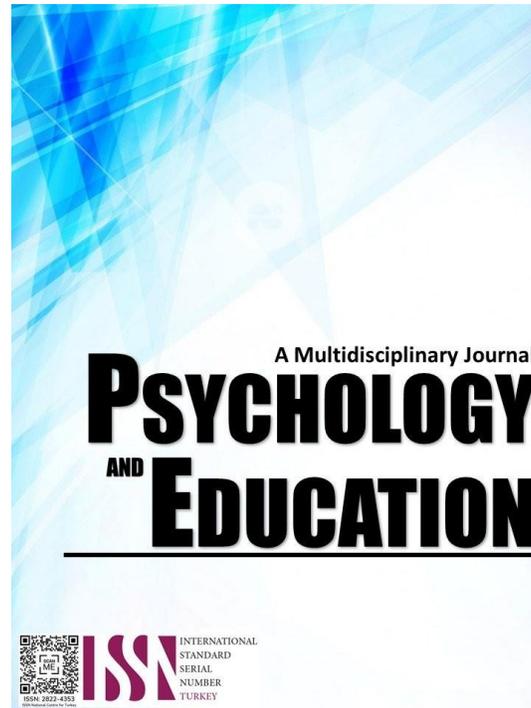


ANALYSIS OF THE EMPLOYABILITY OF EDUCATION GRADUATES



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Analysis of the Employability of Education Graduates

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Abstract

This descriptive study analyzed the employability of graduates from the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) and Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) programs at the Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology Dingle Campus. This research aims to bridge the gap between academic preparation and industry demands, providing critical insights for curriculum enhancement and institutional development. One hundred eighteen (118) graduates from 2018 to 2023 serve as respondents of the study. The researcher-made tracer questionnaire validated for content and reliability serve as data gathering instrument. The research focused on key employability metrics, such as current employment status, job relatedness to their degree, waiting time for employment, and job levels attained. The findings reveal that a significant majority of graduates are employed, with 47.6% in private institutions, 36.8% in government positions, and a minority still seeking employment. The study highlights that most graduates found employment within a year of graduation, indicating the effectiveness of the university's training programs. Graduates identified communication, management, critical thinking, and problem-solving as the most relevant skills acquired during their education. The study underscores the importance of practical training, with many alumni attributing their job readiness to the internship and career talk sessions attended during their studies. Additionally, the feedback points to the need for ongoing curriculum updates, incorporating more hands-on experiences and aligning educational content with current industry standards. The research suggests several enhancements, including increased practical training opportunities, mentorship programs, and the integration of digital tools in teaching. By addressing these areas, the College of Education can better prepare its graduates for the evolving demands of the education sector, ensuring their competitiveness and success in the workforce. These improvements are expected to foster a more robust relationship between the institution and its alumni, ultimately contributing to the quality and relevance of the education provided.

Keywords: *College of Education, graduates, employability, descriptive survey*

Introduction

Education is a fundamental tool for empowering individuals to advance their socioeconomic, political, and technical progress. It plays a critical role in preparing individuals with the necessary skills and competencies to compete in an increasingly dynamic labor market. Graduates must possess the knowledge, skills, and professional competencies provided by their educational institutions to enhance their employability and achieve success in their respective fields (Albina & Sumagaysay, 2020). Employability is influenced by various factors, including academic preparation, internship experiences, technical proficiency, soft skills, and adaptability to industry demands (Tomlinson, 2017). Thus, higher education institutions must continuously evaluate the effectiveness of their programs to ensure that graduates are well-equipped for professional success.

One effective approach to assessing the quality and relevance of educational programs is through tracer studies. These studies track graduates' employment status, career progression, and the applicability of acquired skills in their workplaces. According to Teichler (2019), tracer studies provide a comprehensive assessment of graduates' career trajectories, the alignment between their education and profession, and the competencies they have developed. Such studies serve as valuable tools for curriculum improvement, enabling institutions to align their programs with evolving industry needs. Furthermore, employment trends indicate that industries increasingly demand graduates with not only technical expertise but also critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills—all of which play a pivotal role in workplace success (Bridgstock, 2009).

The employability of graduates remains a national concern, particularly with the increasing number of degree holders entering the workforce each year. Factors such as internship experience, job market conditions, institutional reputation, industry partnerships, and accreditation status significantly affect graduates' employment outcomes (Pacleb-Ulanday, 2021). Accreditation is crucial as it ensures that educational institutions meet high-quality standards, thereby enhancing their graduates' competitiveness. Additionally, the relevance of teacher education programs must be continually assessed, as teachers play a significant role in shaping future generations. According to Ngaruiya (2018), tracer studies can identify curriculum gaps, such as the need for more hands-on training, exposure to emerging pedagogical trends, and enhanced technological integration in teaching methodologies.

The College of Education of Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology – Dingle Campus has consistently produced competent graduates, achieving high passing rates in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) over the years. However, despite conducting periodic tracer records, no comprehensive tracer study has been undertaken in the past five years. It is therefore essential to gather updated data on graduates' employability, job relevance, and the effectiveness of their acquired competencies in professional practice.

This study seeks to provide essential feedback and strengthen the university's connection with its graduates. By examining the perspectives of alumni, the study aims to inform curriculum planning and implementation, ensuring that education programs remain responsive to industry demands. Specifically, the study will analyze employment statistics of graduates from the Bachelor of Secondary and Elementary Education programs, assess the alignment between their education and professional careers, and evaluate the effectiveness of instructional methodologies.

The findings will help refine existing programs, enhance professional training opportunities, and ensure that the university continues to produce highly skilled and employable graduates who can contribute meaningfully to the education sector and beyond.

Research Questions

This study was conducted to trace graduates from the year 2018 to 2023 or a period of 5 years and further determined the employability of graduates in the two degree programs namely: Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED), and Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) as well as the whereabouts and the present situation of the graduates.

1. What is the demographic profile of the graduates in terms of:
 - 1.1. sex;
 - 1.2. civil status;
 - 1.3. Educational attainment;
 - 1.4. field of Specialization;
 - 1.5. eligibility; and
 - 1.6. work location?
2. What is the employment situation of the graduates in terms of:
 - 2.1. current employment situation (employed or not);
 - 2.2. present employment status (regular, temporary, contractual, self-employed, casual);
 - 2.3. waiting time before landing on the first job (no. of years); and
 - 2.4. nature of job?
3. What are the skills and competencies acquired by the graduates during college that help them in the performance of their chosen occupations?
4. What are the factors that affect the non-employability of graduates?
5. What are the suggestions for the improvement of the College of Education program in terms of instruction, seminars and trainings and Student Internship training?

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilizes a descriptive research design with a quantitative approach, specifically employing a tracer study method. A descriptive research design is appropriate as it aims to systematically describe the employment status, competencies, and job relevance of education graduates from Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology – Dingle Campus.

A tracer study is a commonly used method for tracking graduates' employment outcomes and assessing the effectiveness of educational programs in preparing them for the workforce. According to Teichler (2019), tracer studies provide valuable insights into graduates' career progression, skills application, and the relevance of their education in the labor market. A researcher-made tracer questionnaire was used in data gathering. The respondents of the study were the 118 graduates of Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) and Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) offered by the College of Education from school year 2018-2023. The graduates were asked to personally accomplish the survey form sent to them either through mail, e-mail or Facebook or printed. Telephone or cellular phone was used to interview the graduates and to verify the information given in the survey form.

Respondents

The research participants were the 118 College of Education students of Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology-Dingle Campus which represents the total population in which 85 are graduates of Bachelor of Secondary Education and 33 graduates of Bachelor of Elementary Education.

Instrument

The data-gathering instrument is a researcher-made questionnaire that underwent content validation and pilot testing among Education graduates of West Visayas State University- Pototan Campus with a Cronbach value of .894. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data on:

Employment status (e.g., employed, unemployed, underemployed)

Job relevance (alignment between current job and field of study)



Skills and competencies (technical and soft skills acquired in college and their applicability in employment)

Factors affecting employability (e.g., internship experience, accreditation, institutional reputation, industry demand)

Procedure

The data needed for the study was gathered using online and offline platforms through Google Forms and printed questionnaires. Data Privacy Consent statement was provided in the form before answering the questions.

Data Analysis

After scores were determined, all data was coded and entered into SPSS. All data was computed set at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Statistical analyses were conducted using the following statistical tools:

Mean– was used to determine the employability of education graduates as a whole and as to different variables

Frequency count– was used to determine the number of respondents’ answer per item.

Percentage – was used to express as a proportion of a whole to represent findings in very variables and compare results.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Graduates as to Variables

Table 1 shows the graduates’ distribution as to variables. The data shows 83.05% (98) of the respondents are females and twenty (16.05%) are male respondents. It indicates that most of the graduates of the College of Education from 2018 to 2023 are females. When classified as to civil status, 72.04% are single, 30 or 25.42% of the respondents are married, and only 3 or 2.54% are Single Parent. It indicates that the number of graduates of the College of Education from 2018 to 2023 is generally single as of the present time of the study. In addition, Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of the respondents by field of specialization or majors. It shows that most of the respondents are BSED Filipino majors with 42 or 35.59%, followed by the Science majors with 22.03% or 26 respondents, English majors with 10.17% or 12 respondents and Math majors with respondents or 4.24%. On the other hand, a total of 33 BEED graduates or 27.97% serve as respondents of the study.

In addition, Table 1 also indicates the number of respondents who took any government eligibility examination; since the BSED and BEED is a board offering program. Results showed that ninety-seven (97) or more than 82 percent (82.20%) of graduates took the Licensure Examination of Teachers (LET), five (5) or 4.24 percent took the civil service exam, and sixteen (16) or 13.56% did not take any eligibility examinations. It determined that most of the graduates of the Education programs are licensed professional teachers. When classified as to work location, most graduates (80.51%) are working within the country, six (6) graduates or 5.08% are working abroad while seventeen (14.41%) are not working. These findings are consistent with a tracer study conducted by Abela et al. (2015), which reported a high employment rate among BSED and BEED graduates.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Graduates as to Variables

	<i>BSED</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>BEED</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>%</i>
Sex						
Male	17	20.0	3	9.1	20	16.95
Female	68	80.0	30	90.9	98	83.05
Civil Status						
Single	66	77.6	19	57.6	85	72.04
Married	19	22.4	11	33.3	30	25.42
Single Parent			3	9.1	3	2.54
Eligibility						
Licensure Examination for Teachers	72	84.71	25	75.8	97	82.20
Civil Service	3	3.53	2	6.1	5	4.24
Did Not Take	10	11.76	6	18.2	16	13.56
Work Location						
Local	70	82.36	25	75.76	95	80.51
Abroad	3	3.53	3	9.09	6	5.08
Not Applicable (Unemployed)	12	14.11	5	15.2	17	14.41
Total	85		33			

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents as to Specialization

	<i>Specialization</i>	
	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
English	12	10.17
Filipino	42	35.59

Math	5	4.24
Science	26	22.03
BEED	33	27.97
Total	118	

Employment Situation of Graduates as to Different Variables

Figure 1 shows that out of 118 graduates of the College of Education from SY 2018-2023, 47.46% (56) graduates are employed in private institutions, 45 (38.14%) graduates are working in government while 17 respondents (14.41%) are unemployed. The result implies that most of the College of Education graduates were employed in the Private institution. This is supported by the study conducted by Locara, et al (2018), which most of Education graduates are employed in the private academic institutions after they have graduated.

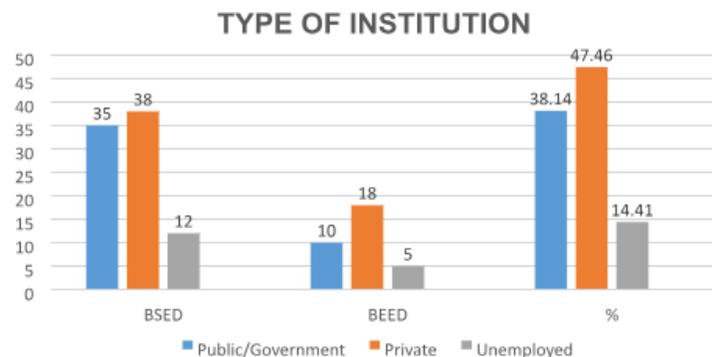


Figure 1. Employment of graduates as to type of institution

Figure 2 indicates the graduates' distribution based on their status of employment. It reveals that 65.68 % of the respondents are employed in the regular/permanent status, 31.76 percent are in contractual/casual basis, 8.24% are in probationary status, 12.94 % are self-employed and 20.00 percent are not employed. It only determined that most of the graduates of the College of Education are currently employed and, therefore, an implication that the graduates of the program are employable in the industry. This result aligns with the study conducted by Ligasan (2012), which emphasizes the strong employment prospects of teacher education graduates due to their acquired competencies and skills that meet industry demands."

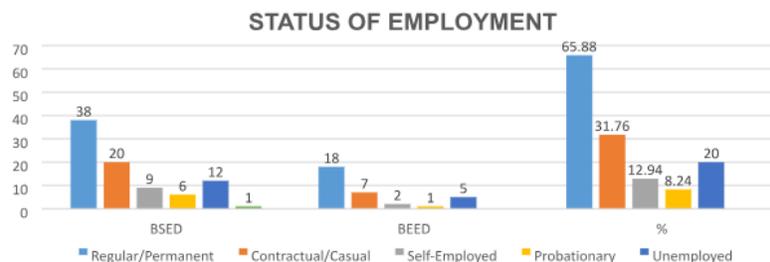


Figure 2. Status of Employment

Figure 3 shows the number of years the Education graduates waited before landing a job. More than 50 % (54.24%) respondents took less than a year before landing a job. 27 students (22.88%) took between 1 to 2 years to land a job, 11.02% (13) students took more than 2 years to land a job and 11.86 % of the graduates are not yet employed. These findings align with the study of Balingbing (2023), which emphasized the high employability rate of teacher education graduates from Philippine state universities, with most securing jobs within a year of graduation. Similarly, the tracer study conducted by Navida, Evangelista, and Ranis (2019) revealed that the majority of Bachelor of Secondary Education graduates in the Philippines found employment within a year, indicating that the teacher education program effectively prepares students for the workforce.

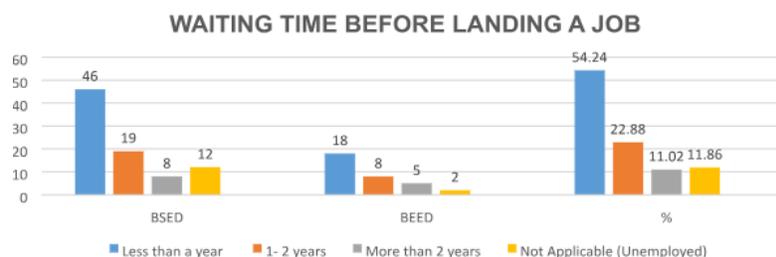


Figure 3. Waiting Time Before Landing a Job

The data revealed that the majority of graduates are employed in academic institutions, with sixty-two (62) individuals or 52.54%, followed by fifteen (15) graduates or 12.71% who are working in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and service industries. Additionally, nine (9) graduates or 7.63% have secured employment in other job sectors, while seventeen (17) or 14.41% remain unemployed.

These findings align with the study of Ramirez et al. (2014), which emphasized that education graduates possess high employability rates, particularly in academic institutions, due to their specialized training and qualifications. Their study further highlighted that while many education graduates secure teaching positions, others explore opportunities in industries such as BPO and corporate training, leveraging their communication and analytical skills. The results of this study reaffirm that 85% of Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) and Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) graduates have access to diverse job opportunities, demonstrating the relevance and adaptability of their academic preparation in various professional fields.

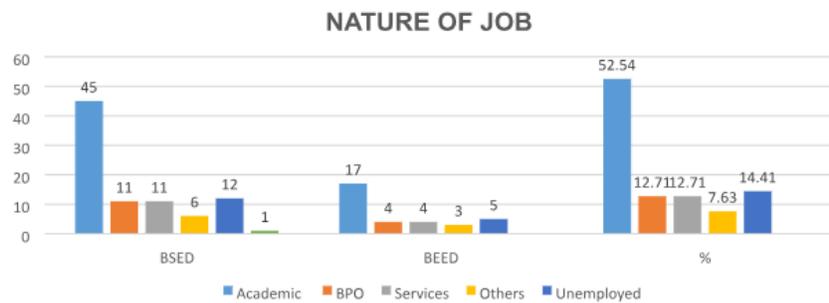


Figure 4. The employed graduates' distribution according to the nature of their job

Skills and Competencies Acquired by the Graduates during College that Help them in the Performance of their Chosen Occupations

Figure 5 illustrates the skills and competencies that graduates consider relevant or applicable to their job performance. Among these, communication skills are the most highly valued, with 108 out of 118 respondents (91.5%) identifying them as useful or relevant. This is followed by management skills, cited by 79 respondents (66.9%), critical thinking skills by 73 respondents (61.9%), and problem-solving skills by 66 respondents (55.9%).

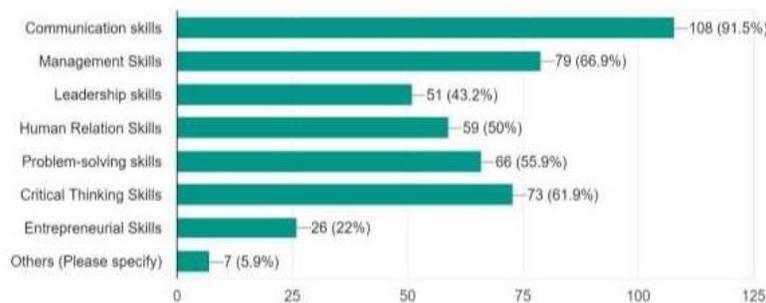


Figure 5. The skills acquired by the graduates

These findings suggest that the skills acquired through the College of Education program are highly applicable in various professional settings. This aligns with the study of Pacleb-Ulanday (2021), which emphasizes that teacher education graduates must develop essential employability skills—such as problem-solving, communication, planning, and organization—during their university training to enhance their employment prospects. In addition, according to a study by Bridgstock (2009), career management skills significantly influence graduate employability.

Factors that Affect the Non-Employability of Graduates

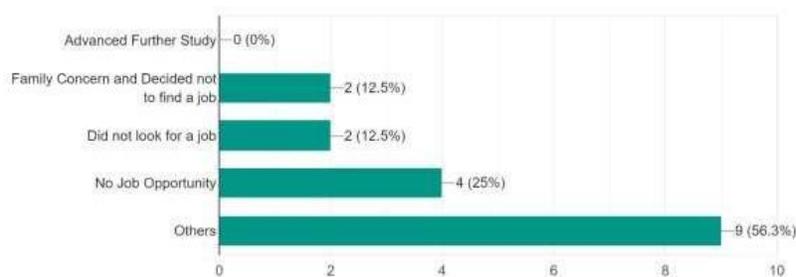


Figure 6. The factors that affect the non-employability of graduates

Figure 6 demonstrates reasons or causes of unemployment based on the unemployed seventeen (17) respondents. Nine (9) or fifty-six (56.3%) state that they decided not to look for employment or find a job because of personal concern or other issues in their life. This is followed by four (4) or twenty-five percent (25%) stated that there was no job opportunity. Whereas, two (2) or 12.5% did not seek employment due to family concerns. It determined that personal matters and other issues is the reason why most of the respondents did not seek employment opportunities. These results aligned with a survey by the Social Weather Stations (SWS) in September 2023 found that joblessness was highest among college graduates, at 25.6% of the total unemployed adult labor force. This suggests that even among educated individuals, personal decisions and expectations significantly influence employment status.

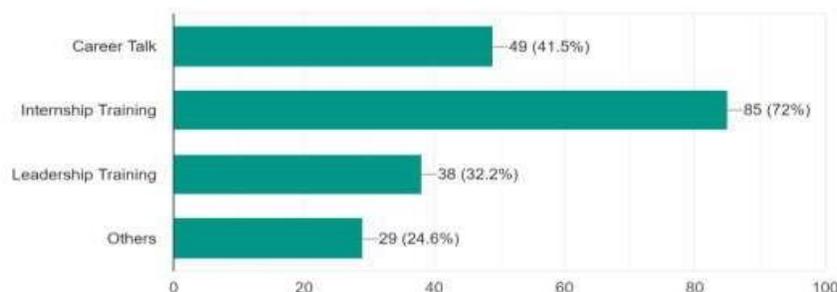


Figure 7. The training attended by the graduates

Figure 7 shows the training attended by the graduates during college. Data shows that 72 % of the graduates perceived the importance of attending training on Internship Training. 41.5 percent of the graduates also attended the Career Talk and 32.2 percent for Leadership Training. The result implies that the College of Education graduates are trained to be equipped with skills and competencies during their college. CHED recognizes this fact as mentioned that the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines has spearheaded the conduct of GTS among selected Higher Education Institutions to obtain data that would show if HEI's are offering courses or programs that produce graduates to meet the needs of industry and society. With the GTS, HEIs would be able to align their efforts with the manpower needs of industry (CHED CMO #s 74 and 75 s. 2017). This study aligns with findings by Albina and Sumagaysay (2020), who found that internships and training programs significantly enhance graduates' job readiness.

Conclusions

The College of Education effectively equips its graduates with the necessary skills and competencies for employment, as reflected in their high employability rate. Professional training, including internships and development programs, plays a vital role in preparing students for the workforce. Essential skills such as communication, management, and critical thinking contribute to their career readiness and adaptability. The transition from graduation to employment is generally swift, highlighting the relevance and effectiveness of the college's training programs in fostering job preparedness.

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