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Examining the Impediments Impacting the Employability of Office Administration Graduates within Legal Offices

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impediments of office administration graduates seeking employment within legal offices, employing the descriptive survey method and utilizing statistical tools such as the weighted mean and ranking method. Data were collected from 50 graduates of Camarines Norte State College, as well as employers and stenographers from legal offices. The findings highlight a significant obstacle faced by office administration graduates: a lack of relevant internships and experience within legal settings, impeding their employment prospects within the legal sector. These results underscore the necessity for closer collaboration between academic institutions and legal offices to facilitate tailored internships and experiential learning opportunities. Additionally, integrating practical training modules into the curriculum is crucial to better prepare graduates for the demands of the legal profession. The implications of these findings extend to policymakers and educational stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of proactive measures to bridge the gap between academic training and industry requirements and enhance the employability of office administration graduates within legal offices.

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Introduction

The legal sector, integral to upholding the rule of law and ensuring justice, encompasses various facets crucial for maintaining societal order. In the realm of legal practice, stenographers play a pivotal role by transcribing court proceedings accurately and efficiently, ensuring an accurate record of legal proceedings [1]. This meticulous documentation provided by stenographers aids legal practitioners, judges, and other stakeholders in the judicial process. Moreover, stenographers contribute to access to justice by facilitating the smooth functioning of courtrooms, enabling individuals to exercise their rights effectively. Beyond courtrooms, stenographers support legal professionals in drafting legal documents, conducting legal research, and managing caseloads, thus enhancing the efficiency of legal processes. Their role extends to legislative settings, where stenographers record proceedings, assisting lawmakers in crafting legislation and upholding transparency in the legislative process. In essence, stenographers are indispensable to the legal sector, ensuring the integrity, accuracy, and efficiency of legal proceedings and contributing significantly to the administration of justice.

In accordance with Ref. [2], the United States saw a current stenographer count of approximately 25,000, a figure projected to decline in the coming year. When the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) commissioned a study to evaluate the demand for court reporters and stenographers nationwide, Ducker Worldwide, an independent third party, conducted the research, resulting in the "Ducker Report." This report indicated that in 2014, for every 1,120 court stenographers who retired, only 200 new stenographers entered the profession, resulting in a net decrease of 920 stenographers annually. Meanwhile, in the Philippines, as of May 2023, the Supreme Court of the Philippines reported an existing cohort of over 5,000 court stenographers, with both nations experiencing a shortage of court stenographers [3].

According to the Management Association of the Philippines, the president of the Court Stenographers Association of the Philippines, estimated that there were 130 stenographer vacancies in the National Capital Region [4]. Furthermore, the Civil Service listed job opportunities on January 19th, 2023, through a website, revealing approximately 397 vacancies for stenographers [5]. This number is anticipated to rise as additional halls of justice are constructed nationwide.

In the tracer study conducted by Ref. [6] findings revealed that a majority of graduates from the program have secured employment, primarily in contractual positions. Specifically, the study indicated that 51% of graduates are employed in roles such as customer service or associates, sales clerks, and cashiers. Notably, the study underscored the significance of professional skills in enhancing graduates' employability, emphasizing their capacity to learn

and adapt to new knowledge. Furthermore, in terms of technical competence, graduates demonstrated proficiency in utilizing Microsoft software for data processing tasks. Despite the favorable employment rates, the study also highlighted a segment comprising 28% of graduates who remain unemployed. Upon closer examination, it was found that a significant factor contributing to their unemployment was the lack of work experience. This underscores the importance of practical exposure and hands-on training in augmenting graduates' readiness for the job market. Therefore, while strides have been made in securing employment for Office Administration graduates, addressing the challenge of limited work experience among a portion of graduates remains a pertinent consideration for stakeholders in the field of education and workforce development.

In adherence to CHED Memorandum Order No.19 Series of 2017, Office Administration graduates are expected to pursue diverse career paths closely aligned with their academic background [7]. These may encompass administrative roles such as clerks/encoders, customer relations personnel, administration officers, office supervisors or managers, executive secretaries, and administrative assistants. Furthermore, graduates may also find opportunities within legal settings, where they can assume positions such as legal secretary, stenographer, administrative clerk, and transcriber. This comprehensive range of potential career paths highlights the multifaceted skill set and adaptability inherent in Office Administration graduates, enabling them to excel across various professional domains. Legal professions encompass a broader spectrum beyond the traditional roles of lawyers or attorneys, extending to administrative positions within legal offices. Often, individuals with backgrounds in business administration are well-suited for these administrative roles, leveraging their relevant skills and knowledge. An office administrator, for instance, functions as an executive assistant endowed with office competencies and the capacity to assume responsibilities autonomously.

A proficient office administration graduate possesses the requisite knowledge and skills to undertake various administrative tasks efficiently, including managing phone calls, calendar scheduling, communications, word processing, and file management. Armed with such competencies, an office administration graduate is well- positioned to secure employment in the administrative capacity they aspire to. The employability prospects of administrators heavily hinge upon the acquisition of pertinent work skills tailored for employment. This underscores the importance of ensuring that office administration graduates are adequately prepared with the requisite skills and knowledge to excel in their chosen professional endeavors [8].

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks serve as foundational pillars that underpin researchers' studies, providing a conceptual framework within which empirical data can be interpreted and analyzed. In this study, the experiential learning theory proposed by Ref. [9] serves as a guiding framework. According to Dewey, knowledge acquisition occurs through the learner's engagement with their social environment and experiences. Central to this theory is the notion that knowledge is best internalized when it is actively applied in real-life contexts, providing meaningful experiences that contextualize the information learned. Dewey emphasized the pivotal role of educators in facilitating experiential learning. Teachers play a crucial role in guiding students through the learning process, imparting the necessary knowledge and skills that students can then apply in practical situations. They serve as facilitators who design learning experiences and provide support to ensure that students can effectively integrate theoretical concepts with practical applications.

By adopting Dewey's experiential learning theory as the theoretical framework, this study acknowledges the significance of hands-on experiences and active engagement in the learning process. It underscores the importance of creating opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in authentic contexts, thereby enhancing their understanding and retention of the subject matter. Additionally, it highlights the indispensable role of educators in orchestrating meaningful learning experiences that foster deeper learning and skill development among students. The focus of this theory is to give the best quality of experience for the students so that they have enough knowledge to apply in real- life situations. This knowledge is now the learners' skills as readiness and preparedness to continue to acquire new knowledge. The experiential learning theory inspires the goal of acquiring knowledge through quality experience. The theory chosen in the presented study is connected to the present learning process due to the shift from online to face-to-face learning. The pandemic forced education to become flexible, and now that the new normal is implemented, the learners need more quality learning through experience.

Students must motivate and synthesize or apply their theoretical knowledge with practical experience to acquire meaningful growth. In this study, the researchers will assess the skills, qualifications, and competencies required by the legal offices when hiring office administration graduates. Therefore, institutions and teachers must identify student's capabilities, needs, and past experiences. Hence, the theory mentioned is relevant to this study. It will help the current study assess the competencies and qualifications of office administration graduates, utilize the theory to know the key factors influencing the

employability of office administration graduates, and improve the employability of office administration graduates.

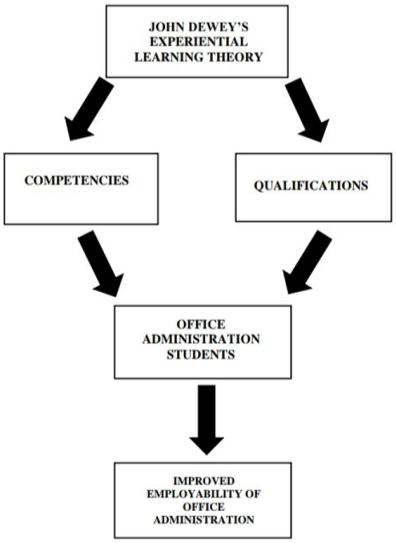


Fig. 1. Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study delineates the relationships between independent and dependent variables, forming the foundation upon which the research is built. Central to this framework are the independent variables, which encompass key factors influencing the employability of Office Administration graduates within legal offices in Daet, Camarines Norte. The first independent variable pertains to identifying the key factors that influence the employability of Office Administration graduates in legal settings. This includes examining various factors such as market demand, industry trends, and specific skill requirements within the legal sector. The second independent variable involves assessing the skills, qualifications, and competencies required by legal offices when hiring Office Administration graduates. This entails evaluating the specific skill sets and knowledge areas that are deemed essential for success in administrative roles within legal environments. The third independent variable focuses on examining the perceptions and expectations of both employers and graduates regarding the preparedness of graduates for employment in legal offices. This involves gathering insights from stakeholders to understand their perspectives on the adequacy of educational preparation, practical skills, and readiness for the demands of the legal workplace.

The proposed action plan for potential interventions and improvements serves as the dependent variable in this study, representing the desired outcome aimed at addressing the challenges and enhancing the opportunities faced by Office Administration graduates in

securing employment within the legal sector in Daet, Camarines Norte. This action plan is informed by the analysis of the independent variables, which include key factors influencing employability, assessment of skills and qualifications, and examination of perceptions and expectations. To conceptualize the paradigm, the researchers employ imagery inspired by a steno notebook, utilizing white and blue colors. White symbolizes competencies associated with cleanliness, purity, innocence, pristineness, and simplicity, while blue represents logic, loyalty, serenity, and trust. The rings with arrows in the steno notebook signify the connections between the independent and dependent variables, illustrating how various elements interact to influence graduates' prospects for employment within the legal sector. The choice of a steno notebook as a conceptual metaphor is significant, as it is an indispensable tool for legal stenographers. By drawing parallels between the steno notebook and the research framework, the study underscores the relevance and applicability of its findings to the legal profession. Thus, the investigation into impediments impacting the employability of Office Administration graduates aligns with the conceptualization presented, emphasizing the practical implications and real-world relevance of the research endeavor.

The primary objective of the study is to conduct a comprehensive investigation and analysis of the factors and barriers that impact the employability of Office Administration graduates seeking employment within legal offices in Daet, Camarines Norte. Specifically, the study aimed to address the following objectives: (1) identify the key factors influencing the employability of Office Administration graduates in the legal sector of Daet, Camarines Norte; (2) assess the skills, qualifications, and competencies required by legal offices when hiring Office Administration graduates; (3) examine the perceptions of both employers and graduates regarding graduates' preparedness for employment in legal offices; (4) explore potential strategies to enhance the employability of Office Administration graduates within the legal industry in Daet, Camarines Norte; and (5) propose an action plan for potential interventions and improvements aimed at addressing and contributing to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by Office Administration graduates in securing employment within the legal sector

Methods

A. Setting

The study is situated in Daet, Camarines Norte, a province situated within the Bicol Region of the Philippines. Daet serves as the principal location for the research, specifically within its legal sector, which encompasses various legal offices and institutions. The selection of Daet as the study's setting is deliberate, owing to its significance as a central hub for legal activities within Camarines Norte. Within Daet, a diverse array of legal entities exists, including law firms,

governmental agencies, courts, and other pertinent legal service providers. This amalgamation of institutions furnishes a rich and dynamic environment suitable for examining the employability of Office Administration graduates within the legal sector. Furthermore, the geographical positioning and socioeconomic milieu of Daet contribute to the distinctive employment dynamics encountered by graduates in their pursuit of employment opportunities. By concentrating on Daet, the study endeavors to offer insights that are both pertinent and applicable to the nuanced context of Camarines Norte, while also contributing to a broader understanding of the employability landscape within the legal sector across the Philippines.

B. Respondents of the Study

The study's respondents comprised Office Administration graduates from the batch of 2021- 2022, totaling 75 individuals. Additionally, employers and stenographers associated with Municipal Trial Court Branch I and II were included in the population. To collect data, a mixed-method approach was employed. The researchers conducted interviews with employers and distributed an online survey questionnaire to Office Administration graduates. Moreover, face-to-face surveys were administered to stenographers and select Office Administration graduates with whom the researchers had established contact. While the intended number of respondents was 75 Office Administration graduates, only 50 individuals from the Batch 2021-2022 cohort participated in the survey. Despite this deviation, the researchers assert that the sample size remains adequate for effectively addressing the study's objectives.

The inclusion of employers and stenographers enriches the study by providing diverse perspectives from key stakeholders within the legal sector. Through interviews and surveys, the researchers aimed to gain comprehensive insights into the factors influencing the employability of Office Administration graduates and identify potential areas for improvement. Despite encountering a slight deviation from the anticipated sample size, the researchers maintained confidence in the study's ability to yield valuable findings and fulfill its research objectives. Instrumentation The instrument that the study used is a questionnaire checklist containing essential questions to gather the needed data for the study. In this way, the researchers let the respondents answer the questions from the given options and give them the right to choose based on their thoughts and beliefs. The survey questionnaire is constructed based on the study's objectives.

C. Data Collection

This study employed purposive sampling to ensure that data collection aligned closely with the research objectives. Structured surveys were utilized as the primary method to systematically gather information from a predetermined group of respondents using

standardized questionnaires. This approach proved advantageous for obtaining quantitative data pertaining to specific aspects of the employability of Office Administration graduates within legal offices in Daet, Camarines Norte.

The researchers meticulously designed a comprehensive questionnaire, incorporating closed- ended questions with predefined response options. These questions were formulated to be clear, concise, and directly aligned with the research objectives, facilitating the systematic collection of relevant data. The structured surveys were then administered to the selected respondents through various means, including in-person interviews, online surveys, or telephone interviews, depending on practical considerations.

In addition to primary data collected directly from respondents, the researchers also utilized secondary data sources to supplement their analysis. These secondary sources included existing literature, reports, and databases related to the employability of Office Administration graduates and the legal sector in the study area. By integrating both primary and secondary data, the researchers aimed to provide a comprehensive and robust analysis of the factors influencing employability within the legal sector in Daet, Camarines Norte.

D. Data Analysis Technique

In the data analysis phase of the study, various statistical tools were employed by the researchers to ascertain the treatment of the research. Quantitative data collected through surveys underwent rigorous analysis, utilizing tables and charts to comprehensively present findings. Weighted Mean analysis was utilized to determine the key factors influencing the employability of Office Administration graduates within legal offices, assess the skills, qualifications, and competencies required by legal offices when hiring Office Administration graduates, and ascertain the perceptions of both graduates and employers regarding graduates' preparedness for employment within the legal sector. This method facilitated a nuanced understanding of the significance attributed to different factors and competencies in the employment context.

The Likert Scale served as another crucial tool, enabling the researchers to gauge the key factors or barriers encountered by graduates in securing employment within legal offices in Daet, Camarines Norte. Additionally, it helped identify the importance attributed to various skills and qualifications required when hiring Office Administration graduates. This scale also aided in assessing the perceptions of both employers and graduates regarding graduates' preparedness for employment in legal offices.

Furthermore, the Ranking Method was employed to rank potential strategies aimed at enhancing the employability of Office Administration graduates within the legal industry in Daet, Camarines Norte. This method facilitated the identification of the most viable strategies for improving graduates' prospects for employment within the legal sector.

Overall, the utilization of these statistical tools ensured a rigorous and systematic analysis of the data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employability and informing the development of targeted interventions to enhance graduates' employability within the legal sector.

Results and Discussion

A. Key Factors Influencing the Employability of Office Administration Graduates within Legal Offices

The primary challenge impacting the employability of Office Administration graduates in legal offices is the absence of relevant internships or experience. Respondents emphasized that internships play a pivotal role in preparing individuals for the workload encountered in office settings, enabling them to gain firsthand experience in the requisite processes for completing tasks. Conversely, respondents expressed a lack of experience working in legal offices, attributing this as a reason for their diminished interest and confidence in pursuing employment opportunities within the field.

The study conducted by Ref. [10] highlights the significant repercussions of lacking internship experience as graduates transition into the professional world. Academic internships serve as a bridge, connecting theoretical knowledge with practical application to enhance students' skills and refine their professional development and experience. Furthermore, internships aid in fostering positive personal attributes, cultivating effective work habits and bolstering confidence levels among students. They provide an invaluable opportunity for students to gain practical experience by applying classroom concepts in real-world work environments.

Table 1. Factors/ Challenges Influencing the Employability

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
Lack of basic understanding of legal terminology, procedures, and concepts, which can be essential in a legal office.	2.78	E
Lack of proficiency in legal software, document management, or case management systems	2.86	E
Inadequate soft skills such as effective communication, attention to detail, and time management.	2.72	E
Insufficient practical experience in legal office environments, making it challenging to adapt quickly to the demands of the job.	3.1	E
Limited networking opportunities and connections within the legal community.	3.08	E
Lack of relevant internships or experiences in legal offices.	3.42	HE
Different expectations regarding job roles, responsibilities, and salary.	3.18	E
Competition and challenges in standing out among a pool of candidates.	3.36	HE
Lack of engagement in ongoing legal education and professional development.	3.04	E
Limited geographic location and opportunities concentrated in specific areas.	2.8	E
Average Weighted Mean	3.03	E

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 =Highly Encountered; (HE) 1.76 – 2.50 =Less Encountered (LE); 2.51 – 3.25 = Encountered (E); 1.00 – 1.75 = Not Encountered (NE)

1. Skills, Qualifications, and Competencies Required by Legal Offices When Hiring Office Administration Graduates

The study unveiled that possessing excellent listening and communication skills to accurately record all information is deemed crucial by employers when hiring Office Administration graduates. Employers emphasized that legal offices contend with significant workloads, underscoring the necessity for individuals who can effectively listen and communicate even under pressure. This skill is particularly vital in court proceedings, where stenographers are expected to meticulously record all information with precision.

According to a study conducted by Ref. [11] revealed that the listening and transcription accuracy of stenographers play a pivotal role in upholding the reliability and fairness of legal proceedings. Any errors or inaccuracies in the court record can have profound repercussions, potentially resulting in wrongful convictions, appeals, or retrials.

Table 2. Skills, Qualifications, and Competencies Required by Legal Offices

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
Know how to type fast, transcribe, dictate, and maintain record files anddocuments.	3.87	VI
Have basic legal knowledge andterminologies.	3.5	I
Possess excellent listening and communication skills to clearly list down all the information.	4	VI
Know how to manage time, schedules, files,and other materials.	3.87	VI
Know how to utilize Microsoft Word.(Creating documents and Reports)	3.62	VI
Average Weighted Mean	3.77	VI

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 = Very Important (VI) 1.76 – 2.50 = Less Important (LI) 2.51 – 3.25= Important (I)1.00 – 1.75 = Not Important (NI)

2. Perceptions of both employers and graduates regarding the preparedness of graduates for employment in legal offices.

Perception of Office Administration Graduates. The study further elucidates that a majority of the respondents exhibit a high proficiency in the English language. This proficiency can be attributed to the status of English as one of the official languages in the Philippines, as well as its widespread use as a medium of instruction in educational institutions. According to Ref. [12], English is categorized as a secondary language, primarily utilized for official discourse in administration, law, business, education, and media sectors. English serves as the preferred medium for teaching technical concepts, and a vast array of educational materials are written in English, contributing to students' proficiency not only in spoken communication but also in written expression. The ability to communicate effectively in English is deemed indispensable for success in today's job

market, with a majority of employers prioritizing candidates based on their proficiency in spoken communication.

Table 3. Perception of Graduates Regarding their Preparedness for Employment

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
Have basic knowledge of legal office processes. (E.g., document processing, transcribing, record management)	3.1	A
Undergone special training or equivalent experience required in legal offices.	2.82	A
Have basic knowledge of legalterminologies.	2.94	A
English language proficiency (E.g.,able to speak, write, and comprehend English effectively.)	3.28	SA
Have the ability to listen andcommunicate accurately.	3.14	A
Average Weighted Mean	3.06	A

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 =Highly Encountered; (HE) 1.76 – 2.50 =Less Encountered (LE); – 3.25 = Encountered (E); 1.00 – 1.75 = Not Encountered (NE)

The legal processes within Municipal Trial Court Judge of Branch II in Daet office receive paramount importance. It is acknowledged that every document, report, and record holds significant value, not only for the clients but also for the smooth functioning of the entire office. Hence, it is imperative for them to recruit individuals with proficient skills capable of delivering swift, accurate, and dependable service. Moreover, according to Ref. [13] in her article on legal knowledge management, when corporate legal teams lack access to accurate information necessary for their tasks, their performance inevitably deteriorates, leading to subpar decision-making.

3. Perception of Employers in Legal Offices.

The study highlighted that employers sought graduates who possessed fundamental knowledge of legal processes, including document processing, transcription, and record management. This emphasis underscored the critical role these skills played within legal offices. Document processing involves the creation, organization, and management of legal documents, essential for maintaining accurate records and facilitating efficient workflow within legal settings. Proficiency in transcription, particularly in accurately transcribing legal proceedings and documents, was vital for preserving the integrity and veracity of legal records. Additionally, expertise in record management ensured that pertinent information was properly stored, retrieved, and maintained, thereby facilitating access to critical data when needed. Overall, the demand for graduates with proficiency in these legal processes reflected the importance of precision, organization, and attention to detail required in the legal profession.

Table 4. Perception of Employers Regarding the Preparedness

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Rating
Have basic knowledge of legal office processes. (E.g.,document processing, transcribing, record management).	3.75	SA
Undergone special trainingor equivalent experience required in legal offices.	3.25	A
Have basic knowledge oflegal terminologies.	2.5	D
English language proficiency (E.g., ableto speak, write, and comprehend English effectively.)	3.25	A
Have the ability to listen andcommunicate accurately.	3.25	A
Average Weighted Mean	3.2	A

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 =Highly Encountered; (HE) 1.76 – 2.50 =Less Encountered (LE); 2.51 – 3.25 = Encountered (E); 1.00 – 1.75 = Not Encountered (NE)

4. Potential Strategies to Enhance the Employability of Office Administration Graduates within the Legal Industry.

Internships and experiential learning in legal offices emerged as the highest priority strategy for enhancing the employability of office administration graduates within the legal industry. Respondents expressed a belief that they had not undergone sufficient practical training and experiences to confidently assert their readiness for employment in a legal office. They recognized that without proper training and practical experiences, their likelihood of being selected or hired to work in a legal office would diminish. This underscores the imperative for graduates to undergo internships and participate in activities aimed at gaining practical experience to enhance their employability within the legal industry.

According to Ref. [14], internships provide students with a firsthand experience of the legal environment, allowing them to observe the inner workings of a law firm or legal department. Through internships, students become acquainted with professional conduct, office culture, and ethical responsibilities that are integral to the legal profession. This exposure enables them to develop a comprehensive understanding of the legal sector, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel in a professional setting.

5. Action Plan

The proposed actions are poised to enhance the employability of Office Administration graduates within legal offices. Firstly, addressing the deficit in internships and experience within legal offices can be achieved through collaboration with legal establishments in Daet, Camarines Norte, particularly trial courts. Organizing internships in such settings will afford students invaluable firsthand experience, equipping them with practical knowledge of legal processes. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to hone their skills in shorthand writing, further augmenting their employability in legal offices. Through these

initiatives, graduates will emerge better prepared and more competitive in the legal employment landscape.

Table 5. Potential Strategies to Enhance the Employability

Indicators	Sum of Rank	Rank
Competency Enhancement: Offer training in legal software, document management systems, and other technology commonly used in legal offices.	436	2
Internships and Experiential Learning in Legal Offices: Encourage and facilitate internship programs with local legal offices to provide graduates with practical experience.	460	1
Soft Skills Development: Incorporate soft skills training in communication, time management, critical thinking, and professionalism into the curriculum.	398	3
Professional Development: Provide access to continuing education resources, including legal seminars, webinars, and workshops.	361	4
Resume Building: Assist graduates in creating impressive resumes that highlight their skills, relevant coursework, internships, and any legal-related projects or experiences.	273	5
Job Placement Support: Establish a dedicated career services office to help graduates with job searches, interview preparation, and job matching within the legal sector.	246	6
Mentorship Programs: Create mentorship programs where experienced legal professionals guide and advise recent graduates in their early careers.	210	7
Career Counseling: Provide personalized career counseling services to help graduates identify their career goals and develop a clear career path within the legal industry.	149	8
Geographic Mobility Support: Offer guidance and resources for graduates willing to relocate for job opportunities, including information on housing, cost of living, and local job markets.	103	10
Feedback Mechanism: Establish a feedback loop with legal offices to continually assess the readiness of graduates and make necessary adjustments to the curriculum.	114	9

Additionally, the course program could further bolster competency enhancement by providing seminars and training sessions tailored to refine students' skills and competencies in legal office procedures. These sessions would concentrate on vital areas such as legal software, document management systems, and commonly utilized technologies within legal offices. Through active participation in these activities, students would not only acquire additional proficiency in these essential tools but also foster a heightened sense of confidence in their skills. By engaging in such proactive initiatives, students would be better equipped to meet the demands of the legal profession. This proactive approach to skill development not only enhances their employability but also positions them as more competitive candidates within the job market. Furthermore, the exposure to practical training and hands-on experiences offered through these seminars and training sessions equips graduates with the practical knowledge and expertise necessary to navigate the complexities of legal office environments effectively.

Ultimately, by investing in these competency enhancement initiatives, the course program can significantly elevate the readiness of office administration graduates for the challenges and opportunities present within the legal industry. This comprehensive

approach not only enhances employability but also empowers graduates to excel in their professional endeavors within legal offices.

Soft skills development has been identified as one of the primary strategies for enhancing the employability of office administration graduates within legal offices. To address this, the study recommends that the course program offer interactive workshops for students. These workshops would feature speakers or guests who would share knowledge, tips, and tricks related to soft skills development. Through engaging with these speakers, students would receive practical training in developing soft skills relevant to the legal office setting. By the conclusion of these workshops, students would be able to leverage their experiences as evidence of improved soft skills, giving them a competitive edge in standing out for possessing such abilities.

Table 6. Action Plan to Enhance the Employability

Strategies	Activity	Objective	Person Involved	Time Frame	Expected Outcome
Internship and Experiential Learning in Legal Offices	The institution will collaborate with local legal offices in Daet Camarines Norteto conduct internships within their Legal Offices.	To encourage and facilitate internship programs to provide students with practical experience.	Students Faculty Employers and The employee of legal offices	Half of Semester	It will help students togain practical knowledgeof legal processes and practice their skillsin shorthand writing.
Competency Enhancement	The course program will provide educational activities, such as seminars, andteam building that offer training in legal software, document management systems and technologies commonly usedin legal offices.	To build students' confidence, enhance their competency,and developvaluable characteristics and skillsets leading to greater employability in legal offices.	Students Faculty andStudent Organiza tion of Office Administ ration	At least one every semester	Students will gain additional competitive advantage, confidence, and improved skillset in-demand bythe legal sector.
Soft Skill Development	The course program will provide interactive workshops where speakersshare valuable insights about soft skill training such as communication, time management, critical thinking, and professionalism.	To help students further improve relevant soft skills to increase their chance of employment.	StudentsFaculty Student Organization of Office Admini strationMentor	Annually	It will givethe students the edge tostand out as they possess great skills needed in the office.

Conclusion

Most of the graduates of Office Administration Batch 2021-2022 encountered a lack of relevant internships or experience in legal offices, which deterred them from pursuing work

as stenographers. The study also revealed that possessing excellent listening and communication skills to accurately record information was deemed very important by employers when hiring Office Administration graduates. Additionally, the study indicated that most graduates were well-prepared in terms of their proficiency in the English language. However, employers sought graduates with a basic knowledge of legal processes such as document processing, transcription, and record management.

The study further disclosed that internships and experiential learning in legal offices were identified as the highest potential strategy for enhancing the employability of office administration graduates within the legal industry. To address this, students were encouraged to attend seminars, trainings, and interactive workshops focused on legal processes. The researchers suggested collaboration between legal offices and the institution to provide students with practical exposure to legal office procedures and enhance their stenography skills.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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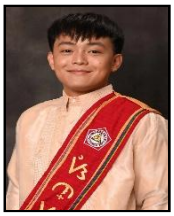
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