

Tracer Study of Business Graduates of a Private Higher Educational Institution

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Abstract

This research paper is a graduate tracer study conducted to monitor the whereabouts of the graduates of College of Business Education. It employed a descriptive research design and analysis used frequencies, percentages, and weighted means. The respondents were 166 graduates of a business school in the Philippines from year 1997 to 2023 using quota sampling. Results showed that most of the graduates are now employed and they found jobs three months after graduation. Graduates felt that they had not reached their full potential and that the College lacked some aspects of research skills, exposure to the international community, opportunity abroad, and salary improvement. The results imply further development in the College business curriculum since the graduates suggested ways strategies for improvement from their actual industrial experience intensified by the challenges they faced at work.

Keywords: *Tracer study, College of Business Education, employability, skills*

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Introduction

Graduates' employability depends on the quality and relevance of the program completed and the students' skills. While Filipinos in the global labor markets are competitive, their parents consider career prospects while choosing a university or college for their children. Hence, school curriculum, recruiting, admission, and retention strategies must include employability. In the 21st century, employability skills are the most essential talents, together with technical knowledge, to compete for and keep work in the global industrial market (Ismail & Mohammed, 2015). Industries may have diverse requirements, but they still seek individuals to achieve their institutional goals and graduates who meet their standards regardless of their field of study. Therefore, schools must fulfill employer workforce training needs.

Individuals who have best developed the abilities that employers consider are most valuable are more likely to receive a job (Teijeiro et al., 2013). This requires education to go beyond knowledge and abilities structured to generate employable graduates. To boost graduates' employability, institutions must continuously assess their programs, offers, curriculum, and methods. Hence, resource coordination and realignment must be prioritized.

Higher education is growing more dynamic, and organizations need proper management tools to compete in this complicated market (Mainardes et al., 2010). They are expected to innovate by offering new higher education courses that meet today's knowledge demands (Mainardes et al., 2010). Survey answers might help Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) identify curricular changes and implement them. Hynes and Richardson (2007 as cited in Mainardes et al., 2010) found that HEIs must carefully plan new university courses. These courses should help students, job seekers, companies, the government (in its attempts to review and enhance its national curriculum), society, and the HEI.

With these premise, this study focused on tracing the graduates of the College of Business Education at Northwestern University (NWU). It described the profile of the graduates, their employment information, usefulness of knowledge and skills for the job, satisfaction in the current job, level of contribution of the program of study to the graduates' personal and professional growth and level of satisfaction on the degree program finished at the HEI.

Methodology

Presenting noteworthy results among business school graduates required a quantitative research strategy. The study intended to target a quota sample of 150 business graduates but fortunately 166 graduate participated in the tracer study. The survey instrument was sent through

Google Form administered on December 2020 and were retrieved on January 2021. The survey questionnaire has four components: demographics, graduates' employment profile, program's impact on personal and professional progress and program satisfaction. Data analysis used frequencies, percentages, and weighted means.

Findings

The private HEI has been in existence since 1997 and had produced number of graduates. From these graduates, most of the respondents were male BSBA graduates from 2015 and 2018. The results showed that the College's role in training skilled workers is unquestionable. The graduates are satisfied on facilities, subjects taken and the way teachers handled courses. However, this tracer research presents several significant problems. Although the institution contributed moderately to personal and professional growth, graduates felt that they had not reached their full potential and that they lacked some aspects of research skills, exposure to the international community, and opportunity abroad. The graduates think the institution MODERATELY achieved their outcomes since their full potentials has not been reached and exposures were limited while they desired worldwide exposure and research skills improvement. Furthermore, laboratory resources and research priorities were the most that the graduates are dissatisfied.

Conclusion

In the light of the findings, the institution needs to increase internship time for foreign exposures and relationships, improve research proficiency, improve laboratories and implement training for teachers. An institution's success depends on the active and supportive alumni network. If graduates lose touch with any academic institution, their knowledge will stale. Instead, they need to be kept informed about the university's expansion.

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