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Driving Transformative Impact Across Disciplines

Peer Review Report Form

Manuscript Title:	Impact of a Short Online Digital Skills Training Program on the Employability Readiness of Unemployed Graduates in Cebu City, Philippines
Type of Article:	Original Article

FIRST ROUND

Editor

General Comments and Recommendations
The reviewers acknowledge the significance of your manuscript and recommend several revisions to further improve its clarity, coherence, organization, and overall scholarly quality. In addition, you are advised to thoroughly review and validate all references included in the manuscript. Please ensure that all cited sources are accurate, accessible, and retrievable through Google Scholar to uphold the credibility and reliability of the study. Additionally, make sure to include the DOI or website link for every reference whenever available to facilitate verification and accessibility of sources. Furthermore, only sources that are cited within the manuscript should appear in the References section, and all entries listed in the References section must also be cited in the text. For example, if 20 unique sources are cited in the manuscript, then only those 20 sources should be included in the References section. Please also note that repeated citations of the same source within the text are counted as a single reference entry; therefore, the total number of references may be lower than the total number of in-text citations.

Reviewer 1

General Comments and Recommendations
The manuscript addresses a relevant issue on digital skills and employability readiness among unemployed graduates. The topic is useful, especially for developing country contexts, but the present version needs stronger methodological reporting and more careful interpretation of the results before it can support its claims clearly.

Specific Comments and Recommendations
The one-group pre-test and post-test design is acceptable for a small intervention study, but the manuscript often states that the improvement was attributable to the training. Without a control group, this claim is too strong because other factors may also explain the change. The authors should soften the causal language and clearly state this as a limitation.
The participants and sampling procedure need more detail. The paper mentions a minimum sample size of 50 and purposive sampling, but it does not clearly describe the final sample profile, recruitment process, dropout, or participant characteristics. This information is important to judge whether the findings can be applied to other unemployed graduates.

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The training program and instrument are not described enough. The manuscript should provide more information on the module contents, duration per module, learning activities, and how completion was verified. The Employability Readiness Questionnaire should also include sample items, validation process, and reliability per dimension, not only the overall Cronbach's alpha.
The results need clearer and more complete statistical reporting. Table 1 appears to have a labeling issue, as "Frequency" seems to refer to the pre-test SD. The study should also report effect size, confidence interval, and assumptions for the paired t-test. This will make the evidence stronger and easier to evaluate.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

	Decision
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2

General Comments and Recommendations
First of all, congratulations on putting together this research. The topic is highly relevant, as the issue of unemployed graduates and digital skills mismatch is indeed a pressing concern here in the Philippines. Focusing on the urban context of Cebu City provides a good localized perspective on a global issue.
Specific Comments and Recommendations
The language used in the first few paragraphs is way too conversational and does not meet the rigorous standards of an international academic journal. For instance, stating that technology has completely flipped the job market on its head, is inappropriate for a formal paper. Similarly, describing unemployed graduates as being stuck in that awkward 'in-between' phase sounds more like a blog post than a peer-reviewed article. Kindly rephrase these sections using formal, objective, and scholarly prose.
Under the Participants and Sampling Procedure section, you mentioned that a minimum sample size of 50 participants was determined. You then stated that the final number depended on the availability of eligible respondents. However, you completely forgot to declare the actual final number of participants in the methodology or results narrative. I had to check Table 2 and look at the degrees of freedom (df = 49) to deduce that your sample size (N) was exactly 50. You must explicitly state your final sample size in the text.
Please double-check Table 1. There is a column header labeled Frequency positioned right after the Pre-test Mean column. The values under this Frequency column are 0.62, 0.58, 0.65, and 0.70. These are clearly decimal values representing the Pre-test Standard Deviation, not frequencies.
The study utilized a quasi-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design. While this is acceptable for basic educational research, the absence of a control group is a massive threat

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to the internal validity of your findings. How can we be absolutely sure that the improvements in digital literacy or job-search confidence were due only to your intervention, and not because the participants were independently browsing the internet or maturing in their job hunt during that time? If you cannot add a control group at this stage, you must write a dedicated Limitations of the Study section heavily acknowledging this flaw.
The methodology states that data collection was conducted within a 1-2 week intervention period. A one to two-week training is extremely brief. While you correctly measured immediate readiness, please be careful not to over-claim the impact of the study. Ensure your Conclusion reflects that this short-term intervention primarily boosted immediate self-efficacy and basic tool familiarity, rather than solving the systemic graduate unemployment issue.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

Decision	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

SECOND ROUND

Decision	**Editor**	**Reviewer 1**	**Reviewer 2**
Accept the manuscript for publication.	/	/	/
Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.			
Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.			