A TRACER STUDY OF THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF BALIUAG UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION GRADUATES (2002-2003 TO 2006-2007)

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to determine the employment status of the College of Information Technology Education graduates from SY 2002-2003 to SY 2006-2007 covering the different programs such as Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT), Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS), and Associate in Computer Technology (ACT). The study used the descriptive survey method of administering questionnaires to 100% graduates of CITE. The responses used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine the employment status, as well as relevance, of the ITE program offerings and curricular content. A total of 264 respondents participated in the study. Results showed that majority of the graduates were employed. Employment indicates that the graduates of Information Technology Education programs were competent and that IT courses are still currently in-demand. Most of the graduates chose to work with local private companies instead of looking for greener pastures abroad. The study also revealed that the different skills learned in college are of utmost importance to the respondents' current jobs. Among these are communication skills, information technology skills, problem-solving skills, human relation skills, critical thinking skills, and entrepreneurial skills. The respondents pursued advance studies both for professional development and promotion.

Keywords: tracer, employment status, competency, information technology

Introduction

Baliuag University started as a humble school in 1925, with only 75 students. It was known as Baliuag Institute. Today, Baliuag University is a prominent institution and a member of numerous regional, national, and international educational associations, including professional organizations. The University has been known to uphold academic excellence, research, and community service. From being a small school known as Baliuag Institute, it became Baliuag Junior Colleges in 1947 and in turn became Baliuag Colleges in 1968. Because of its numerous accomplishments and offerings, Baliuag Colleges was raised to University level and granted full autonomy by the Commission on Higher Education in 2001. Aside from the elementary and high school departments, the University has seven colleges, namely, Education; Hospitality Management and Tourism; Business Administration and Accountancy; Environmental Design and Engineering; Nursing; Arts and Sciences; Information Technology Education and the eighth is Graduate School and Continuing Education;

The College of Information Technology Education started in 1991 when the College of Business Administration offered a two-year computer science course. In 1993, the College offered BS in Computer Science. The supervision of the Computer Science department was transferred from the College of Business Administration and Accountancy to the College of Environmental Design and Engineering in the second semester of school year 2000-2001. The College of Environmental Design and Engineering added BS in Information Technology and BS in Information Management courses in its offerings. In June 2008, Baliuag University officially separated Computer Studies department from the College of Environmental Design and Engineering, thus making it an independent department. The School of Computer Studies, now named the College of Information Technology Education (CITE), offers its students up-to-date computer science, Information Technology (IT) knowledge and skills, technical competence, technical certification and linkages, and humanistic societal values and attitudes to equip them well for integration into the national and international workforce.

According to the Bureau of Labor statistics of United States Department of Labor, in

the past 20 years, employment in computer systems design and related services has grown rapidly. From 1990 to 2001, employment in the industry rose quickly—many businesses began to invest in computer systems. Between 2001 and 2011, employment in computer systems design and related services increased by 232,300 jobs or 18%. BSIT and BSCS programs are among the top five in-demand courses in IT industries, private institutions, and government agencies. These are indicators that there is a robust employment market for the graduates of ITE.

To be able to define the efficiency of the programs offered at Baliuag University, all colleges conducted tracer studies from AY 1997-1998 to AY 2001-2002. Questionnaires were also distributed to all graduates to determine their present employment and their experiences. The results of the research were used by the different colleges of the university to upgrade curricula and their instruction. In the year 2006, another study was conducted by Ms. Maricar Ubaldo covering the graduates of Baliuag University from SY 2000-2001 to SY 2003-2004. Said research was done in coordination with CHED.

The main objective of the present study was to look into the status of the CITE graduates in the years, 2003 through 2007. The large turnout of college graduates in the past years resulted in stiff competition in the job market. Since the employability of the graduates is one of the concerns of the University, the CITE decided to conduct a tracer study to determine the marketability of the BSIT, BSCS, and ACT graduates.

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to investigate the rate of employability of the CITE graduates of Baliuag University from SY 2002-2003 to SY 2006-2007. Specifically, the researchers sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of CITE graduate respondents in terms of the following:
    1.1 course
    1.2 year graduated
    1.3 gender
    1.4 rate of employment

2. (For the employed), what is the present status of CITE graduate respondents in terms of the following variables:
    2.1 company type
    2.2 position
    2.3 place of work
    2.4 employment status
    2.5 length of service
3. (For the unemployed) what are the reasons why they are jobless?
4. What did they encounter during their first job in terms of the following:
    4.1 Time frame of looking for the job
    4.2 Difficulties in looking for the first job
    4.3 Reasons for accepting the job
5. What are the reasons of the respondents for
    5.1 staying on their first job
    5.2 leaving their first job
6. Which of the competencies and courses taken in college do they consider very important and not important to their present job?
7. Did the graduates pursue additional training and advanced studies to improve competencies after graduation?
8. What were the graduates' reasons in pursuing advanced studies?
9. What suggestions do the CITE graduates have to improve the services of the department and the employability of the graduates themselves?

Employability involves a set of achievements, understanding, and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and to be successful in their chosen occupations. These attributes can be had in several ways and settings from educational institutions: in-service training, engagement experience (including trade union involvement), and voluntary activities.

The system approach was adopted in this study. It used the conceptual paradigm which consisted of four (4) parts, namely, input, process, output, and feedback. For *input,*

the researchers considered the student profiles, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of (a) Bachelor of Science in Information Technology; (b) Bachelor of Science in Computer Science; and (c) Bachelor of Science in Information Management. For *process*, the study considered the analysis of the respondents' profile, distribution of questionnaires, and unstructured interviews of the respondents. The *output* focused on the general and specific whereabouts of the BSIT, BSCS, and ACT graduates including the proposed suggestions and recommendations to enhance their employability. *Feedback* occurs when there are revisions or modifications in the system. It may go back to the input stage or to the process stage if problems are encountered from the output that would need revisions or system changes.

This study aimed to be of value to the following:

1. *Baliuag University Administrators*. The results of the study will help the BU Administration in gauging the effectiveness of the programs it offers and to meet the increasing needs of the IT job market and its clientele.
2. *College of Information Technology Education.* This study will aid the CITE to properly observe the employability and status of graduates from SY 2002-2003 to SY 2006- 2007. With this, the researchers hope that the outcome of the study would improve the different programs and activities of the college and produce excellent graduates.
3. *Faculty.* This study will help the teachers in determining the diverse factors that affect the employability of the CITE graduates. This evidence would help them improve the curriculum of the students of the college.
4. *Students.* The results of the study would serve as encouragement to trail career paths in the different IT job markets.

In a world where knowledge is a critical element for nations to prosper and compete, primacy is placed on the quality and relevance of education and how it can ensure that graduates have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that industries need. The changing nature of work environments, the emergence of technology-driven processes, and the diversified needs of the clientele are challenges to the higher education institutions

(HEIs) to meet the demand for employable graduates (De Guzman and De Castro, 2008).

The study of Moreau and Leathwood (2006) and that of Mcquaid and Lindsay (2005) entitled "The Concept of Employability" stressed that universities and colleges are challenged to produce globally competitive graduates. Graduates are expected to develop personal skills, qualities, and experiences that enable them to compete in the labor market. Industry players urge universities and colleges to exert more efforts to develop graduates' core skills: transferable, soft, and employable generic skills.

Cooper and Lybrand (1998) identified four areas of employability – traditional intellectual skills such as critical evaluation, logic, communication, numeracy and IT; learning how to learn; personal attributes and knowledge of organization. McNair (2003) defines employability as more than the ability to get one's first job, while Harvey and Nixon (2002) refer to the concept of retaining and obtaining fulfilling employment. Yorke and Knight (2003) defined it as the concept relating to the ability of graduates to overcome job-related challenges and to gain employment.

These notions draw the difference between being employed and being employable. *Being employed* means having a job while *being employable* means having the necessary qualities to remain employed and to progress in one's work. In January 2014, the SEAMEO INNOTECH Research Studies Unit conducted a study entitled "Employability of Philippine IT Graduates" aiming to draw measures that will make Philippine IT graduates more employable. The study stated that CHED cannot do this alone. It needed the help of other government agencies, universities/colleges, and students as well.

The Government

1. Government agencies such as CHED, the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the National Statistics Office (NSO), and the National Youth Commission should join forces and inform students about subscribed IT courses, as these would be detrimental to their employment. Students should be regularly informed of local and global labor market needs so they can avoid

becoming victims of unemployment and underemployment.

2. The government should provide sufficient IT support. It should provide the necessary infrastructure for the labor force and economy to remain competitive. It should set goals more quickly to make the country's IT economy more appealing and friendlier to investors in order to generate employment. It should move toward supporting global products and services, IT education, and training in order to support telecommunications and BPO firms.
3. The government should continue to adopt policies that will increase IT investments through venture capitalization and strategic alliances.

Universities/Colleges

1. Universities/Colleges must develop students' skills and create opportunities so they can participate in job shadowing, internship, and on-the-job training (OJT) programs to enhance their job-related skills. They should actively sponsor capacity-building programs such as seminars, workshops, and communication-proficiency courses. They should also encourage students to pursue advanced degrees to become more competitive.
2. Universities/Colleges should embark on providing value-added services (VASs) in the IT industry. They should conduct research to see to it that improvements and developments are continuously promoted in the industry.
3. Universities/Colleges should design curricula that match industry needs. This will reduce job mismatches and reduce unemployment. They should make business leaders part of their pool of industry experts, lecturers, and, if possible, Board of Trustees.
4. Universities/Colleges should design programs that will develop students' leadership and behavioral skills, work values, and ethics to make their students more competitive. They should also strongly focus on developing their students' skills in communication, critical thinking, and initiative-taking by integrating these into their first- and second-year curricula.
5. Universities/Colleges should upgrade their teacher quality and standards in order to develop highly competitive graduates. Immediate intervention in teacher training and

higher order thinking skills (HOTS) facilitation is needed.

Employers

1. Employers are encouraged to maintain links with the academe. They should involve universities/colleges in their training and research programs and secure partnership agreements with universities/colleges.
2. Employers should accelerate connectivity and information sharing and improve their communication with government agencies and the academe.
3. Employers should provide wider selection and better access to graduates from all higher education institutions and not limit the graduates from top ranking schools. Hiring must be based on personal qualifications and demonstrated IT competence and not solely on the reputation of the school where the graduates came from.
4. The business and industry sector must maintain close linkages and should collaborate with schools. A shared database that allows information sharing regarding job requirements and qualifications should be created for the use of the educational institutions that supply graduates and employers in search of new employees.

Students

1. Students should seek advice from their guidance counselors for appropriate career counseling. Guidance and counseling officers can assist them in determining what courses suit their abilities. They can also help students select courses that are in demand even if these are not so popular.
2. Students should take a look at the *School to Office Response to Employment* (STORE) database - one that identifies manpower forecasts per industry and per company, as well as tracks job openings and skills requirements prior to choosing their courses.

In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education and TESDA have initiated conducting a tracer study of graduates. All colleges and universities in all the regions are required to submit responses to such study.

A number of Tracer Studies have been conducted by faculty researchers of Baliuag University. In a study conducted by the College of Environmental Design and Engineering of Baliuag University for SY 1998-2002 (Surio, 2005), questionnaires were used as a tool in gathering data from the respondents. The study showed that 78.7% or 107 of the total respondents were employed while 21.3% or 29 respondents were unemployed. The results of the survey showed that majority of the graduates were employed in business organizations. In another tracer study conducted by the College of Arts and Sciences, it was revealed that 71.4% are employed and 28.6% are not employed from SY 1997-1998 to SY 2001-2002 graduates. Those employed were entrepreneurs, office staff, teachers, HR managers, including some self- employed ones. A similar study by (Castro, 2005) for the College of Education of Baliuag University from SY 1997-1998 to SY 2001-2002 established that 36 of the Education graduate respondents were employed full-time; 35 worked on a contractual basis; 28 were permanent employees; and five were part-time workers. It was also revealed that 82.7% of the respondents successfully passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. The study conducted by Dela Cruz (2005) for College of Business Administration and Accountancy covered graduates from SY 1997-2002 revealed that 124 or 78 percent of the total respondents were employed while 35 or 22 percent were unemployed (as of the date of the survey). The results showed that more than half of the employed graduates worked within Bulacan, about a third worked in Metro Manila and the rest were scattered in the different provinces of Luzon. The researchers recommended the creation of a Public Relations and Marketing Office which shall take care of all activities related to employment information, placement, training, job fair, and follow -up of graduates, including alumni affairs and external social relations.

Method

This section presents the different methods and techniques used, the respondents of the study, the instrument/s used, data gathering and collection of the instruments, the processing of the data, and the statistical method used in order for the proponents to accomplish their objectives.

Methods and Techniques of the Study

A descriptive method of research was used with questionnaires as the main source of data. This method was used because the proponents should give an analysis of the report of the graduates of Baliuag University College of Information Technology Education SY 2003-2004 to SY 2006-2007.

Respondents

The respondents included all the graduates of BSIT, BSCS, and ACT of the College of information Technology Education. The office of the registrar provided the following data on 311 graduates.

Table 1

CITE Graduates

School Year	BSIT	BSCS	ACT	Total
2002-2003		94	13	107
2003-2004		25	11	36
2004-2005		29	7	36
2005-2006	7	53	17	77
2006-2007	11	23	21	55
Total	18	224	69	311

Instruments

The proponents distributed questionnaires to 100% respondents of all the graduates from SY 2003-2004 to 2006-2007.

The questionnaires were based on the CHED graduate study questionnaire and the questions were formulated by Baliuag University's College of Business Administration. The questionnaires contained the following parts: (a) general information, (b) employment data, (c) job information, and (d) education.

Data Gathering and Processing of Data

The information on all the respondents, including their addresses, were provided by the Office of the Registrar. Submitted were 264 questionnaires or 84.89% through the help of the CITE students, email, social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram, while others were hand-carried to the those whose residences are of short distance to the University.

All data taken from the respondents' responses were tallied and tabulated using SPSS version 20 software.

Results and Discussion

Total number of graduates from SY 2003-2004 to SY 2006-2007 were 311; however, only 264 graduates responded.

As shown in Table 2, majority were BSCS graduates, (a total of 212 from 264 respondents), since BSIT was offered only in SY 2005-2006.

Table 2

CITE Respondents according to Course, Gender and Year of Graduation

Degree Course	Gender	Year Graduated					
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL
ACT	Male	6	4		9	8	27
	Female	3	3	5	1	11	23
BSCS	Male	31	15	11	9	11	77
	Female	55	6	14	39	10	124
BSIT	Male				2	5	7
	Female				2	4	6
TOTAL		95	28	30	62	49	264

The table shows that of 50 graduates of ACT, 27 males and 23 females responded to this tracer study. Of the BSCS course graduates, 77 respondents were male and 124 were female. There were only 7 males and 6 females respondents from BSIT graduates. Out of the

total of 264 graduates, 84.89 % responded to this tracer study. The respondents were 153 females and 111 males.

Table 3

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Graduates According to Employment Status

Employment Status	*f*	%
No	63	23.9
Yes	201	76.1
Total	264	100

As shown in the employment status of graduates, 201 or 76.1 % were presently employed while 63 or 23.9% were unemployed. The table revealed that more graduates of the Colleges of Information Technology Education were readily employed.

This could mean that the graduates of Information Technology Education programs were technically competent; hence, promptly employed.

Table 4 shows the type of companies where CITE graduates were employed.

Table 4

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Current Company Type Where CITE Graduates Were Employed

Current Company Type	*f*	%
BPO industry	47	17.8
Educational institution	9	3.4
Multinational companies	6	2.3
Banking institution	11	4.2
Government offices	12	4.5
Private institution	85	32.2
IT industry	14	5.3
Insurances	1	.4
Communication company	4	1.5
Broadcasting Company	1	.4

Table 4 Continuation

Current Company Type	*f*	%
Family business	4	1.5
Hospital	1	.4
Internet cafe	3	1.1
Production operation	1	.4
Total	264	100.0

As presented in the current company type, 47 respondents or 17.8% of the graduates were currently employed in the Business Process Outsourcing Industry, nine (9) respondents or 3.4% in educational institutions, 6 or 2.3% in multinational companies, while 11 respondents or 4.2% were in banking institutions. In addition, 12 respondents or 4.5% were employed in different government offices while 85 respondents or 32.2% were employed in private institutions. Fourteen (14) respondents or 5.3% were employed in IT companies; one (1) respondent or .4% was employed in an insurance company, and four (4) respondents or 1.5% were employed in communications company. There were also 10 respondents or 3.8% employed in other companies such as broadcasting, their own family business company, hospitals, internet cafés, and production. This goes to show that ITE course graduates of BU belong to one of the most in-demand courses in the Philippines.

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Place of Work of the Respondents

Place of Work	*f*	%
Local	172	65.2
Abroad	27	10.2
Total	264	100.0

The table shows that 172 respondents or 65.2% were employed in the different companies of the country while only 27 or 10.2% worked abroad. This means that as of the conduct of this survey, many still preferred to work in the Philippines.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage of the Present Employment Status of the Respondents

Employment Status	*f*	%
Regular/Permanent	135	51.1
Temporary	3	1.1
Casual	10	3.8
Contractual	33	12.5
Part-time	6	2.3
Probationary	11	4.2
Total	264	100.0

Table 6 shows that among the CITE graduates who are employed, 135 respondents or 51.1% are in regular or permanent status, 33 or 12.5 % are on contractual basis, 11 or 4.2 % are on probationary status,10 or 3.8% are casual employees, 6 respondents or 2.3 % work part-time, and three (3) or 1.1% are on temporary status.

Table 7

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Present Job Positions of the Respondents

Job Position	*f*	%
Managerial	15	5.7
Supervisory	55	20.8
Clerical	52	19.7
Technical support	12	4.5
Marketing assistance	1	.4
Self-Employed	8	3.0
Account specialist	1	.4
Programmer/Application programmer	6	2.3
Call center agent	3	1.1
Cashier/Teller	9	3.5
Customer Service/Rep	3	1.2
Dining manager	1	.4
Encoder	3	1.1
Factory worker	1	.4

Table 7 Continuation

Job Position	*f*	%
Help desk analyst	1	.4
In house technician	1	.4
IT specialist	5	1.9
Layout artist	2	.8
Network Admin/Asst	3	1.2
Office/ IT staff	4	1.5
Photo editor/Videographer	3	1.2
Project/Sales staff	5	1.9
Teacher	5	1.9
Web developer	4	1.5
Total	264	100.0

The table shows that 55 respondents or 20.8 % belong to supervisory jobs; 52 respondents or 19.7% are in clerical jobs; 15 respondents or 5.7% hold managerial positions and 8 respondents or 3.0% are self-employed. It also show that 134 respondents hold different positions in their employing companies.

Table 8

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Length of Service with the Present Company

Length of Service	*f*	%
Less than a year	55	20.8
1 year and less than 2 years	55	20.8
2 years and less than 3 years	53	20.1
3 years and less than 4 years	23	8.7
4 years or more	17	6.4
Total	264	100.0

Table 8 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the length of service of the employed respondents. Fifty-five (55) respondents or 20.8% have been employed for less than a year, and 53 or 20.1 % have been working for 2 years and less than 3 years. For (4) years or more is the longest for 17 or 6.4% of the respondents.

Table 9

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Period

Number of Years	*f*	%
Less than 1 year	12	4.5
More than 1 year to 2 years	37	14.0
More than 2 years to 3 years	7	2.7
More than 4 years	5	1.9
Total	264	100.0

Table 9 shows that 37 or 14.0% were unemployed for more than 1 year to 2 years; 12 respondents or 4.5% were unemployed for less than a year; 7 respondents or 2.7% were unemployed for more than 2 years to 3 years and 5 respondents or 1.9 % responded that they were unemployed for more than 4 years.

Table 10 shows the reasons of the respondents unemployment.

Table 10

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Reasons Why Graduates were Unemployed

Reasons for Being Unemployed	*f*	%
Pursuing advance studies	6	2.3
Family concern and decided not to find a job	11	4.2
Health-related reason(s)	8	3.0
Lack of work experience	4	1.5
Lack of interest in looking for a job	6	2.3
Inadequate skills/competencies	4	1.5
No job opportunity	13	4.9
Did not look for a job	4	1.5
Unsatisfactory offer	3	1.1
Establishing one's own business	1	.4
Personal reason	2	.8
Resigned	3	1.1
Total	264	100.0

Thirteen 13 respondents or 4.9% answered that there were no job opportunities; 11 or 4.2% responded that due to family concerns, they decided not to find a job; 8 or 3.0% responded that for health reasons they did not find a job; 6 respondents or 2.3 % answered they want to pursue advanced studies; 6 or 2.3% responded that they lacked interest in looking for a job. Other reasons given were unsatisfactory offer, establishing one's own business, personal reason, and resignation.

Table 11

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Employment Status After Graduation

Employment Status	*f*	%
No	44	16.7
Yes	204	77.3
Total	264	100.0

Table 11 shows that 204 or 77.3% of the respondents have been employed after graduation while 44 or 16.7% of the respondents have not been employed for various reasons of their own.

Table 12

Frequency and Percentage of Job Related to the Course Taken up in College

Job Related to the Course	*f*	%
No	88	33.3
Yes	155	58.7
Total	264	100.0

Table 12 shows that 155 or 58.7% of the respondents had their first job right after graduation, and this was related to their course, while 88 or 33.3% of the respondents said otherwise.

Table 13

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Length of Waiting Time to Land Their First Job

Land their Job	*f*	%
less than a month	61	23.1
1-3 months	64	24.2
4-6 months	65	24.6
7-11 months	25	9.5
1 year to less than 2 years	15	5.7
3 years to less than 4 years	1	.4
Total	264	100.0

Table 13 shows that 65 or 23.1% of the respondents got their first job within 4 to 6 months; 64 or 24.2% within 1 to 3 months; 61 or 23.1% in less than a year; 25 or 9.5% of the respondents took their first job within seven to eleven months; 15 or 5.7% got employed after a year; and one respondent answered he was hired after 3 to 4 years of job hunting.

Table 14

Frequency and Percentage Distribution Means of Getting the First Job

Getting the First Job	*f*	%
Advertisement response	35	13.3
Walk-in application	80	30.3
Recommendation	65	24.6
Friends' information	25	9.5
School's job placement	2	.8
Family business	9	3.4
Job fair for PESO	5	1.9
Absorption after OJT	2	.8
Total	264	100.0

Table 14 shows that 80 or 30.3% of the respondents found their first job as walk-in applicants; 65 or 24.6% of the respondents were recommended by someone; 35 or 13.3% responded to an advertisement; 25 or 9.5% got the information from friends; and 9 or 3.4% joined their family business. In addition, 5 or 1.9% of the respondents acquired their job

through Job fair for PESO, 2 respondents were hired by the company where they underwent OJT; and another 2 through the school's job placement officer.

Table 15

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Difficulties Encountered in Looking for the First Job

Difficulties Encountered in Looking for the First Job	*f*	%
No available job	66	25.0
Lack of experience	59	22.3
Low compensation offer	29	11.0
Low opportunity for advancement	31	11.7
Lack of skills/competencies	23	8.7
None	30	11.4
Total	264	100.0

Table 15 shows that 66 or 25% of the respondents claimed there were no available jobs; 59 or 22.3% said lack of work experience caused their difficulty in looking for their first job. Thirty- one or 11.7% of the respondents said that low opportunity for advancement prevented them from getting a job; while 23 or 8.7% claimed that their lack of skills/ competencies as required by the job was a determent factor.

Table 16

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Reasons for Accepting a Job

Reasons for Accepting the Job	*f*	%	Rank
Career challenge	152	57.6	1
Salary	112	42.4	2
Related to special skill	94	35.6	3
Proximity to residence	64	24.2	4
Company reputation	3	1.1	5
For experience	3	1.1	5

Table 16 shows the reasons of the respondents for accepting the job. Career challenge ranked first, with 152 or 57.6%; salary ranked second; job related to special skills

ranked third; proximity to residence ranked fourth and other reasons such as company reputation and for experience ranked fifth and sixth.

Table 17

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Length of Service in First Job

Length of Service	*f*	%
less than a month	9	3.4
1-3 months	32	12.1
4-6 months	67	25.4
7-11 months	40	15.2
1 year to less than 2 years	37	14.0
2 years to less than 3 years	18	6.8
3 years to less than 4 years	9	3.4
Total	264	100.0

Table 17 shows that 67 or 25.4% of the respondents worked with the company for four to six months; 40 or 15.2% answered less than two years; 32 or 12.1% of them said that they stayed on for only one to three months. Eighteen (18) or 6.8% stayed for two years but less than three, and 9 or 3.4% of the respondents stayed less than a month and less than four years respectively.

Table 18

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Currently Employed in Their First Job

Currently Employed	*f*	%
No	150	56.8
Yes	58	22.0
Total	264	100.0

Table 18 shows that 150 or 56.8% of the respondents were no longer employed by their first employer while 58 or 22.0% were still working with the first employer.

Table 20

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Most Skills in Their Job

Most Skills in Their Job	*f*	%
Communication skills	179	67.8
Human Relation skills	127	48.1
Entrepreneurial skills	59	22.3
Information Technology skills	169	64.0
Problem-solving skills	134	50.8
Critical Thinking skills	120	45.5

Table 20 shows the different skills learned in college perceived important to the respondents' current work. Among these are communication skills, information technology skills, problem-solving skills, human relation skills, critical thinking skills, and entrepreneurial skills.

Table 21

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Graduates' Reasons in Pursuing Advanced Studies

Reasons in Pursuing Advanced Studies	*f*	%
	218	82.6
For promotion	3	1.1
For professional development	34	12.9
Both for promotion and professional development	9	3.4
Total	264	100.0

Table 21 shows that 34 or 12.9% of the respondents pursued advanced studies for professional development; 9 or 3.4% said they were motivated for both promotion and professional development to pursue advanced studies, while 3 or 1.1% took up advanced studies for promotion.

Table 22

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Ratings for IT Subjects

	Relevance of General Education Subjects		Relevance of Professional Subjects		Relevance of Elective Subjects		On-the-Job Trainings		Attending Conferences, Seminars, and Trainings		IT Certification	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
1	6	2.3	2	.8	5	1.9	4	1.5	3	1.1	18	6.8
2	18	6.8	9	3.4	16	6.1	10	3.8	19	7.2	25	9.5
3	46	17.4	38	14.4	55	20.8	35	13.3	41	15.5	52	19.7
4	107	40.5	67	25.4	73	27.7	67	25.4	71	26.9	54	20.5
5	76	28.8	137	51.9	102	38.6	137	51.9	119	45.1	104	39.4
Total	253	95.8	253	95.8	251	95.1	253	95.8	253	95.8	253	95.8
Missing	11	4.2	11	4.2	13	4.9	11	4.2	11	4.2	11	4.2
Total	264	100.0	264	100.0	264	100.0	264	100.0	264	100.0	264	100.0

Table 22 shows the importance and usefulness of the general education subjects; 107 or 40.5% stet rated 4, is the most important, and 6 respondents, rated 1, is the least useful; 137 or 51.9% of the respondents rated professional subjects as relevant, with 5 as the most useful and 2 respondents or .8% rated it 1 as the least useful; 102 or 38.6% of the respondents rated 5 as the most useful, and 5 respondents or 1.9% rated 1 as the least useful; 137 or 95.8% of the respondents rated OJT as most useful, but 4 respondents or 1.5% rated 1 as the least useful; and 104 respondents or 95.8% rated their IT certification with a 5 which is most important, but 18 or 6.8% of the respondents said it was not important at all.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Of the 216 graduates of CITE for SY 2002-2003 to SY 2006-2007, 76.1% are presently employed.
2. 65.2% desire to work in the country rather than abroad, and 85 of them prefer to work in private organizations, with 47 in the BPO industry and 14 in the IT industry.
3. Most of the graduates had been on regular or permanent status by the time of this study. Curricular offering should be enriched to answer the need for better skills in critical thinking, human relations, problem solving, and communications.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study the researchers offer the following recommendations:

1. The CITE should regularly review or revise the ITE curricula, vis-à-vis its relevance and significance to the present demands of the industry. The different courses should be strengthened and improved to enable the graduates to land better jobs and positions.
2. The CITE should continuously send the students especially the graduating IT/CS students to different seminars, trainings, conferences locally and nationally, to fully update them on the current trends in ICT.
3. The Center of Instructional and Technology Services (CITS) department of Baliuag University, upon the recommendation of the CITE office, should upgrade and acquire both hardware and latest version of commonly used software, to fully respond to industry needs and practices.
4. Since majority of the graduate respondents believed that they were able to land their first job on their own initiatives and were able to get it just a few months after graduation, the placement program of the university should be strengthened. More IT-related companies should be invited during job fairs or to any school-related affairs to foster camaredie with their staff.
5. A follow-up study/tracer study should be conducted by the College of Information Technology Education (CITE) to fully assess its programs as well as the accomplishments of its graduates.

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