



## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS OF GRADUATES: THE PERCEIVED ASSESSMENT

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**ABSTRACT:** *The employment market today is an energetic, vibrant, demanding, challenging and tough place for young individuals graduating from different schools, universities or any educational institutions. Employers expect the graduates they employ to hold specific skills such as logical thinking, quick learning, communication skills, flexibility, ambition, high levels of motivation, creativity, critical thinking, initiative, teamwork and time management (Lester, 2013:1). Various industries, companies and businesses mainly depend on the output of graduates from the universities, colleges and other higher education institutions who are equipped with the necessary employable skills. This study was therefore conducted to conduct survey and explore the students' perception on the employability skills needed to be competitive in the market and business world. This study was conducted at the College of Business, Entrepreneurship and Accountancy of Cagayan State University- Andrews Campus, Tuguegarao City where the respondents were the second batch of the Bachelor of Science in Accounting Technology. The respondents of this study were the 113 4<sup>th</sup> year BSAT students for the School Year 2017-2018. Total enumeration was used by the researcher in obtaining the results. The survey questionnaire used was patterned from the employability skills profile developed by members of The Conference Board of Canada's Employability Skills Forum and the Business and Education Forum on Science, Technology, and Mathematics. The data gathered were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the descriptive statistics like rank and weighted mean. Descriptive method was used to come up with a good result of the study. Result of the study revealed that under the fundamental skills, managing information and working with tools and technology got the highest category mean of 4.14, followed by communicating with a category mean of 4.09 and thinking and problem solving with a category mean of 3.99. With regard to personal management skills, learning continuously got the highest mean of 4.28 followed by self-management and being adaptable, next is demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours and finally initiative and enterprise with a category mean of 4.13, 4.12 and 3.92 respectively. While under the teamwork skills participating in projects and tasks got 4.08 and working with others got 4.05 category mean. From the results generated it is therefore recommended that the college should design authentic assessment activities, aligned with industry practices, standards and approaches and that employers should work together with schools to provide learning experiences that will promote students' development of employability skills.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Employability skills, fundamental skills, communicating, managing information and working with tools and technology, thinking and problem solving, personal management skills, demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours, self-management and being adaptable, learning continuously, initiative and enterprise, teamwork skills, working with others, participating in projects and tasks.*



## **INTRODUCTION**

The employment market today is an energetic, vibrant, demanding, challenging and tough place for young individuals graduating from different schools, universities or any educational institutions. The job opportunities are for graduates who have employable skills that are anticipated and in demand at workplaces. But from the hundreds of applicants who appear for the interviews only few are chosen mainly because they do not possess the necessary skills for that particular job they are applying for. According to Dhanavel (2011) the need to provide and equip graduating students with the skills needed for the workplace has become a vital concern. Lankard (1990) in his study stated that among these foundational skills needed are those which relate to communication, personal and interpersonal relationships, problem solving, and management of organizational processes. According to Yorke and Knight (2006) employability skills are "a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy." Employability skills can be more helpful to recruiters than skills linked specifically with a graduate's degree, it is necessary for graduates in today's job market to have something that will stand out to possible employers.

Nowadays, employers develop a definite set of skills they look for in every new hire. Those skills that would be necessary to execute a particular job or the employability skills. The skills of graduates are a controversial issue for international and national employers. The concerns of employers rooted from their failure to find graduates with the required skills to effectively contribute and adapt to the work environment (Hesketh, 2000:245). Employability has been questioned in this increasing complex society and knowledge driven economy which requires individuals who can meet challenges of global economy characterised by rapid change (Brown, Hesketh & Williams, 2002). There is already pressure from the labour market for universities to produce students that are ready for the workplace (Lowden, Hall, Elliot & Lewin, 2011). Employers expect the graduates they



employ to hold specific skills such as logical thinking, quick learning, communication skills, flexibility, ambition, high levels of motivation, creativity, critical thinking, initiative, teamwork and time management (Lester, 2013:1). Additionally, employers expect students to have well developed employability skills, so that they can make an immediate contribution to the workplace when recruited. Baxter and Young (1982) have also indicated that employers need entry level workers who are dependable and trustworthy, have basic communication, thinking and problem solving skills, and have the desire to learn and advance the ability to work as part of a team, and possess a proper attitude. The lack of these skills in graduates has impacted the employability of graduates in recent years to a large extent.

Employability skills are a crucial part of college and career readiness, and the education and workforce communities are escalating their attention on how these skills can be integrated into instructional practice at all levels and in all areas. Various industries, companies and businesses mainly depend on the output of graduates from the universities, colleges and other higher education institutions who are equipped with the necessary employable skills. Smith (2009) outlined that the unemployed university graduates who remain unsuccessful in finding and holding jobs is due to their lacking of the critical employability skills. Griesel & Parker (2009:2) also stated that more unemployed graduates are emerging and therefore necessitate a skills revolution in the curricula of universities. That is why nowadays universities are focusing on enhancing the employability of graduates by collating job-market and economic information (Tran, 2010:9). Cox and King (2006:262) also stated that universities are now focusing more on employability and preparing the graduates for the work environment. Different academic programmes in different universities are adopting various strategies by, for example, offering work experience, work-related learning and employability skills modules, and 'ready for work' events, as well as involving employers in course design and delivery. In many cases, with employability skills already embedded in the curriculum, universities employ a range of initiatives to make them more explicit to students (Cranmer, 2006).



## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

This study aimed to assess the students' perceptions on the employability skills of the Bachelor of Science in Accounting Technology students of the College of Business Entrepreneurship and Accountancy of Cagayan State University, Andrews Campus.

Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the perception of the student-respondents with regard to the fundamental skills for employment?
2. What is the perception of the student-respondents with regard to the personal management skills for employment?
3. What is the perception of the student-respondents with regard to the teamwork skills for employment?

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study made use of the descriptive research method employing the questionnaire as main data-gathering instrument. The researcher made use of structured questionnaires to gather the needed data which were given to the respondents.

This study was conducted at the Cagayan State University, Andrews Campus, Tuguegarao City where the respondents were the graduating students of the BS in Accounting Technology.

The respondents of this study were the 113 4<sup>th</sup> year BSAT students for the School Year 2017-2018. Total enumeration was used by the researcher in obtaining the results.

The data gathered were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the descriptive statistics like rank and weighted mean.

The weighted mean was interpreted using the following criterion scale:

Numerical Value	Mean Range	Descriptive Scale
5	4.50-5.00	Excellent
4	3.50-4.49	Good



3	2.50-3.49	Average
2	1.50-2.49	Fair
1	1.00-1.49	Poor

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 1**

***Item Mean, Descriptive Value and Rank Distribution of the Student-Respondents' Perception with Regard to Fundamental Skills***

	Item Mean	Descriptive Value	Rank
<b>COMMUNICATING</b>			
1. Can read independently and understand information presented in a variety of forms	4.22	Good	1
2. Can speak in a way that others pay attention and understand	4.16	Good	2
3. Can write to the needs of the audience.	3.89	Good	7
4. Can listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others	4.12	Good	5
5. Can share information using a range of information and communication technologies	4.13	Good	4
6. Can use relevant scientific, technological and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas	4.14	Good	3
7. Can persuade effectively and negotiate positively	3.94	Good	6
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.09</b>	<b>Good</b>	

### **MANAGING INFORMATION AND WORKING WITH TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY**

1. Can locate, gather and organize information	4.19	Good	2
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using appropriate technology and information systems			
2. Can access, analyze and apply knowledge and can explain or clarify ideal skills from various disciplines	4.05	Good	5
3. Can identify, select and use appropriate tools and technological solutions to frequently encountered problems	4.13	Good	3
4. Can operate tools and equipment in accordance with established operating procedures and safety standards	4.12	Good	4
5. Can seek out opportunities to improve knowledge of tools and technologies that may assist in streamlining work and improving productivity	4.22	Good	1
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>Good</b>	

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#### THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Can assess situations and identify problems and develop practical solutions	4.14	Good	1
2. Can seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts	4.14	Good	1
3. Can recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific and mathematical dimensions of a problem	3.98	Good	4
4. Can identify the root cause of a problem	3.97	Good	5
5. Is creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions	3.95	Good	7
6. Can readily use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions	3.88	Good	8
7. Can evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions	4.07	Good	2

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8. Can implement solutions	3.96	Good	6
9. Can check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities for improvement	4.02	Good	3
10. Can resolve customer concerns in relation to complex project issues.	3.81	Good	9
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Fundamental Skills	Category Mean	Descriptive Value	Rank
Communicating	4.09	Good	2
Managing Information and Working with Tools and Technology	4.14	Good	1
Thinking and Problem Solving	3.99	Good	3
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 1 presents the item mean, descriptive value and rank distribution of student-respondents' perception with regard to fundamental skills. Fundamental skills are defined as skills needed as a basis for further development. A student can be prepared better to progress in the world of work when he or she can communicate, manage information and work with tools and technology, as well as think and solve problems.

Under the category communicating, the table confirms that the descriptive value were unanimously "Good" with the highest numerical value of 4.22 on "Can read independently and understand information presented in a variety of forms" and this implies that BSAT students are proficient in reading and that they understood what they are reading even if it is presented in different forms. Next in rank with an item mean of 4.16 on "Can speak in a way that others pay attention and understand" which implies that BSAT students are also good in communicating that the receiver of the message could understand the message and they could also capture the attention of their receiver or listener. "Can write to the needs of the audience" and "Can persuade effectively and negotiate positively" got the lowest mean of 3.89 and 3.94 or ranked 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively. This implies that BSAT



students still need to learn the art of writing to jive with the needs of their audience and need more exposure on the proper way on how to persuade people as well as how to win a negotiation. The category mean of 4.09 implies that BSAT students feel good on the fundamental skills that they have learned or experienced relative to communicating.

In managing information and working with tools and technology, the table confirms that the descriptive value were also unanimously “Good” with the highest item mean of 4.22 on “Can seek out opportunities to improve knowledge of tools and technologies that may assist in streamlining work and improving productivity” which implies that BSAT students are open to any opportunities, changes and improvements which could help them become more productive and efficient in their respective works. On the other hand, “Can access, analyze and apply knowledge and can explain or clarify ideal skills from various disciplines” got the lowest mean of 4.05 which implies that again BSAT students still lacks exposure and knowledge on the different skills needed by the different disciplines. Thus they need to undergo trainings and seminars and to have a clearer view of the different skills needed by the various disciplines. The category mean of 4.14 implies that BSAT students feel good on the fundamental skills that they have learned or experienced relative to managing information and working with tools and technology.

Under the category thinking and problem solving, the table further confirms that the descriptive value were also unanimously “Good” with the highest item mean of 4.14 for both “Can assess situations and identify problems and develop practical solutions” and “Can seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts.” This implies that BSAT students are good in knowing the problem and assess properly the situation before giving solutions and that all information generated is evaluated based on facts. “Can readily use science, technology and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems and make decisions” and “Can resolve customer concerns in relation to complex project issues” were ranked 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> with an item mean of 3.95 and 3.81 respectively. This implies that the respondents are not really inclined to science and technology hence they lack the knowledge and experience to solve problems and make decisions using science and technology. At the same time they also lack the experience in dealing with customers so they still don’t know how to deal with complex project issues. The category mean of 3.99



implies that BSAT students feel good on the fundamental skills that they have learned or experienced relative to thinking and problem solving.

Basing from the result, managing information and working with tools and technology got the highest category mean of 4.14, next is communicating with a category mean of 4.09 and 3<sup>rd</sup> is thinking and problem solving with 3.99. The overall mean of 4.07 implies that BSAT students feel good on the fundamental skills that they have learned or experienced.

**Table 2**

**Item Mean, Descriptive Value and Rank Distribution of the Student-Respondents' Perception with Regard to Personal Management Skills**

	Item Mean	Descriptive Value	Rank
<b>DEMONSTRATING POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS</b>			
1. Can feel good about self and is confident	3.99	Good	5
2. Can deal with people, problems and situations with honesty, integrity and personal ethics	4.09	Good	4
3. Can recognize own and other people's good efforts	4.17	Good	2
4. Can take care of personal health	4.19	Good	1
5. Can show interest, initiative and effort	4.14	Good	3
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.12</b>	<b>Good</b>	
<b>SELF-MANAGEMENT AND BEING ADAPTABLE</b>			
1. Can work independently or as part of a team	4.14	Good	4
2. Can carry out multiple tasks or projects	4.18	Good	3
3. Is innovative and resourceful and can identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done.	3.96	Good	6
4. Is open and can respond constructively to change	4.14	Good	4
5. Can learn from own mistakes and accept feedback	4.19	Good	2



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6. Can cope with uncertainty	4.21	Good	1
7. Have knowledge and confidence in your own ideas and vision	4.02	Good	5
8. Can evaluate and monitor own performance	4.19	Good	2
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>Good</b>	

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#### LEARNING CONTINUOUSLY

1. Is willing to continuously learn and grow	4.73	Excellent	1
2. Have enthusiasm for ongoing learning	4.61	Excellent	2
3. Can assess personal strength and areas for development	4.24	Good	3
4. Can set own learning goals	4.13	Good	5
5. Can identify and access learning sources and opportunities	3.98	Good	7
6. Can plan for and achieve own learning goals	4.14	Good	4
7. Can acknowledge the need to learn in order to accommodate change	4.11	Good	6
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>Good</b>	

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#### INITIATIVE AND ENTERPRISE

1. Can translate new ideas into action	4.01	Good	2
2. Can identify opportunities not obvious to others	3.80	Good	3
3. Can adapt to new situations	4.34	Good	1
4. Can generate a range of options	3.76	Good	4
5. Can initiate innovative solutions	3.70	Good	5
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>3.92</b>	<b>Good</b>	

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Personal Management Skills	Category Mean	Descriptive Value	Rank
Demonstrating Positive Attitudes and Behaviours	4.12	Good	3
Self-management and Being Adaptable	4.13	Good	2
Learning Continuously	4.28	Good	1
Initiative and Enterprise	3.92	Good	4
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 2 presents the item mean, descriptive value and rank distribution of student-respondents' perception with regard to personal management skills. Personal management skills are the skills, attitudes, and behaviours that drive one's potential for growth. A student can be able to offer themselves greater possibilities when he or she can demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours, manage oneself and being adaptable, could learn continuously and have the initiative and enterprise.

Under the category communicating, the table confirms that the descriptive values were unanimously "Good" with the highest numerical value of 4.19 on "Can take care of personal health". This implies that respondents are aware on the saying "healthy mind resides in a healthy body", so to get that healthy mind they need to make their body healthy and the satisfaction they will get will be amazing. "Can feel good about self and is confident" got the lowest mean of 3.99 in this category. With such result, students should actively work on improving how they feel about themselves and be more confident on whatever things they are doing. The category mean of 4.12 implies that BSAT students feel good on the personal management skills that they have learned or experienced relative to demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours.

In self-management and being adaptable, the table shows that the descriptive values were unanimously "Good" with the highest numerical value of 4.21 on "Can cope with uncertainty." The respondents could understand that they can't control everything and that in a workplace a lot of changes could happen. They fully know that things that they didn't expect will likely happen because no one can predict the future. "Is innovative and



resourceful and can identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done” got the lowest mean of 3.96 which implies that respondents need more training on how to become innovative in their respective fields. The category mean of 4.13 implies that BSAT students feel good on the personal management skills that they have learned or experienced relative to Self-management and being adaptable.

In learning continuously, the table shows that two variables got an “Excellent” descriptive value with a mean of 4.73 and 4.61 pertaining to “Is willing to continuously learn and grow” and “Have enthusiasm for ongoing learning” respectively. This implies that the idea of continuous improvement would always be at the forefront of the respondents’ thoughts, plans and actions regarding their future career and they see all experiences as learning experiences. On the other hand, “Can identify and access learning sources and opportunities” got the lowest mean of 3.98. The respondents need to conduct further research to improve their skills in identifying learning sources and opportunities. The category mean of 4.28 implies that BSAT students feel good on the personal management skills that they have learned or experienced relative to learning continuously.

Under initiative and enterprise, the table confirms that the descriptive values were unanimously “Good” with the highest numerical value of 4.34 on “Can adapt to new situations.” The respondents recognized that learning to adapt to new situations and people is paramount to anyone’s survival especially in the world of business. Meanwhile, “Can initiate innovative solutions” got the lowest mean of 3.70. Initiative and enterprise mean looking for things that need to be done and doing them without being asked. This can also involve thinking creatively to make improvements to the way things are done. The category mean of 3.92 implies that BSAT students feel good on the personal management skills that they have learned or experienced relative to initiative and enterprise.

Basing from the overall result, learning continuously ranked first with a category mean of 4.28, 2<sup>nd</sup> is self management and being adaptable with a category mean of 4.13. 3<sup>rd</sup> on the list with a category mean of 4.12 is demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours and the last is initiative and enterprise with a category mean of 3.92. The overall mean of



4.11 implies that BSAT students feel good on the personal management skills that they have learned or experienced.

**Table 3**

**Item Mean, Descriptive Value and Rank Distribution of the Student-Respondents' Perception with Regard to Teamwork Skills**

	Item Mean	Descriptive Value	Rank
<b>WORKING WITH OTHERS</b>			
1. Can understand and work within the dynamics of a group	4.05	Good	4
2. Can ensure that a team's purpose and objectives are clear	3.84	Good	6
3. Is flexible and try to respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in a group	4.04	Good	5
4. Can recognize and respect people's diversity, individual differences and perspectives	4.05	Good	4
5. Can accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner	4.05	Good	4
6. Can contribute to a team by sharing information and expertise	4.08	Good	3
7. Can lead or support when appropriate, motivating a group for high performance	4.08	Good	3
8. Can understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions	4.15	Good	1
9. Can manage and resolve conflict when appropriate	4.04	Good	5
10. Can contribute to productive working relationship outcomes	4.09	Good	2
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>Good</b>	
<b>PARTICIPATING IN PROJECTS AND TASKS</b>			
1. Plans, designs, or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well-defined	4.13	Good	3



objectives and outcomes			
2. Develops a plan, seeks feedback, tests, revise and implement	4.16	Good	1
3. Work to agreed-upon quality standards and specifications	4.15	Good	2
4. Selects and uses appropriate tools and technology for a task or project	4.08	Good	4
5. Adapts to changing requirements and information	4.08	Good	4
6. Can manage time and priorities – set timeliness, coordinates tasks	4.07	Good	5
7. Can establish clear project goals and deliverables	3.90	Good	7
8. Can understand basic business systems and their relationships	4.05	Good	6
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.08</b>	<b>Good</b>	
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<b>Personal Management Skills</b>	<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Value</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Working with others</b>	4.05	Good	2
<b>Participating in projects and tasks</b>	4.08	Good	1
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>Good</b>	

Table 3 presents the item mean, descriptive value and rank distribution of student-respondents' perception with regard to teamwork skills. Teamwork skills are skills and attributes needed to contribute productively. A student can be prepared better to add value to the outcomes of a task, project, or team when he or she will work with others and participate in projects and tasks.

In working with others, the table confirms that the descriptive value were unanimously "Good" with the highest item mean of 4.15 on "Can understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions" this implies that BSAT students are aware that conflict isn't necessarily a bad thing and that they are aware that a healthy and constructive



conflict is a component of high-functioning teams and that understanding and appreciating the various viewpoints involved in conflict are key factors in its resolution. “Can contribute to productive working relationship outcomes” was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> with an item mean of 4.09. The respondents fully understood the importance of building quality working relationship and that they were fully aware that in doing so it will make one’s job more enjoyable and productive. “Can ensure that a team’s purpose and objectives are clear” got the lowest mean of 3.84. The category mean of 4.05 implies that BSAT students feel good on the teamwork skills that they have learned or experienced relative to working with others.

Under participating in projects and tasks, the table shows that the descriptive value were unanimously “Good” with the highest item mean of 4.16 on “Develops a plan, seeks feedback, tests, revise and implement.” “Work to agreed-upon quality standards and specifications” ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> with an item mean of 4.15 and “Plans, designs, or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well-defined objectives and outcomes” ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> with an item mean of 4.13. The above statements imply that BSAT students are fully aware on the importance of following the right process from the development down to the implementation of a plan and working within the quality standards set. At the same time they are also aware on the importance of having a well defined objectives and outcomes on various projects or tasks. On the other hand, “Can establish clear project goals and deliverables” got the lowest mean of 3.90 which implies that the students needs to undergo more trainings and hands-on activities to be able to learn how to establish a clear project goals and deliverables. The category mean of 4.08 implies that BSAT students feel good on the teamwork skills that they have learned or experienced relative to participating in projects and tasks.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

1. In fundamental skills, a student can be prepared better to progress in the world of work when he or she can communicate, manage information and work with tools and technology, as well as think and solve problems. Working with tools and technology got the highest category mean of 4.14, next is communicating with a



category mean of 4.09 and 3<sup>rd</sup> is thinking and problem solving with 3.99. The overall mean of 4.07 implies that BSAT students feel good on the fundamental skills that they have learned or experienced.

2. In personal management skills, a student can be able to offer themselves greater possibilities when he or she can demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors, manage oneself and being adaptable, could learn continuously and have the initiative and enterprise. Learning continuously ranked first with a category mean of 4.28, 2<sup>nd</sup> is self management and being adaptable with a category mean of 4.13. 3<sup>rd</sup> on the list with a category mean of 4.12 is demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviors and the last is initiative and enterprise with a category mean of 3.92. The overall mean of 4.11 implies that BSAT students feel good on the personal management skills that they have learned or experienced.
3. In teamwork skills, a student can be prepared better to add value to the outcomes of a task, project, or team when he or she will work with others and participate in projects and tasks. Participating in projects and task got a category mean of 4.08 while working with others got 4.05. The overall mean of 4.07 implies that BSAT students feel good on the teamwork skills that they have learned or experienced.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Employability skills are a set of skills and behaviours that are necessary for every job. Employability skills are sometimes called soft skills, foundational skills, work-readiness skills, or job-readiness skills. Graduates should be equipped with the necessary employability skills for the following reasons: 1) They could stand out from other candidates and have more chance of finding work; 2) When they get a job, they will perform it better, and that will lead to better references and networks, and progression in their career; 3) These skills are essential for the actual process of job searching. They need to be able to plan, problem-solve and communicate if they're going to put in applications and ace in their interviews.

The research was therefore conducted and as seen from the result there are three main categories of skills that graduates should possess for them to become employable. Fundamental skills are skills needed as a basis for further development. A student can be



prepared better to progress in the world of work when he or she can communicate, manage information and work with tools and technology, as well as think and solve problems. Personal management skills are the skills, attitudes, and behaviours that drive one's potential for growth. A student can be able to offer themselves greater possibilities when he or she can demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours, manage oneself and being adaptable, could learn continuously and have the initiative and enterprise. Teamwork skills are skills and attributes needed to contribute productively. A student can be prepared better to add value to the outcomes of a task, project, or team when he or she will work with others and participate in projects and tasks.

From the various categories, students excel in the variables under learning continuously with a category mean of 4.28 and they need to improve on the initiative and enterprise with a category mean of 3.92. In the overall mean, personal management skills ranked first with an overall mean of 4.11 while fundamental skills and teamwork skills both got an overall mean of 4.07. All in all the respondents felt good in all the employability skills.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Document employability skills that are embedded and integrated in classroom practice to help students understand and comprehend the connection between higher education and employment.
2. Improve student employability by letting the students understand better the diverse work environment and providing actual or hands-on workplace experiences which is related to their field of specialization.
3. Help students expand their networks in the industry or reinforce linkages to enhance their professional profile.
4. Revisit the curriculum and course syllabus and look for opportunities for employability in the curriculum.
5. Invite alumni and establish a network to support first career connections.
6. The university should put up a simulation laboratory where students could learn and do practical work related to their respective major or program.



7. The universities need to develop lecturers' teaching skills to enable them to teach and develop these skills to the students.
8. Network to both private and government agencies should be established and reinforced in order to determine the skills necessary for employability.
9. Students should be motivated to take accountability or responsibility in developing their own skills by taking the initiative and get exposure to business structures.
10. Students should recognize, appreciate and value the importance of skills development and be proactive in developing it themselves.
11. Teachers should explicitly articulate the relevant graduate employability skills in the learning outcomes for every subject
12. Teachers should develop a mentality of providing guidance services or being a mentor, which can support students in identifying training needs and upgrading their skills.
13. Employability skills training programs should increase the content of sustainable engineering, entrepreneurship, business training, lifelong learning, professionalism, and work ethic in curriculum.
14. The college should design authentic assessment activities, aligned with industry practices, standards and approaches.
15. The college should establish programs which are long-term and in-depth, beginning with career awareness activities.
16. Employers should work together with schools to provide learning experiences that will promote students' development of employability skills.
17. The research should target more respondents and they should get sufficient sample with a longer time frame.

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