

Tracer Study on the BSBA-HRDM Graduates in a State University

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the employability of the graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Human Resource Development Management of the University of Northern Philippines. Specifically, it sought to determine the graduates' profile, position, appointment, the type of agency where employed, and the time it took to land a job. The researchers, through a descriptive design, gathered the data with the use of a questionnaire, documentary analysis, and interviews. Results revealed that most of the respondents were employed in the private and government sectors. In addition, the majority of the respondents had 16 months or more job-hunting time. Based on the findings, the researchers proposed that the students should be engaged in seminars, training, conferences, and workshops beneficial for future work-related endeavors. The college should intensify activities like job fairs to help graduating students find job after graduation. This will increase the employment rate and lessen the job-hunting time of the graduates. The college should establish linkages to private entities in the region to endorse its graduates and disseminate the vacant positions of the private entities. This will increase the employment rate and lessen the job-hunting time of the graduates. A follow-up study should be conducted on the performance of graduates of the program.

Keywords: BSBA-HRDM, Documentary analysis, Employability, UNP

INTRODUCTION

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), whether private or public, are mandated to provide quality education for graduates to fill job vacancies or openings in various workplaces nationally, internationally, or globally. HEIs play a complex role in national development.

Fulgence (2015) defines higher education as any form of post-secondary research, professional, or technical training, or academic study that is offered by universities or other recognized higher education organizations. Higher education institutions and universities around the world are dealing with serious issues and challenges that include equitable access to the advantages of international cooperation, equity of conditions, employability of graduates, (Pardo & Pichay, 2019 & Pardo et al., 2021) improved staff-faculty development, enrichment and preservation of quality in teaching and research, among others.

Sato (2021) also said that education is important for building a country because it helps meet the labor needs of all parts of society. Globalization makes it clear that we need a good education. In the age of the knowledge-based economy and learning societies, formal and informal education plays an increasingly important role in promoting economic stability, social cohesion, individual growth, sustainable development, a culture of peace, and global citizenship. Even though the way we study, work, live, and "think about work" has changed,

traditional formal education still does not give students the knowledge and skills they need. To get students ready to add to knowledge instead of just receiving it, a new pattern must emerge that is developmental, focused on people, and aware of the environment.

Every country, particularly developing nations like the Philippines, lacks appropriate employment possibilities for young people entering the workforce (Moumen et al., 2018). As thousands of graduates join the workforce each year, it is clear that this major and ongoing issue exists. Sadly, many recent graduates struggle to find work simply because the degree they completed is not in demand in the Philippines.

As enterprises expand and labor demands rise, employment possibilities exist through numerous line agencies, local government entities, and government-owned and controlled firms. Although employers' demands for labor rise as their companies expand, they do not just hire people; they also look for graduates with the right combination of hard and soft skills, as well as traits like professionalism, dedication, perseverance, honesty, initiative, and other traits that their particular organization may value. Employers usually want to hire people who have the skills to do the job and the personality to fit in with the company's culture. So, people who want the job should research and learn as much as possible about it (Writing, 2017).

Fulgence (2015) says, "Employability after graduation is more than just being able to find a job right away. Instead, a person can make a positive contribution to society and live a happy life afterward. Higher education gives you a wide range of opportunities to develop these traits." Graduates should be encouraged to recognize and improve their critical skills. They should also be asked to think about their experiences at university to help them figure out what skills they can use after they leave. This is important because getting a job is becoming increasingly important to most students as higher education grows and the job market changes quickly.

The BSBA-HRDM program aims to prepare graduates for a career in Human Resource Management in various companies, including those in the manufacturing, marketing, and service sectors, as well as in the pharmaceutical, semi-conductor, food and beverage, banking, and other industries. It enables students to understand human resource management's concepts, principles, theories, and philosophies. The results serve as input for curriculum improvement and the enhancement of the teaching-learning process to produce quality graduates to meet employers' job requirements. In addition, the results of this study can serve as a guide for future business administration students in their career planning.

Based on the abovementioned literature, the researchers were motivated to determine the employability of the graduates of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, major in Human Resource Development Management of the University of Northern Philippines of School Year 2014-2015 to 2016-2017. Specifically, it sought to determine the profile of the graduates, status of their position, status of appointment, type of agency where employed, and the length of the job-hunting time of the respondents.

METHODOLOGY

The study made use of the descriptive method of research to describe the profile of the graduate-respondents, the status of BSBA Human Resource Development Management graduates, the degree of relevance of their course and their present jobs, the agency where they are employed, and the length of job-hunting time prior to employment. Descriptive research methods were proven to be effective in this kind of research. Similar steps in the study of Pardo, et al. (2019), Quario et al. (2020), Pardo et al. (2021), Rojas et al. (2021), and Navarro et al. (2021) were considered. A total enumeration of all the 462 graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Human Resource Development Management of the school years 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 comprised the population of the study. There were 462 graduates who acted as respondents of the study. The researchers adapted the questionnaire of Rabena and Belizar (2005), a questionnaire used in their employability study. Some parts of the instrument were revised to suit the needs of the study. The said questionnaire gathered information on the work status, positions, status of appointment, type of agency where employed, and job-hunting time of the graduate-respondents. The researchers applied the ethical guidelines of social science research throughout the whole process of data gathering, analysis, and presentation. Permission for the conduct of the study was obtained from the University of Northern Philippines through an operational plan. For the respondents, their full consent was sought first through a letter of consent. The objectives of the research were explained to the respondents, who then decided whether they wanted to participate or not. The gathered data were treated statistically using frequencies and percentages. These data were presented in tabular form in order to have a clear picture of the employability of the graduates.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On Work Status of BSBA Human Resource Development Management Graduates

Table 1 shows that the majority of the graduate respondents (330 or 71.43%) are employed; 35 (7.58%) are self-employed; and 97 (20.99%) are unemployed. This implies that the majority of the graduates in the BSBA HRDM are employable after graduation. The employment rate of the graduates (97.32%) is higher than the employment rate in the Ilocos region as of April 2020 (82.3%), by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

Table 1

Distribution of the graduates as to employability

Year	2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		Overall	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Work Status								
Employed	103	91.96	98	56.98	129	72.47	330	71.43
Self-Employed	6	5.36	15	8.75	14	7.87	35	7.58
Unemployed	3	2.68	59	34.30	35	19.66	97	20.99
Total	112	100	172	100	178	100	462	100

Position of BSBA Human Resource Development Management Graduates

Table 2

Percentage distribution of the respondents as to positions occupied

Year	2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		Overall	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Middle Mgt/Supervisory	50	48.54	10	10.20	18	13.95	78	23.63
Non-Supervisory	53	51.46	88	89.80	111	86.05	252	76.37
Total	103	100	98	100	129	100	330	100

As evident in the table, out of the 330 employed HRDM graduates, most of the graduate respondents (252 or 76.37%) occupy non-supervisory positions, and there are 78 (23.63%) who are occupying supervisory positions. This implies that it is quite difficult or not that easy to become part of middle management or be at a supervisory level. From the data gathered, those who are occupying supervisory levels are either supervisors or managers of pawnshops, department stores, grocery stores, and the like. On the contrary, while the non-supervisors were found to be working in almost the same organization/firm, most do remain to be as staff or ordinary employees of private business entities. Logically, this is so because, just like in any other institution, entities have a generally greater number of employees rather than managers/supervisors.

Status of Appointment of BSBA Human Resource Development Management Graduates

Table 3

Percentage distribution of the respondents as to status of appointment

Year	2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		Overall	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
Status of Appointment								
Permanent	47	45.63	46	46.94	98	75.97	191	57.88
Casual/ Probationary/ Job Order	56	54.37	52	53.06	31	24.03	139	42.12
Total	103	100	98	100	129	100	330	100

The data shows that of the 139 employed graduate respondents, 42.12% are in a casual/probationary/job order position, while 191 respondents (57.88%) are permanent. In-work poverty is labor policy's biggest challenge, according to Rutkowski (2015). Poverty is caused by low earnings and a lack of steady, rewarding jobs. The two main causes of in-work poverty are low education and a lack of lucrative employment. Poor people work in "terrible" jobs. They have low-wage, temporary, or informal jobs. Informality makes minimum wage and employment protection laws ineffective for the poor. Their poor bargaining strength prevents them from benefiting from wage growth. Because "excellent" jobs are few,

especially in rural areas, even educated people must work as low-paid laborers. Eliminating supply-side (better education and skills) and demand-side barriers to meaningful employment is essential to reducing in-work poverty (better jobs). Young and poor people need improved education and new economic tools. Nevertheless, strengthening the formal, higher-value-added economy can provide better jobs. Labor policy should aid structural change. Simpler and more flexible labor regulations are needed to reallocate workers from less productive to more productive activities and from the informal to the formal sector. Poor workers, especially young ones, may benefit from targeted training. If profitable, such projects should be trialed and expanded.

Type of Agency where the BSBA Human Resource Development Management Graduates were Employed

Table 4

Percentage distribution of the respondents as to type of employment agency

Year	2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		Overall	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Type of Agency								
Public	27	26.21	22	22.45	10	7.75	59	17.88
Private	76	73.79	76	77.55	119	92.25	271	82.12
Total	103	100	98	100	129	100	330	100

The majority of employed graduate respondents (8271 or 82.12%) work for private companies or organizations, while 59 (17.88%) are employed by the government. This demonstrates that it is easier to find employment in the private sector in the area. The private sector often uses independent business owners, corporations, or other non-government-owned and controlled organizations to utilize labor or human resources. Manufacturing, financial services, a number of professions, the hotel and tourism sector, and other non-government employment are all possible places to find work. A percentage of the company's earnings are used to pay the employees. Employees in the private sector often have greater wage increases, more career alternatives, greater opportunities for promotion, less employment stability, and a more limited range of benefits than those in the public sector. Working in a more competitive industry typically requires longer hours in a demanding environment compared to working for the government. The public sector provides jobs for people through federal, state, or municipal governments. There are standard civil service roles available in the fields of healthcare, education, emergency services, the armed forces, and other regulatory and administrative agencies. The government pays its employees a portion of tax money. Compared to their private sector counterparts, public sector workers often enjoy more comprehensive benefit packages and job security; after a probationary period, many government positions are filled by permanent employees. It is difficult to get pay increases and promotions, but it is relatively easy to switch jobs in the public sector and keep your benefits, vacation time, and sick pay. Working for a government agency gives a more stable work environment free of market pressures as opposed to employment in the private sector.

Job-Hunting Time of the BSBA Human Resource Development Management Graduates

Table 5

Percentage of job-hunting time of the respondents

Year	2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		Overall	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Job-Hunting Time								
11-15 months	85	75.89	58	33.72	92	51.69	235	50.87
16 months or more	18	16.07	40	23.26	37	20.78	95	20.56
None	9	8.04	74	43.02	49	27.53	132	28.57
Total	112	100	171	100	178	100	462	100

Table 5 shows that half of the respondents (235 or 50.87%) find jobs in 16 months or more, while there are 227 (49.13%) who find employment for 11-15 months, including the self-employed. Admittedly, finding a job in the Philippines is very difficult. This result contradicts some previous employment studies conducted that the graduates were employed within six months, or 7-11 months after their graduation (Pardo, et al., 2019; Pardo et al., 2021). Cities have high unemployment rates and are highly inhabited. Because of this, there is fierce competition among those who live in the area. Despite the slim chance of landing a job, job seekers continue to apply for each position they can in the hopes that one day they will be able to support themselves and their families. On the other hand, three (2.68%) people did not spend time looking for work because they were unsuccessful.

CONCLUSIONS

The majority of the graduate respondents are employed, occupying non-supervisory positions, occupying a permanent position, working in the private sector, and spent 16 months or more job hunting. Senior graduates are more likely to be employed and occupy supervisory and permanent positions. The employment rate of graduates of SY 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 is less than that of the Ilocos region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The students of the program should be more engaged in related seminars, training, conferences, and workshops that are beneficial for future work-related endeavors. The college should intensify the conduct of activities like job fairs and the like to help graduating students find their job after graduation. This will increase the employment rate and lessen the job hunting time of the graduates. The college should establish linkages to private entities in the region to endorse its graduates and to disseminate the vacant positions of the private entities. This will increase the employment rate and lessen the job hunting time of the graduates. A follow-up study should be conducted, particularly with the performance of graduates of the program in different organizations.

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