

Comparative Management Practices and Performance Outcomes of Public and Private TESDA Training Centers in North Cotabato

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Abstract

This study aimed to compare the management practices and performance outcomes of selected public and private TESDA-accredited training centers in North Cotabato and to examine the relationship between these variables. Anchored on Human Capital Theory and Institutional perspectives, the study employed a quantitative descriptive-comparative design using a structured survey questionnaire adapted from TESDA's graduate employment study. Respondents included administrators, trainers, and graduates from one public and three private institutions, selected through purposive and random sampling techniques. Data were analyzed using weighted mean, t-test, and Pearson correlation. Findings revealed that both public and private institutions demonstrated high levels of management practices and performance outcomes. Public centers showed stronger administrative structure and leadership and achieved higher assessment pass rates, while private centers performed better in facilities and resources. No significant differences were found in training and assessment implementation, industry linkages, employment within six months, and job relevance and satisfaction. A strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between management practices and performance outcomes was identified, indicating that effective institutional management contributes to graduate employability and satisfaction. The study concludes that both sectors are effective in delivering technical-vocational education, though each demonstrates distinct strengths. It recommends strengthening institutional support, improving resource management, enhancing trainer development, and expanding industry linkages. The study aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by promoting effective skills development and employability. Its sustainability impact lies in supporting institutional and socio-economic sustainability through improved workforce readiness, strengthened TVET systems, and alignment with labor market demands.

Keywords: Assessment Outcomes, Employment Outcomes, Industry Linkages, Management Practices, Tesda, Tvet

1. Introduction

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) plays a critical role in developing a skilled workforce and enhancing national competitiveness. In the Philippines, TESDA-accredited institutions are central to this mandate, yet variations in management practices between public and private centers may influence training quality and graduate employment outcomes. This study examines how institutional management particularly leadership, resources, training systems, and industry partnerships affects graduate employability in selected TESDA-accredited centers in North Cotabato.

1.1 Background of the Study on Management Practices and Employment Outcomes in TESDA Centers

The increasing demand for skilled labor underscores the importance of TVET in improving productivity and global competitiveness. TESDA serves as the primary agency responsible for equipping Filipinos with industry-aligned skills (TESDA, 2023). However, training effectiveness depends not only on curriculum design but also on institutional management practices. Effective management including leadership, facilities, training systems, and industry partnerships enhances training quality and employability outcomes. Institutions with strong management and industry collaboration demonstrate better performance results (Asian Development Bank, 2021). Public TESDA institutions expand access but often face bureaucratic and financial constraints, while private institutions benefit from operational flexibility and responsiveness to industry needs (ILO, 2020). These differences influence key outcomes such as certification, employment, and job relevance. North Cotabato provides a relevant context due to its growing economic sectors requiring skilled labor. Despite increased training participation, disparities in employment outcomes persist, particularly in job alignment and stability. This study therefore examines how management practices shape graduate employability and workforce integration.

1.2 Themes and Insights from Related Literature on TVET Management and Employability

Literature highlights that effective management practices directly influence training quality and employment outcomes. Human-capital theory emphasizes that investments in structured administration, qualified trainers, and adequate facilities improve graduate productivity (Becker, 1993). Strong leadership and governance systems enhance institutional performance and sustainability (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2022; Orbeta & Corpus, 2024). Facilities and resources are critical to competency development. Adequate tools and training environments aligned with TESDA standards improve assessment performance and learner satisfaction (TESDA Circular No. 13, 2023; Mariano and Tantoco, 2024; Bautista et al., 2021). Trainer competence is equally essential, as certified and industry-experienced trainers enhance skill mastery and job readiness (TESDA Board Resolution No. 2004-13; Cruz & De Guzman, 2022). Industry linkages strengthen training relevance and job placement. Partnerships through enterprise-based programs improve job matching and reduce employment mismatches (TESDA Circular No. 18, 2022; Generalao et al., 2025). However, inconsistencies in coordination lead to varying employment outcomes. Competency-based training improves employability by aligning learning with workplace standards (UNESCO, 2022; TESDA, 2023), though disparities in resources and trainer quality create uneven outcomes (Asian Development Bank, 2021). Assessment systems ensure certification validity but face challenges such as assessor shortages and logistical delays (ADB, 2021). Digital training and assessment innovations expanded access but introduced issues related to infrastructure and quality assurance (ILO and UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021; TESDA, 2023; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023). Employment outcomes vary between institutional types. Public centers increase access through government support, while private centers demonstrate stronger job placement efficiency (ILO, 2020). However, job mismatch remains an issue (PIDS, 2025). Job relevance and satisfaction are higher when training aligns with employment, supported by effective management and industry engagement (Bello, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context of TESDA Training and Employment Outcomes

Globally, TVET systems are recognized as essential for workforce development and economic growth. Nationally, TESDA operates under Republic Act No. 7796, which mandates accessible, high-quality technical education (RA 7796, 1994). The NTESDP 2023–2028 emphasizes innovation, inclusivity, and industry collaboration (TESDA, 2023). Public and private institutions share the goal of producing globally competitive workers but differ in management structures and operational flexibility (Orbeta & Corpus, 2024). Locally, North Cotabato's labor market relies heavily on skilled workers in agriculture, manufacturing, and services, making it a suitable setting to examine institutional differences in training outcomes. Despite policy alignment and institutional expansion, variations in employment outcomes persist due to differences in management practices, resource availability, and industry engagement.

1.4 Theoretical or Conceptual Basis on Management Practices and Graduate Employability

This study is grounded in human-capital theory, which posits that investments in education and training improve productivity and employability (Becker, 1993). It conceptualizes institutional management practices as key determinants of training effectiveness. The independent variables include administrative leadership, facilities and resources, training and assessment implementation, and industry linkages. These factors shape how training programs are delivered and sustained. The dependent variables include assessment pass rates, employment within six months, and job relevance and satisfaction. The framework assumes that effective management practices lead to improved employment outcomes, indicating that well-managed institutions produce more competent and employable graduates.

1.5 Research Gaps and Rationale in Comparing Public and Private TESDA Centers

Existing studies emphasize the importance of management practices and industry partnerships in improving employability. However, most research focuses on national or sectoral trends, with limited comparative analysis at the provincial level. There is a lack of empirical studies comparing public and private TESDA-accredited institutions in North Cotabato, particularly in relation to how management practices influence employment outcomes. Contextual factors such as funding structures, trainer deployment, and resource capacity may significantly affect graduate success. Addressing this gap provides localized evidence to improve institutional practices and strengthen the alignment between training and labor market demands.

1.6 Alignment with Relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This study aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals. It supports SDG 4 – Quality Education by examining the effectiveness of TVET systems in delivering relevant and competency-based training. It contributes to SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth by analyzing how training institutions improve employability and workforce integration. The focus on industry linkages and innovation also relates to SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, as it promotes stronger connections between education and economic sectors.

1.7 Importance of the Study to Multidisciplinary Sustainability

The study contributes to socio-economic sustainability by enhancing workforce readiness and employment opportunities through improved training systems. It supports educational sustainability by strengthening institutional management practices that ensure quality and relevance in TVET delivery. It also contributes to community and regional sustainability by aligning training outcomes with local labor market needs in North Cotabato. Furthermore, the study informs policy and institutional sustainability by providing evidence for improving TESDA governance, resource allocation, and industry collaboration. These contributions collectively support a more inclusive, competitive, and sustainable workforce development system.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative research design to analyze and compare management practices and performance outcomes of public and private TESDA-accredited training centers. This approach enabled a systematic examination of how institutional management influences assessment pass rates, employment rates, and job relevance and satisfaction. Survey questionnaires were used to measure both management practices and employment outcomes, allowing for structured data collection and comparative analysis. The design also supported triangulation, enhancing the reliability and depth of interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in four TESDA-accredited training centers in North Cotabato, Philippines. The public institution included the Provincial Training Center (PTC)–Amas located in Kidapawan City, while the private institutions were PNJ Technical School, St. Therese Institute of Technical Education, and Kidapawan Technical School and Security Training Center, Inc. These institutions were selected based on their accessibility, operational status, and availability of graduate employment records. North Cotabato was considered an appropriate setting due to its increasing participation in technical-vocational education and the presence of emerging industries that provide employment opportunities for TESDA graduates.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents consisted of two groups: administrators and trainers, and graduates from the selected training centers. A total of 19 administrators and trainers participated, with 8 from the public institution and 11 from the private institutions. These respondents were purposively selected due to their direct involvement in institutional management and training processes. Additionally, 60 graduates participated in the study, with 30 from the public institution and 30 from the private institutions. This distribution followed the recommendation of Gay (1976), which suggests a minimum of 30 respondents per group for reliable comparative analysis. The selected respondents ensured adequate representation and variability for meaningful comparison of employment outcomes.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was used for administrators and trainers, selecting individuals based on their managerial and instructional roles within the institutions. For graduates, a representative sampling approach was employed, wherein respondents were randomly selected from official graduate lists to meet the required sample size of 30 per group. Graduates included in the study were those who completed their training within the selected institutions and obtained their National Certificate (NC II) during the most recent training year. Those who only underwent assessment in the centers but were trained elsewhere were excluded to maintain the validity of institutional comparisons. This sampling approach is consistent with the recommendations of Creswell and Creswell (2018), who noted that moderate sample sizes are sufficient in descriptive-comparative studies, and Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012), who identified 30 participants per group as the minimum for reliable statistical analysis.

2.5 Research Instrument

A structured survey questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data on management practices and performance outcomes. The instrument was adapted from the “2019 Study on the Employment of TVET Graduates” by TESDA to ensure alignment with competency-based standards and institutional performance indicators. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section collected institutional profile information, particularly the classification of training centers as public or private. The second section measured management practices, including administrative structure and leadership, facilities and resources, training and assessment implementation, and industry linkages and job placement systems. The third section assessed performance outcomes, including assessment results, employment within six months after graduation, and job relevance and satisfaction. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (“Highly Practiced”) to 1 (“Not Practiced”). The instrument underwent content validation by experts in TVET and research, and it demonstrated high reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.89.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection began with securing permission from the TESDA Cotabato Provincial Office, which provided a list of accredited training centers. Based on accessibility and data availability, one public and three private institutions were selected. Coordination with institutional administrators was conducted to explain the study's purpose and obtain consent. Survey questionnaires were distributed to administrators and trainers, whose responses provided data on management practices. For graduates, lists of recent completers were obtained from institutional records. These graduates were contacted through various communication channels, including phone, email, and social media, and were invited to participate. Some respondents were also reached during institutional visits and alumni activities. Graduate respondents completed the survey either through printed questionnaires or electronic formats. The data collected focused on employment status, assessment results, job relevance, and satisfaction within six months after graduation. Additionally, documentary data such as institutional performance reports were collected to obtain records of assessment pass rates and employment outcomes. These documents were used to support and validate survey responses, ensuring consistency and accuracy. All data were handled with strict confidentiality, and participation was voluntary.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were organized, encoded, and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The weighted mean was used to determine the level of management practices and employment outcomes. To identify significant differences between public and private institutions, an independent samples t-test was applied. Furthermore, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to examine the relationship between management practices and performance outcomes.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Management Practices of TESDA Training Centers

3.1.1 Administrative Structure and Leadership

Public TESDA-accredited training centers demonstrated higher levels of administrative structure and leadership, with a mean of 4.53 described as fully practiced, compared to private centers with a mean of 4.18 described as practiced. Both sectors showed strong performance in maintaining clear organizational structures, transparent communication, participatory decision-making, and systematic monitoring, resulting in an overall mean of 4.36, interpreted as fully practiced. These results indicate that public institutions benefit from formalized administrative systems and structured governance, which enhance accountability and operational efficiency. This finding aligns with Alegre and Berbegal-Mirabent (2016), who emphasized the importance of leadership and governance in sustaining institutional quality. Private institutions, while slightly lower, demonstrate adaptability and flexible leadership approaches consistent with ILO (2020), suggesting that flexibility can also support effective management despite fewer structural resources.

3.1.2 Facilities and Resources

Private TESDA-accredited training centers showed stronger performance in facilities and resources, with a mean of 4.42 classified as fully practiced, compared to public centers with a mean of 4.07 classified as practiced. Both sectors maintained adequate workshops, updated tools, and safe learning environments, resulting in an overall mean of 4.24, indicating that facility-related practices are generally well implemented. This suggests that private institutions prioritize modernization and maintenance of facilities to enhance training quality and attract learners. This finding is consistent with the Asian Development Bank (2021), which noted that private institutions often have stronger resource mobilization capabilities. Public centers, while sufficiently equipped, may face constraints in maintenance due to high enrollment and reliance on government funding, indicating the need for improved resource optimization strategies.

3.1.3 Training and Assessment Implementation

Both public and private institutions demonstrated strong implementation of training and assessment practices, with public centers scoring slightly higher at 4.56 compared to 4.26 for private centers, both interpreted as fully practiced, resulting in an overall mean of 4.41. Trainers in both sectors were certified, provided industry-relevant instruction, and delivered timely feedback to learners. These findings highlight the effectiveness of competency-based training systems in ensuring skill mastery and assessment readiness. Public institutions' higher performance may be attributed to stable employment structures and access to government-funded training opportunities. This supports the findings of ILO (2020), emphasizing the role of well-supported trainers in delivering quality instruction. Private institutions, while maintaining compliance, may benefit from strengthening professional development systems to enhance instructional consistency.

3.1.4 Industry Linkages and Job Placement Systems

Both sectors demonstrated moderate implementation of industry linkages and job placement systems, with public centers scoring 4.07 and private centers 4.09, both interpreted as practiced, resulting in an overall mean of 4.08. Institutions maintained partnerships with industries, provided job placement assistance, and coordinated with employment agencies, although these practices were not fully maximized. These results suggest that while institutional linkages exist, there is still room for improvement in strengthening partnerships and employer engagement. This aligns with the Asian Development

Bank (2021), which emphasized that the effectiveness of industry collaboration depends on regional labor market conditions. Strengthening these linkages can improve job matching and employment outcomes across both sectors.

3.2 Performance Outcomes of TESDA Training Centers

3.2.1 Assessment Pass Rate

Public centers achieved slightly higher assessment performance with a mean of 4.56 compared to private centers with 4.30, both interpreted as fully practiced, resulting in an overall mean of 4.43. Graduates from both sectors demonstrated strong competency, confidence, and adherence to TESDA standards during assessments. These findings indicate that TESDA-accredited institutions effectively implement competency-based assessment systems. Public institutions' higher scores may be attributed to structured training programs and stable resources, consistent with TESDA (2023) and ILO (2020). The results also reinforce the importance of standardized assessment practices in ensuring graduate competence and certification credibility (Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016; ILO, 2020).

3.2.2 Employment within Six Months

Both public and private institutions demonstrated strong employment outcomes, with public centers scoring 4.35 and private centers 4.25, resulting in an overall mean of 4.30, all interpreted as fully practiced. Graduates from both sectors were able to secure employment within six months, supported by relevant training and placement services. These results suggest that TESDA programs effectively align with labor market demands and facilitate workforce entry. Public institutions' slightly higher performance may be linked to formal government partnerships, while private institutions rely on direct employer connections. This finding is consistent with Asian Development Bank (2021) and TESDA (2023), which highlight the importance of industry-aligned training and employment support systems. Continued collaboration with industry partners is essential to sustain these outcomes (ILO, 2020; Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016).

3.2.3 Job Relevance and Satisfaction

Both sectors reported high levels of job relevance and satisfaction, with public centers scoring 4.29 and private centers 4.25, resulting in an overall mean of 4.27, interpreted as fully practiced. Graduates indicated that their jobs aligned with their training, they were satisfied with their employment, and they applied learned skills in their work. These findings indicate that TESDA training programs effectively prepare graduates for real-world employment. Public centers' slightly higher ratings may be due to structured curricula and stronger institutional support, while private institutions maintain competitiveness through adaptive approaches. This supports findings from Asian Development Bank (2021) and TESDA (2023), emphasizing the importance of industry-aligned curricula in improving job satisfaction and relevance (ILO, 2020; Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2016).

3.3 Differences in Management Practices Between Public and Private Institutions

Significant differences were found in administrative structure and leadership and in facilities and resources. Public institutions scored higher in leadership, while private institutions performed better in facilities. However, no significant differences were found in trainer qualifications and industry linkages. Overall, both sectors demonstrated comparable management practices with only slight variations. These findings indicate that public institutions benefit from structured governance systems, while private institutions leverage flexibility to enhance facility quality. This balance reflects complementary strengths between the two sectors. The results align with Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent (2016), ILO (2020), and TESDA (2023), emphasizing that both structured systems and adaptive strategies contribute to institutional effectiveness.

3.4 Differences in Performance Outcomes Between Public and Private Institutions

Significant differences were observed only in assessment pass rates, where public centers performed better. No significant differences were found in employment within six months and job relevance and satisfaction, indicating comparable performance between sectors in these areas. These findings suggest that while public institutions have an advantage in structured training and assessment systems, both sectors are equally effective in preparing graduates for employment. This supports TESDA (2023) and ILO (2020), which highlight the role of competency-based training in achieving workforce readiness, regardless of institutional type.

3.5 Relationship Between Management Practices and Performance Outcomes

A strong positive and statistically significant relationship was found between management practices and performance outcomes in both public and private institutions, with correlation values of $r = 0.61$ and $r = 0.58$, respectively, and an overall correlation of $r = 0.59$. These results confirm that effective management practices such as strong leadership, adequate resources, qualified trainers, and industry partnerships directly contribute to improved assessment performance, employment rates, and job satisfaction. This supports theoretical perspectives such as Human Capital Theory and aligns with TESDA (2023), ILO (2020), and Alegre & Berbegal-Mirabent (2016), emphasizing that institutional quality is a key driver of graduate success and workforce readiness.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concludes that both public and private TESDA-accredited training centers in North Cotabato demonstrate strong management practices and favorable performance outcomes, with public institutions slightly outperforming private ones overall. Public centers exhibit stronger administrative structure and leadership as well as higher assessment pass rates, while private centers excel in facilities and resources. No significant differences were found in training and assessment implementation, industry linkages, employment within six months, and job relevance and satisfaction, indicating comparable effectiveness across sectors in these areas. The study further establishes a strong positive relationship between management practices and performance outcomes, confirming that effective institutional management significantly contributes to graduate competence, employability, and overall training success.

The study recommends strengthening support for public training centers through improved funding processes and facility modernization while maintaining strict trainer qualification standards and enhancing professional development opportunities in both sectors. Public institutions are encouraged to adopt more efficient management practices and implement graduate tracking systems, while private institutions are advised to ensure instructional consistency through stable trainer employment and expand partnerships with TESDA, local government units, and industry stakeholders. Both sectors should continue improving training quality, resource management, and industry collaboration to sustain competitiveness and responsiveness to labor market demands.

The study is limited to selected TESDA-accredited training centers in North Cotabato and focuses only on specific management practices and performance outcomes, which may not fully represent other institutions or regions. It also excludes external factors such as individual motivation, economic conditions, and geographic mobility that may influence employment outcomes, and relies on data from a defined group of respondents within a specific timeframe.

Compliance with ethical standards

The authors declare no conflict of interest and confirm that this study received no external funding. The researchers acknowledge the participation of administrators, trainers, and graduates from the selected TESDA-accredited training centers in North Cotabato, whose voluntary involvement and informed consent made this study possible. Data were collected using non-invasive survey methods, and all information was treated with strict confidentiality, ensuring that no identifying details of participants were disclosed.

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