

The Perceived Competence of Psychology Graduates on Transition to Industrial Work Setting



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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the perceived competence and the actual performance of Psychology Graduates from Pamantasan ng Cabuyao during Industrial On-the-job Training as their competence is measured in different areas of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities. That utilizes a quantitative approach, self-validated questionnaires were administered to measure the graduates' perceptions and supervisors' evaluations. The results of this study revealed that there is a significant difference in knowledge, skills, and abilities in terms of their perceived and actual competence, with mean scores indicating higher perceived competence than actual performance. Despite this gap, Psychology Graduates demonstrate competence crucial for various industries, suggesting potential success as HR professionals as said in a study (Ontok-Balah, 2023).

KEYWORDS: Competence, KSA, Perceive Competence, Actual Competency, Psychology Graduates, Industrial Wok setting.

I. INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly changing world, an individual's worth in society could be more significant once they have made a contribution that will lead them to a successful profession. Multiple areas in the job industry are linked to the field of science, where psychology is, including clinical, educational, and industrial. However, in this study, the prominent field that is discussed based on its relevance is Industrial psychology.

Industrial Psychology is the scientific study of how humans act in groups and at work. The specialty focused on deriving the fundamentals of individual, group, and organizational behavior and using them to solve problems at work (American Psychological Association, 2022). Furthermore, Industrial Psychology focuses on consumer behavior analysis, education, recruitment, performance management, pay and benefits, and organizational change like how human resource-related jobs work (Brogaard, 2022). Employment in the industry in the Philippines were recorded at 19.85% in 2020, According to The World Bank (Trading Economics, 2021). On the other hand, From 1991 to 2023, the Philippines' employment rate averaged 91.72 percent, with a peak of 95.80 percent in November of 2022, as per the Philippine Statistics Authority (Trading Economics, 2022).

After almost three years of entirely imposing and conducting online learning modality in levels of education, one study showed that online education is the future of university learning (Batanero et al., 2022). Additionally, a survey showed that most students (73%) and those who agreed "somewhat" or "strongly" (46%) said they would be interested in taking some online learning in the future (McKenzie, 2021). However, Online learning has various advantages and disadvantages. Previous studies indicated that remote learning has been found to improve information retention and take less time (Abdullah et al., 2022). On the other hand, in exit exams, the university's online students performed significantly worse than oncampus students (Cellini & Grueso, 2021). From a recent one, the adverse effect of online learning were more evident for college learners who performed worse and lacked experience (Bird et al., 2022), and the majority of university students responding to surveys expressed dissatisfaction with the efficacy and experiences of their online learning (Mok et al., 2021).

In a local University in Cabuyao Laguna, the institution of Pamantasan ng Cabuyao (PNC) shifted to an Online learning modality in 2020 and implemented a Hybrid- Flexible Learning Experience Modality (HI-Flex), which is a combination of synchronous and asynchronous blended and modular learning delivery using Microsoft Teams as the official Learning Management System (LMS) of the institution and later on imposed an All-OutSynchronous on the delivery of learning. Presently, PNC continually administers online learning through a newly established LMS named PinNaCle, accessible for faculty members

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and students in learning delivery and acquisition, shaping the students, and providing a foundation of competence as future professionals.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

In this study, the research design that the researchers used is quantitative. It is the overall method that incorporates the different components of the study logically and cohesively; it also serves as the data collection, measurement, and analysis design to explain, predict, and control phenomena (Lechtenberg, 2020). The researchers used a quantitative correlational design to determine the difference between perceived competence and actual performance in the on-the-job training of Pamantasan ng Cabuyao Psychology Graduates in the Academic year 2019-2023. To know the significant difference between the two variables, the researchers' methods used the self-made validated questionnaires that were answered by the participants– that measured students' perceived competence and actual. The researchers coordinated with the On-the-Job training supervisors to determine the students' actual performance to obtain data that validated and correlated to the Perceived Competence of the Graduates.

B. Research Locale

The study was conducted in various areas in Laguna, particularly in the cities of Calamba, Cabuyao, and Sta. Rosa where the primary respondents of this study resided. The respondents of this study were Graduates of Pamantasan ng Cabuyao, located at Limcaoco St. Katapatan Homes, Banay-Banay, City of Cabuyao Laguna. To strengthen this study, the researchers also gathered data from the graduates' respective industrial setting companies located in the various cities of Laguna, Calamba City, Cabuyao City, Sta. Rosa City and Biñan City.

C. Population and Sampling

In this study, the researchers used a non-probability technique, a sampling that selected the sample using non-randomized techniques. Since a non-probability technique was used, purposive sampling was then utilized in this study. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling; through this way, researchers purposely selected participants who possessed and acquired the qualities required in the researcher's study. A non-random technique does not require several participants and underlying theories. With that, the researchers were the ones who determined what was known and looked for the respondents who willingly participated and provided information through possessing qualifications that were needed in the study (Iliyasu, R., & Etikan, I., 2021).

The respondent's qualifications for this study were Female or Male, with a Degree in Bachelor of Science in Psychology, took the internship program in 2023, and a Graduate of the University of Cabuyao from the academic year 2022-2023.

D. Research Participants

The respondents of the study are graduates of a four year tertiary education program, Bachelor of Science in Psychology at the University of Cabuyao Academic Year 2022-2023, Batch 2023 alumni who experienced a combination of one-year traditional learning and Online Distance learning as their mode of learning. Also, as graduates of a tertiary program they learned new knowledge, skills and enhanced their abilities. Furthermore, the graduates' supervisor during their On-the-Job Training in their industrial setting are also respondents of this study

E. Research Instrumentation

A self-report Likert locale-scale questionnaire was used to assess and obtain the data needed for this study. The questionnaire was designed for the Psychology Graduate students to measure and collect information on perceived competence regarding their skills, knowledge, and Abilities. The study aimed to determine the correlation between perceived competency and the student's actual performance in their on-the-job training. Thereby, in finding the Graduate's actual performance, apart from a designed questionnaire given to the Graduates, the researchers also prepared the same set of questions for the Company supervisors who witnessed, observed, and judged the competence performed by Pamantasan ng Cabuyao Graduates during the industrial internship. This was the researcher's way of validating the competence perceived by the Graduates to themselves and correlating with one another.

The researchers' Likert-scale questionnaire consists of three categories, which are skills, knowledge, and ability. Under the category of knowledge, there are problem-solving, conflict management, and strategic thinking. In the skills category, there are interpersonal skills, oral and written communication skills, human capital management, and developing others. On the other hand, ability category consists of resilience, flexibility, and technical credibility. Each topic has a set of questions that the participants responded to measure their perceived competence, and questions answered by choosing between the scales of agreement to disagreement level of the students.

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Moreover, the instrument's internal consistency is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient to guarantee the instrument's reliability in this study. On the other hand, this study used construct validity to assess if the instrument used measures the intended construct that needed measurement. The instrument's validity ensures that the findings obtained from the study are valid. The validation process is followed after the construction of questionnaires given to the respondent containing items associated with their perceived competence. After constructing the questionnaire, the instrument was validated by four professional validators with immense industry knowledge and expertise.

F. Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, the researchers made an Informed Consent Form for the subjects of the study, which are the Psychology Graduates batch 2023 and their respective companies during on-the-job training. The researchers also prepared a letter of request to Pamantasan ng Cabuyao, the Psychology Department Head that permits the researchers to access the documents of the graduates on the job training data including the students' names, company information, and contact person.

Data gathering procedure of this study ran for approximately 3 months. The researchers requested and obtained the list of Graduates and their respective Company during their Industrial Internship from the College of Arts and Sciences Department. They successfully able to connect with some of the Graduates by constantly messaging them through their social media accounts. However, regardless of persistent pleading there were numbers of graduates that did not able to respond due to loss of contact and busy work schedules. Alongside with this, The researchers struggled in acquiring data from companies due to delayed release of coded letters that hold the researchers from reaching out the target companies until second week of November. This circumstance hurdled the researchers to connect with various companies because of upcoming Christmas season thus difficult for them to accommodate the request. After constant number of emails, the researchers receive no replies. Thereby to pursue this study, the researchers came to visit each company to personally hand the letter and discuss the matter of request. Upon requesting the needed data, it consumed plenty of time for the researchers to retrieve the data that they requested to the companies.

On the other hand, data gathering from the company was also conducted through online platforms. However, since some companies cannot be contacted online, the researchers opted to come to their offices personally and requested them to be part of the study.

The researchers provided a brief percussion of the Data Policy Act and a set of instructions so that the respondents could answer the questionnaires honestly and fully know their responsibility as the subject of the study. Furthermore, the study used a purposive sampling method as it is the most appropriate method of sampling to use because the researchers set a qualification to the respondent of the study (Iliyasu &Etikan, 2021).

After answering the questionnaire, the researchers collected and tallied the data for interpretation and assessed if there was a correlation between the results of the questionnaires. The researchers also asked the statistician for help to determine the appropriate statistical tools used in interpreting the data. Then after that, the researcher come up with conclusions and recommendations.

G. Ethical Consideration

Participation in this study was voluntary. Before the respondents agreed to participate in this study, they were given a consent form containing the details regarding the study. And they were entitled to withdraw anytime during the process.

All the information given in this study was confidential and protected. The researchers kept the data and information in a computer file safely. Moreover, all the data and information gathered are destroyed and deleted after the research.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter comprised with results and discussion gathered during the data gathering and the outcome of the studies.

The findings of this study conclude that the Pamantasan ng Cabuyao Psychology Graduates were confidently competent in their knowledge, skills, and abilities during their on-the-job training and believed that they executed their competence appropriately aligned to the demands of the industry. Furthermore, data obtained from company supervisors of psychology graduates during their internship showed them to be competent as part of the human resource team. The graduates acquired various competencies and it manifest on their on-the-job training.

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Table 1. Summary of results Perceived Competence in terms of Knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE	STATEMENT	MEAN	SD	IMPLICATION
Problem Solving	I can criticize the problem before taking action.	3.42	0.68	Highly Competent
Conflict management	I acknowledge others' opinions and ideas in a situation when conflict arises.	3.63	0.64	Highly Competent
Strategic Thinking	I critically analyze challenging situations and plan on how I can improve them in the future.	3.47	0.68	Highly Competent

4.00 - 3.00 (Highly Competent), 2.99 - 2.00 (Competent), 1.99 - 1.00 (Incompetent), 1.00 - 0.99 (Highly Incompetent)

Table 2. Summary Results of Actual Competence in terms of Knowledge

KNOWLEDGE	STATEMENT	MEAN	SD	IMPLICATION
Problem Solving	They can criticize the problem before taking action.	3.14	0.61	Highly Competent
Conflict management	The interns are capable of listening to different opinions when a conflict happens in certain situations.	3.04	0.60	Highly Competent
	The interns acknowledge others' opinions and ideas in a situation when conflict arises.	3.04	0.60	Highly Competent
	The interns understand that maintaining good relations between employees and the company is part of his/her job.	3.04	0.60	Highly Competent
	The interns are knowledgeable about ensuring the safety and work satisfaction of employees in the workplace.	3.04	0.60	Highly Competent
Strategic Thinking	They know how to properly construct accurate and practical ideas required in different circumstances in the work setting.	3.32	0.57	Highly Competent

4.00 - 3.00 (Highly Competent), 2.99 - 2.00 (Competent), 1.99 - 1.00 (Incompetent), 1.00 - 0.99 (Highly Incompetent)

Table 1 and Table 2 show the items that received the highest rate on the perceived and actual competence of the graduates in the category of knowledge.

They showed high competence in their knowledge on problem-solving. It shows that they are equipped to assess challenges and make a rational judgment to solve the problem. In the same way, the graduates are also knowledgeable in conflict management as they are capable of analyzing and resolving conflicts within the workplace and they maintain good relationships with other employees. In addition, the result shows that the graduates are highly competent in terms of knowledge in strategic thinking. It indicates that the graduates critically analyze challenging situations and come up with a plan in order to resolve it.

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Table 3. Summary of results Perceived Competence in terms of Skills

SKILL	STATEMENT	MEAN	SD	IMPLICATION
Interpersonal Skills	I am a safe person to talk with concerns and worries.	3.77	0.60	Highly Competent
Oral and written Communication	I can clearly express my thoughts and ideas by typing.	3.53	0.66	Highly Competent
Human Capital Management	I am capable of helping people maximize their potential and assess their work capabilities.	3.32	0.60	Highly Competent
Developing Others	I consider the importance of feedback from work outputs as part of learning.	3.47	0.68	Highly Competent

Table 4. Summary Results of Actual Competence in terms of Skills

SKILLS	STATEMENT	MEAN	SD	IMPLICATION
Interpersonal Skills	They treat every individual equally with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect.	3.33	0.74	Highly Competent
Oral and written Communication	The interns can create, collaborate and suggest as part of a team.	3.14	0.83	Highly Competent
Human Capital Management	They are capable of helping people in maximizing their potential and assessing their work capabilities.	2.96	0.65	Competent
Developing Others	They consider the importance of feedback from work outputs as part of learning.	2.93	0.78	Competent
	The interns are knowledgeable about ensuring the safety and work satisfaction of employees in the workplace.	3.04	0.60	Highly Competent

4.00 - 3.00 (Highly Competent), 2.99 - 2.00 (Competent), 1.99 - 1.00 (Incompetent), 1.00 - 0.99 (Highly Incompetent)

Table 3 and 4 shows the item that received the highest rate on the perceived and actual competence of the graduates in the category of skills. The graduates have high competence in interpersonal skills as they can collaborate and work in teams. They also showed proficiency in oral and written communication as the graduates can communicate well in oral and written form within the workplace. Having these skills puts the graduates ahead of their competitors and increases their employability in the industry. As the result was shown in their skills in human capital management and skill in developing others that they are highly competent, the graduates are capable of contributing to the development of the organization and other people within the workplace. Hence, not only are they developing but also the organization they worked on, and other people also developed because of their skills. This is an important competence to be an effective human resource. Therefore, it is a great indicator that the graduates can be effective human resources since they are reported to be competent in this area of skills.

Table 5. Summary of results Perceived Competence in terms of Abilities

ABILITY	STATEMENT	MEAN	SD	IMPLICATION
Resilience	I stay optimistic when a difficult situation arises.	3.65	0.58	Highly Competent
	I don't let obstacles or challenging situations demotivate me easily.	3.65	0.55	Highly Competent
Flexibility	I respond positively when there is a change in organizational structures, systems, or policies.	3.47	0.63	Highly Competent
	I adjust my working style to meet the needs of the organization.	3.47	0.68	Highly Competent
Technical Credibility	I practice good judgment in handling issues and problems.	3.40	0.59	Highly Competent

4.00 - 3.00 (Highly Competent), 2.99 - 2.00 (Competent), 1.99 - 1.00 (Incompetent), 1.00 - 0.99 (Highly Incompetent)

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Table 6. Summary Results of Actual Competence in terms of Abilities

ABILITY	STATEMENT	MEAN	SD	IMPLICATION
Resilience	The interns possess a positive outlook on every challenge I encounter.	3.12	0.47	Highly Competent
Flexibility	The interns can easily adapt to changes in work schedules, tasks, etc.	3.18	0.50	Highly Competent
Technical Credibility	They have basic knowledge in technical methods and tools needed for work and apply it to execute their job effectively.	2.95	0.55	Competent
	They can suggest new or alternative procedures and techniques in their work if needed.	2.95	0.55	Competent

4.00 - 3.00 (Highly Competent), 2.99 - 2.00 (Competent), 1.99 - 1.00 (Incompetent), 1.00 - 0.99 (Highly Incompetent)

Table 5 and 6 shows the items that received the highest rate on the perceived and actual competence of the graduates in the category of abilities. The graduates have high resiliency since they have a positive outlook on every challenge they encounter and can manage to be calm and optimistic when difficult situations arise. They also have a high rate of flexibility as they quickly adapt to different changes in the workplace and can modify their approach to meet the needs within the workplace. On the other hand, they are competent with their ability in technical credibility because they have knowledge of technical information within the work and can suggest alternatives to resolve issues. However, there is still room for improvement to reach the higher ability to perform well in this area.

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Table 7. Significant Difference of the Graduates Perceived Competence and Actual Competence in terms of KSA

KNOWLEDGE	N	M	SD	T	TWO-TAILED TEST		INTERPRETATION	DECISION
					Critical Value	p-value		
Graduates	57	3.42	0.55	3.34	1.98	0.0011	With significant difference	Reject HO
Company	57	3.10	0.57					
Skills	N	M	SD	T	Two-tailed test		Interpretation	Decision
					Critical Value	p-value		
Graduates	57	3.38	0.56	3.61	1.98	0.0005	With significant difference	Reject HO
Company	57	2.98	0.73					
Ability	N	M	SD	T	Two-tailed test		Interpretation	Decision
					Critical Value	p-value		
Graduates	57	3.34	0.54	5.27	1.98	0.0000007	With significant difference	Reject HO
Company	57	3.01	0.44					

The result shows that there is a significant difference between the actual and perceived competence of the graduates in terms of their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

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In the area of knowledge, the average score was 3.42 on Perceived Competence and 3.10 on Actual Performance. It also provided the computed Critical level of 1.98 and a significant figure of 0.00 (2-tailed) with a total population of 57 Graduates and 57 responses from the companies. The data presented shows that the students' Perceived Competence in the area of knowledge is higher than their Actual Performance. Thereby, this statistical analysis rejected the null hypothesis as it shows a significant difference between the two variables.

There is a significant difference between the graduate's perceived competence and actual performance in terms of skill, with a mean score of 3.38 on Perceived Competence and 2.98 on Actual Performance. It also provided the computed Critical level of 1.93 and a significant figure of 0.00 (2-tailed) with a total population of 57 Graduates and 57 responses from the companies. The data presented shows that the students' Perceived Competence in the area of skill is higher than their Actual Performance. Thereby, this statistical analysis rejected the null hypothesis as it shows a significant difference between the two given variables.

Furthermore, there is a significant difference between graduates' perceived competence and actual performance in terms of ability, with a mean score of 3.44 on Perceived Competence and 3.01 on Actual Performance. It also provided the computed Critical level of 1.98 and a significant figure of 0.00 (2-tailed) with a total population of 57 Graduates and 57 responses from the companies. The data presented shows that the students' Perceived Competence in the area of ability is higher than their Actual Performance. This statistical analysis rejected the null hypothesis as it shows a significant difference between the two given variables.

IV. DISCUSSION

As researchers viewed and analyzed the overall data of this study, the researchers concluded that Psychology Graduates are competent, particularly when it comes to Knowledge, skills, and Abilities required by Industries, and reflected their possible success as human resource professionals. Provided that the Graduated psychology students perceived themselves as highly competent during the Industrial internship and were validated as competent by their company supervisors, the outcome of this study expounded and corresponded with the idea of Self-efficacy theory that adolescents with high self-efficacy do better academically, and self-efficacious adults have greater efficacy at work (Maddux, 2023). Also, the theory's concept explained that the development of their competence is drawn from their learning experiences as the academic effectiveness contributes to the high competence of the graduates.

Furthermore, the results of this study concluded that the graduates received an adequate learning and training during their academic years as it was manifested having a positive outcome. This is anchored as well as contributes to the context of human capital theory as it contends that the collection of skills, abilities, and knowledge (KSA) acquired through experience, education, and training," is which individuals utilize in carrying out their jobs effectively (Aliu & Aigbavboa, 2019). It merely indicates that competence executed by the Graduates in industrial field is brought by their academic experience and also reflects to the effectivity of learning methods provided to them in the foundation of their professional competence particularly in industrial setting.

Moreover, in consideration to professional world, it was clearly identified in this study that the view of both graduates and their supervisors meet the demands required by industrial setting through leadership competencies and specified variables that is necessary to the organization to work harmonously. This concept was emphasize by the context concluded by human relations theory as it highlight the relevance of leadership competence and leadership approaches in having effective and efficient organization with righteous treatment to employees. Furthermore, Omolawal (2023) contends that effective human resource management is founded on understanding the power and influence of leadership on employees to get the most out of them.

Furthermore, data showed a significant difference between the perceived and actual competence, which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis of this study. This expounds the minimal gap between the perspectives of the graduates and the company, indicating that psychology interns have adequate competency, yet they have some areas of knowledge, skill, and ability that they have to work on in an industrial setting.

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