



# A correlational study of the marketing skills and career preparedness of the graduating students enrolled in marketing management program

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## Abstract

This study focuses on identifying the relationship between marketing skills and career preparedness and assessing the levels of marketing skills and career preparedness of graduating marketing management students. Three sections from fourth-year marketing management were selected using the cluster sampling technique. This study employed a correlational research design. This study revealed that the marketing skills and career preparedness of the graduating marketing management students were strong, indicating that they are well-developed with skills and well-prepared for their careers. In addition, there is a strong significant relationship between marketing skills and career preparedness, which implies that marketing skills contributed positively to the graduating marketing management students' career preparedness. Thus, the study recommended enhancing and practicing those skills for advanced school performance leading to successful careers.

**Keywords:** *marketing skills, career preparedness, graduating marketing management students, relationship, levels*

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## Introduction

In today's changing business environment, professionals need to stay flexible and adapt to trends and obstacles. Companies are seeking individuals with a foundation of knowledge and specific skills that can drive growth and keep them competitive. Graduates from marketing management programs entering the workforce often feel confident in their ability to express ideas, think creatively to solve problems, and apply concepts in situations. Business education in marketing aims to give students both marketing expertise and the skills needed for employment. A designed curriculum offers students an understanding of fundamental business principles, preparing them for various career paths ranging from marketing roles to leadership positions in product management or office administration. However, simply having knowledge of marketing is not enough to be career-ready. Studies emphasize that essential marketing skills like communication, creative problem solving, and analytical thinking are crucial for succeeding in careers (Hartley et al., 2019). Despite this recognition, it remains uncertain how effectively these skills prepare students for the workforce. While previous research acknowledges the significance of marketing competencies, it often fails to link these skills with students' readiness for their careers (Bacon, 2018). Furthermore, studies indicate that hands-on experiences, like internships and practical training, are crucial for skill enhancement. However, differences in interest and involvement imply that not all students reach a level of readiness (Gevana, 2021). This diversity highlights the importance of comprehending how distinct marketing skills impact one's readiness for a career.

In today's world driven by technology, it is essential for marketing graduates to have communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and creativity to meet the demands of the modern industry and secure better career prospects. Their coursework exposes them to a variety of disciplines, enabling them to utilize their skills in tasks like consumer research, content development, and digital marketing strategies. Despite recognizing the ranging applicability of marketing skills in literature, there is a lack of emphasis on how these skills influence career readiness and success after graduation.

This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating how critical thinking, communication, and creativity relate to career preparedness among students studying marketing

management. By exploring how these skills correspond with career readiness, this study will shed light on whether current educational programs equip students for success in their endeavors.

Previous related research has addressed career preparedness to some extent; however, most conclusions, recommendations, and findings have not directly examined the connection between students' marketing skills and their readiness for professional careers. This study seeks to explore how marketing skills specifically critical thinking, communication, and creativity relate to career preparedness, which is assessed in terms of interpersonal skills, self-management, and leadership among graduating marketing management students. This study aims to identify the relationship between these marketing skills and career preparedness, evaluate the current levels of both, and examine how they interact. By understanding this interplay, the study aims to offer insights into whether the current marketing management program adequately prepares students for the demands of their future careers.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Design***

The correlational research design was used in this study. It investigates relationships between variables without the researcher controlling or manipulating them. When two (or more) variables are correlated, it indicates the strength and direction of their relationship. A correlation may be positive or negative in direction. (Bhandari, 2022). The researcher aimed to cast light on the current situation concerning the graduating marketing management students and their level of marketing skills and career preparedness.

### ***Research Locale***

The research was conducted in a Higher Education Institution located in Balingasag, a second-class municipality in the Misamis Oriental province. A higher educational institution in Balingasag founded in 2002 currently provides Basic Education, Technical Programs to include PQF level 5 Diploma Programs and Higher Education programs. The trifocalized agencies, Commission on Higher Education, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority and Department of Education duly recognize its programs.

### ***Population and Sample***

In this study, a total of 115 fourth-year graduating students from the marketing management program during the A.Y. 2022-2023 participated. Cluster sampling was utilized, dividing them into three clusters representing various sections, totaling 115 students. Using a population calculator for a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level, the suggested sample sizes were: Section A (35), Section B (35), and Section C (22), totaling 92 participants.

### ***Research Instrument***

Data collection utilized a survey questionnaire adapted from a previous study on career readiness in college seniors. The questionnaire underwent adjustments to align with the study's objectives and demographic characteristics of the participants. It consisted of three parts: the first part gathered demographic data (sex, age, marital status), the second part assessed marketing skills (dependent variables), and the third part evaluated career preparedness (another set of dependent variables). A pilot test involving thirty participants was conducted to ensure the questionnaire's reliability. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed at .880, indicating high reliability in measuring the consistency of the instrument's items.

### ***Data Gathering Process***

To conduct this study, the researcher initially secured authorization from the College of Business and Management Dean. Subsequently, a letter was sent to the respondents after review by their research adviser. Given pandemic safety measures, the survey was conducted using Google Forms, ensuring both convenience and confidentiality. Prior to completing the survey, participants were provided with a consent letter. Responses were securely collected through Google Forms, and a statistician analyzed the data to ensure accuracy in addressing study objectives and hypotheses.

## ***Findings***

### ***Respondents Perceived Levels of Marketing skills***

Perceived levels of marketing skills of the respondents showed the same results per indicator: critical thinking, communication skills, and creativity fall into the rating of "agree," which implied strong marketing skills of the respondents. Overall, respondents were relatively well-developed regarding their marketing skills during their first to fourth year in the institution.

### ***Respondents Perceived Levels of Career Preparedness***

Perceived levels of career preparedness of the respondents showed the same results per indicator: interpersonal, self-management, and leadership fall into the rating of “agree,” which expressed strong career preparedness of the respondents. To sum up, respondents perceived that they are quietly well-prepared for their future careers.

### ***Significant Relationship Between Marketing Skills and Career Preparedness***

The respondents' marketing skills and career preparedness showed a strong significant relationship. This meant that respondents marketing skills and career preparedness were high. Results imply that students' marketing skills contributed positively to their career preparedness.

## **Conclusion**

The graduating marketing management students showed that they were well-developed in their chosen field. Their rate on their levels of marketing skills showed that the business and management education contributed in molding those skills and it also contributed well to their career preparedness. Marketing management students in their final year in college displayed confidence and readiness for their career. Indeed, there was a strong relationship between the respondents marketing skills and career preparedness. As graduating marketing management students' level of marketing skills was high, their level of career preparedness was also high, evidently based on their responses.

Although this study's objectives were successfully met, there was still a lot to look for in the future as today's changing demand for skills in the business and management industry was rampant. Hence, this study suggests to the graduating marketing management students, although they already have strong marketing skills and career preparedness, they should continue developing them by making these skills meaningful and spending more time practicing them. To the College of Business and Management Faculty, they must create a practical and enjoyable task for the graduating marketing management students that could help them to enhance their skills to the greatest extent possible. For instance, create a hands-on simulation activity to help them continue developing their marketing skills. Further research can explore other variables that will help to improve and foster graduating marketing management students' marketing skills concerning their career preparedness in entering business and management industries.

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