

Tracer Study and Employability Skills Acquisition of Teacher Education Graduates

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ABSTRACT

Employability corresponds to skills and expertise that make a person ideally suited for the potential employer. A diploma is no longer a guarantee of employment and that entails employability is an essential concern as competition for graduates, both locally and abroad because of the remarkable increase in the enrollment rate of higher education institutions. HEI's is expected to provide and develop the employability skills and abilities of graduates that could be desirable for a potential employer. Graduates' employability also measures the fulfillment of the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the HEI's. The graduates' success in landing a decent job also gives credit to the HEI's where they graduated. The study looked into the tracer study and employability skills acquisition of the graduates. This study used a descriptive- correlational design. Respondents were the 108 graduates of the Teacher Education Program for the school year 2013-2014, 2014- 2015, 2015- 2016. Teacher education graduates attained a high rate of employment. The majority are employed at the time of study. Among the scopes of the employability skills acquisition gathered, the majority of graduates highly acquired the employability skills from the university. The result of the analysis between sex and employability skills acquisitions showed that the profile variable (Sex) has no significant relationship to the employability skills acquisitions of the teacher education graduates. It can be inferred that the sex of graduates has no impact on the level of employability skills acquisition of graduates.

Keywords

Tracer Study, Employability, Skills, Graduates, Teacher Education

Article Received: 10 August 2020, Revised: 25 October 2020, Accepted: 18 November 2020

Introduction

In the 21st century, the contributions of teachers not only lie in educating children's young minds and souls, but also focused to the social obligation of nation-building and preparing future leaders. Higher education institutions need to recognize the value of improving every aspect of individuals and, through their graduates, provide well-equipped human capital that will also contribute to the nation's economic growth. This vision is closely related for equipping students with the appropriate skills to secure a better job after graduation. Their achievement in securing a decent job would also be an accomplishment on the part of the institution where they graduate. In the Philippines, the basic entry level requirement in the public institutions is graduate should be a Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) passer, whereas, in private schools, they are encouraged but not necessarily required. Therefore, new graduates prefer to go to private schools most of the time but had only applied to public institutions at least a year after passing the exam. Much of this trend must be said considering the economic side and security of tenure in the public over in private schools. However, private and public schools need to increase their usual number of teachers with the implementation of K-12, providing these graduates a better chance of being hired in a much shorter time frame. Usually, employability skills are developed by students to equip themselves after graduation to meet the demands of various careers. In addition, professionals in the 21st century require skills such as problem-solving and strategic capabilities, decision-making, teamwork and time management, risk-taking and collaboration to be qualified

for a job in the workplace (Shafie & Nayan, 2010). Furthermore, the aim of the study is to trace and assess the status and to determine the employability skills acquisition of teacher education graduates. And through this study, researcher will be able to provide data in the on- going project that strengthen the partnership and relationship of the university to its graduates and helps the university to develop and retain high quality students and maintain its competitive advantage in the local, national and global market place as well as the basis for inputs to management review.

Methods

Descriptive- correlational research design was use in this study since its purpose is to obtain and present facts regarding graduates' profile and employment data, as well as investigate the perceptions regarding their employability skills acquisition, and the relationship between profile variable and employability skills of graduates. The survey targeted a total of 131 Teacher Education graduates from the SY 2013-2014, 2014- 2015, 2015-2016 but only 108 were retrieved. Table 1 presents the Population and Sampling of Teacher Education Graduates. The survey questionnaire was given personally to the graduates and also uploaded in the social network for the graduates to conveniently answer it. The instrument consists of three sections. The first section contains the profile of teacher education graduates, the second section described the graduates' employment data and the third section of the questionnaire contains employability skills acquisition of graduates. The questionnaire is assumed to answer honestly and truthfully

by the graduates' despite of their hectic schedule so that the validity and reliability of the study can be assured. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, weighted mea, chi- square and yate's correction formula were used to analyze data

Table 1. Population and Sampling of Teacher Education Graduates

Batch	Population (N)	Sample (n)	Percentage (%)
2013-2014	25	20	80%
2014-2015	37	32	86%
2015-2016	69	56	81%
TOTAL	131	108	

Results & Discussions

Profile of Teacher Education Graduates

Table 2 Profile of Teacher Education Graduates as to Year Graduated

Batch	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
2013-2014	20	19%
2014-2015	32	30%
2015-2016	56	51%
TOTAL	108	100%

Table 2 shows the lists of years were respondents graduated. Of 108 respondents, 20 (19%) graduated in year 2013- 2014. There are 32 (30%) in year 2014-2015 and 56 (52%) from batch 2015-2016. Thus, most of the respondents were from batch 2015-2016.

Table 3. Profile of Teacher Education Graduates as to Year Graduated Age

Age	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
22 and below	10	9%
23 to 25	53	49%
26 and above	45	42%
TOTAL	108	100%

Reflected in the table is the profile of graduates in terms of age. The age spans from 23 to 25 has the highest frequency (49%).

Table 4. Profile of Teacher Education Graduates as to Civil Status

Civil Status	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Single	74	69%
marriage	34	31%
Total	108	100%

The above table presented the profile of graduates in terms of Civil Status. Majority of the respondents are single with 69%. While 31% of the respondents were married. The study of Dones (2013) also revealed that majority of teacher education graduates are single.

Table 5. Profile of Teacher Education Graduates as to Sex

Sex	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	21	19%
Female	87	81%
Total	108	100%

As reflected in table 5, majority of the respondents is female with 81 %. Whereas, only 19% of the respondents are male. Thus, there are more female respondents than male respondents. As cited by Dones (2013), Statistics Division of the United Nations stated that women dominate the teaching profession rather than men.

Employment data as to Employment Status

Table 6. Employment data as to Employment Status

Are you currently employed?	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Total	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	30	51	99	19%
No	2	2	5	9	81%
Total	20	32	56	108	100%

The data above shows that teacher education graduates attained a high rate of employment among its graduates. Majority are employed at the time of study with 92%. It is supported by the study of Acosta (2016) which stated that if the college has attained a high rate of employment among its graduates, it implies that the college's mission, function and responsibility as a higher education institution to prepare future elementary and secondary teachers with quality pre-service education is successfully accomplished.

Table 7. Employment data as to Reasons why not Employed

Reasons why not employed	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Family concern & decision not to find job	1	20%
Failure to pass the LET	1	20%
Health related reasons	3	60%
Did not look for a job	2	40%
Total	5	100%

The table shows reasons why graduates is not employed. Of the five respondents who were not employed, there are reasons appear to cause such decision. Only one (20%) graduate whose reason is family concern and decision not to find job, one (20%) because he/she failed to pass the licensure examination for teachers, three (60%) graduates because of health related reasons and only two (40%) graduates did not look for a job. Thus, number one reason why graduates are not employed is because of health-related reasons.

Table 8. Employment data as to Place of Employment

Place of Employment	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	Total	Percentage (%)
Local	15	29	49	93	94
Abroad	3	1	2	6	6
Total	18	30	51	99	100%

Table above shows the place of work of graduates. There are 94% of graduates were locally employed and 6% are employed abroad. Thus, most of the teacher education graduates are working locally.

Table 9. Employment data as to Time Gap

Time Gap	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	Total	Percentage (%)	Rank
Less than a month	2	7	18	27	24	3
2-5 months	11	9	27	47	47	1
6-12 months	7	11	6	24	24	2
more than 1 year	0	3	0	3	3	4
Total	18	30	51	101	100%	

Table above showed that 47% of the graduates get in a job in a span of 2 to 5 months. 11 graduates from batch 2013-2014, nine graduates from 2014- 2015, and 27 graduates from batch 2015- 2016. 24% of graduates find their first job in less than a month. There are two (2) graduates from batch 2013- 2014, seven graduates from 2014- 2015 and 18 graduates from batch 2015- 2016. In 6 to 12 months there are 24% of graduates who find their first job, seven graduates from 2013-2014, eleven graduates from 2014- 2015 and six graduates from 2015- 2016. The least number of graduates who finds their first job after graduation falls under more than a year is only 3%. It indicates that most of the graduates has been hired and employed months after they graduated. Nugroho et.al (2012) emphasized that the waiting time of graduates in their employment is due to the work preferences.

Table 10. Employment data as to Nature of Work

Nature of Work	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	Total	Percentage (%)	Rank
Public	11	9	31	61	62	1
Private	6	10	18	34	34	2
6-12 months	1	1	2	4	4	3

Total	18	30	51	99	100%	
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Results show the nature of work where graduates are currently employed. A total of sixty-two percent (62%) of the graduates are currently employed in the public school. Graduates who are currently employed in private institution has a frequency of 34 (34%). For others, one graduate from batch 2013-2014 is currently employed in a semi- private institution, a graduate from batch 2014-2015 is also employed in a semi- private institution and the other two graduates from batch 2015- 2016 has owned a family business. Thus, most of the graduates landed a job in public schools. It was supported by the study of Acosta (2016), being employed in the government means better benefits and job security compared to those who are employed in the private schools. Moreover, it is also stated in the study that better salary and benefits motivate graduates to get employed in the public schools.

Table 11 Employment data as to Years of Experience

Years of Experience	2013- 2014	2014- 2015	2015- 2016	Total	Percentage (%)
less than a year	1	1	3	5	5
one year	1	1	5	7	7
more than one year	16	28	42	86	83
3 years	0	0	3	3	3
4 years	2	0	0	2	2
Total	20	30	53	103	100%

Table shows the year of work experience of graduates. Of 100 total number, there are 86 (83%) graduates who have more than 1 year experience in teaching. There are seven (7%) graduates who has a one-year experience in teaching. Five (5%) graduates answered that they only have less than a year experience. A number of three graduates from batch 2015- 2016 has 3 years' work experience and two graduates from batch 2013- 2014 has a 4 years experience. It proves that employer can hire teachers even with limited number of years' experience in the field of teaching.

Table 12 Employment data as to Years of Methods of Finding Job

Methods of Finding Job	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	Total	Percentage (%)
Walk-in applicant	7	14	29	50	47
Recommendation	6	7	9	22	21
Internet	4	5	5	14	13
Vacancy Notice	3	4	13	20	19
Total	20	30	56	106	100%

As shown from the table, out of 106 who responded in the question, 50 (47%) graduates indicated that they apply on their own or as a walk- in applicant. There are 22 (21%) graduates who finds their job through recommendation. 20 (19%) graduates find their job through vacancy notice. Least

number of respondents said that they find their job through the internet which only has 14 (13%) graduates and those of them is from batch 2013- 2014 with four graduates, 2014-2015 with five graduates and also five graduates from batch 2015- 2016. Thus, majority of graduates finds their way to get hired as a walk-in applicant. According to some graduates, it feels like an accomplishment if you get hired by your own effort, without the help of someone that will recommend you to get hired in a particular institution.

Table 13 Employment data as to Job Position

Job Position	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Total	Percentage (%)
Admin. Staff		1	2	3	3
Lecturer	3			3	3
Instructor		6	3	9	9
Teacher I	15	23	41	79	80
others (Please specify.)			5	5	5
Total	20	30	56	99	100%

As indicated from the table, the highest frequency of graduates is teacher 1 and/or classroom teacher with 80%. Nine (9%) graduates are got hired in a Higher Education Institution as an Instructor. There are also three (3%) graduates who is currently an administrative staff and a graduates who is currently a customer service representative with only 5%. Thus, majority of the graduate is currently employed as a teacher and/or classroom teacher in the educational institution.

Table 14 Employment data as to Gross Monthly Salary

Gross Monthly Salary	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Total	Percentage (%)
₱ 5, 000.00 to 10, 000.00	1	5	3	9	9
₱ 11, 000.00 to 15, 000.00	2	4	3	9	9
₱ 16, 000.00 to 19, 000.00	3	5	7	15	15
₱ 20, 000.00 to 25, 000.00	9	15	37	61	62
₱ 26, 000.00 and Above	3	1	1	5	5
Total	18	30	51	99	100%

Based from the table, majority of graduates earned a monthly salary of ₱20, 000. 00 to ₱25, 000. 00, 61 or 62%. 15% falls under ₱16, 000.00 to ₱19, 000.00. A total of 9% who has a salary of ₱5, 000.00 to ₱10, 000.00. Least number of graduates who has a salary of ₱26, 000.00 and above only has five 5%. In the study of Cook (1999) as cited by Labaria (2016), it stated that job satisfaction can be attain if employee is satisfied with the salary they get in their job.

Level of Employability Skills Acquisition of Graduates

Table 15 Employability Skills Acquisition of Graduates

Employability skills	Mean	Int	Rank
1 Problem solving	4.56	HA	2
2 Leadership	4.46	A	9
3 Ability to work independently	4.48	A	5
4 Creativity	4.45	A	10
5 Time Management	4.47	A	7
6 Communication	4.69	HA	1
7 Technological	4.40	A	11
8 Critical thinking	4.48	A	5
9 Imaginative thinking	4.47	A	7
10 Planning and Organizing	4.50	HA	3
Average Weighted Mean	4.50	HA	

Legend:

4.50-5.00 Highly acquired (HA)

3.50-4.49 Acquired (A)

2.50-3.49 Moderately acquired (MA)

1.50-2.49 Somewhat acquired (SA)

1.00-1.49 Not acquired (NA)

As reflected in the table, the employability skills of graduates have an average weighted mean of 4.50. It indicates that graduates highly acquired the employability skills they need when applying for job and that the university have enlightened them. Looking closely on each skill, most graduates avowed they are pleased and highly acquired the communication, problem solving as well as planning and organizing skills. Graduates' emphasized in this indicator the achievement in their chosen field or career. Some graduates gave an acquired level in leadership, ability to work independently, creativity, time management, technological, critical and imaginative thinking skills.

Relationship between employability skills of graduates in teacher education programs

Table 16. Relationship of sex and skills acquisition of the respondents

Variable	N	P-value	Remarks/conclusion	Interpretation
Profile (SEX) and Employability Skills	108	0.72	Accept Ho	not significant

N=108

p < .05; Reject Ho

*p > .05; Accept Ho

Table 5 present the relationship between sex and employability skills among graduates. It has p-value of 0.72 and the decision is to accept the null hypothesis since the p-value is more than the level of significance at 0.05 using chi-square. Therefore, accept HO, it revealed that there is no significant relationship between sex and employability skills of graduates.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Teacher education graduates of CvSU- Silang attained a high rate of employment among its graduates. Majority are employed after graduation. As to reasons why not employed, health related issues ranked first. As to place of employment, most graduates are working locally. As to time gap between graduation and first job, 2 to 5 months ranked first. As to nature of work, most of the graduates landed a job in a public school. As to years of work experience, majority of the graduates has more than 1 year work experience. As to methods in finding job, most graduates find their way to get hired as a walk-in applicant. As to job position, majority of graduates are currently employed as classroom teacher and as to gross monthly income, most graduates earned a monthly salary of 20,000.00 to 25,000.00. Teacher Education Graduates highly acquired the employability skills such as problem solving, communication, planning and organizing from the university. Profile variable (sex) has no significant relationship to the employability skills acquisition of graduates.

Limitations and Future Studies

Employability of graduates is very important as it measures the skills and capability of graduates to be able to get hired from the potential employer. Graduates must possess the employability skills such as problem-solving, communication, as well as planning and organizing skills, leadership, ability to work independently, creativity, time management, technological, critical and imaginative thinking skills that the university have taught and enlightened them. With all the findings of the study, the placement officer of the university should work closely with the training providers and linkages so that they can assist graduates in their job search. It is revealed in the study that most of the graduates applied for a job as a walk-in applicant.

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