

A Tracer Study On The Employability Of Bachelor In Agricultural Technology Graduates (2011-2020) Of Eastern Visayas State University Burauen Campus

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Abstract: This paper mainly determined the employability of the graduates of Bachelor in Agricultural Technology of Eastern Visayas State University Burauen Campus from 2011-2020. The goal of this study was to track the performance of agricultural technology graduates in order to improve the curriculum. Specifically, it seek out to determine the employment profile of the graduates, competency or skills provided and the rate of the BAT program. The descriptive research design was used in this tracer study. The vast majority of graduates found work in government organizations as service worker and agricultural technician. Most of them their job not related to their graduated program with more than a year of work search and employed within the locality. Majority were contractual with a monthly income of below P 10,000.00 and got a job through their friends' recommendations. The competencies provided in college were high in particular to core value formation skills and human relation skills. On the hand, oral and written communication skills were perceived the least competency skills gained of graduates. The rate of the program rated as high. Teacher-student relationship most rated of the graduates while relevance to the position and relevance to the program to your professional requirements rated the least. Similar tracer studies on the employability of graduates should be conducted in the future with additional variables to be tested.

Keywords: Agricultural Technology, Competency, Employability, Graduates, Tracer Study,

1. Introduction

The current educational trend aims to produce qualified professionals who will contribute to economic growth and educational development as graduates. As a result, it is the obligation of tertiary education to guarantee that graduates are ready to encounter potential labor market needs and to fulfill the rising demand for extremely trained teaching, research, and outreach projects are all ways to build human capital (Gines, 2014). For decades, the Philippines has struggled with chronically high unemployment and underemployment rates as a developing country. Official employment creation continues to lag behind population and labor force growth. Jobs are not created at the same rate as institutions handle out-of-college diplomas (De Ocampo, et.al., 2012). A tracer study is a strategy that is widely applied in most administrations, predominantly learning institutions, to track and keep track of their students after they have graduated. Its goal is to assess a person's progress up until the time he or she obtains employment. It is a vital tool for educational organizers since it can deliver useful data for analyzing the outcomes of tertiary education and training organizations. This info can be utilized to minimize some potential deficiencies in a specified learning curriculum in terms of gratified, transfer, and importance, as well as for the institution's advance improvement in terms of quality assurance. Every school will benefit the most from the tracer research because it will allow them to determine the state of their commodities after they have graduated (Calpa, et.al., 2021). It can collect vital report on graduates' employment profiles, undergraduate know-how, at first and current recent occupations, as well as the significance of their scholastic contextual and job-related abilities. Graduate

tracer surveys be able to collect data on the relevance of the program and graduates' fulfilment through their educational groundwork (Aquino, et.al, 2015). Every academic institution's present instructional programs were assessed and improved using tracer studies as a foundation (Balingbing, 2014). Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) face a difficult task in balancing higher education progress with the professional relevance of academic courses. The employability of graduates, the sort of work, and the duration of time it takes to find their first job are all factors that go into determining learning success (Word press, 2011). One of the most important issues with learning and coaching is that it should be tailored to the present and upcoming demands of high society in transition. Education and training must be designed flexibly within a dynamic process, not according to rigid requirements. It is, and must continue to be, adaptable. It must also be assured that the precise conditions of the nation in query are conquered into account, so that learning and training can be generated as useful and resourceful as possible, so as to craft the finest probable usage of inadequate resources (Schomburg 2003). Tracer studies, which are surveys of graduates of tertiary, are regarded as critical instruments for institutional improvement, particularly in the ever-changing world of employment. He regarded this effort as a method to collect data on graduates' whereabouts, job situations, and program retrospective ratings in a systematic fashion. Any curricular program's purpose, however, is to constantly give a high-quality education (Abana, et.al., 2021). However, one of the indicators used by tertiary education institutions to guarantee that the education they get is of high quality to deliver in appropriate for business needs is graduate employability

(Conrado, et.al., 2016 as cited by Calpa, et.al, 2021). Tertiary education are frequently producing graduates who are able of using technology and nature with knowledge-based information that needs of their work environment. When examining a certain university when it comes to their graduates employment position and curriculum outcomes, this study provides valuable insight and information. It will also function as a benchmark for measuring the higher education institutions reaction to developing extraordinary and knowledgeable employees, additionally a deeper knowledge of the employability variable that is linked to agricultural technology graduates' employability. In addition, assess the employment service profiles for graduates, taking into account the importance of school-related features in the job search. Examining the advantages and disadvantages of the amenities offered and devising methods to improve the graduate's employability. This paper aimed to keep track of the performance of Eastern Visayas State University Burauen Campus agricultural technology graduates as a foundation for curriculum improvement. It was specifically designed to offer a demographic and employability profile of graduates. It also attempted to find out how graduates felt about competences developed by EVSU Burauen Campus graduates, values developed in their alma mater, and abilities that should be developed further. This paper primarily examined the employable of the graduates of Bachelor in Agricultural Technology from 2011-2020. Particularly, it sought to discover the graduates profile in terms of age, gender, marital status and year graduated. It also establish the graduate's employment profile in terms of type of organization, employment type, occupational classification, present job relevant to the course, duration of job search, place of work, employment status, monthly income and job referral. Ascertain the level of competencies provided in college and find out the rate of the program offered as perceived by the agricultural technology graduates.

2. Methods

This tracer study used a descriptive survey research approach. This study's participants were 42 Bachelor of Agricultural Technology graduates who graduated between 2011 and 2020. The questionnaire was completed by 64.47 percent of the 88 total graduates of the program. The major tool utilized in this study was a questionnaire, which comprised four parts: respondent's profile, employment information, level of competencies/skills, and the rate of the program offered as perceived by the graduates. The researcher personally administered some of the questionnaires while others were delivered by email and Facebook Messenger during the data collection phase. The completed questions were then forwarded via personal, email, and message apps. The data was tallied, statistically handled, analyzed, and interpreted.

3. Findings

3.1. Respondents Profile

As shown in Table 1 the profile of the respondents with their age, gender, marital status and year graduated. Half of the graduates were belong to age of 31 years old and above (50.0%), it was followed by ages below 25 years old (33.33%) and (16.67%) aged belong to 26 – 30 years old.

More than half of the graduates 59.52% were male and 57.14% were single. Likewise, the study mostly represented at 19.05% graduated in the year of graduation 2011 and 2019 whereas rarely represented at 4.76% graduated in the year of graduation 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2017. The findings imply that greater number of the graduates were adult, male, single and a relatively proportionate participation of graduates to this study. This further indicates that there were few students who desire to enroll in the BAT program thus minimal graduates recorded in the university.

Table 1. Respondents Profile

Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years old)		
Below 25	14	33.33
26 - 30	7	16.67
31 and above	21	50.00
Gender		
Male	25	59.52
Female	17	40.48
Marital Status		
Single	24	57.14
Married	18	42.86
Year Graduated		
2011	8	19.05
2012	2	4.76
2013	2	4.76
2014	4	9.52
2015	2	4.76
2016	4	9.52
2017	2	4.76
2018	7	16.67
2019	8	19.05
2020	3	7.14

Note: n = 42.

3.2 Employment Profile of Respondents

Table 2 indicates the employment graduates profile, results of the study revealed that there were 52.38% of the graduates working in public or government organization while 47.62% were in the private organization. However, 26.19% of the graduates were service worker, 21.43% were agricultural technician, and 19.05% were office clerk. Majority of the graduates 66.67% were working their current job not related to the course they graduated and 69.05% were searching job for more than 1 year. Mostly of the graduates 69.05% were working within the region and a large number at 88.10% were contractual in terms of employment status. Moreover, majority 76.19% were having a monthly income of below P10,000.00 while 11.90% of graduates having a monthly income P11,000.00 – P20,000.00 and above P31,000.00. There were 42.86% of graduates referred their job through friends, 16.67% got their job through advertisement in social media and referral through relatives and 9.52% got their job through advertisement in any public places. Results of this study signifies that a little half of the graduates employed in public or government organization, most of them work as service worker which is not related to the program taken while less than one forth were working relevant to their graduated program. Likewise, most of them searching job for more than a year, they were mostly working within the locality, and almost were contractual with a monthly income

valued to their present position and they hired the job through their friends' recommendations.

Table 2. Employment Profile of Respondents

Descriptions	Frequency	Percentage
Type of Organization		
Public	22	52.38
Private	20	47.62
Occupational Classification		
Agricultural Technician	9	21.43
Farm Worker	3	7.14
Utility worker	2	4.76
Service worker	11	26.19
Military	3	7.14
Cashier	2	4.76
Office Clerk	8	19.05
Farmer	3	7.14
Bantay Dagat	1	2.38
Current Job Related to the Course		
Yes	14	33.33
No	28	66.67
Duration of Work Search		
1 month – 6 months	4	9.52
7 months – 12 months	9	21.43
1 year and above	29	69.05
Place of Work		
Within the region	29	69.05
Outside the region	11	26.19
Abroad	2	4.76
Employment Status		
Contractual	37	88.10
Permanent/Regular	5	11.90
Monthly Income		
Below P10,000.00	32	76.19
P11,000.00 – P20,000.00	5	11.90
P21,000.00 – P30,000.00	0	0
P31,001.00 and above	5	11.90
Job Referral		
Advertisement in social media	7	16.67
Posted in any public places	4	9.52
Through Friends	18	42.86
Through Relatives	7	16.67
Others	6	14.28

Note: n = 42.

3.3 Competency Provided in College

As presented in Table 3, it shows the competency or skills offered and university graduates have discovered, the core value formation obtained the highest mean of 3.06 which indicates that the graduates form the foundation on which they perform work and conduct in a mannerly order. This was followed by human relation skills, personality development, information technology skills, meeting present and future needs, exposure to local community extension services, research capability, problem solving skills and critical thinking. However, it shows that oral and written communication skills (2.43) were the lowest chosen skills of the graduates wherein it should be the valuable assets of graduates when applying a job and in the workplace. This findings were supported by the results of the study of Clokie and Fourie, (2016) states that solid English and communication skills were in high demand and were

required for graduates' employment. Related results were discovered in the tracer studies of Ulanday (2021) as cited by Cornillez, Jr. et.al. 2021 and Celis, et.al. (2013) affirms that the greatest valuable skills of their graduates studied were human relations and communications.

Table 3. Competency Provided in College

Competencies	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Critical Thinking	2.56	High
Exposure to local community extension services	2.62	High
Human relation skills	3.02	High
Information technology skills	2.70	High
Meeting present and future needs	2.62	High
Oral and written communication skills	2.43	Fair
Personality development	2.74	High
Problem solving skills	2.60	High
Research capability	2.61	High
Core value formation	3.06	High

Legend: 4.00 – 3.28 – Very High; 3.27 - 2.52 – High; 2.51 – 1.76 - Fair; 1.75 - 1.00 – Low

3.4. Rate of the Program

The findings in Table 4 illustrates the rate of BAT program as rated by 42 graduates. Results denoted that the overall mean of 2.80 rated the program as high. However, teacher-students relationship got the highest mean at 3.22, this indicates that there must have a positive teacher and students' relationship in the classroom. This was followed by extracurricular activities and quality of instruction (3.10), student services, organization and administration, class size, teaching and learning environment, professors/instructors pedagogical expertise, and premium given to research. On the other hand, results shows that relevance to the program to your professional requirements and relevance to the position obtained a lowest and fairly chosen rating of the graduates. This signifies that the program taken of the graduates does not fit to the skills and knowledge required in their present profession or job. Likewise, results shows least chosen of the graduates were professors/instructors knowledge of subject matter, laboratory resources, range of the course and library resources. This connotes that graduates are not satisfied to the program taken due to some lacking needed requirements like laboratory and library resources.

Table 4. Rate of the Program

Rate of the Program	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Range of course program	2.68	High
Relevance to the position	2.46	High
Extracurricular activities	3.10	High
The importance of research is emphasized	2.74	High
Environment for teaching and learning	2.78	High
Quality of instruction	3.10	High
Teacher-students relationship	3.22	High
Library resources	2.69	High

Laboratory resources	2.65	High
Class size	2.79	High
Professors/instructors pedagogical expertise	2.77	High
Professors/instructors knowledge of subject matter	2.62	High
Organization and administration	2.89	High
Relevance to the program to your professional requirements	2.49	Fair
Student services	2.96	High

Legend: 4.00 – 3.28 – Very High; 3.27 - 2.52 – High; 2.51 – 1.76 - Fair; 1.75 - 1.00 – Low

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The vast majority of graduates found work as service workers and agricultural technicians in public or government enterprises. Most of them their current job not related to their course graduated with a search work duration of more than a year and working within the locality or region. Majority of the graduates were contractual having a monthly income of below P 10,000.00 and got a job through their friend recommendations. The competencies provided in college were high in particular to core value formation abilities and skills in human relation. Personality abilities and information technology skills were also useful skills gained of graduates. However, oral and written communication skills were perceived the least competency skills gained of graduates. As regards to the rate of the program, findings revealed that the graduates rated the program as high. However, teacher-student relationship most rated of the graduates while relevance to the position and relevance to the program to your professional requirements rated the least. The researcher recommend that: the university in particular to the agriculture curriculum should comply the needed laboratory and library resources, facilities and other requirement for the program. There is a need to hire competent and qualified faculty as required to field of specialization. Through this study it is hoped that the campus are given insights into improving the services they provide to assure their clientele quality education and similar tracer studies should be conducted in the future with additional variables to be tested.

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