



TRACER STUDY OF BSIT GRADUATES AT CAGAYAN STATE UNIVERSITY AT LAL-LO (S.Y 2010-2014)

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Abstract: *This study generally aimed to trace the current status and employment of the BSIT graduates of Cagayan State University of Lal-lo during the school year 2010-2014.*

The descriptive method was used with a questionnaire as the major data gathering instrument. There were 256 total graduates but only 248 of them responded to the study which consisted of 87 males and 161 females. Data analysis was done through frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and ranking.

The BSIT graduates were employed with meager income and majority were working according to their preparation such as programmers and business and office inventory staff. The skills acquired from the school were very useful. Most of the graduates are satisfied in their jobs, the unemployed graduates were hard up to find a job but still have high desirability of finding a job soon.

Keywords: *Tracer study, graduates, employment, information technology*

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

It is always the desire of higher education or institutes to follow up their graduates through tracer studies. A tracer study's aim is to evaluate graduates' progress up to the time they land into a job. It also assesses the availability and quality of graduates.

To continue tracing the BSIT graduates of Cagayan State University at Lal-lo, this study investigated the status of the graduates as regards their employment and whereabouts as well as their professional development.

The tracer study is significant in different aspects. First, it provided a continuation of the process of evaluation of the performance of the BSIT graduates batches 2010-2014. Second, the results enabled comparative studies with the results from similar studies.

Statement of the Problem

The main objective of the study was to trace the BSIT graduates of CSU at Lal-lo of school year 2010-2014. Specifically the researchers sought answers to the following questions.



1. What is the profile of the graduates?
2. What is the employment status of the graduates?
3. What are the reasons of the unemployment of graduates?
4. What are the graduates' insights on their success to their profession?

METHODS

Research Design

The researchers used descriptive- quantitative research, since the study determined the employment status, socio demographic profile, personal data, educational background and socio economic background, as well as the graduates' insight on the success of their profession. The descriptive research design was used because the study involved answering questions concerning the current status of the respondents.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in the different towns of Cagayan as the residence of the graduates of Cagayan State University at Lal-lo. The respondents were from the towns of Lal-lo, Gattaran, Lasam, Camalaniugan, Abulug, Baggao, Allacapan, Alcala, Buguey, Sto.Nino and Sta. Ana.

Respondents and Sampling Technique

The researchers used complete enumeration or total enumeration technique since all the graduates of BSIT batch 2010-2014 were the respondents. There were 248 graduates who responded to the survey.

Table 1 shows the distribution of graduates per year from 2010-2014.

Table 1.Number of graduates per year

Year	Male	Female	Total
2010	9	14	23
2011	11	28	39
2012	17	41	58
2013	26	36	62
2014	34	40	74

Research Instrument

The data gathering tool that the researchers used in this study is a survey questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the IT graduates of CSU Lal-lo batch 2010-2014. The instrument composed of several parts which helped the researchers elicit the data needed



in the study. Part I determined the socio economic profile and educational background of the graduates. Part II asked for the employment status of the graduates from the time they landed to their first employment and ended up to the status of their current employment. Part III elicited information from the unemployed graduates particularly the reasons of being unemployed, the positions they previously applied and the desire of looking for employment. Lastly, Part IV asked information on the graduates' satisfaction on their profession. Each respondent was given enough time to answer the questions.

There were three ways in distributing the questionnaires which the researchers used in the survey. First, personal distribution wherein the researchers scheduled a specific time to locate the respondents in their residences based on the addresses given by the Registrar. Second is through e-mail and facebook messaging. Third is through phone calls for the graduates who do not have facebook and email accounts and those who are outside the country.

Data Collection Procedure

The list of graduates including their addresses was sought from the campus Registrar. The researchers gathered data from January to November 2014. They also visited different websites to collect information related to the study. Right after the retrieval of questionnaires the researchers started organizing the data.

Analysis of Data

The researchers used descriptive statistics in analyzing the data gathered. Frequency counts, percentage, rank, and weighted mean were used. In this study, the researchers simply summarized and described the employment status of the IT graduates of CSU Lal-lo, how many percent of the graduates were underemployed, unemployed, self-employed, and full employed. The summary is presented in tabular and graphical form.

For the perception of the graduates' of their success in their profession, the scale below was used.

<i>Scale Values</i>	<i>Mean Rating</i>	<i>Adjectival Description</i>
4	3.26-4.00	Very Satisfied
3	2.51-3.25	Satisfied
2	1.76-2.50	Fairly Satisfied
1	1.00-1.75	Not Satisfied



RESULTS

Profile of the Graduates

The following table (Table 2) shows the profile of the graduates particularly the sex, the civil status, and the number of children of the married graduates.

Table 2. Profile of the graduates

Employment status of the Graduates

Table 3 describes the employment status of the graduates. As shown in the table, out of 248 graduates, 81.85% (203) are employed, 2.02% (5) are self-employed and 16.13% (40) are unemployed.

Table 3. Employment status of the graduates

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Employed	203	81.85%
Self-employed	5	2.02%
Unemployed	40	16.13%

TRANSITION OF FIRST EMPLOYMENT

Kind of employment the graduates consider in seeking their first employment

Table 4 shows the nature of employment of graduates in their first job. As the table shows, there are 138 graduates who considered that their first employment is on utility and/or clerical job while 65 got jobs in-line with their course.

Table 4. Nature of employment of graduates in their first job

Kind of first employment	Frequency	Percentage
Job related to my course	65	32.02%
Utility/clerical job	138	67.98%

Factors that enabled the graduates' to have their first employment

Table 5 determined the factors that enabled the graduates get their first employment. Among the 7 options with the scale of 1st to 7th, 47 graduates has scored scholastic standing as the 1st factor that enabled them land their first job, 22 graduates placed personality factor on the 2nd rank, 3rd is due to OJT experience with 20 frequency, political patronage with 18, reputation of the university with 15, 10 reported with the help of friends, and fraternal affiliation as the last with only 5 frequency.



Table 5. Factors that enabled the graduates get their first employment

Factors enabled to get their first employment	Frequency	Ranking
Friends	10	6 th
Scholastic standing	47	1 st
Reputation of the university	15	5 th
Personality factors	22	2 nd
Political patronage	18	4 th
Fraternal affiliation	5	7 th
On the job training experience	20	3 rd

Difficulties encountered in seeking their first employment

Table 6 shows the difficulties encountered by the graduates in seeking their first employment. As shown, most of the respondents considered few job vacancies as the first difficulty they have encountered and the least is the inaccessibility of the workplace.

Table 6. Difficulties encountered by the graduates in looking their first employment

Difficulties encountered	Frequency	Ranking
Few job vacancies	42	1 st
Mismatch with the educational qualifications	25	2 nd
Inadequate experiences	20	3 rd
Lack of political patronage	17	4 th
No fraternal affiliations	13	5 th
Low salary offer	13	5 th
Inaccessible workplace	7	6 th

The coping mechanisms the graduates applied to adjust to the difficulties encountered

The table below shows the coping mechanisms applied by the graduates to adjust from the difficulties encountered in seeking their first employment. With the total of 35, 23 of the graduates attended trainings/ seminars/ workshop. 10 looked for political connections, and 2 pushed through post-graduate degree.

Table 7. Coping mechanisms applied by the graduates

Coping mechanisms	Frequency	Ranking
Attended trainings/ seminars/ workshops	23	65.71%
Looked for political connections	10	28.57%
Took further studies/professional advancement	2	5.72%

Satisfaction of the graduates in their first job



Table 8 shows how graduates satisfied in their first employment, 88 answered ‘yes’ while 49 answered ‘no’.

Table 8. Satisfaction of the graduates in their first job

Were you satisfied in your first job?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	88	64.23%
No	49	35.77%

Reasons of graduates’ satisfaction in their first job

Table 9 shows the reasons of the graduates why they were satisfied in their first job. Out of 88 graduates who were satisfied, 35 of them revealed that their work offered good pay, 22 found the job challenging, 12 considered the workplace’s accessibility, 9 disclosed that they have good working relationship with their employers, 6 viewed their job as a promising career and 4 counted for security of tenure.

Table 9. Reasons of graduates’ satisfaction in their first job

Reason for employment satisfaction	Frequency	Ranking
Challenging	22	2 nd
Accessible workplace	12	3 rd
Good working relationship with employer	9	4 th
Security of tenure	4	6 th
Good pay	35	1 st
Promising career	6	5 th

Reasons of graduates’ dissatisfaction in their first job

The table below shows the reasons why the graduates were dissatisfied in their first job. As the first in rank, 19 chose low salary. Indifferent attitudes of co-workers employers and the lack of security of tenure ranked second and third, respectively.

Table 10. Reasons of graduates for being not satisfied in their first job

Reasons for employment dissatisfaction	Frequency	Ranking
Low salary	19	1 st
Indifferent attitudes of co-workers and employers	13	2 nd
Inaccessible workplace	3	4 th
No promising career	3	4 th
No security of tenure	11	3 rd



THE EMPLOYED GRADUATES

The employment status of the employed graduates

Table 11 shows the employment status of the employed graduates. 72 graduates were permanent, 12 of the graduates were OFW, 35 were contractual, 17 were in daily basis, and 67 are on job order.

Table 11. The employment status of the employed graduates

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Permanent	72	35.47%
Daily Basis	17	8.37%
Contractual	35	17.24%
On job order	67	33.00%
OFW	12	5.92%

The position of the employed graduates

The next table shows the position of the employed graduates. 77 of the graduates are IT staff, 52 are office clerk/assistants, 41 are sales/marketing officers, 6 are call center agents, 5 are bank employees, 5 are teachers and the remaining few are police officer, salon staff, OFWs, and security guards.

Table 12. The position of the employed graduates

Position	Frequency	Percentage
Domestic Helper	4	1.97%
Saloon staff	1	0.5%
Security guard	2	0.98%
Office Clerk/Assistant	52	25.61%
Call Center agent	6	2.95%
Police	2	0.98%
IT Staff	77	37.93%
Bank Employee	5	2.46%
Teacher	5	2.46%
Factory Worker	3	1.48%
Sales/Marketing Officer	41	20.20%
Skilled laborer	5	2.46%

The incentives offered to the employed graduates

The next table shows the incentives offered to the employed graduates. Among the incentives insurance benefits ranked first, sick leave is second, maternity/paternity leave is third, hospitalization ranked fourth, and death benefits and 13th month pay, fifth.



Table 13. The benefits offered to the employed graduates

Incentives Offers	Frequency	Ranking
Maternity/ paternity leave	10	3 rd
Study leave	6	6 th
Hazard pay	6	6 th
Insurance benefits	16	1 st
Death benefits	8	5 th
Hospitalization	9	4 th
Sick leave	13	2 nd
Vacation leave	8	5 th
RATA	6	6 th
Subsidies	6	6 th
13 th month pay	8	5 th

Usefulness of the IT skills

Table 14 presents the usefulness of the IT skills acquired from school. Results indicate that skills in web designing, PC operations and programming are very useful in their jobs as shown in their weighted means 3.46, 3.95, and 3.64, respectively.

Table 14. Usefulness of the IT skills

CATEGORY	WEIGHTED MEAN	DESCRIPTION
Graphics designing	2.87	Useful
Animation	2.88	Useful
Web designing	3.45	Very Useful
PC operations	3.95	Very Useful
Programming skills	3.64	Very Useful
Troubleshooting	2.95	Useful
Hardware servicing	3.14	Useful
Overall weighted mean	3.26	Very Useful

Legend:

3.26-4.00 – Very useful 1.76-2.50 – Fairly useful
2.51-3.25 – Useful 1.00-1.75 – Not useful

Monthly income of the employed graduates

Table 15 shows the monthly income of the employed graduates. Among the 203 graduates, 151 only revealed their monthly income. 17 have the income ranges 5,000-10,000; 37 of them ranges 10,500-15,000; 53 has the income with 15,500-20,000, 35 of them have 20,500-25,000, 4 has 25,500-30,000, and 5 with above 30,000.



Table 15. Monthly income of the employed graduates

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
5,000-10,000	17	11.29%
10,500-15,000	37	24.50%
15,500-20,000	53	35.09%
20,500-25,000	35	23.17%
25,500-30,000	4	2.64%
30,000 above	5	3.31%

THE SELF-EMPLOYED GRADUATES

Type of business of the self-employed graduates

The table below shows the type of business of the self-employed graduates. Among the 5 self-employed graduates, 3 of them own a computer shop/ internet café, 1 is on home service PC repairing and 1 owns a farm.

Table 16. Type of business of self-employed graduates

Type of the Business	Frequency	Percentage
Computer shop/ internet cafe	3	60%
Home service PC Repairing	1	20%
Farming	1	20%

Reasons for being self-employed

Table 17 shows the reason of the self-employed graduates. Among the 5 self-employed graduates, 4 of them chose higher income, 3 graduates said for more flexible time and having no superior, 2 claimed because of family issues and business opportunity, and 1 pursued another degree.

Table 17. Reasons for being self-employed

Reasons	Frequency	Ranking
Higher income	4	1 st
More flexible time	3	2 nd
Family issues	2	3 rd
No superior	3	2 nd
Business opportunity	2	3 rd
Pursued another degree	1	4 th

Monthly Income of the business

The next table shows the monthly income of the business owned by the graduates. 2 of them have the income range from 5,000-10,000, 2 also have 10,500-15,000, and 1 from is



15,500-20,000. Majority of the self-employed graduates only earn not higher than 15,000 monthly.

Table 18. Monthly Income of the business

Monthly income	Frequency	Ranking
5,000-10,000	2	1 st
10,500-15,000	2	1 st
15,500-20,000	1	2 nd

UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES

Reasons for being unemployed

The table below shows the reasons of graduates for being unemployed. 17 claimed they were not able to find a job, 13 had the reason of job mismatch, 2 has prioritized his family, and another 3 took another course.

Table 19. Reasons for being unemployed

Reasons for being unemployed	Frequency	Ranking
Unable to find a job	17	1 st
My family is my priority	2	4 th
Job mismatch	13	2 nd
Pursued another course	3	3 rd

How they finance their daily living

The next table shows the way the unemployed graduates finance their daily living. In these results, 19 graduates are supported by their parents, 15 are supported by their husband/wife, 5 chose to be dealers of apparel and cosmetics and 1 serve as a domestic helper.

Table 20. Ways of the graduates in financing daily living

How do you finance your daily living	Frequency	Ranking
Supported by parents	19	1 st
Dealer of apparel and cosmetics	5	3 rd
Supported by husband/ wife	15	2 nd
Domestic helper (locally)	1	4 th

SATISFACTION OF THE GRADUATES IN THEIR PROFESSION

Table 21 shows how the 248 graduates are satisfied in their profession particularly in academic program aspect.



Table 21. Satisfaction of the graduates in their profession

Academic Program Aspect	Mean Rating	Adjectival Description
Position	2.88	Satisfied
Salary	2.85	Satisfied
Fringe benefits	2.30	Satisfied
Work task	2.80	Satisfied
Opportunity for professional advancement	2.86	Satisfied
Nature of work	2.62	Satisfied
Autonomy in job	2.50	Fairly Satisfied
Work environment	2.83	Satisfied
Job prestige	2.97	Satisfied
Opportunity for community involvement	2.61	Satisfied
Awards and recognition	2.48	Satisfied
Security of their job	2.81	Satisfied
Overall weighted mean	2.70	Satisfied

DISCUSSION

There were more females who graduated than male and majority are still single. The married graduates preferred to have few children.

Majority of the graduates are employed in different agencies and specialization but they were not able to land in jobs related to their course prior to their first employment. Scholastic standing was the 1st factor that enabled them land their first job while few job vacancies was the first difficulty they have encountered towards their first employment. As regards job satisfaction majority had positive responses as most of them are permanent in their jobs. Majority works as IT staff as revealed by their rating on the usefulness of IT skills acquired from school as very useful. The self-employed graduates preferred to put up businesses related to their course that they personally manage due to higher income as they disclosed.

As regards job satisfaction, the graduates claimed that they are satisfied.

Conclusion

After collecting all the data needed, the researchers found out that there are more female than male and most of them are employed in different private and government organizations. There are 40 unemployed graduates who preferred to stay with their families. There are also 5 self-employed graduates who preferred and claimed to have



higher income. The graduates are satisfied in the different academic aspects; hence, the IT skills acquired are being applied by the graduates in their respective jobs.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. The university should have placement programs for their graduates.
2. The tracer study should be continued to monitor the whereabouts of graduates in the BSIT program.

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