Readiness of Undergraduate Taxation Graduates for Employment in the Industrial Sector

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Abstract
This paper evaluates the readiness of undergraduate (S1) Taxation graduates to work in the industrial sector using a mixed-methods design. Survey data (N=160) and expert interviews indicate strong theoretical mastery but weaker practical readiness, notably in digital taxation, regulatory updating, and communication. The discussion aligns these gaps with employability and experiential learning literature and recommends industry-embedded learning, updated curricula, and hands-on digital tax practice to enhance employability (OECD, 2022; World Bank, 2021; Yorke, 2006). The rapid development of industry requires graduates who not only possess strong theoretical knowledge but also practical skills relevant to taxation practices in companies. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through surveys and interviews involving graduates, academics, and industry practitioners.

Keywords: Undergraduate Taxation, Graduate Readiness, Industrial Sector, Employability, Curriculum, Digital Taxation

1. Introduction

The industrial sector requires taxation professionals who can ensure regulatory compliance, support financial decision-making, and operate within increasingly digitalized tax administrations. Despite solid academic foundations, concerns persist about the alignment between higher education outcomes and workplace expectations. This study focuses on the readiness of undergraduate (S1) Taxation graduates to perform effectively in industrial settings, highlighting the competencies that matter most—ranging from conceptual knowledge to hands-on capability with digital tax systems and cross-functional communication.

This research aims to evaluate the level of readiness of undergraduate Taxation graduates for employment in the industrial sector. Specifically, it seeks to: (i) identify key competencies possessed by graduates; (ii) analyze gaps between academic preparation and industry requirements; and (iii) formulate actionable recommendations to enhance graduate employability.

The study is guided by the following questions: (1) To what extent are undergraduate Taxation graduates ready to work in the industrial sector? (2) What competencies required by industry are not yet fully mastered by graduates? (3) How should higher education curricula be improved to better match industrial demands?

2. Research Method

Research Approach. This study employs a *qualitative systematic literature review* (SLR) to explore sustainable e-learning pedagogy for lifelong learners in the disruption era (Atkinson &

Cipriani, 2018; Dickinson, 1995; Gupta et al., 2024). The SLR approach is particularly suited for synthesizing dispersed scholarly contributions across multidisciplinary fields (education, technology, and sustainability) while ensuring methodological transparency and replicability. The review emphasizes conceptual depth rather than statistical generalization, focusing on developing a futuristic pedagogical model grounded in existing theories and practices (Randles & Finnegan, 2023; Siddaway et al., 2019).

3. Results and Discussions

Approximately 72% of graduates report having a strong theoretical understanding of core taxation topics, including income tax, VAT, withholding tax, and compliance cycles. However, practical readiness remains relatively low, as only 38% feel prepared to apply this knowledge in real industrial settings. The main challenges involve practical application such as documentation preparation, audit response handling, and cross-functional collaboration in the workplace.

In terms of digital competence, employers emphasize proficiency in e-filing, e-invoicing, and enterprise tax modules. Nevertheless, only about 41% of graduates report having hands-on exposure to these systems. In addition, many graduates indicate difficulties in keeping up with frequent changes in tax regulations, particularly due to limited guided practice and a lack of access to curated regulatory updates.

Regarding employability and soft skills, recruiters highlight gaps in communication and teamwork abilities. Graduates often struggle to explain tax implications to non-specialists and to collaborate effectively with operations and finance departments. Problem-solving skills are also uneven, especially in case-based analysis and in developing data-supported recommendations among entry-level applicants.

Table 1. Quantitative Indicators of Perceived Readiness

Indicator	Metric	Value
Theoretical readiness	Self-reported share of graduates	72%
Practical readiness	Self-reported share of graduates	38%

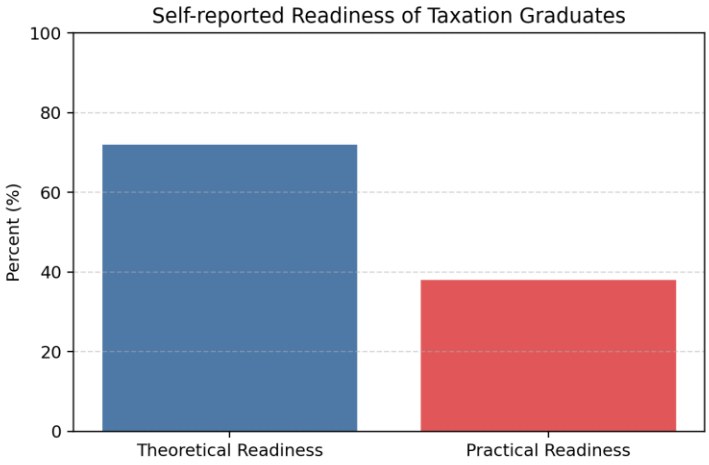

Figure 1. Self-Reported Theoretical VS Practical Readiness (N=160)

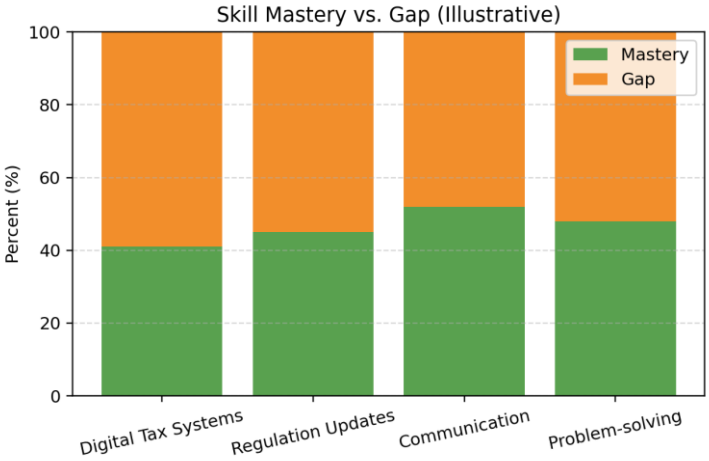

Figure 2. Skill Mastery Versus Gap Across Competencies

The results suggest a persistent theory–practice divide. While classroom instruction equips students with conceptual tax frameworks, experiential learning is limited. Exposure to live systems (e.g., e-invoicing/e-filing) and regulatory monitoring cycles is essential for industrial readiness. Strengthening university–industry linkages—through internships, guest lectures, and co-designed projects—can translate theory into actionable competence. Furthermore, embedded communication training and cross-functional teamwork exercises would help graduates articulate tax impacts to stakeholders and collaborate effectively with finance, procurement, and production units.

Curricular renewal should prioritize: (1) integrated case simulations reflecting manufacturing and services contexts; (2) mandatory practicums using sandboxed digital tax platforms; (3) assessment rubrics that value problem diagnosis, regulatory interpretation, and ethical compliance; and (4) continuous professional development pathways that keep students

current with tax reforms. These steps are likely to raise practical readiness without sacrificing theoretical rigor.

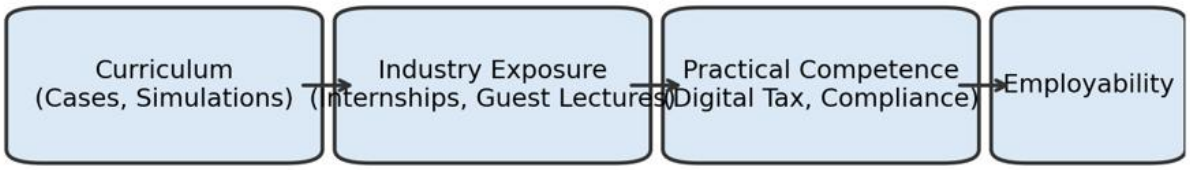

Figure 3. Curriculum → Industry Exposure → Practical Competence → Employability Pathway

4. Conclusion

Undergraduate Taxation graduates possess solid theoretical foundations but insufficient practical readiness. Priority actions include: (i) industry-embedded learning (internships, practicums), (ii) digital tax laboratories for e-filing/e-invoicing practice, (iii) authentic assessments valuing problem diagnosis and regulatory interpretation, and (iv) structured routines for staying current with tax reforms. These steps align with conference-style guidance for clear figures, captions, and integrated tables in proceedings manuscripts (IEEE; IOP; Springer).

Table 2. Priority Actions and Expected Outcomes

Action	Mechanism	Expected Outcome
Internships & practicums	Work-integrated learning	Higher practical readiness
Digital tax labs	Hands-on e-filing/e-invoicing practice	Operational proficiency
Case-based assessment	Applied diagnosis & ethics	Stronger decision-making
Industry partnerships	Guest lectures & co-designed projects	Curriculum–industry alignment

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