



TESDA National Certification and Job Placement of UM-CHE Graduates: A Correlation Analysis

Ara Mae T. Cuison

Associate Professor, College of Hospitality Education,
University of Mindanao, Matina Campus,
Davao City, 8000, Davao del Sur, Philippines

Abstract

The tourism and hospitality industry requires professionals who are competent and job-ready. This study examined the perceived significance and contribution of TESDA National Certification (NC) to the job placement of graduates from the University of Mindanao–College of Hospitality Education (UM-CHE). TESDA NCs aim to validate competencies in food and beverage services, front office operations, and tour guiding. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 103 UM-CHE graduates from 2016 to 2020 to determine the role of NCs in employability. Results indicated that NCs are moderately beneficial, particularly in securing entry-level positions aligned with graduates' qualifications. The highest perceived benefit was competency validation and job positioning, while lower impact was observed on long-term outcomes such as promotion, salary growth, and regularization. Correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between perceived importance and employment contribution. Overall, TESDA NCs serve as valuable but non-exclusive tools for employability, emphasizing the need to strengthen curricula and instructional strategies aligned with industry-demand certifications.

Keywords

hospitality education, TESDA national certification, graduate employability, job placement, workplace readiness

INTRODUCTION

In the Philippines the tourism and hospitality sector has recognized the significance of ensuring a well-equipped workforce (Espellita & Maravilla, 2019; Wang, Ayres & Huyton, 2009). The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) became an instrument in ensuring that the labor market has enough training and skills development by providing the national certification programs that contribute to the employability of the graduates of tourism and hospitality programs (Deale & Schoffstall, 2015). The tourism and hospitality industry employers require TESDA-certified graduates as they need to possess specific transferable skills such as leadership, communication, strategic thinking, and decision-making (Gaité et al., 2022). Moreover, many employers in the field have noted that while hotel and restaurant management graduates possess a solid theoretical foundation (Gaité et al., 2022), they usually need more training to develop the practical, hands-on skills needed to excel in their roles in the industry.

In the University of Mindanao (UM) College of Hospitality Education (CHE), the TESDA National Certification has become an essential component in preparing its students for successful employment within the industry. The curriculum of CHE, which covers a broad range of disciplines, including food and beverages, travel and tourism, lodging, and recreation, is intended to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in their chosen careers based on industry standards.

Employers have consistently provided positive feedback on the college graduates' job performance, highlighting their strong communication and interpersonal skills, which are essential for developing positive customer relationships (Gaité et al., 2022). The flexibility and diverse curriculum of the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management and Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management programs have been a key factor in the graduates' employability, as it prepares them for a wide range of roles within the hospitality and tourism industry (Mejia et al., 2014; Breakey & Craig-Smith, 2007; Harkison et al., 2011).

In the UM-CHE, the TESDA National Certification has been included in the curriculum, and it has been considered as a requirement for students to pass specific skill-based courses before their deployment to practicum. The

college believes that the competencies, knowledge, exposure, and skills acquired during their studies will enable students to pass the National Assessment, thereby obtaining the National Certification. This certification provides them with a competitive edge when applying for positions within the industry (Torres & Gomez, 2024).

TESDA's National Certificate promotes the assessment and certification of middle-level skilled workforces through the Philippine TVET Competency Assessment and Certification System (PTCACS). This assessment evaluates whether graduates or workers can meet the competency standards expected in the workplace. The certification is awarded to those who meet these qualification standards, ensuring that those who pass possess the quality and productivity standards required in the industry, thereby enhancing their global competitiveness (Torres & Gomez, 2024).

The partnership between the University of Mindanao and TESDA has enabled the college to offer its students the opportunity to obtain nationally recognized certifications, which are highly valued by employers in the tourism and hospitality sector (Mejia et al., 2014). These certifications demonstrate the graduates' mastery of industry-specific competencies, making them more attractive candidates for job placements within the field (Deale & Schoffstall, 2015; Wang et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2010).

The UM-CHE is strengthening the assessment and training centers for present and future students. The College assures that it will fulfill the qualification standards in each assessment currently offered by the UM Assessment and Training Center. The graduates of the Tourism and Hospitality Management are associated with different assessment qualifications for different competencies. As already practiced in the College, the students are required to have at least 6 National Certifications Level II in the qualifications that is suited to their field of specialization: Travel Services National Certification II, Tour Guiding National Certification II, Front Office Services National Certification II, Events Management Services National Certification III, Bread and Pastry Production National Certification II, Cookery National Certification II, Housekeeping National Certification II, Bartending National Certification II, and Food and Beverages Services National Certification NCII. The new curriculum, with the inclusion of the K-12 program, additional upgrading of the National Certification requirements, is also in progress.

The impact of TESDA NCs on employment outcomes differs in various sectors and regions. For instance, while TESDA reports high employment rates among its graduates, data analyzed by the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) states that many of these employed graduates earn below the minimum wage, particularly those with NC I and NC II certifications. According to the Edcom2 newsletter in 2023, graduates with higher-level certifications, such as NC III and NC IV, tend to secure better-paying positions.

Despite the institutional emphasis on technical and vocational education as a key to employment, there still a lack of studies examining the direct relationship between TESDA National Certification and actual job placement outcomes, particularly among graduates of hospitality education programs in higher education institutions such as the University of Mindanao – College of Hospitality Education (UM-CHE). While national agencies like TESDA promote the certification as a key driver of employability, few localized studies have critically assessed whether this credential translates into measurable employment advantages in real-world industry settings. Moreover, with the evolving demands of the hospitality sector and increasing graduate competition, it is crucial to determine whether certification alone suffices in securing job placement or if other factors play more significant roles. Addressing this gap is urgent to inform curriculum alignment, improve graduate support mechanisms, and ensure that institutional efforts in producing TESDA-certified graduates effectively contribute to labor market integration (Navarro, 2016).

Given the gaps and limitations in the existing literature on national certifications, this study was conducted to explore the perceived significance and contribution of the TESDA National Certification to job placement among graduates of the University of Mindanao – College of Hospitality Education (UM-CHE), particularly within the tourism and hospitality industry. Specifically, the study aims to: (1) describe the importance and benefits of the TESDA National Certificate to the employment outcomes of UM-CHE graduates; (2) determine the level of contribution of the TESDA National Certificate to their job placement; and (3) establish the correlation between the graduates' perceived level of importance and the perceived level of contribution of the TESDA National Certification to their employment. This research seeks to provide evidence-based insights on how competency-based certifications influence the employability of hospitality and tourism graduates, and to inform institutional strategies that support workforce readiness and industry alignment.

There are two theoretical bases for this study: the Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964) and Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973). Human Capital Theory conceives that education and training are considered an investment that enhances individuals' productivity and potential salaries. In the context of hospitality and tourism education, TESDA National Certifications are proof that the students are equipped with job-ready competencies, consequently increasing their employability and value in the labor market.

Another theory is the Signaling Theory, which suggests that certifications function as signals to employers about a candidate's reliability, suitability, and capabilities for specific roles (Spence, 1973). These qualifications help bridge the gap between academic preparation and industry expectations by making skills and competencies visible and verifiable. In a highly competitive industry such as hospitality and tourism, the presence of nationally recognized certifications can serve as a key differentiator for graduates in the employment competition.

Together, these theories support the rationale that TESDA certifications contribute to both the development of individual capabilities and the enhancement of labor market signaling, aligning with the study's goal of assessing the perceived importance and contribution of national certifications to job placement outcomes among graduates of the University of Mindanao – College of Hospitality Education.

The CHE, which manages the UM Assessment and Training Center, will greatly benefit from this study and will also contribute data that will help compare the results of competencies that the students acquired in the past to current, thereby improving its implementation. For the University, this will help them grow more as a training and assessment center, not only for UM students but also for walk-ins, to ensure continuing improvement in facilities and services. This study may also benefit the College in observing the competencies acquired by the TM and HRM students in their previous training and assessment. With this study, the students will appreciate the significance of having a National Certificate in getting employed in the future.

Furthermore, this study supports the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by evaluating the effectiveness of competency-based certification systems, and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by promoting inclusive strategies for productive employment and skills matching in the hospitality industry.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Research Respondents

The study used primary data obtained from survey questionnaire. The respondents were 103 graduates from S.Y. 2016 to 2020 of the University of Mindanao, Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management and Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management. The surveyed UM CHE graduates are those who have completed or enrolled in the TESDA National Certification program. There was an initial filter to the survey questionnaire so that only graduates from S.Y. 2016-2020 were accepted from the HRM and TM programs. List of Alumni from the said school years were also requested from the Alumni Office and the online survey was directly given to them.

Materials and Instrument

The instrument used in gathering primary data was the survey questionnaire which was modified and partially adapted from Manalo (2018) research work titled, “Effectiveness of TESDA National Certification to Cruise Line Operation in Culinary Arts Graduates of 2015 and 2016”. The instrument was used to gather data and information from the respondents, who are the UM-CHE graduates. It has three parts; the first part was intended to identify the respondent’s profile; the second part is to determine the level of importance/benefits of TESDA National Certification to UM-CHE Graduates’ employment and lastly, the third part aims to discover the level of contribution of TESDA National Certification to UM-CHE Graduates’ employment.

The scale used to interpret the responses of the participants is presented below:

Range of Mean	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Very High	This means that the variable being measured is always evident.
3.41-4.20	High	This means that the variable being measured is often evident.
2.61-3.40	Moderate	This means that the variable being measured is sometimes evident.
1.81-2.60	Low	This means that the variable being measured is seldom evident.
1.00-1.80	Very Low	This means that the variable being measured is almost never evident.

Design and Procedure

The researcher utilized a descriptive, correlational research design. As widely accepted, the descriptive design is a fact-finding study that entails a sufficient and accurate interpretation of results. Research describes a certain present condition. Relatively, the design is appropriate to this study since it seeks to describe the National Certification of CHE Graduates in the years 2016 to 2020. It is also correlational since the study aims to establish the association between the perceived level of importance and the level of contribution of the National Certification. The methods used to gather data for the descriptive correlational research design were through a questionnaire, and analyzed through appropriate statistical tools. The researcher went to the Alumni Office and Registrar to request a list of the names of all UM-CHE graduate students from 2016 to 2020. The researcher contacted the graduates of 2016 to 2020 through social media and email so that the questionnaire would easily reach the respondents. The data gathering was conducted last November 2020 to January 2020. The data was tallied, encoded, and interpreted using different statistical tools. These include frequency and percentage, which was used to present the profile of each UM-CHE graduate in terms of sex, year graduated, and employment status, and job roles of graduates; weighted mean was used to determine the level of importance and contribution of graduates. Lastly, the researchers used Spearman’s rho to determine the correlation between the perceived importance and contribution of National Certification to UM-CHE graduates’ employment. Spearman’s rho was used in this study because it is the most appropriate tool to measure the relationship between two ranked or ordinal variables. It helped determine if graduates who rated the National Certification as more important also saw it as more helpful in getting employed. All data collected in this study were handled with strict confidentiality and in accordance with ethical research standards and the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and gave their voluntary consent. Personal information was not disclosed, and the data were used only for academic purposes.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The profile of respondents of this study is shown in Table 1. It revealed that the male respondents for this study were 56 out of 103 total respondents, which is 54.4%, and female respondents of 47 out of 103, which is 45.6%. Respondents

from class 2016 was 6.8% of the total surveyed from 2017 was 11.7%, 2018 was 27.2 %, 2019 was 31.1% and 2020 was 23.3%. There was an increasing trend of the number of graduates before 2020.

Table 1 Profile of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	56	54.4
Female	47	45.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Graduated Year		
2016	7	6.8
2017	12	11.7
2018	28	27.2
2019	32	31.1
2020	24	23.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Employment Status		
Employed Full-Time	80	77.7
Employed Part-Time	5	4.9
Seeking opportunities	9	8.7
Self-employed	9	8.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>8.7</i>
Job Roles		
Rank and File	66	64.1
Supervisory	23	22.3
Managerial	9	8.7
Executive	5	4.9
<i>Total</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>100.0</i>

The employment status of the respondents shows that 77.7 % were full-time, 4.9% were part-time, 8.7% were seeking opportunities, and 8.7% were self-employed. On average, 15% of the graduates are fully employed over the years. The job roles of graduate respondents are 64.1% rank and file, 22.3% supervisory, 8.7% managerial and 4.9 % executive. It showed that graduates of the program occupied various ranks in the industry.

The profile of the respondents revealed a near-balanced gender distribution, with 54.4% male and 45.6% female graduates, indicating that the hospitality program maintains inclusivity across genders—an important consideration in a sector known for valuing diversity (Wang, Ayres & Huyton, 2009). Graduates from batches 2016 to 2020 were included, with the highest representation from 2018 (27.2%) and 2019 (31.1%), showing an increasing trend in graduate output prior to the pandemic. This aligns with national trends in the Philippines where hospitality and tourism programs saw steady growth in enrollment before COVID-19 (Espellita & Maravilla, 2019).

The employment status data shows that 77.7% of respondents are employed full-time, with only a small percentage either part-time (4.9%), self-employed (8.7%), or seeking opportunities (8.7%). This suggests a generally favorable employability rate, supported by literature indicating that TESDA-certified graduates often enjoy higher employment potential (Santillan et al., 2020; Dimaunahan & Panoy, 2021). The job positions of respondents further demonstrate upward mobility, with 64.1% in rank-and-file positions, 22.3% in supervisory roles, 8.7% in managerial roles, and 4.9% in executive positions. This trajectory reflects the hospitality industry’s typical career ladder and supports findings that certification and workplace-based training enhance graduates’ readiness for higher-level responsibilities over time (Deale & Schoffstall, 2015; Gaite et al., 2022). Overall, the data shows that the UM-CHE’s integration of TESDA National Certifications into its curriculum has positively influenced graduate employability across different levels of the industry.

Table 2 presents the perceived level of importance/benefits of TESDA National Certification (NC) to UM-CHE graduate’s employment. The results show that all the items resulted in a moderate level, resulting in a total mean of 2.74. Items 1 and 2 result in a mean of 2.82, which is the highest mean. The overall trend implies that while the TESDA National Certificate is perceived as moderately to highly beneficial in gaining employment, its impact diminishes when it comes to long-term career growth, such as regularization and promotion. This underscores a potential gap in industry recognition of TESDA certifications beyond the hiring stage, highlighting the need for stronger employer engagement and policy integration to elevate the NC’s role in long-term professional development.

Table 2 Level of Importance/Benefits of TESDA National Certification to UM-CHE Graduates' Employment

Item Statement	Mean	Descriptive Level
1. The TESDA National Certificate is required or being asked when applying a job.	2.82	Moderate
2. The TESDA National Certificate helps to get a place on a desired position	2.82	Moderate
3. The TESDA National Certificate places an applicant in the priority list	2.71	Moderate
4. The TESDA National Certificate can be a basis for the employees to be regular workers.	2.69	Moderate
5. The TESDA National Certificate helps to get a promotion easily.	2.62	Moderate
General Mean	2.74	Moderate

The overall result of Table 2 is moderate, suggests the perceived impact of having TESDA NC on the graduates of UM CHE is sometimes evident. The factors that can be responsible for this outcome may be due to the variable influence on the employment requirements. TESDA NCs are proof of an individual's competency. However, its effect on employment can vary. There is a study that assessed the effectiveness of TESDA NCs among Hotel and Restaurant Administration Graduates, and they found that although the certification is important in the contribution to job placement because it provides additional credentials and potential promotions, it is not a guarantee of instant employment or a salary increase (Ingco et al., 2020). Employee preference is also a factor in employment. Employers may give importance to practical experience, soft skills, or higher educational qualifications over technical certifications. This difference means that while NC is beneficial, it is not universally regarded as a critical determinant for employment (Mahumot, 2025).

In the context of UM-CHE graduates, the possession of a TESDA NC can provide a competitive edge in the hospitality industry by validating specific skill sets. However, the overall benefit may be moderate, as employment outcomes also heavily depend on factors such as work experience, soft skills, and the demand within the local job market. Therefore, while a TESDA NC is a valuable credential, its impact on employment should be considered as part of a broader set of qualifications and experiences (Communications, 2023).

Table 3 presents the perceptions of UM-CHE graduates regarding the contribution of the TESDA National Certification (NC) to their employment outcomes. The results indicate an overall moderate level of significance, with mean scores ranging from 2.73 to 3.44. The highest-rated items reflect a strong recognition of the NC as a validation of competency aligned with industry standards ($\bar{x} = 3.44$), evidence of applicant skills ($\bar{x} = 3.41$), and a requirement for job positioning ($\bar{x} = 3.40$), reinforcing its importance during the initial hiring stage. However, the bulk of the remaining items fall within the mid-range (around 3.0), especially those concerning the NC's role in career advancement, job responsibility assignment, and applicant prioritization. Lower mean scores were recorded for items associated with promotion eligibility ($\bar{x} = 2.97$), contract agreements ($\bar{x} = 2.93$), salary scale ($\bar{x} = 2.74$), and particularly regular employment status ($\bar{x} = 2.73$). This overall moderate assessment implies that while the TESDA NC is viewed as a useful credential for entering the workforce, it is not widely regarded as a major factor in long-term employment benefits or career progression. The findings suggest a need for enhanced alignment between certification frameworks and employer recognition across all employment stages, as emphasized in literature promoting certification-based employment mobility (Balakrishnan et al., 2020; TESDA, 2023).

Table 3 Level of the Contribution of TESDA National Certification to UM-CHE Graduates' Employment

TESDA National Certification...	Mean	Descriptive Level
1. Is one of the requirements for job positioning	3.40	Moderate
2. Is evidence for competency of the applicant	3.41	Moderate
3. is a license for competency standards.	3.44	Moderate
4. places an applicant in the priority list	3.03	Moderate
5. places an applicant to his desired position	3.21	Moderate
6. can be a basis on setting job responsibilities	3.18	Moderate
7. can be the basis of contract agreement between applicant and company.	2.93	Moderate
8. can be a basis for salary scale determination.	2.74	Moderate
9. can be basis for hiring applicants.	2.87	Moderate
10. can be a basis for the employees to be regular workers	2.73	Moderate
11. is essential for appraisal or reclassification.	2.85	Moderate
12. can be an additional credential for promotion	2.97	Moderate
13. can be a basis for long employment contract	2.76	Moderate
14. can be a basis for assigning special projects	2.86	Moderate
15. can be a basis to know the level of competency	3.04	Moderate
Total Mean	3.08	Moderate

The overall mean score shown is 3.08. It is interpreted as moderate level which indicates that while TESDA National Certification plays a significant role in improving employability, its influence remains limited to certain aspects of employment. The result are consistent with the findings of Martinez and Ordoñez (2020), who emphasized that national certifications serve as proof of technical competency and enhance the marketability of graduates, particularly in the hospitality and service sectors. In the report of TESDA (2018), it is also similar that national Certifications are often

recognized by employers as validation of minimum job qualifications, especially for entry-level positions. The results also align with the observations in the study of Navarro (2016) that certifications, while useful for employment access, may not strongly influence salary grades, regularization, or long-term promotion—areas often determined by other factors such as work experience, tenure, and academic qualifications. Furthermore, UNESCO-UNEVOC (2019) says that while technical-vocational qualifications provide job readiness, their recognition and utility vary across industries and employers. The “moderate” overall mean underscores the supportive – but not standalone—role of TESDA certification in employment. As Bernardo et al. (2021) emphasize, the Philippine Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system must continue to evolve to meet industry demands through updated curricula, workplace-based learning, and improved recognition systems.

While TESDA NCs improve employability, they do not guarantee employment. A study evaluating Cruise Line Operations in Culinary Arts graduates found that those with TESDA NCs had a relatively easier time finding jobs. However, others still struggled due to limited job availability or lack of professional experience (Manalo et al., 2018). This suggests that while the NC can be beneficial, its impact is often dependent on additional factors.

In the hospitality and tourism industry, employers typically view the TESDA NC as a supporting credential rather than a primary one. A study conducted in Bohol revealed that although 72 percent of tourism professionals held TESDA NCs, employers still prioritized other criteria such as attitude, work ethic, and customer service orientation (Mahumot et al., 2025). The TESDA National Certificate contributes positively to the employment of hospitality and tourism graduates by validating their technical skills and enhancing job readiness. However, its overall impact remains moderate due to the importance of experience, soft skills, and employer preferences. For the NC to be most effective, it must be complemented by strong interpersonal abilities and relevant industry exposure.

The acquisition of a TESDA National Certificate can significantly augment the skillset and employability of Human Resource Management graduates, providing them with practical, industry-aligned competencies that complement their theoretical knowledge (Florese & Gan, 2020). Higher education institutions serve as crucial hubs for developing human capital, particularly in countries like the Philippines, which are becoming increasingly popular destinations for foreign business outsourcing firms seeking skilled workers (Penera et al., 2021). The globalized and multicultural nature of modern societies necessitates that educational systems prioritize employability as a central goal (Florese & Gan, 2020). Graduates equipped with practical skills are better positioned to address the challenges of the 21st century, where unemployment and underemployment remain persistent issues (Ebuenga et al., 2023).

Table 4 below shows the correlation matrix between the perceived importance of National Certification and its perceived contribution to the employment of UM CHE graduates. The perceived importance and contribution of National Certification is significantly correlated to the Graduates’ employment. This means that having NC is important in their getting employed since it is required in some establishments.

Table 4 Spearman’s Rho Correlation between Perceived Importance and Contribution of National Certifications to Graduates’ Employment using Spearman’s Rho

Paired Variable	R-value	P-value	Decision H ₀
“Helped me for a job position” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job”	.273*	.003	Reject
“Helped me for a job position” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.512**	.000	Reject
“Helped me for a job position” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.418*	.000	Reject
“Helped me for a job position” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.461**	.000	Reject
“Helped me for a job position” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.404**	.000	Reject
“Is one of my evidences for demonstrating competency” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.310**	.001	Reject
“Is one of my evidences for demonstrating competency” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.456**	.000	Reject
“Is one of my evidences for demonstrating competency” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.415**	.000	Reject
“Is one of my evidences for demonstrating competency” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.398**	.000	Reject
“Is one of my evidences for demonstrating competency” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.310**	.001	Reject
“Is a license for competency standards” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.361**	.000	Reject
“Is a license for competency standards” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.516**	.000	Reject
“Is a license for competency standards” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.483**	.000	Reject
“Is a license for competency standards” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.423**	.000	Reject
“Is a license for competency standards” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.426**	.000	Reject

“Places an applicant in the priority list” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.337**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant in the priority list” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.577**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant in the priority list” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.569**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant in the priority list” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.484**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant in the priority list” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.595**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant to his desired position” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.396**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant to his desired position” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.659**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant to his desired position” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.552**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant to his desired position” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.528**	.000	Reject
“Places an applicant to his desired position” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.594**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for setting my job responsibilities” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.401**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for setting my job responsibilities” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.612**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for setting my job responsibilities” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.548**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for setting my job responsibilities” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.581**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for setting my job responsibilities” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.554*	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis of my contract agreement to my employer” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.462**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis of my contract agreement to my employer” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.642**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis of my contract agreement to my employer” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.617**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis of my contract agreement to my employer” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace”	.637**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis of my contract agreement to my employer” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.678**	.000	Reject
“Was used to determine my salary scale” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.426**	.000	Reject
“Was used to determine my salary scale” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.570**	.000	Reject
“Was used to determine my salary scale” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.668**	.000	Reject
“Was used to determine my salary scale” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.657**	.000	Reject
“Was used to determine my salary scale” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.651**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get hired” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.492**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get hired” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.584**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get hired” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.639**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get hired” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.647**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get hired” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.632**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get regularized ” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.432**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get regularized ” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.630**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get regularized ” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.685**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for me to get regularized ” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.730**	.000	Reject

“Was used as basis for me to get regularized easily.”	” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.673**	.000	Reject
“Is essential for my job appraisal or reclassification from me when applying a job.”	” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.446**	.000	Reject
“Is essential for my job appraisal or reclassification”	” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.652**	.000	Reject
“Is essential for my job appraisal or reclassification”	” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.706**	.000	Reject
“Is essential for my job appraisal or reclassification”	” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.633**	.000	Reject
“Is essential for my job appraisal or reclassification”	” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.616**	.000	Reject
“Is an additional credential for my promotion me when applying a job.”	” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.461**	.000	Reject
“Is an additional credential for my promotion desired position”	” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.602**	.000	Reject
“Is an additional credential for my promotion prospective employer”	” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.647**	.000	Reject
“Is an additional credential for my promotion regularized in the workplace”	” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace”	.685**	.000	Reject
“Is an additional credential for my promotion easily.”	” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.629**	.000	Reject
“Is one of the bases for my long employment contract from me when applying a job.”	” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.566*	.000	Reject
“Is one of the bases for my long employment contract desired position”	” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.640**	.000	Reject
“Is one of the bases for my long employment contract of my prospective employer”	” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.745**	.000	Reject
“Is one of the bases for my long employment contract to get regularized in the workplace”	” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace”	.768**	.000	Reject
“Is one of the bases for my long employment contract easily”	” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.634**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for assigning me in special projects from me when applying a job.”	” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.470**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for assigning me in special projects desired position”	” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.646**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for assigning me in special projects of my prospective employer”	” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.684**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for assigning me in special projects to get regularized in the workplace.”	” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.746**	.000	Reject
“Was used as basis for assigning me in special projects easily.”	” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.672**	.000	Reject
“Is used to measure my level of competency me when applying a job.”	” to “was required or being asked from me when applying a job.”	.268**	.003	Reject
“Is used to measure my level of competency desired position”	” to “helped me get a place on my desired position”	.529**	.000	Reject
“Is used to measure my level of competency prospective employer”	” to “placed me in the priority list of my prospective employer”	.548**	.000	Reject
“Is used to measure my level of competency regularized in the workplace.”	” to “was one of the bases for me to get regularized in the workplace.”	.555**	.000	Reject
“Is used to measure my level of competency easily.”	” to “helped me get the promotion easily.”	.488**	.000	Reject

***p<0.005

The correlation between the significance of having an NC and its perceived contribution in the employability of the graduates is established. It supports the idea that NCs are valued by employers and can lead to more secure employment; however, it does not directly offer concrete evidence to definitively link NCs to longer contract durations. Liu et al. (2021) suggest that the possession of tourism/hospitality-related certificates has no significant impact on starting salaries, contradicting the common perception. This finding underscores the need for a more nuanced understanding of how employers actually perceive and weigh the value of these certificates, as their impact may not align with the general assumption that they provide a clear advantage in securing long-term contracts (Santillan et al., 2020).

Further, Liu et al. (2021) note that the level of starting salaries primarily depends on factors like academic credentials, language proficiency, and academic performance, rather than solely on the attainment of professional certificates. While TESDA National Certificates may be viewed positively by employers, their significance appears to be just one of many considerations in the hiring and compensation process (Preko & Anyigba, 2022).

Nonetheless, the research of Santillan et al. (2020) suggests that TESDA National Certificates can still provide benefits to graduates, such as increased chances of employment and the ability to contribute to national development, both locally and globally. The Philippines' focus on technical and vocational education, as mandated by the 1935 Constitution, underscores the country's recognition of the importance of developing a skilled workforce to drive economic progress. It suggests that while educational institutions strive to align their graduate attributes with employer demands, factors like academic credentials, language proficiency, and academic performance often play a more significant role in determining starting salaries and, potentially, other aspects of employment. On the other hand, a study claimed that TESDA National Certificates can provide graduates with increased chances of employment and the ability to contribute to national development, both locally and globally (Estecomen et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

In this study the findings from the 103 respondents from the College of Hospitality Education who graduated from 2016-2020 revealed that the level of importance or benefits of TESDA National Certification is moderate. This shows that the perceived impact of having TESDA NC on the graduates of UM CHE is apparent. This may be attributed to the variable influence on the employment requirements. For the level of contribution of TESDA NC to Um- CHE graduates the results also indicates moderate results. This goes to show that though TESDA NC is significant in improving employability of the graduates its influence is limited. The relationship between perceived importance and contribution of NC to graduates' employment revealed that there is a significant correlation. This just indicates that NCs are valued by employers and lead to a secure employment, however, it does not promise a longer work contract.

TESDA NCs are important for the tourism and hospitality sector since it proves that the graduates have the skills and competence to be hired within the industry standards. This goes to show that the qualifications such as Food and beverage Services NCII, Housekeeping NCII, Bread and Pastry Production NCII, Front Office Services NCII, Bartending NCII and Cookery NCII provides credentials to the UM-CHE graduates that land them to their desired job placement. However, it is not the sole factor that employers consider in hiring them. There are other requirements that will also affect their job security and promotion.

The results encourage the College of Hospitality Education to reinforce the curriculum and identify the NCs that is in-demand in the industry. Moreover, it is also recommended to strengthen instructional strategies that support the technical competencies development relevant to the identified certifications

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