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**A Tracer Study of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Graduates of Baliuag University From 2013 to 2015**

Rolando R. Calma, DBA

Abstract

This study determined the employability of the graduates of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration of Baliuag University from 2013 to 2015. Out of 641 graduates from the different areas of specialization (Financial Management, Human Resource Development Management, Management Accounting, Marketing Management, and Operations Management), 279 (43.53%) were used as respondents. The study found that within a year after graduation, 92.48% of the respondents were hired regardless of their fields of specialization. Most of the graduates are now working in Bulacan and Manila areas. The study also identified the job placement profile of the graduates and evaluated the extent of use of various skills in their present job. Findings of the study further revealed that the respondents believed that they adequately acquired the training from their BU education that contributed to the development of these skills.

Keywords: tracer study, BSBA graduates, graduate skills

The success of an economy may depend on the quality of its human resources which is linked to the effectiveness and efficiency of the educational system. Tracer studies are appropriate means of evaluating the results of the education and training provided by an institution to its students. They provide relevant information concerning the level of employment, unemployment, and underemployment among the graduates, their first and current work positions, and more importantly, the correlation between educational qualifications and required work skills. Therefore, graduate tracer studies generate relevant information that would help an educational institution assess the attainment of its vision, mission, and goals.

It is vital for any higher educational institution to constantly evaluate the curriculum to ensure that its content is relevant, of high quality, and aligned with the demands of the current job market. One of the approaches that an institution does is through the conduct of a tracer study. The study seeks to assess the impact of the course program on graduates' competencies in several key areas and evaluate their views of the overall quality of the institutional services during their period of study.

Baliuag University, the first school in Region III granted full autonomy by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), is committed to offer programs that would meet national and global manpower demands. These programs also aim to develop the youth into mature and responsible individuals who can function effectively as persons, community members, and world citizens. Therefore, findings of the tracer study provide invaluable information on the graduates' current professional and academic activities and career paths and can be used to support university-wide improvement and planning initiatives for the delivery of current and future programs and services.

The College of Business Administration and Accountancy, one of the departments of the University, is also devoted to meeting the present global society's demand for quality business graduates possessing academic excellence, relevant professional skills, and sound ethical principles. The education and training that the College provides to its graduates are two of the most important mechanisms to empower graduates for their socioeconomic development. Since 1970 when the Bachelor of Science in Commerce was offered, business students have been nurtured with the essential foundation and resources for entrepreneurship and business-related career. Records of the Registrar's Office of Baliuag University showed that for school year 1969-1970, there were only two graduates of B.S. in Commerce, the very first batch of the program.

Significance of the Study

A tracer study of graduates is necessary to determine the extent of responsibility an institution has upon its graduates.

For Baliuag University, this tracer study can serve as a basis in the formulation of dynamic but crucial programs not only to comply with the requirements of the government but also to meet the increasing needs of its various stakeholders. It can be a significant basis for initiating and implementing improvements in the academic curriculum. It can also serve as a reference point in enhancing the current programs and in designing new programs that address the real training needs of the students.

In the same vein, this tracer study may help faculty members upgrade the university standards by continuously inspiring and enriching the minds of students to be competitive and to excel in their respective areas of specialization, as well as to participate actively in the globalized world of service and international development.

Likewise, it serves as a motivation for students to study harder to realize their dreams and make them aware that there are successful graduates.

Lastly, this tracer study may help graduates obtain information on their occupational, educational, and socioeconomic activities, and on the supplementary training they need for their present jobs or for better job placement.

Research Questions

The main objective of this tracer study is to determine the employability of the graduates of Baliuag University for the course Bachelor of Science in Business Administration for batches 2013 to 2015.

In light of this major problem, the following specific problems were considered:

1. How can the respondents be described in terms of the following:
 - 1.1 present status of employment
 - 1.2 types of company/industry that employ them
 - 1.3 present job position
 - 1.4 number of months/years it took them to land a job after graduation
 - 1.5 difficulties they encountered in looking for their first job
 - 1.6 length of service with their first job and with present company
 - 1.7 reasons for staying with their present job and leaving their first job
 - 1.8 training and further studies they attended after college
2. How do the respondents rate the extent of use of the following graduates' skills in their present job:
 - 2.1 communication skill
 - 2.2 comprehension skill

- 2.3 critical thinking skill
 - 2.4 entrepreneurial skill
 - 2.5 human relation skill
 - 2.6 information technology skill
 - 2.7 leadership skill
 - 2.8 problem-solving skill
 - 2.9 decision-making skill
 - 2.10 research skill?
3. How do the respondents rate the adequacy of training they acquired from their BU education that contributed to the development of the following graduates' skills:
- 3.1 communication skill
 - 3.2 comprehension skill
 - 3.3 critical thinking skill
 - 3.4 entrepreneurial skill
 - 3.5 human relation skill
 - 3.6 information technology skill
 - 3.7 leadership skill
 - 3.8 problem-solving skill
 - 3.9 decision-making skill
 - 3.10 research skill
4. How do the respondents rate BU's placement services in terms of providing them with necessary employment assistance?
5. What are the suggestions given by the respondents on how BU can improve the

employability of its graduates?

6. What are the suggestions given by the respondents on how BU can improve its course curriculum?

Scope and Limitations of the Tracer Study

This tracer study was conducted during the second semester of school year 2016-2017. The respondents of the study were the graduates of Baliuag University from 2013 to 2015 with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. With the use of a questionnaire, data regarding the characteristics of the graduates as to their present job position, present status of employment, length of service with the present company, number of months or years that took the graduates to land their first job, difficulties they encountered in looking for their first job, and reason/s for remaining in and leaving their job were gathered, described, and analyzed.

This study also identified the extent of use of various skills in the present job of the respondents and if they adequately acquired the training from their BU education that contributed to the development of these skills, namely, communication skill, comprehension skill, critical thinking skill, entrepreneurial skill, human relation skill, information technology skill, leadership skill, problem-solving skill, decision-making skill, and research skill.

Definition of Terms

In order to understand the study better, the operational definitions of certain terms were given as follows:

Communication skill. This term refers to the ability of the respondents to convey information and ideas to another person.

Comprehension skill. This refers to the ability of the respondents to grasp and understand what is told or read to them.

Critical thinking skill. This means the ability of the respondents to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information as a guide to make conceptualization.

Decision-making skill. This refers to the respondent's ability to select a course of action from among possible alternatives in order to arrive at a solution for a given problem.

Employability. This means the ability of the respondents to get employed or to land a job.

Entrepreneurial skill. This is the ability of the respondents to create something new with value and exploit this idea and create an enterprise or work as a member of a team.

Human relation skill. This refers to the ability of the respondents to interact with other people in the business organization.

Information technology skill. This is the ability of the respondents to perform tasks using computer systems, software, networks, and other related technology.

Leadership skill. This is the respondent's ability to lead and direct others effectively.

Problem-solving skill. This is the ability of the respondents to define the problem to find solutions to it.

Research skill. This is the ability of the respondents to collect and analyze relevant, accurate, and timely information.

Specialization. This refers to the major field of study taken up by the graduates such as Management Accounting, Financial Management, Human Resource Development Management, and Marketing Management.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the labor market theory explored by Son (2007) in his study entitled “The Role of Labor Market in Explaining Growth and Inequality: The Philippines Case.” Son theorized that higher education is an important determinant of employment in the Philippine labor market. Those with higher education have crowded out the less educated in terms of job opportunities. His study premised this finding on two explanations: one is that there has been more demand in the Philippine labor market for individuals with secondary and tertiary education. The other is that low-productivity jobs are taken over by the more educated labor force. This finding confirms his previous conjecture that a significant increase in the supply of qualified workers has lowered the price for skilled labor over the period. According to him, this is an issue of mismatch between the labor market and the education sector. In other words, the current education sector does not supply the right kind of skills that are demanded by the labor market.

Review of Related Literature

To enrich and broaden the researcher’s perception of the research topic, and to successfully evaluate the study, several related studies and literature were reviewed.

Oseifuah, Gyekye, NovisiKwadzo, and Vukor-Quarshie (2014) determined the employment success of UNIVENBCOM graduates, particularly the extent to which the BCOM degree curricula adequately equip graduates with basic competencies and skills required for effective job performance. The results of the research showed the importance of emphasizing English communication and computer skills in the structure of the BCOM (Accounting) curriculum. Gines (2014) described the extent to which the various curricular programs contributed to the development of the graduates’ communication skills, human

relations skills, leadership skills, problem-solving skills, and research skills; and evaluated the degree of effectiveness, adequacy, and relevance of the University's curricular programs

Vong (2014) likewise conducted a graduate tracer study intended to evaluate the quality of education provided by the Royal University of Phnom Penh as indicated through access to and success in the fields of work. The study also compared the skills attained from the course of study and the requirements of the labor market which contributed to the success of the graduates. Celis, Festijo, and Cueto (2013) determined the job placement profile of the graduates and relevance of school-related factors to job placement. It also identified the work-related values and skills that contributed to the meeting of demands of their present job. The study also found that salaries and benefits played a big role in the decision to remain in or leave the first job. Human relations skills and communication skills were deemed to be the most useful competencies learned by the graduates from LPU and perseverance was the highest work value for the respondents.

Macatangay (2013) assessed the relevance of the curricula, knowledge, skills, and work values acquired by the graduates that were pertinent to their employment. The study also described the personal and professional characteristics and job placement of the graduates and the school-related factors associated with their employment. The findings of the study served as the basis of the researcher to improve, update, or enhance the curricular program to make it more responsive to the needs of fast-changing technology. Ramirez, Cruz, and Alcantara (2012) also conducted a graduate tracer study that determined the incidence of employment, self-employment, unemployment, and further education among the graduates and the relevance of the school-acquired skills and competencies to the graduates' chosen occupations. Findings of their study proved that there was a significant

relationship between the graduates' fields of specialization and their occupations after graduation. The results further affirmed that the school produced marketable and appropriately trained graduates with the majority landing in course-related jobs within a short time after graduation. The study also indicated that the graduates possessed the skills and competencies necessary to succeed in this competitive world.

In their 2012 tracer study, Calma and Ocampo determined the level of employability of the graduates and indicated that the majority of the respondents were connected with companies dealing with sales and services. It was found that the graduates were qualified to hold supervisory and managerial positions which were related to the college courses they took up. The study also established the fact that the school was able to provide its students with sufficient knowledge and skills as perceived by the respondents.

Method

Research Design

The researcher used the descriptive method of research which, according to Ariola (2006), is used to analyze, interpret, and report the present status of the study. It is applicable in big sample or larger population. It also uses questionnaire or other instruments prepared by the researcher to generate data. The data must be organized and presented systematically so that valid and accurate conclusions may be drawn from them.

The descriptive method of research was employed in this study to gather information about the existing conditions of Baliuag University graduates of the course Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from 2013 to 2015. The study, therefore, involved the collection of data using a questionnaire concerning the current status of the respondents.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

Table 1

Respondents of the Study

Year Graduated	Number of Graduates	Actual Number of Respondents	%
2013	213	79	37.09
2014	202	86	42.57
2015	226	114	50.44
Total	641	279	43.53

Source: BU Registrar's Office

Table 1 shows the actual number of graduates per year and those who responded to the researcher's request to participate in the study. The researcher used these 279 respondents or 43.53% as the sample size of the study.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Area of Specialization

Area of Specialization	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Marketing Management	89	31.90	1
Financial Management	70	25.09	2
Management Accounting	65	23.30	3
Human Resource Dev't Management	36	12.90	4
Operations Management	19	6.81	5
Total	279	100.00	

Table 2 shows that almost a third (31.90%) of the respondents were Marketing Management graduates, followed by Financial Management majors with 70 respondents or 25.09%. There were 65 respondents or 23.30% who majored in Management Accounting and 36 respondents or 12.90% who majored in Human Resource Development Management.

Among the respondents of the study, graduates who majored in Operations Management had the least number with 19 respondents or 6.81%.

From the data, it can be inferred that during the period under review, Marketing Management was the most in-demand major field of specialization in the Business Administration program of Baliuag University and the least in-demand was Operations Management.

Instrument

The questionnaire developed by CHED and adopted by Gines (2014) was the main instrument used for data-gathering. Minor modifications were made and delimited to few questions to obtain pertinent information and data about the employability of the BSBA graduates of Baliuag University from 2013 to 2015.

The questionnaire included information about the respondents in terms of their major field of specialization, present status of employment, types of company/industry that employed them, their present job position, number of months/years it took them to land a job after graduation, difficulties they encountered in looking for their first job, length of service in their first job and in the present company, reasons for staying in their present job and leaving their first job, and training and further studies they attended after college.

Included in the questionnaire were information about the respondents' assessment in terms of the extent of use of various skills in their present job and if they adequately acquired the training from their BU education that contributed to the development of such skills. The skills included were communication skill, comprehension skill, critical thinking skill, decision-making skill, entrepreneurial skill, human relation skill, information technology skill, leadership skill, problem-solving skill, and research skill.

Data-Gathering Procedure

The researcher undertook the data-gathering process with the help of students and faculty members of the College of Business Administration and Accountancy of the Baliuag University.

Other means of data-gathering were utilized such as e-mail and Facebook messaging. There were 25 graduates who responded through e-mail, 31 who used Facebook messaging, and the rest were personally met by the researcher and his colleagues, students, and friends.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

The data collected from the questionnaire was organized, tabulated, analyzed, and treated statistically using percentage (%) and weighted mean.

The researcher also made use of Likert scaling techniques to compute the frequency of the answers of the respondents. With regard to the extent of use of the various skills in the present job of the respondents, the mean responses were interpreted using the following scale:

Range of Mean Values	Scale Value	Interpretation
4.20 – 5.00	5	To A Great Extent
3.40 – 4.19	4	To Some Extent
2.60 – 3.39	3	Limited
1.80 – 2.59	2	Very Limited
1.00 – 1.79	1	Not At All

For the adequacy of training that respondents acquired from their BU education that contributed to the development of these skills, the mean responses were interpreted using the following scale:

Range of Mean Values	Scale Value	Interpretation
4.20 – 5.00	5	Very Adequate
3.40 – 4.19	4	Adequate
2.60 – 3.39	3	Fairly Adequate
1.80 – 2.59	2	Inadequate
1.00 – 1.79	1	Very Inadequate

The researcher adopted the verbal interpretation of the aforementioned mean value from the survey questionnaire developed by CHED and used by Gines (2014).

Results and Discussion

This part of the tracer study dealt with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data to determine the employability of the BSBA graduates of Baliuag University from 2013 to 2015.

Table 3

Percentage Distribution of Respondents Employed Locally and Overseas

Location	<i>F</i>	%
Local		
Bulacan	128	45.87
Manila	125	44.79
Pampanga	6	2.15
Batangas	1	0.36
Cabanatuan	1	0.36
Cavite	1	0.36
Tarlac	1	0.36
Sub-total	263	94.25
Overseas		
United Arab Emirates	8	2.87
Japan	2	0.72
Bahrain	1	0.36
Finland	1	0.36

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

Location	<i>F</i>	%
Kuwait	1	0.36
Qatar	1	0.36
Taiwan	1	0.36
USA	1	0.36
Sub-total	16	5.75
Total	279	100.0

As can be seen in Table 3, majority of the respondents were working for companies located in Bulacan (45.87%) and Manila (44.79%). There were 16 or 5.73% of the graduates who were working in foreign countries such as United Arab Emirates, Japan, Bahrain, Finland, Kuwait, Qatar, Taiwan, and USA. The United Arab Emirates employed the most number of graduates.

Data shows that BSBA graduates of Baliuag University possess the necessary qualifications to penetrate the global market.

Table 4

Ranked Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Status of Employment

Status of Employment	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Regular/Permanent	227	81.36	1
Probationary	22	7.89	2
Contractual	16	5.73	3
Self-employed	10	3.58	4
Part-time	2	0.72	5
Casual	2	0.72	5
Total	297	100.00	

On the status of employment of the respondents, Table 3 indicated that 81.36% of them had permanent status, 7.89% were under probationary period, 5.73% were on a contractual basis, while the rest were self-employed, part-timers, and casual.

Data also disclosed that majority of the Business Administration graduates of Baliuag University were regular employees who had security of tenure in their jobs. This is also a good indicator that generally, BU graduates have sufficient work ethics and skills that merit regular employment.

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Types of Company That Employed the Respondents

Type of Industry/Company	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Banking, Finance, Insurance	61	21.86	1
Marketing, Sales, Logistics	59	21.15	2
Industrial/Manufacturing	33	11.83	3
Services	27	9.68	4
Business Process Outsourcing	26	9.32	5
Food Business	18	6.45	6
Real Estate/Construction	15	5.38	7
Academe	13	4.66	8
Government and Quasi-government	10	3.58	9
Telecom/Communications	8	2.87	10
IT/Computer Software	5	1.79	11
Hotels and Restaurants	3	1.07	12
Health and Social Works	1	0.36	13
Total	279	100.0	

Table 5 showed a wide array of jobs in which Business Administration graduates of BU were employed. Topping the list was banking, finance, and insurance, employing 21.86% of graduates followed by marketing/sales/logistics area with almost the same percentage (21.15%). Specifically, 11.83% of the graduates were employed in the services sector.

The business process outsourcing (BPO) industry employed 9.32% of the respondents and the food business industry, on the other hand, hired 6.45% of the graduates. The rest were employed in real estate/construction (5.38%), the academe (4.66%), and government/quasi-government (3.58%). There was a small percentage of graduates who were employed in telecom/communications, IT/computer software, hotels and restaurants, and health and social works.

It is worthy to note that most of the Business Administration graduates were employed in business organizations related to their fields.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Present Job Position

Position	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Rank-and-file	207	74.19	1
Managerial level	19	6.81	2
Owner/co-owner	10	3.59	3
No responses	43	15.41	
Total	279	100.0	

The data in Table 6 disclosed that 74.19% of the respondents held rank-and-file positions while only 6.81% occupied managerial positions. Also, 15.41% of the respondents did not specify their job position, and a small percentage (3.59%) managed their own business.

The high percentage of rank-and-file employees is understandable since graduates were relatively new in their jobs, having graduated in 2013 up to 2015.

Table 7

Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Length of Service With Their Present Company

Length of Service	<i>F</i>	%
Less than one year	38	13.62
1-3 years	230	82.44
No response	11	3.94
Total	279	100.0

The data in Table 7 revealed that 82.44% of the respondents had been employed by their present company for more than a year while 13.62% had been employed for less than a year.

Presented below are some reasons why a big number of respondents are still connected with or employed in their present company.

Table 8

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents Staying With Their Job

Reasons	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Good salary	154	55.20	1
Career challenge	42	15.05	2
Related to course or program study	27	9.68	3
Good relationship with co-workers	18	6.45	4
Proximity to residence	13	4.66	5
Stable company	6	2.15	6
Family influence	6	2.15	6
Good management	5	1.79	7
Job enjoyment	3	1.08	8
others	5	1.79	
Total	279	100.0	

The data in Table 8 revealed that the top five reasons why respondents had decided to

stay with their first job were good salary (55.20%), sufficient career challenge (15.05%), job being related to the course or program of study (9.68%), good relationship with co-workers (6.45%), and proximity to residence (4.66%). Salary was the main consideration for remaining in one's job, while enjoying one's job and company stability did not have much bearing. Some other reasons cited were helping in the family business and putting up their own business.

The tracer study conducted by Celis, Festijo, and Cueto (2013) also found that salaries and benefits played a major role in remaining in or leaving one's first job. The same finding was presented in the study conducted by Buenviaje, Del Mundo, Anoñuevo and Martinez (2015). These researchers stated that the graduates' number one reason for remaining in their jobs was salaries and benefits. Also, the employees claimed they would stay with or leave their present company for the same reason.

Table 9

Length of Time That the Respondents Waited Before Getting Their First Job

Length of Time	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
1-3 months	171	61.29	1
4-6 months	63	22.58	2
More than 6 months but less than 1 year	24	8.61	3
More than 1 year but less than 2 years	14	5.02	4
More than 2 years but less than 3 years	7	2.50	5
Total	279	100.0	

The data presented in Table 9 indicated that it took one to three months after graduation before 61.29% of the respondents were hired; 22.58% waited for four to six months after graduation before they got their first job; and 8.61% waited for more than 6

months but less than one year before they became employed.

A mere 5.02% of the respondents landed their first job after more than a year but less than two years after they graduated and 2.50% waited for more than two years but less than 3 years after graduation.

The figures confirmed the good employability rate of BU graduates in terms of how fast they landed a job or found employment. A significant number, representing 92.48% of the respondents, were hired within a year after graduation.

This was a little bit lower than the result of the previous tracer study of the BSBA graduates of Baliuag University conducted by Calma and Ocampo (2012) in which 95.03% of the graduates were employed one year after graduation.

Table 10

Difficulties Encountered by the Respondents in Looking for Their First Job

Difficulties Encountered	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Few job vacancies	110	39.43	1
Inadequate experience	68	24.37	3
Low compensation offer	26	9.32	4
Mismatch of educational qualifications	13	4.66	5
Passing the pre-employment interview	5	1.79	6
Personality factors	4	1.43	7
Low opportunity for advancement	4	1.43	7
Passing the pre-employment exam	3	1.08	8
Not meeting paper requirements	2	0.72	9
Lack of skills/competencies	1	0.36	10
Nothing	69	24.73	2

On the obstacles encountered by the respondents in looking for their jobs, Table 10 enumerated these major difficulties: lack of job vacancies (39.43%), inadequate experience

(24.37%), low compensation offer (9.32%), and mismatch of job qualifications (4.66%).

There were few respondents who had problems in passing the pre-employment interview and pre-employment exam. On the contrary, 24.73% of the respondents said they did not experience any difficulty at all.

The tracer study conducted by De Castro (2017) to determine the employability of the graduates of one state college in the Philippines also found that majority of the graduates experienced a difficulty in looking for a job because of the few vacancies available or lack of position or item in the company.

Table 11

Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Reasons for Leaving Their First Job

Reasons for Leaving	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Low salary and benefits	47	36.71	1
End of contract	14	10.94	2
No career challenge	12	9.38	3
Better offer from another company	12	9.38	4
Proximity to residence	9	7.03	5
Had other goals to accomplish	9	7.03	5
Not related to course or program of study	8	6.25	6
Family influence	4	3.13	7
Not enjoying the job	4	3.13	7
Management problem	3	2.34	8
Peer/co-employees	2	1.56	9
Pregnancy	2	1.56	9
Wanted to pursue further education	1	0.78	10
Health reason	1	0.78	10
Total	128	100.0	

There were 128 graduates who left their first jobs and Table 11 listed the reasons behind this move. The top five reasons for leaving were low salary and benefits (36.71%),

end of contract (10.94%), lack of career challenge (9.38%), better offer from another company (9.38%), distance of residence to place of work, and had other goals to accomplish, both at 7.03%.

Giang (2012) reported in her article that according to a survey conducted by PayScale, the top reason why workers quit their job was to seek higher pay somewhere else.

The graduates' responses in Appendix A revealed that BSBA graduates of Baliuag University were willing to learn further and were receptive to various trainings, programs, and other development opportunities to improve their professional career and become better members of the business organizations. It can be deduced from this finding that more BSBA graduates are enthusiastic to pursue advanced training and continuing education for their career advancement.

Table 12

The Extent of Use of Different Skills to the Present Job of the Respondents

Graduates' Skills	Weighted Mean
Communication skill	4.44
Leadership skill	4.34
Entrepreneurial skill	4.28
Decision-making skill	4.28
Critical thinking skill	4.27
Comprehension skill	4.23
Problem-solving skill	4.23
Human relation skill	4.19
Information technology skill	4.00
Research skill	3.98
Grand Weighted Mean	4.22

Note. 4.20 – 5.00=to a great extent; 3.40 – 4.19 =to some extent; 2.60 – 3.39=limited; 1.80 - 2.59=very limited; 1.00 – 1.79=not at all.

Table 12 ranked communication skill, or the ability of the respondents to convey information and ideas, as the number one skill commonly used in their present job, with a weighted mean of 4.44, and verbally interpreted as “to a great extent.” This was followed by leadership skill (4.34), or the ability of the respondents to lead effectively, which was interpreted as “to a great extent.” Entrepreneurial skill (4.28), or the ability of the respondents to create something new with value was used by the respondents in their present jobs to a great extent (4.29).

The data also indicated that decision-making (the ability to select a course of action from among possible alternatives in order to arrive at a solution for a given problem), critical thinking (the ability of the respondents to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information as a guide to make conceptualization), comprehension (ability of the respondents to grasp and understand what is told or read) and problem-solving (ability of the respondents to define the problem to find solution to it) were the other skills used by the respondents to a great extent in their present jobs.

The following skills were used by the respondents in their present job to some extent: human relation (ability of the respondents to interact with the other people in business organization), information technology (ability of the respondents to perform their tasks using computer systems, software, networks and other related technology), and conducting research (ability of the respondents to collect and analyze relevant, accurate, and timely information).

It could be seen from Table 13 that communication skill had the highest mean (4.44) and research skill had the lowest mean (3.98) among the skills used by the respondents in their work.

Overall, these skills were used by the respondents in their work to a great extent. In short, these skills were important in the performance of their tasks.

In their study, Ramirez, Cruz, and Alcantara (2012) also found that communication skill was the number one skill relevant to the current jobs of the graduates. Likewise, it was the same finding of the study conducted by Buenviaje, Del Mundo, Anoñuevo, and Martinez (2015) on the Business Administration graduates.

This finding implies that communication skill has become the most sought-after skill in employment today.

Table 13

Adequacy of Training That Graduates Acquired From BU Education

Graduates' Skills	Weighted Mean
Leadership skill	4.20
Decision-making skill	4.15
Entrepreneurial skill	4.15
Comprehension skill	4.11
Critical thinking skill	4.10
Problem-solving skill	4.09
Communication skill	4.07
Human relation skill	4.05
Research skill	4.01
Information technology Skill	3.92
Grand Weighted Mean	4.08

Note. 4.20 – 5.00=very adequate; 3.40 – 4.19=adequate; 2.60 – 3.39=fairly adequate; 1.80 – 2.59=Inadequate; 1.00 – 1.79=very inadequate.

Table 13 reveals that weighted mean and verbal interpretation on the adequacy of training that graduates acquired from their BU education. The development of different skills were attributed to the training they received. Leadership skill had the highest weighted mean

(4.20) and the only one with verbal interpretation of “very adequate.” This means that leadership skill was the only skill in which the respondents perceived that they had been very adequately trained for by their BU education. This was followed by decision-making and entrepreneurial skills with 4.15 weighted mean. This meant that respondents got adequate training from their BU education to develop these two skills.

The three skills with the lowest weighted mean included human relation (4.05), research (4.01), and information technology (3.92). The respondents perceived that they got adequate training from their BU education to develop these skills. IT skill had the lowest mean in terms of adequacy of training.

Overall, the figures affirmed that respondents acquired adequate training from BU education that contributed to the development of various skills.

Table 14

BU's Placement Services in Terms of Providing Graduates With the Necessary Employment Assistance

Level of Employment Assistance	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
Very Adequate	42	15.05	3
Adequate	155	55.56	1
Fairly Adequate	67	24.01	2
Inadequate	15	5.38	4
Very Inadequate	0	0.00	
Total	279	100.0	

Table 14 shows the ranked frequency and percentage distribution of BU's placement services in providing the graduates with employment assistance. The data recorded that there were 42 or 15.05% of the respondents who rated BU's placement services as “very adequate” in providing them with necessary employment assistance. More than half

(55.56%) of the graduates rated BU's placement services as adequate. There were 24.01% of the respondents who rated the employment assistance as fairly adequate and only 5.38% who rated it as inadequate. No respondents rated the placement services of the University as very inadequate.

Comparatively, the findings of the present study were much better than the findings of the previous research done by Calma and Ocampo (2012) in which only 56.99% of the respondents were satisfied with the placement efforts of the University and there were a few who rated the services as very inadequate.

It can be inferred that more graduates are satisfied with the placement services provided them by the University.

Table 15

Respondents' Suggestions on How BU Can Improve the Employability of Its Graduates

Top Suggestions	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
More trainings, seminars, and job immersions	123	44.09	1
Hire competent professors with industry experience	75	26.88	2
Conduct more job fairs and job matching	71	25.45	3
Develop students' communication skills	63	22.58	4
Conduct mock job interviews	50	17.92	5
Widen industry linkages to make students globally competitive	48	17.20	6
Provide job opening alerts through graduate FB groups	39	13.98	7
Create graduate profile in the job market	35	12.54	8

Almost half of the respondents suggested that there must be more trainings, seminars, and job immersions. The second-ranked suggestion was to hire professors with industry experience particularly to conduct mock job interviews to prepare students in the first step of the job-hiring process. Many favored the idea to partner with other industries to widen the

linkages of BU and expose students to real-life situations. Graduates thought that hiring professors with industry experience would not only enhance their theoretical knowledge of their course but also provide actual applications and real-life scenarios where they could apply what they had learned.

Surprisingly, graduates wanted more job fairs, with specific suggestions for companies that hire employees directly and through agencies. They believed that job fairs would help them find jobs easily. Another suggestion was to develop the communication skills of students. Moreover, graduates wanted BU to extend their assistance to their graduates by creating a graduate profile and providing alerts as to job vacancies and other employment opportunities through social media such as Facebook.

Table 16

Respondents' Suggestions on How BU Can Improve Its Course Curriculum

Top Suggestions	<i>F</i>	%	Rank
• Integrate trainings, seminars, and more job exposure in the curriculum	85	30.47	1
• Assess and evaluate the competency of business professors	69	24.73	2
• Vary classroom activities, not limited to reporting	63	22.58	3
• Hire teachers competent to teach SAP and MS Excel	52	18.64	4
• Benchmark with other universities offering business courses	50	17.92	5
• OJT students must be matched with industries within their particular field	48	17.20	6
• Provide more opportunities in which students can apply what they learned in the business context	39	13.98	7
• Add more subjects on technical writing, business communication and oral communication	38	13.62	8
• Update curriculum to make it more relevant to industry needs	33	11.83	9
• Research, strategic management, and feasibility studies must be conducted by each group with an adviser	25	8.96	10

Table 16 disclosed that the number one suggestion given by the respondents to improve the course curriculum was to integrate trainings, seminars, and more job exposures in the curriculum. There should be an assessment and evaluation conducted for the competency of business professors who should think of a variety of classroom activities and not limit themselves to student reports.

The matching of the on-the-job training program of the students with the type of industry within their particular field was also suggested. The course curriculum must provide more opportunities where the students could apply what they had learned in the business context.

To improve the course curriculum, respondents also suggested that necessary subjects be added to enhance their technical writing and business and oral communication skills. This was one particular skill in which the respondents were found to have adequate training from their BU education. However, it was not good enough for them to use this skill in their present job to a great extent.

The findings of the tracer study conducted by Orejana and Resurreccion (2010) that aimed to determine the employability of the BSBA graduates were somehow similar to the findings of the present study. In their study, Orejana and Resurreccion found that more exposures/applications; additional or updated subjects; more enhancement activities; more time for projects and on-the-job trainings, and more involvement in extra-curricular activities were the top recommendations of the graduates to improve the BSBA curriculum.

Recommendations

Based on the preceding findings and discussions, the following recommendations have been proposed:

1. Students should be motivated and encouraged to involve themselves in different classroom activities and to express themselves in order to enhance their communication skills.
2. Graduating students must be provided with more pre-employment activities or programs that will strengthen their capability of passing employment requirements.
3. The Center for Career and Counseling (CCC) of the University should continue holding job fairs and extensive symposia, seminars, trainings, and lectures for graduating Business Administration students.
4. The CBAA, in collaboration with the alumni office, should maximize the use of technology such as the creation of an online group to trace the graduates and to serve as storage of data for future researchers.
5. The College should continue expanding the line-up of its industry partners and strengthening its relationship with them.
6. Suggestions and recommendations of the graduates should also be addressed by integrating them into the new curriculum.
7. More follow-up studies should be made on the affairs, status, and programs of the University and its graduates for further development of all stakeholders.

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