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The Impact of the Event Management Course on Tourism Graduates' Employability: A Case Study of UFM Alumni in Vietnam

Nguyen Thi Gia Dinh 

University of Finance – Marketing, Viet Nam

*Corresponding author: Nguyen Thi Gia Dinh — e-mail: ntg.dinh@ufm.edu.vn

Abstract

The study aims to investigate the impact of the Event Management course on tourism graduates' employability. The participants of the study were 142 alumni of the Faculty of Tourism, University of Finance – Marketing (UFM), Vietnam. They were students coming from three classes 19DSK, 20DSK, and 21DSK. They all completed the course Event Management. The study employed a quantitative research design and used a structured questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Form to the participants. The collected data was analyzed with the support of SPSS software, using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation). The results show that the Event Management course has a positive impact on tourism graduates' employability. The course provided useful and practical knowledge for students' employability and their future careers. Moreover, the course also equipped students with essential skills for their employability, such as communication skills, teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, time management skills, and adaptability skills.

Keywords: Alumni; Employability; Event management; Tourism

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and rationale

Event management is a crucial subject for the future careers of tourism students. This subject helps students build a foundation of knowledge in event management, such as event planning, event promotion, budgeting, and problem-solving during events, etc. (Shone & Parry, 2019). In the context of current international integration and the development of domestic and international tourism, this subject is even more essential for students to plan tourism events and promote the image of their country (Getz & Page, 2016).

Furthermore, the increasing demand for events and festivals leads to a growing need for personnel with knowledge in event management. Events, from personal events like weddings, birthday parties, and anniversaries to larger events such as sporting events and national events, all require a large workforce. In modern life, events increasingly demand professionalism and specific values. This necessitates that students receive thorough training in this field (Jackson, 2015).

In the current educational context, especially in the tourism industry at UFM, Event Management has been included in the curriculum as a mandatory specialized English course. The course equips students with the necessary knowledge and skills to coordinate real-world events. However, this course focuses heavily on theory and lacks practical experience. This highlights the urgent need to assess the effectiveness of the course in relation to the practical work of students after graduation.

Furthermore, in the context of higher education in Vietnam, research on the impact of Event Management on the employability of tourism graduates is very limited. Gathering feedback from students, especially alumni who have applied their learning to their practical work, will help assess the usefulness of the course and provide valuable material for improving its teaching.

All the needs and problems mentioned above are the reasons why the author conducted this research with the title “The Impact of the Event Management Course on Tourism Graduates’ Employability: A Case Study of UFM Alumni in Vietnam”.

1.2. Research objectives

This study was conducted to investigate the impact of the Event Management course on the employability of students in the tourism sector, with the two main objectives: (1) To examine the extent to which the knowledge gained from Event Management course affects students’ employability after graduation; (2) To explore the extent to which the skills acquired from Event Management course impact students’ employability after graduation.

1.3. Research questions

Based on the objectives mentioned above, the current study addresses the two research questions:

RQ1: To what extent does the knowledge gained from the Event Management course contribute to tourism graduates’ employability after graduation?

RQ2: To what extent do the skills acquired from the Event Management course contribute to tourism graduates’ employability after graduation?

1.4. The significance of the study

This study makes valuable contributions in both theoretical and practical terms.

Theoretically, this study makes a significant contribution to the theoretical foundation and the limited research on the relationship between event management and the employability of graduates. Specifically, the empirical evidence based on the real-world experiences of alumni from this study will contribute to research in the fields of event organization, tourism, and human resource development for these industries.

Practically, the research results contribute to the evaluation and improvement of the Event Management curriculum at universities, specifically UFM. Furthermore, this study provides useful information for instructors in teaching and enhancing the applicability of the Event Management course.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Event management

Event management is gradually becoming an important field in tourism and service training programs (Junek et al., 2009). This course provides fundamental concepts and terminology about events, such as event types (private, public, charity, commercial, major, etc.), event characteristics, categories, and typologies. In addition, it provides knowledge about event planning, including pre-event, during-event, and post-event planning. Furthermore, risk management, budget management, and event promotion plans are also discussed in detail in this course (Shone & Parry, 2019). Beyond this knowledge, the course also provides the knowledge and skills to coordinate with stakeholders such as distributors, stakeholders, etc., during the event organization process. This is crucial because, in practice, event organizers need to coordinate with many stakeholders to ensure the event runs smoothly and creates a positive experience for attendees (Shone & Parry, 2019).

One of the key aspects of teaching and learning Event Management is its high applicability (Ruhanen, 2005). Students are given the opportunity to apply the theories they have learned to real-world events. They are given the chance to practice, plan, and organize small, personal events that are familiar to everyday life. These events could include birthday parties, camping trips, educational visits to museums or national parks, etc. With these familiar events, students can creatively apply their learned theories to practice. From this, students gain personal experience and learn valuable lessons. This is a practical and useful application that the course provides to students (Arcodia, & Reid, 2008).

2.2. Employability in Tourism

Employability refers to a student's ability to find, maintain, and develop a career after graduation (Harvey, 2001). For the tourism industry, employability is not just about finding a job, but also about adapting to the realities of the labor market (Harvey, 2001). Because the tourism industry requires adaptability to diverse situations, different types of clients, and various events, graduates need a high level of adaptability to their work (Shariff, 2021). Furthermore, in addition to academic knowledge, graduates need essential skills such as communication, collaboration, and negotiation with stakeholders to organize tourism events. Therefore, employability in tourism demands that graduates possess the necessary knowledge and skills to adapt to the industry's development and the needs of businesses (McKercher et al., 2023).

In the context of the Vietnamese tourism industry, employability is becoming increasingly competitive. Businesses in this industry require a workforce that not only possesses strong knowledge but also essential skills, high adaptability, and flexibility in all situations and various events (McKercher et al., 2023). Employability in tourism is not just about acquired knowledge and skills, but also about genuine competence stemming from continuous learning and practical experience (Punsalan et al., 2024). To meet the increasing demands of society, learners need to make a great effort to improve their knowledge and skills related to tourism and event organization (Punsalan et al., 2024).

2.3. Event management course and employability in tourism

Event Management is considered a crucial factor in enhancing the employability of tourism students after graduation (Welthagen, 2023). This course equips students not only with knowledge of event organization but also with essential skills for working in the tourism industry (Welthagen, 2023). These include the skills of communication, teamwork and collaboration, problem-solving, planning and organization, time management, and adaptability. Furthermore, event management is designed with a practical application, including the experience with event planning, coordination, and operation. This provides practical experience that contributes to the development of professional skills for students in the tourism industry (Garcia, 2025). Therefore, students are well-prepared for future employment after graduation.

Several studies show a strong correlation between event management training and employability in tourism. According to Welthagen (2025), Event Management helps students improve their professional knowledge and practical skills in the tourism and event industry. In addition, this course supports students in developing practical work skills and adapting to various events in the tourism industry. Haw et al. (2021) also emphasize that skills formed through internships in event organization and coordination will help learners adapt better to the real-world working environment of tourism and event businesses.

In the context of Vietnam, event management training is a key element in the tourism industry. Event management contributes to creating a skilled workforce that meets the needs of the tourism sector. Several universities, such as RMIT Vietnam and Hoa Sen University, have developed official programs that combine event management and tourism. This demonstrates the importance and close connection of event management to the training of human resources for the tourism industry.

3. Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design. This design is suitable for surveying the opinions of a large number of students using a Likert-scale questionnaire (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). This design is particularly well-suited for collecting data on students' perceptions and evaluations of the knowledge and skills they acquired from the course, as well as the impact of these on their employability.

3.2. Participants

The study's participants consisted of 142 alumni from the Faculty of Tourism, UFM, Vietnam. All of them are graduates. They were from three classes of three courses:

Course 19 (19DSK): 51 participants

Course 20 (20DSK): 41 participants

Course 21 (21DSK): 50 participants

The participants were selected using the convenience sampling method based on their willingness and accessibility to participate in the study.

The demographic information of the participants is described in Table 1. As presented in Table 1, most of the participants had full-time jobs (66.9%) and worked in the field of Tourism (42.3%) and Event management (21.08%). The others worked in the field of Marketing

(16.9%), Business or Administration (12.7%), and other fields (6.3%). Importantly, most of them admitted that their current jobs were related to event management (59.9%).

Table 1. *Demographic profile of participants*

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Cohort	Course 19 (19DSK)	51	35.9
	Course 20 (20DSK)	41	28.9
	Course 21 (21DSK)	50	35.2
Employment status	Full-time employed	95	66.9
	Part-time employed	18	12.7
	Self-employed	9	6.3
	Further study	14	9.9
	Unemployed	6	4.2
Current field of work	Tourism / Hospitality	60	42.3
	Event Management	31	21.8
	Marketing / Communication	24	16.9
	Business / Administration	18	12.7
	Other	9	6.3
Job related to event management	Yes	85	59.9
	Partly	44	31.0
	No	13	9.1

3.3. Research instrument

The study used a structured questionnaire to collect data. It is developed based on the study's objectives and the literature review presented above. It consisted of three sections. Section one collected the participants' demographic information, including cohort, employment status, current field of work, and the relation of their jobs and event management. Section two collected the participants' opinions or perceptions of the impact of the knowledge gained from the Event Management course on their employability. Section three mentioned the impact of the skills gained from the Event Management course on the participants' employability.

The questionnaire mainly used a five-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

3.4. Data collection and analysis

The structured questionnaire was distributed to the participants via Google Form. Participants were informed of the research's purpose, and all responses to the questionnaire were to be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Participants agreed to answer the questionnaire and consented to their responses being used as the data for the study. The data collection was conducted over a period of one week.

The questionnaire data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to analyze the participants' responses. The interpretation of the mean scores followed

established recommendations for analyzing five-point Likert-scale data by Best and Kahn's (2006) research.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. The impact of knowledge gained from the Event Management course on students' employability

Table 3. *Impact of knowledge gained from the Event Management course*

Item	N	Mean	SD
The Event Management course provided practical knowledge relevant to workplace demands.	142	4.29	0.65
The course improved my understanding of event planning and organization.	142	4.34	0.61
The course helped me understand real-world event management practices.	142	4.22	0.70
The knowledge learned from the course is useful in my current job.	142	4.26	0.68
The course increased my understanding of workplace expectations in the tourism and event industry.	142	4.18	0.73
The knowledge gained from the course increased my confidence when entering the job market.	142	4.24	0.69
The knowledge learned from the course contributed positively to my employability after graduation.	142	4.27	0.67

As shown in Table 3, the mean scores of all the items were higher than 4.0. This indicated that former students have a positive assessment of the knowledge gained from the Event Management course, which enhances their employability after graduation.

With the highest mean, the item related to knowledge of event planning and organization was rated as having a significant impact on graduates' employability. In addition, alumni also highly valued the practical knowledge provided by the course ($M = 4.29$). Furthermore, alumni considered the knowledge from this course very useful for their practical work ($M = 4.26$). They also felt more confident ($M = 4.24$) and understood event management in practice ($M = 4.22$) thanks to the knowledge gained from this course. Finally, they also positively assessed that the course increased their understanding of workplace expectations in the tourism and event industry ($M = 4.18$).

Moreover, the standard deviation between the items was relatively low, indicating consistency in the participants' responses. In general, the knowledge gained from the Event Management course has a fairly positive impact on students' employability after graduation. This knowledge is highly practical, helping students feel more confident when entering the job market.

4.2. The impact of skills acquired from the Event Management course on students' employability

Table 4. *Impact of skills acquired from the Event Management course*

Item	N	Mean	SD
The course improved my communication skills.	142	4.36	0.60
The course enhanced my teamwork and collaboration skills.	142	4.31	0.64
The course improved my problem-solving skills.	142	4.12	0.76

The course strengthened my planning and organizational skills.	142	4.28	0.66
The course improved my time management and adaptability skills.	142	4.16	0.73
The course encouraged creativity and critical thinking.	142	4.14	0.75
The employability skills developed through the course are useful in my current career.	142	4.27	0.68
The employability skills developed through the course helped me adapt to workplace challenges.	142	4.20	0.71
The employability skills gained from the course contributed positively to my employability after graduation.	142	4.25	0.69

In Table 4, the results show that the mean scores for all items were higher than 4.0. This indicates a very positive assessment by alumni of the skills acquired from the Event Management course, which support their job-seeking and practical work skills.

Specifically, students rated the course as providing good support for communication skills (highest mean score 4.36), followed by teamwork and collaboration skills ($M = 4.31$). The third highest score is related to planning and organizational skills ($M = 4.28$). In addition, they highly appreciated that the course equipped them with useful employability skills for their current jobs ($M=4.27$), and contributed positively to their employability after graduation ($M=4.25$). They also agreed that the employability skills developed through the course helped them adapt to workplace challenges ($M=4.20$), and improved them in time management and adaptability skills as well ($M=4.16$). In addition, they evaluated that the course encouraged them to think critically and creatively ($M=4.14$). Finally, they also stated that their problem-solving skills improved thanks to what they learned from this course ($M=4.12$).

Overall, alumni highly valued the skills they acquired from the Event Management course, which helped improve their communication skills, event planning, teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and creativity. These are valuable experiences that the course provided for their employability.

5. Discussion

The study results indicate that the Event Management course contributes positively to the employability of tourism students upon graduation. Beyond providing theoretical knowledge, the course equips learners with the essential skills needed to enter the professional tourism environment. These findings align with Harvey's (2001) research, which suggests that employability depends not only on academic performance but also on the development of practical skills such as planning and event organization. Regarding the study's first research question, feedback from alumni indicates that Event Management is highly relevant to their careers, particularly in the areas of event planning and operations within the tourism sector. These findings extend the research presented in the book by Shone and Parry (2019). Indeed, learners highly value the knowledge provided by the book, viewing it as a bridge to practical application. The results of this study also align with the work of Getz and Page (2016), emphasizing that event management instruction must integrate theory and practice to better prepare learners for careers in the increasingly dynamic and expanding tourism industry.

Regarding the study's second research question, the results indicate that communication, teamwork, planning, and event organization skills were highly rated outcomes of the Event

Management course. These findings strongly reinforce previous studies, such as those by Junek et al. (2009) and Haw et al. (2021), which emphasize that these skills represent practical value derived from event management education. The tourism industry, including event organization, demands constant interaction among colleagues, as well as between event organizers and clients, suppliers, local authorities, and other stakeholders (Junek et al., 2009). Consequently, teamwork, communication, and collaborative skills are no longer merely supplementary; they are essential competencies for professionals in the event organization field (Haw et al., 2021). Meanwhile, other skills, such as problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking, also received positive feedback from former students, albeit to a lesser extent than the aforementioned skills. In reality, problem-solving and cognitive skills are best developed when learners engage with actual events and encounter real-world issues (Ruhanen, 2005; Jackson, 2015). Therefore, the Event Management course can only partially facilitate the development of these specific skills. Ultimately, while the Event Management course proves beneficial by equipping learners with the fundamental skills needed to secure employment, there is a need to further integrate practical industry skills to better prepare students for the actual work environment.

In short, this course provides positive experiences and contributes useful and practical knowledge and skills to learners' employability in the tourism industry. While previous studies have often examined employability from the perspectives of employers or undergraduates (Welthagen, 2023; McKercher et al., 2023), this study surveys the views of alumni who have already entered the labor market. Consequently, their insights provide valuable evidence regarding the practical utility of academic coursework in real-world workplace settings, moving beyond mere pre-graduation expectations.. However, to achieve success in their careers, both instructors and learners need to strive to develop highly applicable learning materials. This also requires support and cooperation from various stakeholders, such as schools and businesses.

6. Conclusion, limitations, and recommendation

This study has demonstrated the positive impact of the Event Management course on the employability of tourism graduates. The course provided useful and practical knowledge, helping students better understand event management in the real world. This, in turn, boosted their confidence when entering the job market and in their future careers. Furthermore, the course helped students develop practical skills that support job searching and career retention. These skills include communication skills, teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, time management skills, and adaptability skills. In addition, the course fostered students' deep analytical and creative thinking. Obviously, the course has made a positive and beneficial contribution to students' employability after graduation.

Despite the aforementioned contributions, this study has certain limitations. First, the use of a convenience sampling method may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study relies on self-reported data and the perceptions of alumni rather than objective measures of actual job performance. Therefore, while the results offer valuable insights from the perspective of individuals with both educational and practical work experience, future research should expand the scope to include graduates from various universities. Furthermore, it is recommended that future studies combine quantitative and qualitative methods, such as in-

depth interviews with alumni and employers, to gain a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of how Event Management education contributes to graduates' employability.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions

All authors contributed to the conception and design of the study, drafted and critically revised the manuscript, and approved the submitted version.

Ethics Statement

The study involved adult university alumni and collected anonymous questionnaire responses. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality of their responses, and the use of the data for research purposes..

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before they completed the questionnaire. Participants were informed that participation was voluntary, that their responses would be treated confidentially, and that the data would be used solely for research purposes.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are not publicly available because they contain participant responses collected for research purposes. The data may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to applicable ethical and confidentiality requirements.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

During the preparation of this manuscript, Grammarly was used only to support language editing, wording refinement, and organization of the manuscript. The author reviewed and verified all AI-assisted outputs and remain fully responsible for the accuracy, interpretation, originality, and final content of the manuscript.

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Appendix

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1. Demographic Information

1. Cohort / Course

- ☐ Course 19 (19DSK)
☐ Course 20 (20DSK)
☐ Course 21 (21DSK)

2. Current employment status

- ☐ Full-time employed
☐ Part-time employed
☐ Self-employed
☐ Further study
☐ Unemployed

3. Current field of work

- ☐ Tourism / Hospitality
☐ Event Management
☐ Marketing / Communication
☐ Business / Administration
☐ Other (please specify)

4. Is your current job related to event management?

- ☐ Yes
☐ Partly
☐ No

Section 2. Impact of Knowledge Gained from the Event Management Course on Employability

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement.

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The Event Management course provided practical knowledge relevant to workplace demands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	The course improved my understanding of event planning and organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3	The course helped me understand real-world event management practices.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	The knowledge learned from the course is useful in my current job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	The course increased my understanding of workplace expectations in the tourism and event industry.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	The knowledge gained from the course increased my confidence when entering the job market.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	The knowledge learned from the course contributed positively to my employability after graduation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 3. Impact of Skills Acquired from the Event Management Course on Employability

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	The course improved my communication skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	The course enhanced my teamwork and collaboration skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	The course improved my problem-solving skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	The course strengthened my planning and organizational skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	The course improved my time management and adaptability skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	The course encouraged creativity and critical thinking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	The employability skills developed through the course are useful in my current career.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	The employability skills developed through the course helped me adapt to workplace challenges.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	The employability skills gained from the course contributed positively to my employability after graduation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

THANK YOU SO MUCH!