

The employability of the BSBA graduates of 2014-2015 and 2015-2016: An assessment

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Abstract - *One of the happiest moments felt by students is their graduation, thinking that this is the end of their sacrifices as students. But after a few months when they will start to look for a job, they will realize that graduation is not the end. It's the beginning of meeting the challenges to be in their working lives and begin to manage the transition from being students to employees. They have to face the reality that looking for a job now is not an easy task, unless they have professional or political connections to back them up, they have good credentials as passport to apply for a job, or they have the experience which companies are looking for from the applicants. This study provides valuable information for evaluating the performance of the graduates who are working in a particular company after earning a degree. It helps in analyzing information concerning the employment profile of the graduates who are the best people to give the information as evidence of the program's effectiveness in terms of employment and positions held. [5] The top priority of the BSBA program is to produce graduates whose qualifications fit with the business companies' requirements. With the help of the BA mentors, the future graduates will also be taught on how to be ready to manage a successful business after earning their degree no matter what type of business they are prepared to put up in the future. This study was conducted to determine the employability of the BSBA graduates from 2015-2016. It also helped in the job placement of the graduates and determined the BSBA Program related factors to job placement. The data gathered are important documents to be kept in the BSBA Department for accreditation purposes. It also aimed to find some interventions the department will conduct should there be negative findings as far as the students' job placement is concerned for the improvement of the department. A descriptive survey method of research was applied with a survey questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument which was sent to graduates on line. There were 99 graduates in 2015 and 2016, and questionnaires were sent to them online through their email ad, but unfortunately, only 26 submitted their reply.*

Keywords - *Employability, professional connections, political connections, interventions, curriculum review, student trainings*

Introduction

Most of the students' goal to get a degree is to find a job after graduation. The BSBA is a program wherein students are taught how to start a business but only few business graduates plan to manage their own business or family business.

In today's employability problem of graduates who are new in the job world, there must be collaboration between the school and the company where the graduates plan to apply for work to prepare them to be skilled and employable (Rateau, 2011).

Our young graduates who possess the skills and knowledge they have learned in school are those which the school is proud of and failure to have these abilities means the school particularly the Department failed in their mission.

To prepare the students to become a successful part of the company's workforce, they should be trained and be given the skills through the school program where they are enrolled with the support and guidance of the BA mentors to lessen their difficulties in applying for a job considering the stiff competition nowadays from graduates of famous schools like DLSU, UST, and other prestigious colleges and universities.

To solve the employability problem of students and to get them into meaningful settings in which they can apply what they've learned in school is part of the mission in the BSBA Program.

This study aims to determine the employability of the Graduates in 2015-2016. It also aims to know the factors affecting their job performance and why and how they were employed. Furthermore, this study proposes a program to improve the employability of the future graduates and find some interventions the BA Department will conduct should there be negative findings as far as the students' job placement is concerned and the length of time graduates can be employed. It also seeks to answer questions on why they still stayed in their present work now even if their job is not in line with their major field of specialization, identify their career status, problems encountered doing their present jobs, their evaluation as far as the BA Program is concerned and their suggestions/recommendations if they observed that something is lacking in the BA Program. Aside from these objectives, this study purposely aims to have a record of a tracer study to be kept in the Department for the PACUCOA, ISO, ISA accreditations.

Review of Related Literature

The School of Business and Computer Studies (BSCS) has been granted Level II accreditation and this is a great challenge to the BSBA Program implementers to maintain its level and to move vertically. To materialize this aim, the Program must identify some inputs or information on program outcomes to improve the curriculum if there is a need in terms of employment of the graduates.

As observed, there are plenty of mismatches, underemployment, and other issues regarding the graduates' employability.

The higher education has been concerned with the development of the students, their knowledge and skills which any educated person should expect to have by the time of graduation and to inspire and enable individuals to develop their capabilities to the highest potential levels throughout life so that they grow intellectually, contribute effectively to society, achieve personal fulfillment and are well- equipped for work. (Maripaz and Ombra, 2016)

One of the important skills that students should possess is the Communication skills. As observed, this is a problem experienced not only in our school but many schools in the country. This skill is deemed to be the most useful competencies learned by the graduates because languages play an important role in their work.

Professional subjects are relevant for job placement and the faculty member's communication and mastery skills proved the most important in terms of school related factors in terms of faculty and instruction (Celis, Festuo, and Cueto, 2013).

People go to college and finish college degree with the goal of being employed and earn a living. The primary aim of the school is to produce competent and highly qualified graduates employable here and abroad. This can be done by reviewing the curriculum of each program,

employing and maintaining competent faculty members and improve instructional facilities (Aquino, 2016).

There are plenty of colleges/universities offering quality education nowadays yet many graduates find themselves unemployed after earning a degree. Thousands of these young graduates can be seen lining up in job fairs around the country looking for good employment opportunities (Labaria, 2016).

Our Country is now facing a problem on absorbing the high number of graduates to be part of the labor force. Graduates are so disappointed of not being able to land a job, a job that is well-paid and secure. The employability of graduates from an institution is very important to note. It is through proper training that one may get a decent job after graduation.

Methodology

This study used the Descriptive Survey Questionnaire. It is descriptive in nature since it tries to describe the employability of BSBA Graduates in 2015 to 2016. The BSBA Program offers four (4) Major Courses; the Financial Management (FM), Marketing Management (MM), Operations Management (OM), and Human Resource and Development Management (HRDM). A descriptive survey method of research was applied with a survey questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument which was sent to graduates online. A link was sent to the 99 graduates in 2015 to 2016, and questions were formulated and edited to make the graduates feel convenient to answer each question. They can even answer the questions on their mobile phones. After clicking the choice, answer the short statement questions, they have to click "SUBMIT" at the end of the questionnaire. Then, it is automatic that the researcher can receive their answers/reply.

Among the 99 graduates in 2015 and 2016, only 26 submitted their reply which is 26.26% of the total graduates in those years. The 26 Graduates were used as the Respondents of the Researcher. The study led to the determination of the factors influencing the employability of BSBA Graduates.

Data Presentation and Analysis

After summarizing the results, data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the Frequency Percentage and Ranking Methods of analyzing data. There were 26 Respondents, 6 are graduates in 2015 and 20 are graduates in 2016.

Table 1. Gender Profile of Respondents (Batch 2015)

GENDER	F	M	HR	O	TO	%
ER	M	M	DM	M	TAL	
Female	3	1	0	1	5	83
Male	1	0	0	0	1	17
Total	4	1	0	1	6	100

Among the 6 respondents who graduated in 2015, eighty three (83%) of them are female with an average age of 22. This means that young women are very patient in looking for jobs while still single. They don't want to stay home idle. Most of them are major in Financial Management.

Table 2. Gender Profile of Respondents (Batch 2016)

GENDER	F	M	HR	O	TO	%
ER	M	M	DM	M	TAL	
Female	3	8	2	2	15	75
Male	2	2	0	1	5	25
Total	5	10	2	3	20	100

Fifteen (15) graduates in 2016 are female and only five (5) are male and majority are female who are major in Marketing Management. As observed, most of the BA students take Marketing Management as their major field of specialization.

Table 3. Respondents' Major Field Of Specialization (Batch 2015)

BSBA Major Fields	No. of Graduate s	2015 No. of Respondent s	%
FM	13	4	31
HRDM	3	0	0
MM	20	1	5
OM	7	1	14
TOTAL	43	6	14

Out of the forty three (43) graduates, in 2015, only 6 or 14% submitted their reply. Most of them are Financial Management Major.

Table 4. Respondents' Major Field of Specialization (Batch 2016)

BSBA Major Fields	2016		
	No. of Graduates	No. of Respondents	%
FM	11	5	45
HRDM	5	2	40
MM	35	10	29
OM	5	3	60
TOTAL	56	20	36

Among the 56 graduates in 2016, 20 were used as respondents or 36% replied, most are major in Marketing Management. This shows that majority of the BSBA graduates took Marketing Management as their major field of specialization.

Table 5. Positions Held by the Respondents in their companies (2015)

POSITION	F M	M M	O M	HR DM	T ot al	%
Accounting Staff	1	0	0	0	1	20
FCC Analyst	1	0	0	0	1	20
Collection Rep	0	1	0	0	1	20
Customer Advisor	1	0	0	0	1	20
Call Center Agent	0	0	1	0	1	20
TOTAL	3	1	1	0	5	100

Among the six (6) respondents in 2015, four (4) are now working in banks, which most of them dream to be part of bank employees, one (1) is in the BPO, and one (1) is engaged in business.

Table 6a. Positions Held by the Respondents in their companies (2016)

POSITION	F M	M M	O M	HR DM	T ot
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	al				%	
Concierge/Service	1	1	2	10		
HR/Office Assistant		1	1	2	10	
Oprtn/ Fin. Asst/ Fraud Contrl/ Proj Asst (Bank)	2	5	7	41		
Advertising/ Marketing	1	2	2	5	25	
Cabin Crew		1	1	5		
Teacher		1	1	5		
BPO	1		1	5		
TOTAL	5	8	1	3	17	85

This table shows that most of the graduates in 2016 are working in banks as shown by 45% and 25% are in Advertising/ Marketing Companies. This further shows that most of them are working using their major field of specialization. The respondents are mostly Marketing Management major.

Table 6b. Self-Employed Respondents (2016)

2016 Respondents	F M M	M M M	O M M	H R D M	To tal	%
Self-Employed	0	1	2	0	3	15

Fifteen (15) percent of the respondents in 2016 as shown in Table 6b are now managing their own businesses. This means they are also using what they learned in school as far as business knowledge is concerned.

Table 7. Channels of Communication used by the Respondents to apply for a job (2015)

CHANNELS OF	No.	%
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COMMUNICATION		
Internet	2	40
Friends/Relatives	2	40
Newspapers	1	20
TOTAL	5	100.00

Most of the respondents used Internet and Friends/Relatives as their means to find the jobs they are having now while one used newspaper. The other one is not using any means to find for a job because he is self-employed.

Table 8. Channels of Communication used by the Respondents to apply for a job (2016)

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION	No.	%
Internet	6	35
Friends/Relatives	10	59
Walk-in	1	6
TOTAL	17	100.00

Through Friends/Relatives was used by 59% of the 2016 respondents, the rest used Internet. Among the 20 respondents, 3 are self-employed.

Table 9. Job Related to major field of specialization? (2015)

Remarks	No. of Respondents	Percentage
YES	4	67
NO	2	33

Based on the respondents' answer, 67 % of the respondents said YES that their present job is related to their major field of specialization. This includes the self-employed graduate as he is managing his own business now, while of 33% said that their work is not related to their field of specialization. They just stick to this job because it is easier to get, and it is hard to get a job aligned to their major field of specialization.

Table 10. Job Related to major field of specialization? (2016)

Remarks	No. of Respondents	Percentage
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YES	13	65
NO	7	35

Majority of the graduates in 2016 have jobs related to their major of specialization. This means that they are using their knowledge learned in school as BSBA Graduates. This includes the three (3) self-employed graduates who are actually doing the practical application of the knowledge learned in school.

Table 11. Monthly Basic Salary of Respondents (Batch 2015)

SALAR Y RANGE	F M	M M	HR DM	O M	TO TAL	%
P10k– P15K	1				1	20
P15k– P20K	1			1	2	40
Above P20K	1	1			2	40
TOTAL	3	1	0	1	5	100

Table 11 shows that 40% of the respondents have salaries above P20K which is competitive enough for graduates who are new in the job world. The same percentage rate (407%) of the respondents are also receiving salaries between P15k to P20K which is also good enough for them and they are already contented receiving this amount, while the self-employed respondent has a salary between P8K to P10K, still contented and stick to managing his own business.

Table 12. Monthly Basic Salary of Respondents (Batch 2016)

SALAR Y RANGE	F M	M M	HR DM	O M	TO TAL	%
P8K – P10K		2	1		3	18
P10k– P15K	3		1		4	24
P15k– P20K	2	2		1	5	29
Above P20K		5			5	29
TOTAL	5	9	2	1	17	100

Table 12 shows that most of the respondents 29% and 29% are receiving enough salary ranging from P15-P20K and above P20K, respectively. This is one of the reasons why they still

stayed in their work now as they think they are receiving salary which is competitive and more than enough for them as new employees or new entrants in the job world.

Table 13. Monthly Basic Salary of the Self-Employed Respondents (Batch 2016)

SALAR Y RANGE	F M	M M	HR DM	O M	TO TA L	%
P8K – P10K				1	1	33.3 3
P15k– P20K				1	1	33.3 3
Above P20K		1			1	33.3 3
TOTAL	0	1	0	2	3	100

The Three self-employed respondents (2016) have income ranging from P8k-P10k, P10k-P15k, and above P20K which they seemed enough for them for their daily needs. This is the reason why they did not look for another job. Another reason is their practical and actual application of knowledge learned in school.

Table 14. Length of time to find employment after graduation (2015)

Period in finding for a job after graduation	No. of Respondents	%
Less than 3 months	4	80
Between 3 – 6 months	1	20
TOTAL	5	100.0

80% of the respondents have found their jobs in less than 3 months after graduation which means that it did not take them a longer period of time in looking for jobs, while one took him between 3-6 months. One respondent also did not take him a long period of time because he immediately joined the business world by having his own business.

Table 15. Length of time to find employment after graduation (2016)

Period in

finding for a job after graduation	No. of Respondents	%
Less than 3 months	8	40
Between 6 – 8 months	1	5
Almost a year	1	5
Did not apply for work after graduation	\ 10	50
TOTAL	20	100.0

Most of the graduates in 2016 did not apply for a job which comprised 50% of the respondents. This is due to personal reason. Others took a vacation to relax before entering into the job world. Forty (40) percent took less period of time in looking for a job, less than 3 months. This means that it was easy for them to look for a job after graduation which is a positive outcome of the SDCA graduates.

Table 16. Current Status in Present Work (Batch 2015)

STATUS	No.	%
Full-Time	4	80
FT Probationary	1	20
TOTAL	5	100.00

Most of the respondents (80%) are Full Time, while one (1) has a Probationary Period waiting for the time Full Time Regular status. The self-employed respondent is also Full Time managing his own business.

Table 17. Current Status in Present Work (Batch 2016)

STATUS	No.	%
Full-Time	14	82
Contractual	2	12
FT Probationary	1	6
TOTAL	17	100.00

Eighty Two percent (82%) of the respondents in 2016 are occupying Full Time Status among the 17 respondents while 3 of the 20 respondents are self-employed. This shows that they are already contented doing the jobs that they have now as far as salary and the nature of work they are doing.

Table 18. Problems encountered by the respondents in the workplace (Batch 2015)

PROBLEMS	N0. OF RESPONDENTS	%
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More on People Oriented	1	33
Low salary	1	33
Communication skills	1	34
Total	3	100

Table 18 above shows that 3 among the 6 respondents in 2015 encountered problems in doing their jobs. One has a problem on facing different attitudes of people especially if the work involves constant communication with them. Good communication skill is important in this type of job. The remaining 3 did not encounter job-related problems and are enjoying working in the companies because they have jobs related to their major field of specialization.

Table 19. Problems encountered by the respondents in the workplace (Batch 2016)

PROBLEMS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	%
Stiff Competition	2	20
Seniority and overuse of power	1	10
Communication skills	5	50
Irate Customers/Dealing with impatient customers	1	10
Too much working hours	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

Table 19 shows that communication skills is a problem encountered by 50% of the respondents. This is a problem which most of our graduates are experiencing. Stiff Competition is another problem which is a natural experience considering that they are new in the job world. They don't have the experience which companies are looking for an applicant, Ten (10) respondents did not encounter job-related problems. This includes the three (3) self-employed graduates in 2016.

Table 20. Respondents' Recommendations Based on problems encountered (2015)

Recommendation	%
Improve Communication Skills	33.33

Let students attend trainings	16.67
Review and Improve the curriculum	66.67
Undertake further studies	16.67
Improve MOA with other companies to give students proper exposure	33.33

Based on their recommendations as shown in Table 20, 66.67% recommended for a curriculum review anticipating that something is lacking in the curriculum. Next is to improve or enhance communication skills which is a nationwide problem. MOA between the school and the company should be improved to expose future graduates in the actual work scenario.

Table 21. Respondents' Recommendations based on the problems encountered (2016)

Recommendation	%
Improve Communication Skills	55
Let students attend trainings	15
Review and Improve the curriculum	25
Undertake further studies	15
Improve MOA with other companies to give students proper exposure	25

As shown in the table above, 55% of the 2016 graduates recommended for an improvement in Communication Skills, which they think should be done in school. Another recommendation is a review of the curriculum and improvement of MOA between the school and the companies where students are going to have their On-the-Job Training for exposure and preparation for their future job.

Table 22. Ranking of the contribution of the BSBA Program of Study to the Respondents' present job

BSBA Contribution	RANK
Ability to work under pressure	1

Team Spirit	2
Time Management	3
Technical Knowledge	4
Entrepreneurial Skills	5
Decision Skills	6
Leadership Skills	7
Communication Skills	8
Creative Skills	9
Work Independently	10

As to the rating of the students in terms of the BSBA Program that contributes to the performance of their jobs, Ability to Work under Pressure ranked first, followed by Team Spirit, then Time Management, and finally Work Independently ranked tenth.

Summary of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendation

Summary of Findings. Findings show that 75% of the respondents (2016 graduates) who have jobs are Female. This explains that women have the perseverance in anything that they do to reach their goals and to partially solve their financial problems. A proof also is that among the 99 graduates, most of those who submitted their reply are women.

Among the 99 graduates, only 26.26% replied and submitted their reply, 5 (19.23%) of the graduates in 2015 and 21 (32% in 2016. It seems that some of the graduates don't care to spend a single minute of their time in knowing and getting information as to what is happening to their alma mater. This is the reason why only 26 replied among the 99 graduates.

Most of the Respondents are now working in banks as Operation Specialist, Financial Analyst, working in the Fraud Control Unit, Customer Advisor, and a Project Assistant. The rest are in the BPO as Call Center Agents and Accounting Staff.

Salary is good enough for single persons receiving a salary ranging from P10K-P20K, some respondents are receiving above P20K. This is one of the reasons why they still stayed in the company even if some of them are not applying their major field of specialization because for them their salary is already competitive.

Conclusion

Tracing the employability of the graduates in 2015 to 2016, the researcher has discovered only few problems encountered by the respondents. This shows that our graduates are still competent and have the perseverance in dealing with few problems they have encountered and problems that they will encounter in the future.

Most of their answers are positive except for a few who are still encountering problems in their jobs. One of the problems is Stiff Competition. In a workplace where most of the employees have the same field of specialization, stiff competition will always arise. Another is seniority and overuse of power. In every organization, promotion and other benefits in a company are given to employees based on seniority, maybe one of the respondents, experienced the overuse of power for senior employees which is inevitable in an organization. Communication skill is another problem which is experienced by most colleges and universities in the country nowadays. Some

problems are encountered by the self-employed graduates and being in the business is not an easy responsibility considering that they are new to this activity.

Recommendation

As per evaluation of the results in tracing the employability of the graduates in 2015 to 2016, the researcher found out that their major problem is on Communication Skills which is a problem experienced not only the graduates in St. Dominic but nationwide. As mentor in the college department, requiring students to speak in English in the school campus is not enough. The English Department and the BSBA Department should work hand in hand in enhancing the communication skills of the students. Aside from the role of the English Department, it is also recommended that Business English particularly Business Correspondence should be part of the discussions in all the Professional Subjects knowing that these subjects involve business transactions and talking to businessmen is inevitable.

The BA Department will also review the curriculum as part of its Plans and Programs. In connection with this, course syllabi should also be part of the review to guide the Professors in incorporating the Business English in the Professional Subjects leading to the Program Educational Objectives (PEO) and other Program Outcomes.

Most of the respondents suggested that the department should strengthen the MOA with companies that give the OJT students the proper exposure for them to prepare in their future jobs. There should be collaboration between the company and the school wherein the company will identify the skills they need so that the school will see to it that the students will be equipped with what the company is looking for.

The BSBA Programs particularly the business professional subjects should give some other practices that will enhance the graduates to be expert in business. One of the ways to practice Business application is to have a business center in the BSBA Department. This business will not compete with the school's business, but it is only a practice for students. This will be done in the iLab.

Strengthening the linkages between the department and the alumni might be one of the ways to improve the BA Department. This is one of the reasons why only few graduates answered the questionnaire because they are not always informed of the activities in school. This makes them less supportive to any school activities. This can be done by having the initial contact database of the BSBA graduates, and then involve them in any big activities of the department.

Students should also be required to attend seminars related to their major field of specialization within and outside the school. They should also be required to attend competitions as this will encourage them to improve their creative and critical thinking.

They are required to take the examination of the Registered Business Professionals or The Registered Marketing Professionals. This examination is a plus factor for the graduates to facilitate their job application and to improve their performances in the job world.

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