

Original Article

Career Pathways and Employability of Business Administration Graduates in Human Resource Management: A Tracer Study

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Abstract. This descriptive-correlational study examined the career pathways and occupational outcomes of Business Administration graduates majoring in Human Resource Management (Batches 2023–2025) at Negros Oriental State University–Guihulngan Campus. Utilizing snowball sampling, the study gathered data from 197 participants, achieving at least a 75% response rate per batch. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests of independence, Cramer’s V, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Descriptive findings revealed that 79.7% of graduates secured full-time employment, with 59.9% gaining employment within three months post-graduation, primarily in business (48.2%) and human resource (16.8%) sectors. Most occupied rank-and-file roles (63.9%), and 69.4% rated their employment as relevant or very relevant to their degree ($M = 3.94$). Communication ($M = 4.58$) and teamwork ($M = 4.60$) were the most heavily utilized competencies, while core subjects like Training and Development ($M = 4.46$) were rated highly useful. Inferential analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between year of graduation and employment status ($\chi^2(2, N = 197) = 2.04, p = .360, V = .126$) or between transition challenges and time to secure a first job ($\chi^2(4, N = 197) = 6.22, p = .180, V = .130$). However, a statistically significant moderate positive correlation was established between acquired skills and job relevance ($r(168) = .37, p = .001$). Overall, the program effectively supports graduate employability, offering empirical baselines for targeted curriculum enhancements and digital skill integration.

Keywords: Career trajectories; Employability; Human resource management; Job relevance; Tracer study.

The modern global labor market is undergoing a rapid, technology-driven shift, altering the expectation that a university degree alone guarantees immediate career entry. Contemporary employers increasingly prioritize dynamic, practical competencies, workplace adaptability, and industry-aligned skills over traditional educational credentials. As Tushar and Sooraksa (2023) note, key dimensions of graduate employability include strong interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and effective teamwork. Consequently, higher education institutions (HEIs) face growing pressure to keep degree programs closely aligned with changing industry demands. This alignment is especially vital for the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Human Resource Management (BSBA-HRM). Because HR functions directly govern

workforce acquisition, employee relations, and organizational compliance, any gap between academic preparation and professional expectations can impact both operational stability and graduate career growth.

To measure how effectively academic programs prepare students for the workforce, institutions globally rely on graduate tracer studies. These empirical assessments provide essential baseline data regarding career progression, employment timelines, skill utilization, and job-degree alignment, offering the evidence needed for systematic curriculum enhancement. Internationally, this methodology has proven effective for institutional evaluation. For instance, the Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey demonstrated that tracking alumni provides clear evidence needed to strengthen professional development frameworks and align education with macroeconomic needs (Hsien & Edwards, 2023). Similarly, tracer studies in the Indonesian higher education sector conducted by Lubis and Kartika (2024) identified specific competency gaps, leading to targeted revisions in technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial training. These precedents affirm that post-graduation tracking is an essential tool for quality assurance and strategic planning in higher education.

In the Philippine higher education context, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) actively promotes tracer studies to evaluate institutional performance and support program accreditation. National literature indicates that while business administration programs maintain high overall employment rates, structural mismatches in job alignment persist. For example, Nemiño et al. (2025) observed that although BSBA graduates majoring in HR and Financial Management generally secure employment within six months, many are concentrated in general entry-level roles rather than specialized positions. Furthermore, studies by Calbonero Narciso (2021) and Nieva (2025) show that while local employers value foundational soft skills such as communication and work ethics, they consistently report graduate skill shortages in digital HR tools, data analytics, and specialized software applications. These findings highlight a clear gap between traditional classroom instruction and modern, technology-driven workspaces.

At the regional level, localized economic conditions strongly shape employability dynamics. Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority indicate that the economy of Negros Oriental is predominantly driven by agriculture and service-based industries. This structure results in fewer corporate headquarters and formal, dedicated HR departments. Consequently, local business graduates must navigate a competitive market with limited specialized HR openings, which often leads to underemployment or temporary work in unrelated fields. Regional research by Tayco et al. (2022) confirms that while general employment rates remain steady in Negros Oriental, maintaining direct job-degree alignment remains a challenge for local business alumni.

Despite the established value of tracer studies, a research gap exists regarding specialized business programs in the local context. Prior tracing studies at Negros Oriental State University–Guihulngan Campus have focused primarily on non-business programs, such as Ubat et al. (2024), which examined Bachelor of Secondary Education graduates majoring in Mathematics. To date, no localized study has systematically examined the employment outcomes, career progression, skill utilization, or transition challenges specific to BSBA–HRM cohorts. This lack of program-specific tracking data limits academic leaders' ability to determine whether the HR curriculum effectively prepares graduates for specialized roles, how quickly alumni secure employment, or how well classroom instruction aligns with current workplace requirements. Addressing this empirical gap is essential to guide evidence-based curriculum improvement, enhance student career placement, and strengthen institutional quality assurance.

Therefore, this study systematically traces the career pathways and employment outcomes of BSBA–HRM graduates from Negros Oriental State University–Guihulngan Campus across the 2023–2025 cohorts. Specifically, it examines the relationships between graduate profiles, competencies developed, workplace challenges, and job-degree relevance to evaluate the overall effectiveness of academic preparation. The findings provide an empirical basis for the College of Business Administration to update its curriculum, particularly by integrating modern HR technologies and digital tools. Additionally, the study offers current students clear insight into local market expectations, equips the university alumni office with updated tracking data, and contributes valuable comparative findings to business education research in the Philippines.

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to evaluate the career pathways and occupational outcomes of business graduates. A descriptive design is well suited to tracer studies because it allows systematic collection of factual, quantified information on the target population's current employment status, job-degree relevance, and competency utilization. Concurrently, the correlational component was employed to analyze the nature and strength of relationships between independent variables—such as the graduates' acquired institutional competencies and year of graduation—and dependent metrics, including employment status and vertical job relevance. This dual approach provides an empirical framework to profile structural labor market outcomes and identify the underlying curricular variables that drive graduate success without manipulating the natural environment.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised all Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Human Resource Management (BSBA-HRM) alumni from Negros Oriental State University–Guihulngan Campus who graduated spanned the three-year academic bracket from 2023 to 2025 ($N = 262$), yielding a final sample size of $n = 197$ graduates ($N = 262$). Given the practical challenges of tracking mobile alumni across shifting geographic locations and employment sectors, the researchers used a non-probability snowball sampling technique. To mitigate potential sampling bias and ensure robust empirical representation, the researchers established a rigorous benchmark targeting a minimum response rate of 75% per graduating class.

Across the target population, the total graduate cohorts consisted of 96 graduates in 2023, 81 graduates in 2024, and 85 graduates in 2025. Through structured peer-referral tracking and verified contact lists, the study successfully surveyed 72 respondents from the 2023 batch (75.0% response rate), 61 respondents from the 2024 batch (75.3% response rate), and 64 respondents from the 2025 batch (75.3% response rate). This yielded a final aggregated sample size of 197 graduates, representing an overall response rate of 75.2% (197/262). Individuals who graduated outside the 2023–2025 window or belonged to other degree programs were excluded.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a structured, researcher-made tracer questionnaire adapted from standard higher education frameworks and customized to reflect localized HR competencies and regional labor market dynamics. To ensure structural rigor and content validity, the draft instrument was submitted to three (3) expert validators specializing in research methodology, higher education administration, and human resource management for panel evaluation. The panel assessed the instrument's construct clarity, item relevance, and alignment with research objectives, resulting in a high Content Validity Index rating of 4.7 out of 5.0. After validation, the researchers administered a pilot test to a non-participating subsample of business graduates to determine internal consistency. The reliability analysis produced Cronbach's Alpha coefficients consistently above the 0.70 threshold, confirming that the instrument possessed high internal reliability and was stable for widespread field administration.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection process was conducted online using Google Forms to maximize geographical reach and accommodate the varied schedules of employed alumni. After obtaining administrative clearance from institutional authorities, the digital survey link was disseminated through official alumni networks, email, and verified social media channels. Graduates who completed the survey then helped identify and contact remaining cohort peers to fulfill the snowball sampling protocol. The team systematically monitored data collection over a predefined multi-week period to ensure the 75% per-batch representation benchmark was met. Automated data logging eliminated manual transcription errors.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected quantitative datasets were processed and analyzed using integrated statistical software. We applied descriptive and inferential statistical tools based on the underlying scale of the metrics. Descriptive statistics—specifically frequencies, percentages, and weighted means—were used to profile graduates' employment characteristics, timeframes for securing jobs, and utility ratings of workplace competencies. For the inferential phase, non-parametric and parametric tests were deployed depending on data types: the Chi-square (χ^2) test of

independence was used to analyze the relationship between categorical variables (graduation year and employment status), while the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was applied to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between continuous variables (acquired institutional skills and perceived job relevance). All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered strictly to established institutional ethical protocols and the mandates of the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Before accessing the core survey questions, all participants received an electronic informed consent form outlining the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. We maintained complete data confidentiality throughout the research cycle; all identifying markers were anonymized, and responses were aggregated to prevent individual cross-referencing. The raw data were securely stored in encrypted digital drives accessible exclusively to the primary research team and will be permanently purged upon completion of the institutional reporting requirements.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. *Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Age*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	142	72
26-30	42	21
31-35	7	4
36-40	3	1.5
41+	3	1.5
Total	197	100

Table 1 illustrates the age distribution of the respondents, showing that most graduates belong to the 20–25 age group (72%). This suggests that the BSBA–HRM program is primarily completed within the expected academic duration, allowing graduates to transition early into the workforce. This pattern may reflect the structured curriculum and standard academic progression, which enable students to graduate on time and seek employment immediately. The concentration of younger graduates supports Mendoza and Reyes (2025), who observed a similar trend among Philippine graduates transitioning directly from tertiary education to employment. This also aligns with Bautista (2025), who noted that current graduate cohorts are predominantly Gen Z, characterized by early workforce entry and active participation in tracer studies. Meanwhile, the smaller proportion of older respondents may reflect non-traditional students who returned to education for career advancement, consistent with Dela Cruz et al. (2025). Overall, the age distribution suggests that the graduates are in the early stage of career development, which may influence their employment experiences and job expectations.

Table 2. *Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Sex*

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	57	29
Female	137	69.5
Prefer not to say	3	1.5
Total	197	100

Table 2 presents the sex distribution of the respondents, showing a higher proportion of female graduates (69.5%) compared to male graduates (29%). This indicates that BSBA–HRM remains a female-dominated program, which may be influenced by the nature of HR roles that require strong interpersonal, communication, and organizational skills. This finding aligns with Lapuz (2024), who reported that HRM programs in the Philippines are predominantly composed of female graduates because of their stronger representation in people-oriented and administrative roles. It also supports David et al. (2024), who highlighted that female graduates are more responsive in tracer studies, contributing to their higher representation in survey-based research. The small percentage of respondents who preferred not to disclose their sex reflects inclusive data practices, as emphasized by Astillero (2025), ensuring more accurate and respectful demographic reporting. The overall distribution suggests that gender composition may also influence workplace participation patterns in HR-related roles.

Table 3. *Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Civil Status*

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	172	87.3
Married	24	12.2
Separated	1	0.5
Widowed	0	0
Total	197	100

Table 3 shows that most respondents are single (87.3%), while a smaller portion are married (12.2%), and only a minimal number are separated (0.5%). This suggests that most graduates are at a life stage where they prioritize career establishment over family responsibilities, allowing greater flexibility in employment decisions and job mobility. This pattern aligns with Olmedo (2025), who found that most graduates remain single immediately after graduation as they focus on entering the workforce and building their careers. It also supports Lapuz (2024), who noted that single individuals typically dominate civil status among BSBA-HRM graduates because of early-career development priorities. Furthermore, Rivera et al. (2025) emphasized that civil status in tracer studies reflects workforce mobility and availability, which directly affects employment choices and career progression. Overall, the data suggest that respondents are at a life stage that supports active labor market participation.

Table 4. *Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of the Year They Graduated*

Year Graduated	Frequency	Percentage
2023	72	36.5
2024	61	31.0
2025	64	32.5
Total	197	100

Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents by year of graduation, showing a balanced representation across the 2023 (36.5%), 2024 (31.0%), and 2025 (32.5%) cohorts. This balance allows for a more reliable comparison of employment outcomes across different graduation years. The slightly higher participation of the 2023 batch may reflect their longer exposure to the labor market, which gives them more stable employment experiences to report. This aligns with Belisario (2024), who explained that earlier cohorts tend to provide more comprehensive tracer data because of longer employment exposure. Similarly, Mercado and Santos (2025) noted that graduates who are already employed are more likely to participate in tracer studies because they can reflect more meaningfully on their career pathways. The distribution also supports Guevarra (2024), who emphasized that multi-cohort tracer studies reduce bias and provide a more accurate representation of program outcomes across time. Overall, this distribution strengthens the study's validity by capturing both recent and earlier graduate experiences.

Table 5. *Employment Profile of the Graduates in Terms of Their Current Employment Status*

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Employed (Full-time)	157	79.7
Employed (Part-time)	4	2
Self-employed	9	4.6
Unemployed	25	12.7
Currently pursuing further studies	2	1
Total	197	100

Table 5 shows that most graduates (79.7%) are employed full-time, while smaller proportions are unemployed (12.7%), self-employed (4.6%), part-time employed (2%), or pursuing further studies (1%). The high full-time employment rate suggests that BSBA-HRM graduates possess competencies that are directly applicable to organizational needs, particularly in administrative and human resource functions where versatility is highly valued. This explains their quick absorption into structured employment settings, as many companies prefer graduates who can immediately perform general HR and business-related tasks without extensive training. This finding aligns with Rivera et al. (2025), who noted that BSBA graduates are often hired quickly because of their flexible skill set across business functions. Similarly, Victoriano et al. (2024) explained that local employers frequently hire business graduates for entry-level HR and administrative roles because these positions require foundational competencies rather than highly specialized training. On the other hand, the 12.7% unemployment rate may reflect job market selectivity and graduates' preference for field-aligned work, as some graduates delay employment while waiting for roles that match their specialization and career goals, as reflected in the transitional labor market pattern identified by the Philippine Statistics Authority (2025).

Table 6. *Employment Profile of the Graduates in Terms of the Length of Time in Securing the First Job After Graduation*

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 month	37	18.8
1-3 months	81	41.1
4-6 months	33	16.8
7-12 months	16	8.1
More than 1 year	15	7.6
Not yet employed	15	7.6
Total	197	100

Table 6 reveals that 59.9% of graduates secured employment within one to three months after graduation, with 18.8% employed in less than a month. Meanwhile, 16.8% took four to six months, and a smaller proportion took longer, while 7.6% remain unemployed. The relatively fast transition to employment suggests that BSBA–HRM graduates are readily absorbed into the labor market because their competencies match entry-level requirements in business and HR-related positions. The concentration of employment within the first three months also indicates strong demand for graduates who possess basic administrative, communication, and organizational skills, which are commonly required in corporate settings. However, graduates who took longer than six months to secure employment may face job selectivity, skills mismatch, or competition in preferred industries. Some graduates may also be improving their employability by seeking additional training or waiting for more stable or higher-paying positions rather than immediately accepting available jobs. This pattern aligns with Bersano et al. (2025), who found that business graduates are hired quickly because labor markets demand HR and administrative competencies. Victoriano et al. (2024) further explained that early employment is common among business graduates because they adapt well to various entry-level roles. Meanwhile, Albina (2024) noted that delayed employment is often influenced by graduates' preference for better job fit and long-term career alignment rather than immediate placement.

Table 7. *Career Profile of BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of Industry of Employment*

Industry Of Employment	Frequency	Percentage
Hospitality/Hotel and Restaurant	4	2
Human Resource Management	33	16.8
Business/Corporate Sector	95	48.2
Education	6	3
Government	18	9.2
Not yet employed	27	13.7
Others	14	7.1
Total	197	100

Table 7 illustrates the professional sectors where the graduates are currently absorbed. The largest proportion, 48.2% (95 individuals), is employed in the Business/Corporate Sector, followed by 16.8% (33 individuals) in Human Resource Management roles. Other placements include Government (9.2%), Education (3%), and Hospitality (2%). The “Others” category (7.1%) includes business owners and banking-related positions, while 13.7% (27 individuals) are not yet employed. The dominance of the Business/Corporate Sector suggests that BSBA–HRM graduates are primarily absorbed into general administrative and organizational roles rather than strictly specialized HR positions.

This may be because HRM competencies such as communication, coordination, and basic personnel management are broadly applicable across most corporate environments. Meanwhile, the lower percentage in HR-specific roles may indicate limited availability of dedicated HR positions in the local labor market, leading graduates to take related but broader business functions. The presence of government employment reflects the degree's flexibility in public administration roles, while entrepreneurship in the “Others” category suggests that some graduates apply their management skills in self-employment settings. This pattern supports Lapuz (2024), although the results further indicate that employment outcomes are also shaped by job availability and market structure, not only specialization.

Table 8. *Career Profile of BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of Current Job Position*

Current Job Position	Frequency	Percentage
Rank-and-File/Staff level	126	63.9
Supervisory/Officer level	24	12.2
Managerial/Executive level	4	2
Self-employed	9	4.6
Not yet employed	27	13.7
Other	7	3.6
Total	197	100

Table 8 shows that most graduates (63.9% or 126 individuals) hold rank-and-file positions, followed by Supervisory roles (12.2%), Self-Employment (4.6%), Managerial positions (2%), and other employment arrangements (3.6%), while 13.7% remain unemployed. The “Other” category includes contractual and technical positions such as job order employees, probationary workers, encoders, and invoicers. The predominance of rank-and-file positions indicates that most graduates begin their careers at entry-level roles, where they are expected to gain experience before advancing to higher positions. This reflects the typical career progression in business-related fields, where promotion is strongly influenced by work experience, performance, and exposure to organizational operations. The presence of supervisory and managerial roles, although limited, suggests that some graduates can advance early, possibly due to strong competencies, leadership potential, or prior internship exposure. Meanwhile, contractual roles highlight the reality of non-permanent employment structures in the labor market, which is common among fresh graduates entering both private and public institutions. These patterns suggest that career progression is gradual and experience-based rather than immediate, consistent with Lapuz (2024), while also reflecting labor market conditions that influence employment stability and mobility.

Table 9. *Career Profile of BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of Extent of Job Relevance to the BSBA–HRM Degree*

Scale	Verbal Description	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
1	Not Relevant	4	2.4	0.024
2	Slightly Relevant	9	5.3	0.106
3	Moderately Relevant	39	22.9	0.688
4	Relevant	60	35.3	1.412
5	Very Relevant	58	34.1	1.706
Total		170	100	3.936

Table 9 presents the degree of alignment between the graduates’ current employment and their BSBA–HRM background. Results show that 69.4% of respondents consider their jobs as relevant or very relevant, while 22.9% report moderate relevance, and only 2.4% indicate no relevance. The overall weighted mean of $M = 3.94$ ($SD = 0.98$) indicates that, in general, graduates perceive their employment as aligned with their academic preparation. This suggests that the competencies developed in the BSBA–HRM program transfer to workplace settings, particularly in communication, administrative tasks, and basic HR functions commonly required across business organizations. However, the presence of moderately relevant responses indicates that some graduates are working in roles where only part of their academic training is applied. This may be due to limited HR-specific job opportunities, leading graduates to accept related positions in banking, management, or general business operations. The small percentage of non-relevant employment suggests that most graduates can still apply at least some aspect of their degree, even when placed outside their specialization. This supports Nieva (2025), although the findings also indicate that job relevance is influenced not only by curriculum design but also by labor market availability and job distribution.

Table 10. *Level of Skills and Competencies Acquired by BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of Utilization of Acquired Skills in Their Current Job*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Communication skills	4.58	Very Utilized
Leadership and management skills	4.16	Utilized
Human resource planning and recruitment	3.89	Utilized
Problem-solving and decision-making	4.45	Very Utilized
Teamwork and interpersonal skills	4.6	Very Utilized
Cumulative	4.34	Very Utilized

Table 10 shows that graduates generally apply their learned competencies in their current employment, reflected in a grand mean of $M = 4.34$ interpreted as “Very Utilized.” Among the indicators, teamwork and interpersonal

skills ($M = 4.60$) and communication skills ($M = 4.58$) obtained the highest means, followed by problem-solving and decision-making ($M = 4.45$). Leadership and management skills ($M = 4.16$) and human resource planning and recruitment ($M = 3.89$) were still used but were slightly lower than soft skills. This pattern suggests that graduates are more frequently assigned to roles that require interaction, coordination, and day-to-day workplace communication rather than highly technical HR functions. This may reflect the nature of entry-level positions, where graduates are typically placed first and expected to prioritize adaptability and teamwork before specialization. As Pascua et al. (2024) note, early-career roles in business settings often require interpersonal effectiveness as a foundation for performance. In addition, Fahmy et al. (2025) observed that graduates often rely more on soft skills in actual job settings because these competencies are immediately needed in daily tasks, while technical HR functions are gradually developed through experience. Thus, the high utilization of soft skills indicates that the curriculum effectively prepares graduates for real workplace demands, particularly in entry-level professional environments.

Table 11. *Level of Skills and Competencies Acquired by BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of Perceived Importance of Competencies for Career Success*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Communication skills	4.78	Very Important
Leadership and management skills	4.61	Very Important
Human resource planning and recruitment	4.46	Very Important
Problem-solving and decision-making	4.68	Very Important
Teamwork and interpersonal skills	4.76	Very Important
Cumulative	4.66	Very Important

Table 11 reveals that all competencies were rated “Very Important,” with a grand mean of $M = 4.66$. Communication skills ($M = 4.78$) and teamwork and interpersonal skills ($M = 4.76$) received the highest ratings, followed closely by problem-solving ($M = 4.68$) and leadership and management skills ($M = 4.61$). Human resource planning and recruitment ($M = 4.46$) obtained the lowest mean but remained highly valued. The results indicate that graduates strongly recognize that career advancement depends more on transferable skills than on technical HR knowledge alone. This perception may be shaped by their workplace experiences, where communication and adaptability are consistently required across roles and industries. It also reflects their awareness that promotion and career mobility often depend on interpersonal effectiveness and decision-making ability. As Salvador and Dizon (2022) note, soft skills tend to drive long-term career growth because they remain applicable across positions, while technical competencies may vary by job assignment. Likewise, Alvarez (2023) explains that graduates tend to prioritize broad, transferable competencies because these provide flexibility in navigating diverse career paths. This explains why communication and teamwork are viewed as the strongest drivers of career success.

Table 12. *Level of Skills and Competencies Acquired by BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of the Usefulness of HRM Subjects in the Workplace*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Recruitment and Selection	4.1	Useful
Compensation and Benefits	4.31	Very Useful
Labor Laws and Industrial Relations	4.26	Very Useful
Training and Development	4.46	Very Useful
Cumulative	4.28	Very Useful

Table 12 shows that HRM subjects are perceived as highly applicable in the workplace, with a grand mean of $M = 4.28$ interpreted as “Very Useful.” Training and Development ($M = 4.46$) obtained the highest rating, followed by Compensation and Benefits (4.31) and Labor Laws and Industrial Relations ($M = 4.26$), while Recruitment and Selection ($M = 4.10$) was rated as useful but comparatively lower. The findings suggest that HRM subjects are most appreciated when they directly match actual workplace tasks, particularly those involving employee development, compensation processing, and compliance with labor regulations. This may be because these areas are frequently encountered even in entry-level HR or administrative positions, making them immediately relevant to graduates’ daily responsibilities. On the other hand, entry-level employees may handle recruitment-related tasks less often, which helps explain their slightly lower rating. Devera et al. (2025) noted that HR graduates often find training and development concepts highly applicable because organizations prioritize improving employee performance. Similarly, Cruz (2024) emphasized that labor law knowledge becomes essential once graduates are exposed to real organizational processes. These results indicate that curriculum content remains useful, but its

application becomes more evident as graduates gain workplace experience.

Table 13. *Challenges and Gaps Encountered by BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of Transitioning from School to Work*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Difficulty finding your first job in your field of study	3.45	Serious challenge
Need to acquire new skills, training, or certifications	3.63	Serious challenge
Low starting salary in your first job	3.63	Serious challenge
Lack of professional network or connections	3.4	Serious challenge
Difficulty adjusting to workplace responsibilities or environment	3.31	Moderate challenge
Cumulative	3.48	Serious challenge

Table 13 shows that graduates generally experience “Serious Challenges” in their transition to employment, reflected in a grand mean of 3.48. The most prominent difficulties are the need to acquire additional skills and low starting salaries both ($M = 3.63$), followed by difficulty in finding a job aligned with their field (3.45) and lack of professional connections ($M = 3.40$). Adjustment to workplace responsibilities ($M = 3.31$) was rated as a moderate challenge. These results suggest that transition difficulty stems less from academic deficiency than from the gap between school preparation and labor market expectations. The need for additional skills reflects how workplaces increasingly require updated competencies, especially in digital and specialized HR tools that undergraduate training may not fully cover. Meanwhile, low starting salaries and limited connections suggest structural labor market conditions in which entry-level positions are highly competitive and often influenced by networks. Villar (2025) supports this pattern by explaining that modern HR roles demand continuous upskilling beyond classroom learning. In addition, Paguia (2025) explains that graduate transition is shaped not only by competence but also by economic realities and labor absorption capacity, which slows down immediate placement. Nemiño et al. (2025) further highlight that limited professional networks reduce access to opportunities, which helps explain why even competent graduates may still struggle to enter their preferred field.

Table 14. *Challenges and Gaps Encountered by BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of the Difficulties Encountered During Job Seeking*

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of required work experience	74	37.6
High competition for limited HR job openings	22	11.2
Limited availability of HR job vacancies	27	13.7
Employers’ preference for experienced applicants	60	30.5
Mismatch between academic training and job requirements	14	7
Total	197	100

Table 14 reveals that the most common barrier in job seeking is a lack of required work experience (37.6%), followed by employers’ preference for experienced applicants (30.5%). Other challenges include limited HR vacancies (13.7%), high competition (11.2%), and a mismatch between training and job requirements (7%). The dominance of experience-related barriers indicates that graduates are academically prepared but still disadvantaged in actual hiring conditions where employers prioritize work exposure. This creates a cycle where fresh graduates struggle to enter the workforce because entry-level jobs already require prior experience.

This reflects Villar (2025), who explains that graduates often face a “first-job barrier” where lack of experience becomes the main screening factor rather than academic performance. It also aligns with Paguia (2025), who describes the labor market as highly selective, especially for HR-related positions where employers minimize hiring risks by choosing candidates with prior exposure. The relatively low percentage reporting mismatch suggests the program content generally aligns with industry needs, but access to opportunities—not competence—is the main limitation to employment entry.

Table 15. *Challenges and Gaps Encountered by BSBA–HRM Graduates in Terms of Perceived Gaps Between the Competencies Learned in the Program and the Actual Workplace Requirements*

Presence of Competency Gaps	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	131	66.5
No	66	33.5
Total	197	100

Table 15 shows that 66.5% of graduates perceived gaps between what they learned and actual workplace demands, while 33.5% reported no gaps. This indicates that most graduates feel that their academic preparation

does not fully match the complexity of real job tasks. This perception suggests that while foundational knowledge is sufficient, workplace expectations require more applied and technical competencies.

The gap is likely influenced by the rapid integration of technology and digital systems in HR work, which demands skills that may not be fully developed during undergraduate training. Villar (2025) explains this as a “digital skills lag,” where academic content does not immediately keep pace with industry tools and systems. At the same time, Nemiño et al. (2025) note that graduates often feel confident in interpersonal and theoretical knowledge but less prepared in technical execution, especially in software-based tasks. This helps explain why many still experience gaps, even when their program provides strong foundational HR knowledge.

Table 16. *Gaps Encountered by 131 BSBA–HRM Graduates*

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Practical HR Experience	81	61.8
Technical Skills / Software Proficiency	88	67.2
Problem Solving and Decision-Making	72	55.0
Communication and Interpersonal Skills	75	57.3
Knowledge of Labor Laws and Policies	62	46.6

Table 16 shows that Technical Skills and Software Proficiency ranked as the highest concern (67.2%), followed by Practical HR Experience (61.8%). Communication and Interpersonal Skills (57.3%) and Problem Solving and Decision-Making (55.0%) were also identified as areas needing improvement, while Knowledge of Labor Laws and Policies (46.6%) received the lowest percentage. These findings suggest that graduates have greater difficulty applying technical and practical workplace skills than theoretical knowledge. This may be because many HR functions in modern workplaces already rely on digital systems, software applications, and actual operational experience that are difficult to fully simulate in classroom settings.

The findings support Villar (2025), who emphasized that modern HR work increasingly requires digital and technical competencies beyond traditional classroom instruction. Similarly, the results align with Pagua (2025), who explained that rapid industry changes often create gaps between academic preparation and workplace expectations. Although graduates reported fewer concerns about labor laws and policies, the higher percentages in technical and practical competencies suggest they feel more challenged in operational tasks than in conceptual understanding. This also supports Nemiño et al. (2025), whose study found that business graduates are generally confident in interpersonal communication but less confident in technical workplace applications. Overall, the findings indicate that additional exposure to HR software, workplace simulations, and hands-on training may help strengthen graduates’ readiness for actual HR functions.

Table 17. *The Transition and Professional Development Profile of the Graduates in Terms of Method of Securing the First Job*

Methods	Frequency	Percentage
Response to an advertisement (Newspaper, LinkedIn, Facebook)	51	26
University Career Fair/Placement Office	2	1
Referral from friends or family	57	28.9
Walk-in application	57	28.9
Internship (OJT) turned into a permanent job	15	7.6
Not yet employed	15	7.6
Total	197	100

Table 17 shows that graduates primarily secure employment through walk-in applications (28.9%) and referrals from friends or family (28.9%), followed by responses to advertisements (26%). A smaller proportion obtained jobs through internship conversions (7.6%), while university career fairs contributed minimally (1%). The results indicate that personal initiative and informal networks largely drive employment acquisition rather than institutional placement mechanisms. This suggests that graduates rely more on direct engagement with employers and existing social connections when entering the labor market. The limited contribution of career fairs may reflect either low participation, limited employer engagement, or reduced effectiveness of formal placement events in matching graduates with actual job openings. Laurente (2025) explains that in many business-related fields, social capital remains a key factor in securing employment because personal referrals often carry stronger trust in hiring decisions. Tan et al. (2025) further support this, emphasizing that proactive job-seeking behaviors such as walk-ins remain highly effective for entry-level positions. Meanwhile, internship-to-employment conversion highlights the importance of practical exposure, where performance during training becomes a direct

pathway to hiring.

Table 18. *The Transition and Professional Development Profile of the Graduates in Terms of the Reasons for Current Unemployment*

Reasons for Current Unemployment	Frequency	Percentage
Further studies (Master's degree)	2	1
Family concerns/Personal reasons	4	2
Lack of job opportunities in the local area	10	5.1
Waiting for better job offers	11	5.6
Not unemployed	170	86.3
Total	197	100

Table 18 indicates that most graduates (86.3%) are currently employed. Among those not employed, the main reasons include waiting for better job offers (5.6%), lack of job opportunities in the local area (5.1%), family or personal concerns (2%), and pursuit of further studies (1%). The pattern suggests that unemployment among graduates is not primarily due to the inability to find work, but rather related to selectivity and external constraints. The decision to wait for better job offers reflects a preference for job quality over immediate employment, particularly in terms of salary level, job fit, and career growth potential. This aligns with Fahmy et al. (2025), who describe a tendency among BSBA graduates to practice “selective employment,” prioritizing long-term career alignment over quick entry into available positions. In contrast, local job limitations show that geographic constraints still affect access to specialized HR roles, especially in provincial labor markets with fewer opportunities. Mendoza et al. (2025) note that graduates outside urban centers often face limited access to higher-level positions, which influences employment timing and decisions. Overall, the findings suggest that unemployment in this context is largely transitional rather than structural.

Table 19. *The Transition and Professional Development Profile of the Graduates in Terms of Pursuit of Further Professional Development or Graduate Studies*

Professional Development	Frequency	Percentage
Enrolled in a Master's Degree (MBA/MA)	4	2
Enrolled in Law School	0	0
Obtained professional certifications (e.g., CHRP - Certified HR Professional)	16	8.1
Participated in online professional certification courses	12	6.1
Attended specialized HR seminars/training	16	8.1
No professional development pursued yet	149	75.7
Total	197	100

Table 19 shows that most graduates (75.7%) have not yet engaged in formal professional development activities. However, a portion have pursued certifications (8.1%), attended HR seminars or training (8.1%), participated in online courses (6.1%), and a small group is enrolled in a Master's degree program (2%). These results suggest that graduates currently prefer short-term, flexible learning opportunities over long-term academic advancement. This may reflect employment demands, financial considerations, or the immediate practicality of certifications compared with graduate studies. The preference for short-term training reflects the need for rapid skill enhancement in response to evolving workplace requirements. Fahmy et al. (2025) explain that business graduates increasingly prefer micro-credentials and certifications because they offer immediate workplace applicability. Similarly, Arambulo and Mirasol (2024) note that working graduates often choose flexible learning options, such as seminars and online courses, because of time and financial constraints. Despite the low percentage pursuing graduate studies, this does not indicate a lack of interest; rather, it reflects prioritizing immediate employability and skill relevance in current job settings.

Table 20 reflects graduates' strong agreement that the program enhanced their communication abilities, with all indicators interpreted as “Strongly Agree” and a grand mean of 4.30. Graduates gave the highest ratings to clear communication in professional settings and the ability to adjust communication style to the audience. This suggests that graduates consistently develop and frequently apply communication skills in the workplace, making them more noticeable. This may be explained by the nature of HR and business roles, which require constant interaction, coordination, and professional communication, allowing graduates to directly apply what they learned in real situations. These findings align with RSIS International (2025) and Nemiño et al. (2025), which highlight communication as a core competency in HR-related work. However, beyond this alignment, the results indicate that graduates view communication skills as essential for early-career adjustment and workplace integration, which may help explain why studies such as Narciso (2026) associate strong interpersonal skills with

faster employment.

Table 20. *Level of Graduates' Agreement on the Contribution of the NORSU–Guihulngan BSBA–HRM Program to Their Personal and Professional Growth in Terms of Communication Skills*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to communicate clearly in professional settings.	4.36	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program enhanced my confidence in expressing ideas during discussions and presentations.	4.28	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program helped me develop effective written communication skills for workplace tasks.	4.25	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to listen and respond appropriately in professional conversations.	4.3	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program enhanced my ability to adjust my communication style depending on the audience.	4.32	Strongly Agree
Cumulative	4.3	Strongly Agree

Table 21. *Level of Graduates' Agreement on the Contribution of the NORSU–Guihulngan BSBA–HRM Program to their Personal and Professional Growth in Terms of Problem–Solving Skills*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The BSBA–HRM program helped me analyze work-related problems effectively.	4.23	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program trained me to think critically when making decisions.	4.24	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to identify appropriate solutions to workplace challenges.	4.24	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program enhanced my ability to evaluate different options before making decisions.	4.28	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program helped me apply logical reasoning in solving job-related problems.	4.27	Strongly Agree
Cumulative	4.25	Strongly Agree

Table 21 shows that graduates strongly agree that the program developed their problem-solving and decision-making skills, with a grand mean of 4.25. The highest ratings were for evaluating options and applying logical reasoning, indicating that graduates can apply analytical thinking in real work situations. This suggests that the curriculum supports not only theoretical understanding but also practical decision-making, which is necessary in handling workplace challenges. This may be because problem-solving activities in the program, such as case analysis and decision-making tasks, mirror actual job responsibilities. These results align with Llanes et al. (2026) and Dassun et al. (2025), and, more importantly, show that graduates recognize these skills as necessary for career progression. As Abas (2025) notes, analytical ability becomes more important as employees take on higher responsibilities, which helps explain why graduates value these competencies even early in their careers.

Table 22. *Level of Graduates' Agreement on the Contribution of the NORSU–Guihulngan BSBA–HRM Program to Their Personal and Professional Growth in Terms of Technical HR Knowledge*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The BSBA–HRM program provided me with sufficient knowledge of core HR functions (e.g., recruitment, training, employee relations).	4.19	Agree
The BSBA–HRM program helped me understand HR policies and procedures.	4.27	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program enhanced my knowledge of labor laws and workplace regulations.	4.24	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program equipped me with practical HR skills applicable in real work settings.	4.2	Agree
The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to apply HR concepts in actual job tasks.	4.21	Strongly Agree
Cumulative	4.22	Strongly Agree

Table 22 indicates that graduates generally agree that the program contributed to their technical HR knowledge, with a grand mean of 4.22 interpreted as “Strongly Agree.” Graduates rated understanding of HR policies and labor laws higher, while practical HR skills and core HR functions received slightly lower ratings. This suggests that while theoretical knowledge is well established, the application of technical skills may still be developing in actual workplace settings. This may be due to limited exposure to advanced HR tasks during entry-level employment or the industry's increasing demand for system-based and digital HR competencies.

These findings align with Abas (2025) and Llanes et al. (2026), but they also explain why technical competencies are rated slightly lower than other skills. As Galay (2024) notes, technical expertise is often strengthened through work experience, indicating that graduates continue to develop these competencies beyond formal education.

Table 23 *Level of Graduates' Agreement on the Contribution of the NORSU–Guihulngan BSBA–HRM Program to Their Personal and Professional Growth in Terms of Work Ethics*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The BSBA–HRM program helped me develop a strong sense of responsibility in my work.	4.38	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program encouraged professionalism in workplace behavior.	4.42	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program strengthened my commitment to ethical practices in my career.	4.37	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program instilled discipline in completing assigned tasks.	4.59	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program enhanced my accountability for my actions in the workplace.	4.4	Strongly Agree
Cumulative	4.43	Strongly Agree

Table 23 reflects the highest level of agreement among all categories, with a grand mean of 4.43, indicating that graduates strongly perceive the program as effective in developing work ethics. Graduates gave the highest rating to discipline in completing tasks, followed by professionalism and accountability. This suggests that value formation is a strong component of the program, and these traits are easily observed and practiced in the workplace. This may be because the program consistently reinforces work ethic through academic requirements, group work, and professional expectations during training. Fahmy et al. (2025) and Nieva (2025) support these findings, emphasizing that discipline and responsibility are key to maintaining employment and adapting to workplace demands. The results further indicate that graduates associate their professional behavior and reliability with their academic training, highlighting the importance of values-based education.

Table 24. *Level of Graduates' Agreement on the Contribution of the NORSU–Guihulngan BSBA–HRM Program to Their Personal and Professional Growth in Terms of Leadership Skills*

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The BSBA–HRM program helped me develop the ability to lead a team effectively.	4.22	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to motivate others to achieve goals.	4.31	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program enhanced my confidence in taking leadership roles.	4.28	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to delegate tasks and responsibilities efficiently.	4.30	Strongly Agree
The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to make decisions as a team leader.	4.24	Strongly Agree
Cumulative	4.27	Strongly Agree

Table 24 presents graduates' level of agreement on the contribution of the BSBA–HRM program to their personal and professional growth in terms of leadership skills. Overall, graduates strongly agreed that the program effectively fostered their leadership capacities, as evidenced by a cumulative weighted mean of 4.27 (Strongly Agree). Among the individual indicators, the highest mean scores were obtained by indicator 2, "The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to motivate others to achieve goals" (4.31), closely followed by indicator 4, "The BSBA–HRM program improved my ability to delegate tasks and responsibilities efficiently" (4.30). Meanwhile, indicator 1, "The BSBA–HRM program helped me develop the ability to lead a team effectively," had the lowest weighted mean at 4.22, though it still fell within the Strongly Agree range. These findings indicate that coursework, collaborative group projects, presentations, and campus organizational activities provided actionable opportunities for students to cultivate practical interpersonal influence and administrative coordination. While most recent graduates currently hold entry-level or rank-and-file positions in the local labor market, these high leadership skill ratings underscore an essential aspect of early-career progression. In local enterprise settings—such as business process outsourcing, hospitality, retail, and regional administrative roles—entry-level HR and business personnel are routinely expected to demonstrate self-leadership, task delegation, and lateral motivation within working teams long before receiving formal supervisory titles. Developing foundational leadership competencies during college equips graduates to adapt quickly to dynamic workplace demands, take initiative, and position themselves for early promotion.

These results align with the findings of Narciso (2026) and Fahmy et al. (2025), who noted that higher education business curricula serve as critical incubators for soft skills and professional agency. Furthermore, as Nieva (2025) highlights, leadership readiness directly supports employee adaptability in evolving work environments, explaining why graduates recognize delegation and motivational skills as critical assets even in the initial stages of their employment journey.

Table 25. Relationship Between Year of Graduation and Employment Status

Variables	χ^2	df	p-value	Cramer's V	Decision	Interpretation
Year Graduated Employment Status	2.04	2	0.360	0.126	Do not reject	Not Statistically Significant

The Chi-square test results indicate no statistically significant relationship between year of graduation and employment status ($\chi^2(2, N = 197) = 2.04, p = .360, V = .126$). This implies that graduates' employment status does not significantly vary based on their year of graduation ($p > .05$). This implies that graduates' employment status does not significantly vary based on their year of graduation. Furthermore, the Cramer's V value of 0.126 suggests a weak association between the two variables. Even if minor differences exist across graduation years, these differences are not substantial enough to establish a meaningful relationship. This result emphasizes that graduation timing does not hinder or provide a distinct advantage in employment. These results are consistent with Narciso (2026), whose tracer study of BSBA-HRM graduates found that employment rates remained steady across multiple graduation years. Narciso concluded that because the demand for human resource professionals is a "constant organizational need," graduates from different years face a similar job market and achieve comparable employment outcomes. This shows that the Guihulngan Campus provides a reliable, standardized foundation that yields consistent professional success for its students, regardless of graduation date.

Table 26. Relationship Between Level of Acquired Skills and Competencies and Extent of Job Relevance

Variables	r	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Level of Acquired Skills and Competencies Extent of Job Relevance	0.37	0.001	Reject Null	Statistically Significant

The Pearson correlation coefficient reveals a moderate positive relationship, $r(168) = .37, p = .001$, between the graduates' level of acquired skills and competencies and the extent of their job relevance. The p -value of .001, below the .05 significance threshold, confirms statistical significance. This statistical analysis evaluated a sample of $n = 170$ employed graduates, purposefully excluding the 27 unemployed respondents who had no current position to rate for job relevance. These findings indicate that as graduates' mastery of skills and competencies improves, alignment between their degree program and current employment rises significantly. This underscores that curriculum design serves as the primary bridge to a relevant career. Although a substantial majority of these employed graduates occupy rank-and-file roles (63.9%), this concentration reflects standard early-career progression for recent cohorts (2023–2025), where entry-level positions provide the foundational operational experience required before advancing into supervisory (12.2%) or managerial (2.0%) tiers. Furthermore, this distribution directly aligns with the economic structure of Negros Oriental, where local labor market demand is driven predominantly by small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs), service-sector businesses, and regional branch offices seeking operational support rather than executive-level management.

While these results confirm that the BSBA-HRM program at NORSU-Guihulngan successfully facilitates immediate labor market absorption, they also highlight the need to continuously refine the curriculum to strengthen entry-level technical competencies—such as HR software proficiency, administrative compliance, and onboarding execution—alongside general leadership preparation to support long-term career growth. This interpretation aligns with Abas (2025), whose tracer study of BSBA-HRM graduates found that students with higher mastery in specialized HR subjects (e.g., labor relations and recruitment) were significantly more likely to secure employment in formal HR departments rather than unrelated administrative roles. As Abas noted, "technical competence acts as a gatekeeper," meaning that higher perceived skill mastery directly drives graduates to pursue and attain positions that match their educational background. Ultimately, this confirms that at NORSU-Guihulngan, acquiring professional competencies is the key determinant in ensuring graduates secure employment that fully utilizes their degree.

Table 27. Relationship Between Challenges Encountered and Length of Time to Secure First Job

Variables	χ^2	df	p-value	Cramer's V	Decision	Interpretation
Challenges Encountered vs Length of time to secure a job	6.22	4	0.180	0.13	Do not reject	Not Statistically Significant

The Chi-square test of independence shows no statistically significant relationship between the challenges encountered by graduates and the length of time it took them to secure their first job, $\chi^2(4, N = 197) = 6.22, p = .180, V = .130$. The Cramer's V value of .130 indicates a weak association ($p > .05$), suggesting that although graduates may face various job-search difficulties, these personal or systemic challenges do not significantly prolong the time required to gain initial employment. This finding is strongly supported by Llanes et al. (2026), whose tracer study on BSBA–HR graduates in a state university revealed that specialized technical training and strong professional ethics provide a "competitive edge." This competitive edge helps graduates overcome market challenges and secure positions despite external difficulties. This confirms that the NORSU–Guihulngan program equips students with a level of readiness that helps them bypass common job-hunting hurdles and ensures a smooth transition into the professional workforce.

Conclusion

This tracer study establishes that the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration majoring in Human Resource Management (BSBA–HRM) program at Negros Oriental State University – Guihulngan Campus functions as an effective catalyst for early workforce entry and vertical job-degree alignment. Conceptually, the investigation contributes to the literature on graduate employability by demonstrating that structured academic preparation directly correlates with higher occupational relevance. Rather than external macroeconomic shifts or cohort-specific variables dictating employment duration, a graduate's strategic acquisition of institutional skills shows a statistically significant positive correlation with career alignment. This reinforces the theoretical premise that baseline competency development is the most reliable insulation against structural underemployment in regional labor markets.

The empirical link between institutional skill proficiency and job relevance underscores critical implications for educational policy and curriculum design. Because communicative efficiency, teamwork, and foundational HR competencies drive workplace integration, academic leadership must shift from isolated classroom models to integrated, experiential learning environments. The persistent, albeit non-disruptive, barriers cited by alumni – namely initial competency gaps and limited professional experience – demand a strategic policy shift within the College of Business Administration. This includes institutionalizing extended corporate partnerships, modernizing business simulations, and expanding targeted internship frameworks to bridge the transition from student to practitioner.

Consequently, future academic interventions should focus on continuous instructional calibration, explicitly embedding advanced technical and industry-mapped modules into the core curriculum to strengthen long-term graduate readiness. Future research should expand on these findings by conducting longitudinal tracer tracking across a wider geographic cluster of state universities, integrating qualitative feedback from industry employers to triangulate self-reported competency levels with external performance metrics.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: conceptualization, methodology, project administration, supervision, writing – original draft, and writing – review & editing

Author 2: research problem formulation, conceptualization, research design development, and writing – review & editing

Author 3: data gathering, literature review, data preparation, and writing – proposal draft

Author 4: data gathering, data analysis, statistical/thematic analysis, and visualization

Author 5: data gathering, validation, proofreading, and final manuscript editing

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