

#### **Relationship between the Employment Status and People Responsible for the Development of Transferable Skills**

Table 22 shows the relationship between the employment status and people responsible for the development of transferable skills. Results show that employment status was not significantly affected by lecturers, employers or supervisors, and students. It means further that the status of employment of the graduates does not vary regardless of who their lecturers, employers or supervisors are. In support to this is the finding of Wickramasinghe&Perera (2010). The perceptions of employers, university lecturers, and graduates have towards employability are said to be different and was the focus of a study that was performed using entry-level graduates working in IT sector in



Sri Lanka. There are clear differences in priorities for employability skills by male graduates, female graduates, employers, and lecturers while employability skills are said to be influenced mainly by graduate gender. University graduates prefer to acquire these skills while university lecturers and employers want their graduates to have these skills. All three groups identified problem solving, self-confidence, and team work as the most important factor towards employability. (Morrison, 2013) highlighting that degrees offer transferable skills which provides future employability in business and finance. Students are encouraged to develop absolute employability which is considered more important. The study reveals that staff perceptions play an important role in the influence of social class, gender, and race on employability. It is stated that with increasing pressure on higher education systems lecturers are compelled to deliver employability focused curricula.

**Table 22. Relationship between the employment status and people responsible for the development of transferable skills.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
a) Lecturers	-0.052	0.699	Not significant
b) Employers/ supervisors	-0.061	0.660	Not significant
c) Student themselves	-0.015	0.914	Not significant

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

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

**Relationship between Employment Status and Programs or Situations That Can Give Ample Opportunity to Gain Work Experiences and Aid in the Development of Transferable Skills among Students**

The Table 23 shows the relationship between employment status and programs or situations that can give ample opportunity to gain work experiences and aid in the development of transferable skills among students.

Results show that industry training significantly affected the employment status of the graduates as shown in the probability value of 0.020 lower than 0.05 level of significance; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. The findings imply that when the training acquired by the students in his workplace is adequate, their employment status becomes better.



**Table23. Relationship between employment status and programs or situations that can give ample opportunity to gain work experiences and aid in the development of transferable skills among students.**

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Probability	Statistical Inference
Employment status and			
Industry Training (OJT/Practicum)	-0.304	0.020*	Significant
Part-time Job	-0.138	0.315	Not Significant
Involvement in College or Campus Activities (club, college committee, etc)	-0.237	0.081	Not significant
Specific Transferable Skill Program or Course	-0.077	0.577	Not Significant
Learning Approach (case study, off campus project or assignment, etc)	0.045	0.744	Not Significant
Simulations	0.078	0.573	Not Significant
Workplace Visit	-0.170	0.216	Not Significant

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

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

On the other hand, learning approach, part time job, involvement in college/campus activities, specific transferable skill program, simulations and work place visit did not affect the employment status of the graduates. This supports the study of Billy S. Javier as he concluded that area of interest, involvement to extra-curricular activities and trainings/seminars attended were determinants of graduate employability. Shaping the students earlier, exposing them into extra-



curricular activities and involving them to related trainings/seminars, then the graduates were likely land in a job.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that the employability of the graduates depends not only on the attributes of the individual graduates such as subject knowledge, experience, skills and personality traits, but also on the faculty, curriculum and pedagogy in the university systems.

Though the graduate is young or old, male or female, single or married, they have similar chances of employment. When the graduates have potential for advancement, his or her employability is greater. Whether the graduate developed problem solving skills, collaboration or teamwork, communication skills, opportunity for specialization, and confidence in unfamiliar problems, their employment status remains the same. The employability of the graduate is not affected by their involvement in school activities. Regardless of the qualities emphasized in the campus environment, the employment status of the graduate is the same. Whether the graduates are competent in their interpersonal skills or not, their employment status is not varying. The higher the critical thinking skill of the graduate, his/her employability is lower. Whether the graduates show teamwork or collaboration among themselves; and whether they possess skills in oral and written communication; and whether they show skills in resolving problems, their employability is the same. The technical understanding acquired by the graduates does not guarantee their employability. The status of employment of the graduates does not vary regardless of who their lecturers, employers or supervisors are and even who they are. When the training acquired by the students in his workplace is great, their employment status becomes better.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following items are recommended.

1. The school should assist the students in their career path to lead them to the right choice of course.
2. Skills applicable to IT –related jobs should be emphasized in the curriculum and developed among IT students to be competitive during their job search.
3. All graduating students should take TESDA NC II or any eligibility examinations for them to upgrade their skills/competencies and become eligible assessors.



4. The relevance and quality of curriculum program must be given important consideration or should receive a high priority on the planning and implementation of information technology education
5. Establishing linkages between school and industry and enhancing the job trainings and placement of graduates may be a major consideration of any academic institution.
6. The Bachelor of Science of Information Technology instruction should be improved through the Critical Thinking Skills of the students.
7. Further studies should be conducted in wide/ larger scope so as to establish greater validity and reliability of the findings and results under this nature of research.

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