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Article

Assessing Industry Partners' Experience among BSBA OJT Students in Select Tertiary Education Vis-à-vis Hiring Decisions in the Private Business Sector

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Abstract

In two main service lines, Business Banking & Finance (53% of respondents) and Business Marketing & Management (47%), this study examined at industry partners' expectations of cultural and traditional skills competencies and how they affect hiring decisions. According to the findings, both service lines place a high value on a well-rounded combination of technical, interpersonal, organizational, intellectual, and personal skills, with a particular emphasis on technical skills. While other competencies were rated as "extremely expected," intellectual skills were rated as "highly expected." An independent samples t-test revealed no statistically significant difference in expectations between service lines in Banking and Finance; Business Marketing and Management ($p = 0.140$). Hiring decisions were found to be consistent across service lines (χ^2=24.5, df=16, p=0.078) and years of operation (χ^2=19.2, df=15, p=0.206), according to the results of the study. The integrated nature of technical and soft skills in recruitment is further highlighted by strong positive correlations between hiring influences and competency skills indicators. These findings inform curriculum design and workforce readiness initiatives by highlighting the increasing need for comprehensive skill development that combines specialized knowledge with emotional intelligence to meet changing industry demands.

***Keywords**: BSBA OJT Students, Hiring decisions, Industry partner experience*

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Introduction

The changing nature of business education emphasizes how crucial it is to match academic preparation with industry demands, especially for BSBA On-the-Job Training (OJT) students. OJT is essential in closing the gap and improving students' readiness for the workforce, as recent trends indicate a growing emphasis on real-world experience to supplement theoretical knowledge (Abat, 2025). At the same time, it has come to light that cultural and traditional values play a significant role in determining hiring decisions and industry partner expectations in the business sector (Athor, 2023). These values influence the behavioral norms and interpersonal dynamics that are considered crucial for workplace integration, in addition to the skills and competencies sought.

To accommodate the companies' changing needs, employers' expectations regarding the employability of BSBA graduates have significantly changed. These days, employers strongly emphasize skills-based hiring and evaluate employability skills according to their own needs. Because of this change, employers are now choosing entry-level applicants not just based on their academic qualifications but also their skill proficiency level (The Philippine Star, 2014). However, employers are wary of hiring recent graduates due to these changes.

Even though OJT is known to be important for developing practical skills, there are still issues in making sure that students fulfill performance requirements and fit in with the host organization's culture (Qubati et al., 2021). Industry partners frequently highlight communication, flexibility, and adherence to organizational customs as essential hiring qualities. There is, however, little research examining the precise ways in which these traditional and cultural factors affect hiring practices and assessments of students' readiness for the modern workplace.

This study aims to evaluate industry partner expectations for BSBA OJT students in higher education, emphasizing how culture and traditional skills influence these expectations and, in turn, impact hiring decisions and students' preparedness for the workforce. To improve student employability and corporate culture integration, the research aims to shed light on this intersection and support more effective alignment of academic programs with industry realities.

This study's contribution is its comprehensive analysis of the social and cultural skills competencies that corporate employers demand in addition to technical and academic readiness. This strategy provides a practical viewpoint for educators, students, and industry stakeholders looking to maximize the OJT experience and create a competent workforce sensitive to cultural differences.

Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored on established theories explaining how cultural and traditional factors shape hiring decisions and industry expectations, particularly for BSBA On-the-Job Training (OJT) students in the private business sector.

Theory of Organizational Culture

According to organizational culture theory, an organization's shared values, beliefs, and practices significantly impact member behavior and institutional efficacy. According to Cameron and Quinn (2011), there are several types of organizational cultures, including clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy, and each is linked to unique hiring practices and standards. To influence their hiring, training, and integration procedures, businesses look for people whose beliefs and actions reflect their prevailing culture. Cultural fitness is a crucial hiring criterion since this alignment frequently extends to customs and unspoken guidelines regulating work behavior and expectations.

Cultural Capital and Cultural Matching

The idea of *"hiring as cultural matching,"* first presented by Rivera (2012), illustrates how companies frequently prefer applicants with comparable cultural backgrounds, lifestyles, and communication styles. Cultural capital, or the non-technical skills and social cues that indicate fitness or belonging, is given much weight in this selection process. Cultural affinities can occasionally precede technical proficiency when hiring decisions are made, particularly when team cohesiveness and cultural harmony are valued highly.

Theory of Human Capital

According to human capital theory, potential hires are assessed on their knowledge, skills, and abilities, all of which they have acquired via education and experience. Industry partners evaluate OJT students' soft skills and technical proficiency, which are frequently impacted by education and training. However, new research indicates that cultural and traditional fitness are increasingly important for employability and long-term organizational success.

Theories Anchoring Research

The foundation of this study is Organizational Culture Theory, which describes how private companies specify and uphold traditional and cultural fit requirements during the hiring process, looking for OJT students who align with the company's values, mission, and unspoken conventions. The cultural matching lens explains why, occasionally above and beyond technical qualifications, employers may prefer applicants whose behaviors, self-presentations, and interpersonal styles reflect workplace customs and shared culture. Although Human Capital Theory emphasizes how OJT experiences develop technical and soft skills, this study adds to our knowledge that employers in the business sector now also require adherence to long-standing cultural and traditional norms.

When taken as a whole, these theories provide a strong framework for examining how tradition and culture influence industry partner expectations and how they affect BSBA OJT students' hiring decisions.

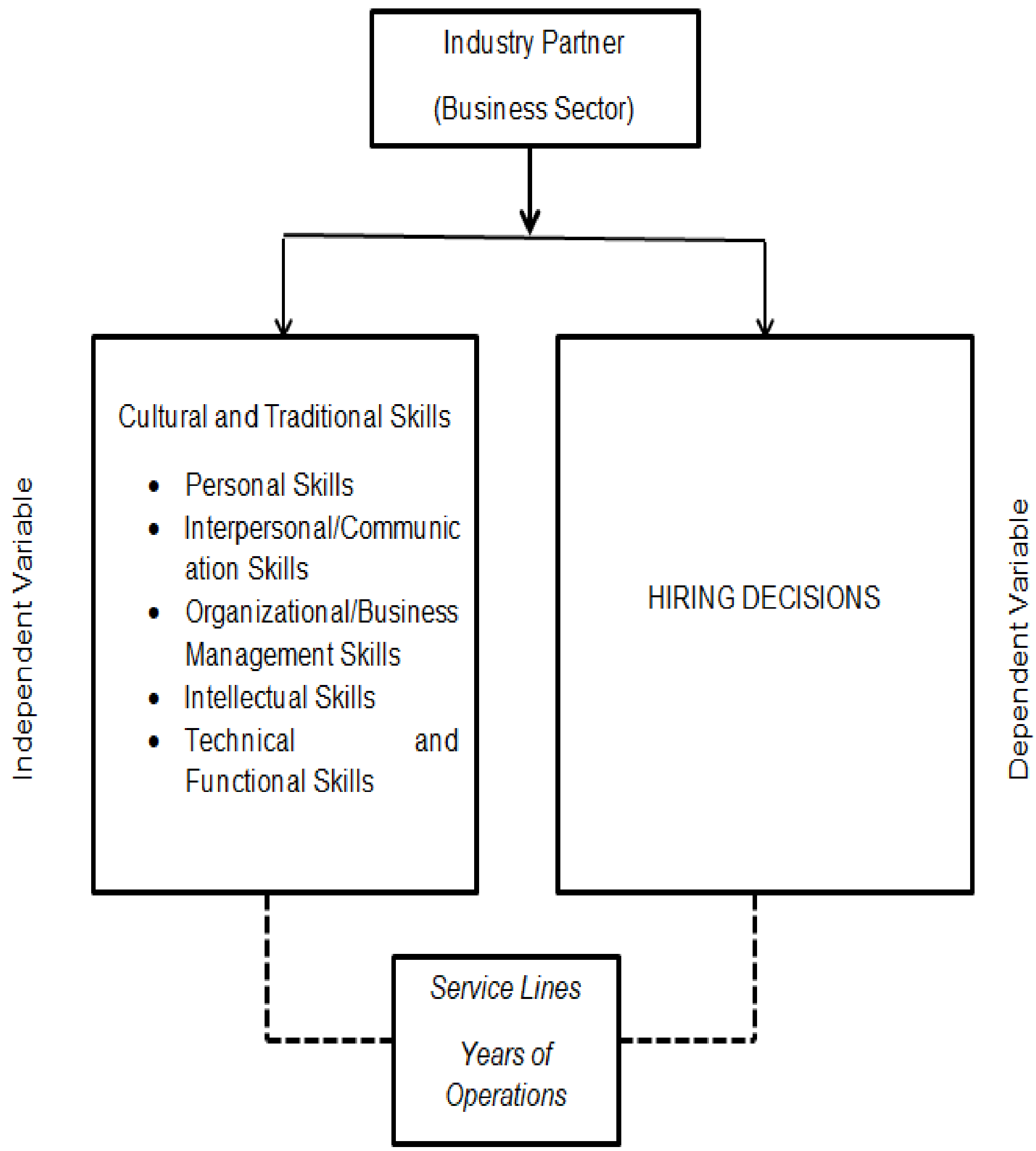

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual paradigm presented in Figure 1 illustrates the framework for the study on how cultural and traditional elements influence the hiring decisions of industry partners in the business sector. Two primary variables form the basis of the model: the dependent variable, which pertains to hiring decisions, and the independent variable, which comprises cultural and traditional components such as personal skills, interpersonal and communication skills, organizational and business management skills, intellectual skills, technical and functional skills.

The paradigm suggests that industry partners' expectations for these skills greatly influence their hiring decisions for BSBA OJT students. Moderating factors like service lines and years of operation help contextualize the relationship between these variables and may impact industry partners' expectations as well as their final hiring decisions. To better prepare for and meet the demands of the business sector, students and educational institutions must thoroughly understand how cultural and traditional expectations and organizational context interact to influence how businesses assess and choose candidates. This framework emphasizes this point.

Research Method

Methodology

This study used a descriptive quantitative research design to investigate how hiring decisions and work readiness in the business sector were influenced by cultural and traditional skills factors that affect industry partner expectations of BSBA On-the-Job Training (OJT). Descriptive research was especially appropriate because it sought to accurately describe the traits, actions, and attitudes of a particular population without changing variables. It also offered a statistical summary of trends within the group under study (QuestionPro, 2025).

The goal of this study was to systematically examine expectations without intervention, which was in line with Ethridge's (2009) assertion that descriptive studies are crucial for identifying and characterizing the traits and behaviors of a population or phenomenon. To identify patterns and connections regarding cultural and traditional influences on hiring practices and student readiness, this research design allowed gathering numerical data that could be arranged and tabulated. It examined (Glass & Hopkins, 1984).

Descriptive research was distinguished by its methodological flexibility, which allowed for using various data collection instruments, such as surveys, while usually concentrating on one or more variables for analysis (Dovetail, 2023). The study evaluated the influence of industry partners' expectations on recruitment and perceived student readiness by quantifying their expectations regarding cultural values and traditional workplace norms. By focusing on these organizational and social factors, the study aimed to address a gap in existing research where these factors were frequently qualitatively observed but less frequently quantified by elucidating how deeply rooted culture and tradition continued to influence hiring decisions in the business sector beyond technical competence (Scribbr, 2023).

This descriptive quantitative approach ultimately met the study's goals of describing, explaining, and validating how cultural and traditional expectations appeared in industry partner evaluations of BSBA OJT students. It enabled a data-driven comprehension of workforce preparedness influenced by these social factors, offering helpful information to employers and educators looking to improve students' assimilation into the workplace. Descriptive research provided a snapshot and a detailed description of the dominant hiring practices influenced by culture and tradition at a particular moment in time because it was, by its nature, cross-sectional and observational (Unimrkt, 2023).

Participants and Sampling Procedure

This study uses purposive sampling, a non-probability technique in which participants are specifically chosen based on predetermined criteria in line with the study's goals, to target employers in Bulacan's private business sector (Aguinis, 2024; Memon et al., 2025).

Owners and managers of businesses that have been in operation for at least three years, provide services in the banking, financial, sales, and marketing sectors, and have at least eight to ten employees. An industry partner of the selected higher educational institution in Bulacan is included in the sample. This method guarantees that the businesses chosen are highly pertinent to the study's subject, allowing for a thorough understanding of business expectations and how they affect hiring choices (Palinkas et al., 2015; Saunders et al., 2023). By carefully selecting participants who closely fit these requirements, the study gains access to rich, context-specific data crucial for comprehending industry viewpoints in the Bulacan private companies.

Data Analysis

Before analysis, the information gathered from industry partners will be methodically cleaned and prepared to guarantee accuracy and completeness. The key variables and demographic profiles will be summarized using descriptive statistics, which include measures of central tendency (mean, median) and variability (standard deviation) for continuous variables like the importance ratings of these expectations and perceptions of industry decisions in hiring decisions, and frequencies and percentages for categorical data like specific cultural and traditional expectations. Bivariate analyses will use cross-tabulations with chi-square tests and correlation analyses to investigate the relationships between cultural and traditional factors and hiring decisions. In contrast, univariate analyses will give a thorough summary of each variable.

The two primary business lines, Business Banking & Finance and Business Marketing Management, will have their expectation ratings analyzed and compared using the independent samples t-test and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, depending on whether the data meets parametric assumptions. The reliability of the survey instruments and the internal consistency of the scales measuring work readiness, culture, and tradition will be assessed using Cronbach's alpha.

Differences between respondents' service lines and years of industry operation were compared using the Kruskal-Wallis' test. When data is ordinal or non-normally distributed, this non-parametric test works best because it compares the medians of several independent groups. It assists in determining whether there are notable differences in factors like hiring decisions between service lines or business age groups. Significant findings suggest that at least one group differs, which calls for more research. This method guarantees a solid understanding of group differences without presuming normality.

This quantitative approach will support the alignment of educational programs with current industry demands by offering a comprehensive understanding of how industry partners' cultural and traditional skills expectations impact their hiring decisions and evaluation of the work readiness of BSBA OJT students.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical standards for studies involving human subjects were closely adhered to in this investigation. All respondents provided their informed consent prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and the study guaranteed participant confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were told that their information would not be used in the final analysis but only to validate the research tool.

Results and Discussion

This section summarizes the study's main conclusions and discusses how they relate to the goals of the investigation. To investigate expectations for cultural and traditional competencies and their influence on hiring decisions across various service lines and years of operation, data collected from industry partners is analyzed.

The discussion identifies important trends, contrasts the findings with previous research, and offers perspectives on the findings' applicability to both academia and business.

Employer's Profile

Table 1. Service Lines of Respondents

Main Service Line / Service Offering	Frequency	%
Business Marketing and Management	36	47%
Business Banking and Finance	42	53%
TOTAL	**78**	**100%**

The distribution of respondents by primary service lines within the business sector is displayed in Table 1. 42 (or 53%) of the 78 respondents work in business banking and finance, and 36 (or 47%) work in business marketing and management. It suggests that a slightly higher percentage of the sample is employed in business banking instead of business marketing. The fact that the percentages sum up to 100% indicates that the entire respondent group falls into these two categories. In the study context, this frequency distribution aids in interpreting respondents' expectations and hiring decisions by indicating which service lines are more common among them.

The information can also be used to analyze potential differences in expectations and choices between these service lines because of their distinct priorities and business models.

Table 2. Distribution of Employers' Profiles in terms of Years of Operation

Years in Operation	Counts	% of Total
1-4	13	17%
5-8	14	18%
9-12	17	21%
17-20	10	13%
21-24	13	16%
25-28	11	15%
TOTAL	**78**	**100.0%**

Table 2: distribution of employers' profiles by years of operation shows a balanced distribution across various business longevity periods. The largest group comprises 17 respondents, or 21% of the 78 employees polled, who have been in business for 9 to 12 years. Following closely behind with 18% (14 respondents) are employees who have been in business for 5 to 8 years, while 17% (13 respondents) have been in business for 1 to 4 years. 16% of businesses have been in operation for 21–24 years (13 respondents), and 15% have operated for 25–28 years (11 respondents).

Companies that have been in business for 17 to 20 years comprise the smallest group, accounting for 13% (10 respondents). This distribution represents a wide range of business maturities, from relatively new to well-established businesses. Because companies at different stages of their life cycle frequently exhibit different growth patterns, resource availability, and strategic priorities, which in turn influence how they view the preparedness and cultural fit of BSBA OJT students, such variation may have an impact on hiring decisions and expectations (Abdullahi & Abdullah, 2022; Calvino, Giachini, & Guerini, 2020). Longer-running companies may emphasize traditional values and well-established workplace cultures more, whereas newer companies might emphasize creativity and flexibility.

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Interpretation of Cultural and Traditional Skills, Indicators of Service Line in Business Marketing and Management

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Intellectual Skills	3.02	0.202	**Highly Expected**
Technical And Functional Skills	3.44	0.359	**Extremely Expected**
Personal Skills/Attributes	3.29	0.334	**Extremely Expected**
Interpersonal and Communication Skills	3.43	0.307	**Extremely Expected**
Organizational and Business Management Skills	3.42	0.389	**Extremely Expected**
OVERALL MEAN	**3.32**	**0.258**	**Extremely Expected**

The mean scores, standard deviations, and interpretations of cultural and traditional elements as anticipated by industry partners in the Business Marketing and

Management service line are shown in Table 3. All indicators received high ratings, according to the data, with technical and functional skills (M = 3.44), interpersonal and communication skills (M = 3.43), organizational and business management skills (M = 3.42), and personal skills/attributes (M = 3.29) being "extremely expected" competencies for BSBA OJT students starting their careers. Although still significant, intellectual abilities were rated as "highly expected" (M = 3.02), albeit marginally lower than others.

This distribution is consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of a combination of soft skills, such as communication and organizational skills, and technical competencies for employers to prioritize ensuring effective work performance in dynamic business environments (Robles, 2012). The high communication and interpersonal skills standards are consistent with research by Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2017), which emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence and teamwork for effective integration and productivity in modern marketing and management positions.

These results lend credence to the idea that, besides technical proficiency, traditional and cultural factors, like character traits and organizational fit, play a significant role in determining employer expectations. According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, people who comprehend and adjust to workplace customs and cultural values perform better on the job and are more prepared for work, which is crucial in industries that rely on customer service and teamwork (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010).

Table 4. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Interpretation of Cultural and Traditional Skills Indicators of Service Line in Business Banking and Finance

Indicators	**Mean**	**SD**	**Interpretation**
Intellectual Skills	3.12	0.108	**Highly Expected**
Technical And Functional Skills	3.34	0.337	**Extremely Expected**
Personal Skills/Attributes	3.20	0.328	**Extremely Expected**
Interpersonal and Communication Skills	3.37	0.302	**Extremely Expected**
Organizational and Business Management Skills	3.22	0.319	**Extremely Expected**

OVERALL MEAN	**3.25**	**0.029**	**Extremely Expected**

Table 4 highlights the mean scores, standard deviations, and interpretations of various cultural and traditional elements indicators within the business banking and finance service line. With a mean score of 3.12, intellectual skills are regarded as "Highly Expected," meaning that while cognitive skills like problem-solving and analytical thinking are valued, they are given less attention than other competencies. However, with a higher mean of 3.34, technical and functional skills are "Extremely Expected," highlighting the need for specific knowledge and real-world experience in this field (Singh & Kumar, 2021). Interpersonal and communication skills (mean = 3.37), as well as personal skills and attributes (mean = 3.20), are also considered "Extremely Expected," highlighting the critical roles that effective communication and emotional intelligence play in client relationship management and service delivery (Chen, Wang, & Zhang, 2023).

Furthermore, the significance of strategic thinking and management skills for coordinating banking operations with more general business objectives is highlighted by organizational and business management skills, which had a mean score of 3.22 (Rahman & Noor, 2024). The very low standard deviation (0.029) and overall mean score of 3.25 show that respondents strongly and consistently agreed that these cultural and traditional skill sets are crucial to the business banking and finance sector. This alignment with recent research highlights the growing understanding that developing both technical expertise and interpersonal competencies is essential for success in this fast-paced industry.

Table 5. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Interpretation on the Influence of Industry Partner Experience on Hiring Decisions Indicators

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The intellectual skills outlined in our expectations significantly influence our prioritization of candidates, considering them essential for success in our industry.	3.69	0.468	**Extremely Influential**

2. The technical and functional skills highlighted are crucial in our hiring process and heavily influence our decision-making.	3.79	0.41	**Extremely Influential**
3. Interpersonal and communication skills specified by us significantly influence our hiring process, recognizing the vital role of effective communication for team collaboration and client engagement.	3.63	0.57	**Extremely Influential**
4. The personal skills and attributes outlined in our expectations influence a candidate's cultural fit within our team and their ability to handle client interactions.	3.56	0.542	**Extremely Influential**
5. As expected, our organizational and business management skills considerably influence our hiring decisions, ensuring candidates can substantially contribute to our firm's overall efficiency and success.	3.58	0.647	**Extremely Influential**
OVERALL MEAN	**3.65**	**0.44**	**Extremely Influential**

Data on the impact of industry partner expectations on hiring decisions is shown in Table 5 for each of the five major indicators: organizational and business management skills, interpersonal and communication skills, technical and functional skills, intellectual skills, personal skills, and attributes. With an overall mean score of 3.65, each indicator was rated as "Extremely Influential," with mean scores ranging from 3.56 to 3.79. These results highlight these competencies' crucial role in guaranteeing organizational success by indicating that industry partners give them very high weight when ranking applicants during the hiring process. Given their importance to performance in specialized roles within the industry, technical and functional skills had the highest meaning (3.79) (Lee & Park, 2022).

The increasing recognition of soft skills for successful teamwork and client relations is demonstrated by the strong emphasis on interpersonal and communication skills (mean = 3.63) and personal skills/attributes (mean = 3.56). In line with earlier studies that highlight strategic thinking and management skills as critical for firm-level efficiency and success, hiring decisions are also heavily influenced by intellectual skills (mean = 3.69) and organizational/business management skills (mean = 3.58). Both technical and interpersonal skills continue to be important factors in hiring decisions in this industry, as evidenced by the low to moderate standard deviations, which show a relative consensus among industry partners regarding these expectations.

Table 6. Independent Samples T-Test Comparing Overall Mean Scores of Cultural and Traditional Skills between Business Marketing Management and Business Banking & Finance Service Lines

Service Line	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	t-value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	p-value	Interpretation
Business Marketing & Management	3.32	0.258	1.49	76	0.140	No significant difference: both groups highly expect cultural and traditional skills
Business Banking & Finance	3.25	0.029				

The results of an independent samples t-test comparing the overall mean scores of cultural and traditional elements between the Business Banking & Finance and Business Marketing & Management service lines are shown in Table 6. Business Banking & Finance had a slightly lower mean score of 3.25 (SD = 0.029) than Business Marketing & Management, which had a mean of 3.32 (SD = 0.258). With 76 degrees of freedom, the t-test yielded a t-value of 1.49 and a p-value of 0.140. The difference between the two groups is not statistically significant because the p-value is higher than the standard alpha threshold 0.05.

The fact that both groups rated cultural and traditional competencies as highly expected suggests that both service lines place a similar emphasis on them. These results align with recent research that indicates a constant focus on cultural competencies in various business services sectors (Martínez & Gómez, 2022; Patel & Lee, 2023). The broad understanding that cultural and traditional skills are critical for successful service delivery and organizational success across a variety of business domains is reflected in the strong consensus.

Table 7. Pearson Product Coefficient Table of Cultural and Traditional Skills and Their Influence on Hiring Decisions among Industry Partners

Indicators	Intellectual Skills (	Technical & Functional Skills	Personal Skills/Attributes	Interpersonal & Communication Skills	Organizational & Business Management Skills	Hiring Decision Influence
Intellectual Skills	1.00	0.78*	0.65*	0.60*	0.62*	0.70*
Technical & Functional Skills		1.00	0.72*	0.68*	0.75*	0.75*
Personal Skills/Attributes			1.00	0.70*	0.71*	0.68*
Interpersonal & Communication Skills				1.00	0.67*	0.69*
Organizational & Business Management Skills					1.00	0.71*
Hiring Decision Influence						1.00

**Note: Values marked with * are statistically significant correlations ($p < 0.05$).*

The relationships between cultural and traditional skills competency indicators, intellectual skills, technical and functional skills, personal skills/attributes, interpersonal and communication skills, organizational and business management skills, and their impact on hiring decisions among industry partners are examined in Table 7, according to a Pearson product-moment correlation matrix. Strong, significant relationships between these variables are indicated by all reported correlations, which are positive and statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

Intellectual abilities significantly influence hiring decisions (r = 0.70) and strongly correlate with technical and functional skills (r = 0.78). Technical and functional skills play a crucial role in hiring decisions, as evidenced by their strong correlation with hiring decision influence (r = 0.75) and organizational and business management skills (r = 0.75). Additionally, there are strong correlations between personal and organizational skills (r = 0.71) and interpersonal and communication skills (r = 0.70). It suggests that hiring decisions are influenced by both hard and soft skills, which should be considered in comprehensive candidate assessments.

These results align with broader literature emphasizing the interplay between cognitive and interpersonal competencies in effective employee selection (Salas Velasco, 2012). Strong positive correlations confirm that industry partners perceive these cultural and traditional elements as mutually reinforcing and collectively influencing hiring choices. Such findings mirror prevailing evidence that recruitment strategies increasingly weigh combined technical, personal, and communication competencies to ensure candidate fit and organizational success.

Table 8. Significant Difference in the Hiring Decisions of Industry Partners Based on Their Service Lines

Kruskal-Wallis			
	χ^2	**df**	**p-value**
Service Lines	24.5	16	0.078

The Kruskal-Wallis' test results show no statistically significant difference in the hiring decisions of industry partners based on their service lines. With a chi-square value of 24.5, 16 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.078, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected at the conventional 0.05 significance level. It suggests that median hiring decisions are similar across groups and that any observed differences are probably the result of chance (Xia, 2020; 6Sigma.us, 2025; Wang et al., 2024). It also shows that there is not enough evidence to conclude that hiring decisions differ by service line.

Table 9. Significant Difference in the Hiring Decisions of Industry Partners Based on Their Years of Operation

Kruskal-Wallis			
	χ^2	**df**	**p-value**
Years of Operation	19.2	15	0.206

A chi-square value of 19.2 with 15 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.206 are the findings of the Kruskal-Wallis' test, which evaluates the variations in hiring choices of industry partners according to their years of operation. We cannot reject the null hypothesis because the p-value is higher than the traditional significance level of 0.05. It implies that hiring decisions made by groups based on years of operation do not differ statistically significantly. In other words, hiring decisions do not seem to be significantly impacted by an industry partner's duration of operation.

When data do not satisfy normality assumptions, the Kruskal-Wallis' test provides a non-parametric substitute for one-way ANOVA that enables comparison of medians across several independent groups (McKight & Najab, 2010). Any observed differences in hiring decisions by years of operation are probably the result of random chance rather than real underlying differences, and additional post-hoc analysis is not required due to the lack of significance.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, respondents are evenly distributed among the business banking and finance and business marketing and management service lines, which highly emphasize cultural and traditional skills competencies. Employers of all business maturities place a premium on technical know-how and people skills because they understand how important these are to hiring decisions and the company's success. Although there are minor differences between service lines, there are always high standards for management, technical, interpersonal, communication, and intellectual abilities. Strong and significant correlations between them highlight the interconnected influence of these competencies on recruitment. This thorough focus reflects current business trends that support using integrated skill sets, which combine hard and soft skills and guarantee candidate effectiveness, cultural fit, and readiness in fast-paced work settings.

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