

Degrees Don't Equal Jobs: Fixing the Employability Gap

DR. MIGUELE E. SUPREMO, JR.

*School of Teacher Education, Biliran Province State University, Naval, Biliran 6560, Philippines
Corresponding email: miguele.supremojr@bipsu.edu.ph*

Many young people in the Philippines grow up with the belief that earning a college degree is the golden ticket to a successful future. But for too many, that dream doesn't match reality. After graduation, they discover that a diploma alone is not enough to land a job that pays well or uses the skills they've studied for years. The employability gap where degrees don't lead to meaningful employment has become a shared frustration among countless Filipino families.

A recent report from Cordero (2024), the Philippine Statistics Authority shows that fresh graduates account for nearly 43% of the unemployed. This is a telling sign that our education system isn't fully aligned with the job market. In many industries, employers find that new graduates can't meet their expectations for skills like critical thinking or effective communication. According to Mavromaras et al. (2024), this mismatch is not just a personal setback for each job seeker, it also means companies struggle to fill positions with people who can help them grow

It's a daily struggle for graduates and their families. Many young people end up taking jobs unrelated to their field, working long hours in roles that don't tap into what they studied or hoped for (Lu, 2024). Parents, too, worry that the money they invested in education has not paid off. These feelings of disappointment and frustration are common, and they show that something deeper needs fixing. One problem is that universities and colleges often focus too much on theory and lectures. While these are important, they don't always prepare students for the real demands of the workplace. Many schools also lack strong partnerships with industries that could help tailor courses to market needs. On top of that, technical and vocational skills are often undervalued, even though they offer practical and rewarding careers.

To close the employability gap, schools need to rethink how they teach and what they teach. It means weaving in internships and on-the-job training so students can practice what they learn and build confidence (Sitti et al., 2023). Employers also need to speak up about the skills they want and work with schools to create programs

that meet those needs. And as a society, we need to respect all paths to success—whether it's a four-year degree or a technical certification.

Schools must partner directly with industries to create practical learning experiences like apprenticeships and internships, giving students a taste of real work and real challenges before they graduate (Vocal et al., 2023). Employers must also invest in mentorship and training, bridging the gap between what's taught in schools and what's expected in the workplace. Government policies should support job-matching programs that connect graduates to roles that value their degrees and skills, not just fill seats.

References

- Lu, B. J. (2024). Challenges to improving Filipino graduates' employability. Philippine News Agency. Retrieved from <https://www.pna.gov.ph/index.php/opinion/pieces/905-challenges-to-improving-filipino-graduates-employability>
- Sitti, Mariam & Jolo, & Indama, Abegail & Pacio, Saddam. (2023). The Role of Internship on Preparing Students for Employment: Prospects, Challenges and Policy Options. 133-140.
- Mavromaras, Kostas & McGuinness, Seamus & O'Leary, Nigel & Sloane, Peter & Fok, King. (2009). Job Mismatches and Labour Market Outcomes. Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Papers.
- Vocal, Jhervie & Barriga, Erica & Bartican, Jann & Leon, Clare & Encina, Jhead & Lama, Liv & Tupas, Alleah. (2023). Effect Of Internship On Personal And Professional Development Of The Selected College Graduates. 10.13140/Rg.2.2.24348.46726.
- Ted Cordero (2024). Fresh grads push PH unemployment to 2.38M in July 2024 — PSA. Retrieved from <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.gmanetwork.com/news/money/economy/919526/fresh-grads-push-ph-unemployment-rate-to-2-38m-in-july-2024-psa/story/%3famp>

ARTICLE DETAILS

EIR-0000001; Received: June 4, 2025; Accepted: June 7, 2025; Published: June 9, 2025

CITATION:

Supremo, Miguele E. Jr. (2025). Degrees Don't Equal Jobs: Fixing the Employability Gap. *Education and Industry Review: Essays and Critiques*. DOI: 10.62596/eir.mc2zqa28

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2025 by author(s). *Education and Industry Review: Essays and Critiques* is published by Stratworks Research Inc. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), allowing redistribution and reproduction in any format or medium, provided the original work is cited or recognized.