



EMPLOYABILITY TRACER STUDY OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN LEGAL MANAGEMENT GRADUATES OF CAGAYAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT: *The Preliminary Survey Visit on the program of the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines found out that the college has no tracer studies conducted to monitor the whereabouts of graduates. As a result of this finding, the first tracer study thus conducted covering the graduates from 2016 to 2019 batch of graduates. The conduct of this tracer study will help the College to broaden its intention of improving the curricular offering of the program. This study is designed to determine the employability of the Legal Management graduates from year 2016-2019. This study tried to monitor the whereabouts of the graduates from 2016 to 2019 with a total of 212. The survey yielded a response rate of 53.21% or 107 out of 212 targeted respondents. The existence of the pandemic had made it harder for the conduct of this study coupled with the problem that some of the graduates are working outside of the region thus hard to reach which reduced the response rate thus electronic version of the survey questionnaire was sent thru their e-mails and/or social media (e.g., Facebook). Those graduates who have not been reached were excluded in this study. The gathering of data was done in mid part of 2020 to July of 2021. The study has made use of the descriptive-quantitative research design utilizing simple frequency counts and percentages. Results in the conduct of this study are of significance for identifying and addressing curriculum related issues. Based from the findings, majority of the traced graduates took a short period of time in searching for an employment and skills possessed by the graduates as manifested in the data are relevant to their present job. In view of the findings in this study, the following are strongly recommended The conduct of a regular tracer study must be given priority by the College or the Alumni Relations and Placement Services to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to make them highly employable in the industry while the College or the University creates a specific Committee or group designed in the monitoring of the whereabouts of the graduates by creating a mechanism where the graduates can easily access and update their employment status. The Alumni Relations and Placement Services of the Campus of the University should help graduates search for employment to minimize*



underemployment of its graduates. Similar studies must be conducted to explore into other variables related to graduates' employability like reasons of the unemployment of some of the graduates, number of times the respondents changed job, number of graduates whose jobs are not related to their course yet remain with the present work, job satisfaction and promotion, congruence between curriculum and skills that industry expects from would-be employees

Keywords: *Bachelor of Science in Legal Management, tracer study, employability, competencies, Board Resolution No. 405, Alumni Relations and Placement Services, Policies, standards and guidelines, Preliminary Survey Visit, Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines, descriptive quantitative design*

INTRODUCTION

The adoption of the curricular program of the BACHELOR OF ARTS IN LEGAL MANAGEMENT was grounded from the BOARD RESOLUTION No. 405.s. 2008 of CAGAYAN STATE UNIVERSITY, in pursuance to CHED POLICIES, STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES s. 2017 which was initially installed at Carig Campus and later on transferred to the College of Business, Entrepreneurship and Accountancy at the main campus of the university, the Andrews Campus. The program was further changed to BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN LEGAL MANAGEMENT as a result of the National Hearing/consultation on the proposed Policies, standards and Guidelines of the program on August 30, 2017 of the Commission on Higher Education. The passage of Resolution No. 405 Series of 2008 of the Board of Regents authorized the offering of the program. The program is an interdisciplinary methodology to the education of business, management, law and society that delivers knowledge and skills in the mechanisms of law and the legal and regulatory complexities of the business milieu. The principal purpose of the multifaceted program is to cultivate the study of law within a business-management structure and to explore the innumerable ways in which the law is associated with other management disciplines relevant to an understanding of up-to-date business and society.

The Preliminary Survey Visit on the program of the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines found out that the college has no tracer studies conducted to monitor the whereabouts of graduates. As a result of this finding, the first tracer study thus conducted covering the graduates from 2016 to 2019 batch of graduates.



The conduct of this tracer study will help the College to broaden its intention of improving the curricular offering of the program.

The conduct of tracer studies as Balingbing (2014) attest, served as a basis for assessment and enhancement of existing educational programs offered by every academic institution, while Melik & Pavlin, (2009) mentioned that Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) is challenged in balancing the development of higher education and professional relevance of academic teachings. Word press presented in 2011 that learning success' parameter is measured through the employability of graduates, type of employment and the length of time landing on their first job. It was distinguished that graduate's employability has been an increasing concern of HEI's. Government agencies have been encouraging educational institutions and employers to work together to address employability issues as Lowden, Hall, Elliot & Lewin emphasized in 2011. It is a well-thought-out as the pride and honor of every academic institution to produce internationally proficient employed graduates. In 2015, Tran suggested in his study that changes in the society should be underscored in the higher education system by its stakeholders. The character of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) is not restricted to the academic knowledge within the four corners of the classroom or even the institution itself but to fulfil to realize the vision of every student which is to land in a decent profession after graduation and become socially recognized in the society, Menez (2014). However, it was noted by Sagarino, Acosta and Amoguis in 2013 that public speaking, computer literacy, communication skills and customer relations were among the factors that impact the employability of graduates. In this study, the researchers resolute the employability of graduates from LCUP- CBEA from 2010-2015. This study will also enable the department to assess the current programs offered, its relevance with their employability and also to discover its strengths and weaknesses as perceived by its graduates.

"In the 21st century, as mentioned by Ismail & Mohammed (2015) in their work, employability skill is the most prerequisite skill in addition to technical knowledge in an attempt to strive for employment and withstand job at the developed global market". Higher learning institutions necessitates the delivery of the training and standards required of the graduates to meet the competencies future employers set for their workforce. Industries may have diverse standards, but the expectations and characteristics of the



applicants to possess reflects the goals of the institution they come from. It is further contended by Teijeiro, Rungo, & Freire (2013) that “personalities who have best established the proficiencies which companies feel to be most important are more prospective to be in a position to obtain a job”. Thus, universities need to regularly review their programs, offerings, curricula, and methods to strengthen the employability of their graduates. Configuration and realignment of resources in the direction of this end must become an urgency. Studies like this have turned out to be the main mechanisms to regulate the areas of strength and weakness of an institution’s graduates. “Graduate tracer studies (GTS) as presented by Canizares (2015 , p. 82), are imperative to Higher Education Institutions since it empowered such institutions to accommodate changes in the society especially the demands of the actual and potential employers, through evaluation and continuous evaluation of their curricula” Woya (2019) and Siraye, Abebe, Melese, and Wale (2018) conducted similar undertakings on employability tracer studies among statistics graduates, and business and economics graduates, respectively in a parallel attempt of Del Rosario (2019), among graduates of B.S. in Industrial Technology Bachelor of Secondary Education by Canizares (2015) and Bachelor of Elementary Education by De Vera (2018), to mention a few.

Llanto's reminder rebounded the previous assertion of Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) chairman for education Eduardo Gueriez-Ong, saying that the Philippine educational institutions should pool resources tightly in providing world-class quality system to prepare the country's manpower pool for international competition. Ong even advocated that a strong tripartite partnership between government, academe, and industry should be taking place, in order to produce an educational system that offers the right training to prepare Filipino workers to support local industry's development and contend in the global employment market. Without intermediation, the workforce will be unprepared for the skills necessities of local industry and the government's national development plan, undermining economic progress, he said. In addition, local workers will be ill equipped to face the challenges-and take advantage of the opportunities-of "global realities" including globalization, trade liberalization, information and technology advancements, and bilateral and multilateral employment arrangements. Ong said a strong workforce is critical now that



statistics show the Philippines' ranking in a number of world competitiveness indices going up in 2013 compared to 2012.

In Orejana's(2010), Tracer Study on the Graduates of the BSBA Program: An Input to Curricular Development emphasized that alumni are reflected as the best evidence of a program's effectiveness in terms of employment and positions held. Moreover, they are a good source of feedback regarding the program's significance in the current labor market. This study was steered to determine the employability of the graduates of the BSBA programs. The study further aimed to collect feedbacks about the BSBA program that could be utilized to expand its quality education. The study used the descriptive research design. There respondents were BSBA graduates from 2002 – 2006 identified by means of the snowballing technique. A structured, non-disguised questionnaire was used to gather data. Data collected were subjected to basic descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, proportions, and mean. Findings of the study indicate that 91% of the respondents are employed, with 20% holding supervisory positions and 4% holding managerial positions. Content or topics covered by the programs is found to be the main strength in the aspect of curriculum as supported by 45% of the respondents while lack of applications and exposures came out as the main weakness as indicated by 29% of the respondents. Correspondingly, the primary recommendation was to have more exposures and applications as expressed by 45% of the respondents.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study is designed to determine the employability of the Legal Management graduates from year 2016-2019. Specifically, it sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the respondents' personal profile in terms of:
 - 1.1. Age
 - 1.2. sex
2. What is the employment profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 2.1 status of employment
 - 2.2 type of organization/sector/employer
 - 2.2 employment type
 - 2.2.1 Duration of job search
 - 2.2.2 Relationship of Current Job with Undergraduate Course



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study tried to monitor the whereabouts of the graduates from 2016 to 2019 with a total of 212. The survey yielded a response rate of 53.21% or 107 out of 212 targeted respondents (*see Table 1*).

School year	Total number of graduates	Total number of traced graduates	percentage
2015-2016	37	16	43.32
2016-2017	40	32	80.00
2017-2018	44	21	47.77
2018-2019	91	38	41.76
total	212	107	53.21

Table 1: total Number of graduates per school year

The existence of the pandemic had made it harder for the conduct of this study coupled with the problem that some of the graduates are working outside of the region thus hard to reach which reduced the response rate thus electronic version of the survey questionnaire was sent thru their e-mails and/or social media (e.g., Facebook). Those graduates who have not been reached were excluded in this study. The gathering of data was done in mid part of 2020 to July of 2021. The study has made use of the descriptive-quantitative research design utilizing simple frequency counts and percentages.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage distribution of respondents according to age

AGE	Frequency	Percentage
21-23	46	42.99
24-26	39	36.45
27-29	18	16.82
30-33	4	03.74
TOTAL	107	100.00



The data shown in the table revealed the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents as to age. As shown, the highest frequency of 46 or 42.99 percent belongs to the age bracket of 21-23 which implies that the respondents are still in their early adulthood manifesting idealistic, energetic, enthusiasm and vigor in their chosen field of endeavor.

Table 3: frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to sex per school year

	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2028-2019	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
male	8	50.00	13	25.42	7	33.33	11	28.95
female	8	50.00	19	59.38	14	66.67	27	71.05
total	16	100.00	32	100.00	21	100.00	38	100.00

The data in the table indicated the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents as to sex per school year. It revealed that the highest frequency across all the school year belongs to the female group which implies that the program is female dominated thus showing the statistical ratio of the country on male and female.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondent as to status of employment

	2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Employed	15	40.54	29	72.50	18	40.91	24	26.37
Self-employed	1	02.70	-	-	3	06.82	2	02.20
Pursuing higher studies	-	-	3	07.50	-	-	12	13.19
Not traced	21	56.76	8	20.00	23	52.27	53	58.24
TOTAL	37	100.00	40	100.00	44	100.00	91	100.00

Data revealed in the table showed the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents as to status of employment. As used in this study, status of employment would mean the present status of the graduates as to whether or not they are employed or pursuing a higher study. The highest frequency across all the school year except for SY 2016-2017, belongs to the untraced status followed by the employed graduates. The data imply that there is a need to broaden and exert more effort on the part of the College or the University through the Alumni Relations and Placement Services in monitoring the whereabouts of the graduates.



Table 5: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of employed Respondents according to type of employer/organization/sector

Type of employer	Frequency	Percentage
Government/Public	48	52.18
Private	38	41.30
Self-employed	6	06.52
Total	92	100.00

The table showed the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents as to type of employer/organization/sector. As revealed from the table, the highest frequency of 48 or 52.18 percent belongs to the government or public sector which implies that the employer of the majority of the employed graduates provides for a security of tenure. Of the employed in the private sector, majority of the graduates are employed in the law firms which is relevance to the program of the graduates.

Table 6: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents according to Length of period in Landing to a job after graduation

Length of period in Landing to a job	Frequency	Percentage
0-5 months	41	44.57
6-11 months	36	39.13
12-24 months	15	16.30
Total	92	100.00

The data in the table revealed the length of period in landing to a job after graduation by the graduates. As shown, 41 or 44.57 percent of the respondents were able to find for a job within 0-5 months after graduation. Most of the graduates who landed to a job after graduation has been absorbed by the cooperating agency where they have conducted their program immersion which implies that the immersion performances of the graduates shown by the graduates has been very satisfactory.



Table 7: Frequency and percentage distribution of the Relevance of Respondents' present Job to their Program

Relatedness of Respondents' present Job to their Program	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	53	57.61
No	39	42.39
Total	92	100.00

The table showed the frequency and percentage distribution of relevance of the respondents' program to their present jobs. As revealed from the data, the highest frequency of 53 or 57.61 percent of the respondents' present job is relevant to their program which implies that the program curriculum was carefully crafted to meet the standards, demands and the competencies required of the industry where the graduates are employed.

CONCLUSION

Results in the conduct of this study are of significance for identifying and addressing curriculum related issues. Based from the findings, majority of the traced graduates took a short period of time in searching for an employment and skills possessed by the graduates as manifested in the data are relevant to their present job.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings in this study, the following are strongly recommended:

- The conduct of a regular tracer study must be given priority by the College or the Alumni Relations and Placement Services to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to make them highly employable in the industry.
- That the College or the University must create a specific Committee or group designed in the monitoring of the whereabouts of the graduates by creating a mechanism where the graduates can easily access and update their employment status.



- The Alumni Relations and Placement Services of the Campus of the University should help graduates search for employment to minimize underemployment of its graduates.
- Similar studies must be conducted to explore into other variables related to graduates' employability like reasons of the unemployment of some of the graduates, number of times the respondents changed job, number of graduates whose jobs are not related to their course yet remain with the present work, job satisfaction and promotion, congruence between curriculum and skills that industry expects from would-be employees.
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