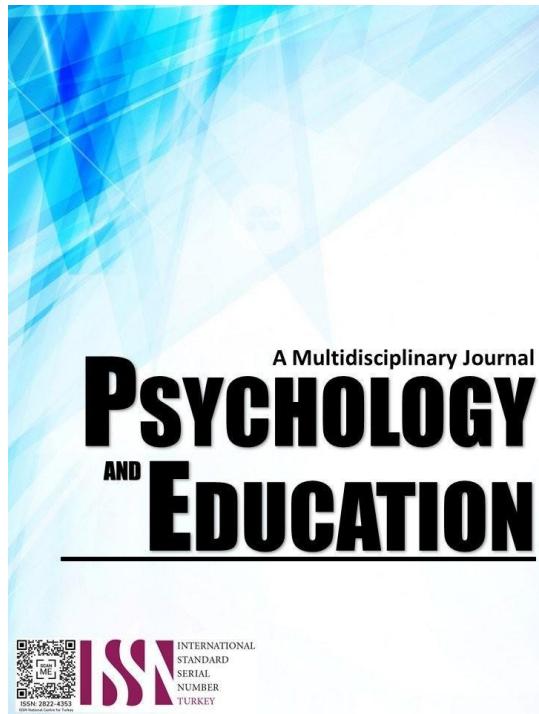


**TRACER STUDY OF GRADUATES IN MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
MAJOR IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MAED) AND MASTER OF
ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MAEM) OF SULTAN
KUDARAT STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE
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Tracer Study of Graduates in Master of Arts in Education Major in Educational Management (MAED) And Master of Arts in Educational Management (MAEM) of Sultan Kudarat State University Graduate School 2022-2024

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Abstract

Every educational institution strives to produce competent and highly skilled graduates who can go on to excel locally or globally. A graduate survey could highlight how academic programs and course offerings can be modified to meet institutional goals. Tracer studies enable universities to produce combined information on the employment of their alumni that also reflects the quality of education they offer. This study described the socio-demographic profile and employability of the Master of Arts in Educational Management/Master of Arts in Education Major in Educational Management program graduates of Sultan Kudarat State University from 2022 to 2024. Forty-two (42) graduates were included in the study, which used a descriptive-correlational research design. The data was gathered through questionnaires using Google Forms. Before enrolling in the graduate program, graduate respondents were all employed in the Department of Education as permanent teachers. Affordable tuition fees and prospects for better advancement were among the reasons graduates chose the university. There is no significant difference between the respondents' job-level positions before and after pursuing the graduate program. Meanwhile, the degrees earned by the graduates were related to their job-level position. The management and staff of the graduate program created a curriculum that considers industry demands, particularly those of the education sector. Moreover, the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained in graduate school can significantly impact careers, the workplace, and society. Finally, even though attending a graduate program costs significant money and takes a lot of work and dedication, graduates may gain financially, intellectually, and personally.

Keywords: *tracer study, graduate program, employment, demographic profile, job level position*

Introduction

People's knowledge and skills are the foundation of a country's economy, and skill requirements change as globalization, technical advancements, and outside investment change. To stay up to date with changes, people must obtain the skills necessary to be profitable and productive, which may be accomplished through education. Learning is the most crucial system for empowering individuals for their socioeconomic, political, and technological advancements. According to Ramirez et al. (2014), higher education institutions' learning environments must consider this when organizing their educational programs. To ensure that course curricula are highly caliber, higher educational institutions can make a significant contribution by using tracer study concepts to develop an atmosphere of sustained learning empowerment for former students' ongoing professional development.

Every educational establishment aims to generate capable and highly skilled graduates who can eventually perform well on a local or international level. Research is an effective instrument that can offer useful data for assessing the graduates' performance (Hipona et al., 2021).

According to the Philippine Qualifications Framework, agencies such as DepEd, CHED, TESDA, PRC, and DOLE have the responsibility to assess, analyze, and suggest education requirements for higher education, technical skill development, and basic education, as well as for licensure examination alignment (Gines, 2014).

Tracer studies, such as those written by Schomburg (2016) and Reyes (2021), are crucial for evaluating academic programs. These guarantee that academic programs are sufficiently relevant to the demands of the industry. This strategy aids in enhancing the abilities acquired via the execution of tracing tasks, promoting longer-term professional development in addition to immediate employability.

Sultan Kudarat State University (SKSU) is one of the SUCs, situated in the southern part of the nation. It possesses the obligation to observe and record the performance of its graduates in order to assess responsibility and ensure that academic initiatives have had a significant influence on society, the community, and the person, like any other state university (Cerado et al., 2020).

Anderson (2017) argued that school systems have an all-time responsibility for the high performance and academic success of students. Effective school leadership for high achievement and student accomplishment. It is questioned if school administrators have the managerial skills, leadership ideologies, and techniques needed to ensure that educational institutions operate effectively.

This study aimed to evaluate the professional outcomes of graduates from the Master of Arts in Educational Management and the Master of Arts in Education with a specialization in Educational Management. The skills and abilities developed during graduate studies must align with the evolving needs of educational institutions and the broader community. The career accomplishments of these graduates served as evidence of the program's relevance and effectiveness.



Research Questions

The general purpose of the study is to determine the employment statuses of the graduates of the Master of Arts in Educational Management/Master of Arts in Education Major in Educational Management program of Sultan Kudarat State University. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of Graduates in the MAED and MAEM programs in terms of:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. sex;
 - 1.3. civil status;
 - 1.4. region of origin;
 - 1.5. place of work;
 - 1.6. degree completed;
 - 1.7. years graduated; and
 - 1.8. scholarship in completing the graduate program of the respondents?
2. What are the respondents' reasons for taking and pursuing Graduate Studies?
3. What is the employment profile of the Graduates in terms of:
 - 3.1. employment rate;
 - 3.2. employment status;
 - 3.3. classification of occupation;
 - 3.4. major lines of business in their present employment; and
 - 3.5. gross monthly earnings after completing the graduate program?
4. What is the job level position of the respondents before and after completing the Graduate Program?
5. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' job level position before and after taking the MAED/MAEM program?
6. Is there a relationship between degrees earned and job level position of the graduates in the MAED/MAEM program?

Methodology

Research Design

The present undertaking utilized descriptive-correlational research design. This research specifically used the survey to gather data on the respondents' socio-demographic and employment profiles, the reasons for pursuing graduate studies, the applicability of the curriculum to their current employment, and the overall significance of the graduate school program. Descriptive research is appropriate for identifying population characteristics, frequencies, trends, and categories.

The correlational approach was applied to examine the relationship between the respondents' employment statuses before and after completing the MAED or MAEM program. This method is particularly effective for investigating associations within observational data, offering valuable insights into the direction and strength of relationships between variables without implying causation (Polit & Beck, 2021).

The data collected in this study were statistically processed and analyzed using frequency counts and percentages, mean and rank.

Respondents

This study collected data from 52 graduates of the Master of Arts in Education, specializing in Educational Management, at Sultan Kudarat State University. The graduates completed their degrees between 2022 and 2024, with 6 graduates from 2022, 17 graduates from 2023, and 29 graduates from 2024. By including all graduates from this period, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive assessment of their socio-demographic profiles and employment outcomes. This approach ensured a detailed and reliable understanding of the program's impact on their professional careers.

Master of Arts in Education Major in Educational Management (MAED) and Master of Arts in Educational Management (MAEM) graduates from 2022 to 2024 served as the respondents of this study.

Purposive sampling was considered in this study because the respondents were from different cities and towns within Region XII and BARMM. Initially, total population sampling was employed. However, a total of 42 (81%) available samples comprised the study. One kind of purposive sampling strategy according to Rai and Thapa (2015) is total population sampling, in which you decide to look at the entire population with a specific set of traits. Target samples, which are non-representative sub-groups of a wider population, are created to meet very specific needs.

Instrument

This study used an online survey to collect the data needed for this study. The study consists of three main parts. Demographic profiles of respondents, educational background, and employment data. The research instrument for this study was adapted from the work of Hitalia and Protacio (2024), titled "Degree and Employment Status of Graduates of SKSU Graduate School." The instrument underwent



validation to ensure its suitability for this study. Its content was aligned with the required criteria and indicators set by accreditation and other quality assurance standards. However, since the original instrument covers the entire SKSU graduate program, certain items that are not relevant to the MAED and MAEM programs were excluded by the researcher.

Procedure

A systematic methodology was utilized for this study starting with securing official permission from the President of Sultan Kudarat State University (SKSU) to do the research within the university. Upon receiving approval, a request letter was sent to the university registrar, seeking access to relevant documents, including the contact details and academic profiles of the graduates participating in the study. A tracer survey was conducted for graduates of the MAED and MAEM programs at the SKSU Graduate School. The researcher contacted the target respondents using a social networking platform. The questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms by the researcher. This survey gathered information on their work status, career advancement, and other pertinent aspects. Upon the completion and submission of the surveys, the researcher gathered and systematically arranged the data, assuring precision and comprehensiveness. The concluding phase of the method entailed the analysis of the collected data using suitable statistical instruments to discern trends and correlations between the degrees obtained and the employment status of the graduates, alongside other significant aspects examined in this study. Figure 2 shows the data collection procedure for this study.

Data Analysis

This study used percentile and frequency distribution methods to analyze and interpret the data. The frequency and distribution of individual variables for respondents were determined using percentages. To determine whether the observed difference is statistically significant or likely due to chance, t-test was used to compare the means of the two groups.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the interpretation of data gathered in the study.

Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic profile of MAED graduates in terms of age, sex, civil status, degree completed, year graduated, and scholarship in completing the graduate program.

Table 1. *Socio-Demographic Profile of MAED Graduates*

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
31-35	6	43%
36-40	5	36%
41-45	2	14%
51-55	1	7%
Total	14	100%
Sex		
Male	4	29%
Female	10	71%
Total	14	100%
Civil Status		
Single	7	50%
Married	5	36%
Widowed	1	7%
Married but not living with spouse	1	7%
Total	14	100%
Region of Origin		
Region XII	11	79%
BARMM	3	21%
Total	14	100%
Place of Work		
Region XII	10	71%
BARMM	4	29%
Total	14	100%
Year Graduated		
2024	14	100%
Total	14	100%
Scholarship in completing the program		
	0	0

N=14

Table 2 presents the profile of MAEM graduates in terms of age, sex, civil status, degree completed, year graduated and scholarship in



completing the graduate program.

Table 2. Socio-Demographic Profile of MAEM Graduates

	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
26-30	8	29%
31-35	7	25%
36-40	7	25%
41-45	6	21%
Total	28	100%
Sex		
Male	10	36%
Female	18	64%
Total	28	100%
Civil Status		
Single	15	53%
Married	12	43%
Widowed	1	4%
Total	28	100%
Region of Origin		
Region XII	24	86%
BARMM	4	14%
Total	28	100%
Place of Work		
Region XII	24	86%
BARMM	4	14%
Total	28	100%
Year Graduated		
2022	3	11%
2023	12	43%
2024	13	46%
Total	28	100%
Scholarship in completing the program	0	0%

N = 28

Table 1 and Table 2 shows that 43% of MAED graduates were between 31-35 years old and 29% of MAEM graduates were between 26-30 years old. This data suggests that more younger educators are pursuing graduate school programs.

The result of the study of Hipona et al. (2021) states that after graduating from college, which often happens between the ages of 20 and 21, students start working, focusing on their professional and personal growth while also aiming for higher academic or employment status, which may take years.

In terms of sex, most of the respondents are females which is 71% in MAED and 64% in MAEM graduates. This data suggests that female educators continue to dominate the education profession.

This is similar to the study by Awan and Riasat (2015), female educators play an important role in teaching in classrooms to ensure that all students enjoy and has access to educational opportunities. Female teachers probably have comfort and safety.

Ulanday (2021) also confirmed that women predominate in the teaching profession, where they are given the chance to lead and serve the community and school. The female students traditionally favored teacher education programs as stated in the study of Cerado et al. (2020), because the occupation is similar to the role of a mother. Furthermore, it has long been believed that women are typically linked with teaching.

The civil status of the respondents also shows that 50% of the MAED graduates and 53% of the MAEM graduates were single. The result is followed by those who were married by 36% and 43% respectively. Five percent of the respondents were widowed and 2% were married but not living with a spouse.

Because married people may have responsibilities outside of work according to Evangelista et al. (2015), people may favor singles when making employment decisions because they believe single people can and will work longer hours than married people. Hipona et al. (2021) also agreed that single people are preferred by employers because they are seen as more committed to their work and more prepared to take on new challenges on duties and difficulties compared to married folks.

Table 1 and 2 also confirm that 83% of the respondent's region of origin is Region XII and 17% were from BARMM. However, only 81% of the respondents were employed in Region XII and 19% were employed in BARMM. Since SKSU is accessible in these two



regions, many professionals opt to enroll in university.

Furthermore, Table 1 and Table 2 show the significant number of MAED and MAEM graduates with 100% MAED and 46% MAEM graduate respondents from 2024. All graduates were not recipients of any scholarship in completing the graduate program.

Teachers must upgrade to teach the spiral curriculum in the majority of content, specialized, and contextualized courses due to changes in the primary education landscape brought about by Republic Act (2013).

Reasons for Taking and Pursuing Graduate Studies

Table 3 exhibits the reasons for the MAED graduates in taking and pursuing graduate studies.

Table 3. Reasons of MAED Graduates for Taking and Pursuing Graduate Studies

	Frequency	Percentage
Affordable tuition fee	12	25%
Personal prestige of being at SKSU	6	12.5%
Prospect for better employment	8	16.7%
Prospect for better advancement	9	18.8%
School location	7	14.5%
Fulfillment of dream to study at SKSU	6	12.5%

N = 14

Table 4 reveals the reasons for the MAEM graduates in taking and pursuing graduate studies.

Table 4. Reasons for MAEM Graduates for Taking and Pursuing Graduate Studies

	Frequency	Percentage
Affordable tuition fee	36	39.6%
Personal prestige of being at SKSU	12	13.2%
Prospect for better employment	8	8.8%
Prospect for better advancement	18	19.8%
School location	12	13.2%
Fulfillment of dream to study at SKSU	5	5.4%

N = 28

Graduates gave a variety of reasons for enrolling in the program as shown in Table 4. Both MAED and MAEM graduates agreed that the affordable tuition fee being offered by SKSU had been the main reason they enrolled in the graduate program. Some of the reasons of the graduates were a prospect for better advancement, because of the school location, and for personal prestige of being at SKSU.

Gines (2014) revealed that education graduates opt to enroll in education programs because of reasonable tuition fees, the personal prestige of being at a university, prospect of better employment and career advancement.

The findings in the research of Culala (2017) explained that teachers who want to improve their teaching talents, sharpen their leadership skills, and acquire theoretical, conceptual, and practical knowledge are the target audience for the Master of Education in Administration program.

Students enrolled in graduate programs, according to Gonzales (2017), can acquire the knowledge and abilities necessary to become managers and leaders in education in curriculum and education, research, strategic planning, and administration, and other relevant fields. Students are able to integrate ideas and make relevant connections through the integrated courses.

Employment Profile of Respondents

Table 5 confirms the employment profile of MAED graduates in terms of employment status, present occupation, the company/organization they are connected with, major lines of business in their present employment, and gross monthly earnings after completing graduate program.

Table 5. Employment Profile of MAED Graduates

	Frequency	Percentage
Employed		
Yes	14	100%
No	0	0%
Total	14	100%
Employment Status		
Regular or Permanent	14	100%
Total	14	100%



Present Occupation			
Professionals	14	100%	
Officials of Government and Special-			
Interest Organization, Corporate	0	0%	
Executives, Managers, Managing			
Proprietors and Supervisors			
Total	14	100%	
Name of Company/Organization			
DepEd	14	100%	
Total	14	100%	
Major line of business of the Company/Organization			
Education	14	100%	
Total	14	100%	
Gross monthly earning after completing the graduate program			
₱ 21, 000.00 - ₱ 30, 999.00	9	64%	
₱ 31, 000.00 - ₱ 40, 999.00	5	36%	
₱ 41, 000.00 - ₱ 50, 999.00	0	0%	
₱ 51, 000.00 - ₱ 60, 999.00	0	0%	
₱ 71, 000.00 - ₱ 80, 999.00	0	0%	
Total	14	100%	

N = 14

Table 6 manifests the employment profile of MAEM graduates with regards to employment status, present occupation, the company/organization they are connected with, major lines of business in their present employment, and gross monthly earnings after completing graduate program.

Table 6. Employment Profile of MAEM Graduates

	Frequency	Percentage
Employed		
Yes	28	100%
No	0	0%
Total	28	100%
Employment Status		
Regular or Permanent	28	100%
Total	28	100%
Present Occupation		
Professionals	26	93%
Officials of Government and Special-	2	7%
Interest Organization, Corporate		
Executives, Managers, Managing		
Proprietors and Supervisors		
Total	28	100%
Name of Company/Organization		
DepEd	28	100%
Total	28	100%
Major line of business of the Company/Organization		
Education	28	100%
Total	28	100%
Gross monthly earning after completing the graduate program		
₱ 21, 000.00 - ₱ 30, 999.00	9	32.1%
₱ 31, 000.00 - ₱ 40, 999.00	16	57.1%
₱ 41, 000.00 - ₱ 50, 999.00	1	3.6%
₱ 51, 000.00 - ₱ 60, 999.00	1	3.6%
₱ 71, 000.00 - ₱ 80, 999.00	1	3.6%
Total	28	100%

N = 28

Tables 5 and 6 indicate that all the graduates are currently employed as permanent or regular staff members, with the majority working in professional roles. Notably, all the graduates are positioned within the Department of Education. This suggests that even while employed by DepEd, graduates are committed to furthering their knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Woya (2019) emphasizes that the quality of instruction and the outcomes achieved are critical components of effective higher education. Such education enhances relevant competencies and skills, thereby preparing students for the workforce.



DepEd Order No. 7 (2015) states that one of the most important requirements for employment at the Department of Education is an educational background. When choosing applicants for hiring and promotion, graduate school units are awarded points and credits to candidates.

The major line of business of the MAED and MAEM graduates is education since they are employed by DepEd. Twenty-one (50%) of the graduates were earning between ₱ 31,000.00 - ₱ 40,999.00 monthly, and eighteen (44%) earned between 21,000.00 - ₱ 30,999.00 monthly.

The study by Aquino and colleagues (2015) revealed that salary and benefits were cited as the reasons they remained at their current job. The research conducted by Almejas et al. (2017) indicates that teachers' income levels are generally above the poverty line and exceed the average income.

There are several reasons why a worker would prefer

to remain with a company, according to the study of Hipona, Cuevas, and Martin (2021), but if their labor is well paid and their welfare is taken care of, there is usually no cause to leave. Employee satisfaction is influenced by a number of elements, including pay, workload, management perceptions, flexibility, teamwork, and resources.

Job Level Position of Respondents

Table 7 displays the permanent job level position of the respondents before and after taking the MAED graduate program.

Table 7. Job Level Position of MAED Graduates Before and After Completing the Graduate Program

	Frequency	Percentage
Permanent job position (Previous)		
Teacher I	13	93%
Teacher II	1	7%
Teacher III	0	0%
Master Teacher I	0	0%
Principal I	0	0%
Education Program Supervisor	0	0%
Total	14	100%
Permanent job position (Present)		
Teacher I	9	64%
Teacher II	2	14%
Teacher III	3	22%
Master Teacher I	0	0%
Principal I	0	0%
Education Program Supervisor	0	0%
Total	14	100%

N = 14

Table 8 uncovers the permanent job level position of the respondents before and after taking the MAEM graduate program.

Table 8. Job Level Position of MAEM Graduates Before and After Completing the Graduate Program

	Frequency	Percentage
Permanent job position (Previous)		
Teacher I	9	32%
Teacher II	8	28.5%
Teacher III	8	28.5%
Master Teacher I	3	11%
Principal I	0	0%
Education Program Supervisor	0	0%
Total	28	100%
Permanent job position (Present)		
Teacher I	1	3.6%
Teacher II	6	21.4%
Teacher III	18	64.2%
Master Teacher I	1	3.6%
Principal I	1	3.6%
Education Program Supervisor	1	3.6%
Total	28	100%

N = 28



Tables 7 and 8 disclosed that Teacher I level position of respondents decreased from 93% to 64% for MAED graduates and from 32% to 3.6% for MAEM graduates. One of the graduate respondents in MAEM was also promoted from Master Teacher I to Principal I and another graduate respondent also from MAEM was promoted from Master Teacher I to Education Program Supervisor. According to the respondents, their graduate school degrees and acquired abilities provided them with greater opportunities and career prospects. The graduate program management and staff created a curriculum that takes into account industry demands, particularly those of the education sector.

DepEd Order No. 20 (2024), stipulates that educational qualifications are essential for obtaining higher teaching positions within the Department of Education. Graduate study units are awarded credits during the selection and evaluation of teacher candidates.

Graduate qualities are constantly practiced as stated in the study of Gentova et al. (2023), which suggests that the traits, abilities, and knowledge that graduates ideally acquired while attending the school subsequently influence how they contribute to their career, workplace, and society as a whole. These graduate traits are the advanced abilities, knowledge, and skills that students acquire and put into practice as a result of their university education and experiences.

Madrigal (2015) found out that graduates were shaped and changed in a variety of positive ways, which inspired them to be social change agents, gave them a sense of well-being, made them capable of practicing their profession, and prepared them for jobs or employment.

Respondents' Job Level Position Before and After Taking the MAED/MAEM Program

Table 9. Significant Difference in the Respondents' Job Level Position Before and After Taking the MAED/MAEM Program

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Interpretation
Before	42	2.5	14.8 5	0.89	7	2.36	No significant
After	42	4	54.2 8				

Table 9 explains that the results of one sample t-test of the difference in job level position of respondents before and after taking the MAED/MAEM program have no significant difference, since the t value .89 is lower than the p value 2.36 at .05 level of significance. This will lead to a conclusion to accept the hypothesis raised by the researcher.

In the study of Ulanday (2021), it presented that better advantages come with working for the government and employment stability in contrast to individuals who work in the private educational institutions. Additionally, the report also states that improved pay and perks encourage recent graduates to work in public schools.

Graduates who chose to pursue further education according to Cerado et al. (2020), unambiguously stated these main motivations, which include professional growth and advancement, and promotion.

Coldwell (2017) also confirms that some educators are motivated to pursue professional development because they want to advance their professions and witness successful results.

Relationship between Degrees Earned and Job Level Position

Table 10. Correlation Between degrees earned and job level position of the graduates in the MAED/MAEM graduate program

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Degrees Earned	42	7.0	8.7 6			Moderate Significant
Job Level Position	42	7.0	7.9 2	.432	.392	Correlation

Table 10 affirms that there is a moderately significant relationship between the degrees earned by the respondents after completing the MAED/MAEM graduate program and their present job level position. Since the r-value is .432, which is higher than the p-value .392. It signifies that the degrees earned are related to the job level position of the graduates in the MAED/MAEM program.

The general trends are striking and obvious: greater education implies more opportunities. Despite the fact that it needs significant financial resources, effort, and commitment, most people's lives are measurably improved by schooling. Most graduates benefit greatly from it, both monetarily and in terms of intellectual and personal growth. People's lives are improved, and our economy is strengthened by higher education (Ma, Pender & Welch, 2016).

As pointed out by Kalaw (2019), lack of experience and learning out-of-date or inappropriate skills are the biggest obstacles to finding work, while work experience and pursuing an academic career are the most important factors in obtaining a job. Graduates concur that the educational experiences they had greatly impacted their communication, interpersonal, and critical thinking abilities, and familiarity



with the field. In general, they thought the educational experience was very beneficial since it had a great impact on both professional and personal development.

As stated by Tantawy study findings (2020), the ability of teaching career paths to provide chances for ongoing advancement and to improve the quality of education is crucial for attracting and keeping highly skilled and driven educators. Additionally, to foster fresh learning and sustain their enthusiasm for teaching, educators typically look for improved career routes; in the absence of these chances, those who want professional development are compelled to transition into educational management positions.

Conclusions

The study found that more young educators are enrolling in graduate school programs, primarily driven by goals of professional advancement and personal development. Female educators continue to dominate the profession, likely due to the nurturing and caregiving aspects of teaching, which parallel traditional maternal roles. Most of the graduates were single, enabling them to take on longer working hours and greater responsibilities. Despite not receiving scholarships, all respondents completed their graduate studies, attributing their success to perseverance and the affordability of tuition. The low cost of education and the potential for better job opportunities were key reasons for choosing the program.

All graduates were employed in the Department of Education and remained committed to enhancing their skills, competencies, and qualifications. They recognized that earning graduate units positively impacted their prospects for promotion, as these were factored into hiring decisions. The respondents, who reported incomes above the poverty line, cited job satisfaction as influenced by salary, workload, management support, and workplace flexibility. Their advanced degrees provided them with more career options and stronger professional standing. The graduate program's curriculum aligned with industry demands, particularly in education, equipping them with relevant and practical skills. Ultimately, the pursuit of higher education was seen as a worthwhile investment, offering intellectual, professional, and financial rewards despite the effort and resources required.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are considered: only the graduates' profile, including their gender, age, place of origin, employment, degree, year of graduation, and scholarship received for completing the graduate program, was taken into account in the current tracer study. It is recommended that the skills, knowledge, and abilities that graduates should have after completing their studies be examined in the subsequent graduate survey. Affordable tuition fees, prospects for better advancement, and school location were found to be the reasons for the graduates pursuing graduate studies at the university. SKSU must continue its pursuit of offering low tuition fees for increased accessibility of higher education. Since all the graduates were already employed in the Department of Education before, they enrolled in the graduate program, they are committed to furthering their knowledge, skills, and competencies. Thus, the university must strengthen skills related to the curriculum to enhance employability, increase job security, open doors to better career opportunities, allow adaptability to industry changes, and lead to better job performance of graduates. Even though graduates agreed that their graduate degrees and acquired abilities provided them with greater opportunities and career prospects, it is still recommended to examine and improve course offerings to guarantee that additional programs for developing skills and competencies are available, particularly in the areas of communication, critical thinking, information technology, interpersonal relationships, and problem-solving. Despite an insignificant relationship between the graduates' employment status before and after taking the graduate program, the university should adequately support tracer studies so that it can stay informed about what recent graduates are doing and what more efforts may be made to improve the curriculum and teaching style for more deserving and productive graduates. The degree earned by the graduates is related to their job level position, which means more opportunities are implied by higher education. Therefore, the university should provide accessible higher education not only in Sultan Kudarat but also within Region XII as well as the nearby regions, to foster a more equitable and more innovative society, empower individuals, and contribute to economic growth. The Graduate Tracer Study ought to be carried out regularly to find out where the graduates are, analyze current programs, evaluate study circumstances and provisions, and create enhancements to make it stronger or to develop new, pertinent applications in the future. Curriculum planners and school administrators must consider these recommendations as a starting point for developing tactics that contribute to the university's curriculum to better meet employer and student requirements.

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