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A Tracer Study of the Graduates of Education Graduate Programs 2018-2022 of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos Graduate School

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Abstract. This explanatory sequential inquiry determined the contribution of graduate education to the development of skills, the satisfaction with the delivery of the graduate school program and services, and the practice of graduate attributes of the graduates of education graduate programs of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos Graduate School. Likewise, it explored deeper insights on the quantitative data to generate a broader perspective on the graduates' experiences on the contributions of the graduate school to the development of their skills, satisfaction with the delivery of programs and services, and graduate attribute practice. The participants were the graduates of education graduate programs during 2018-2022 and determined using purposive sampling. In data gathering, survey questionnaire and semi-structured in-depth interview were employed. In analyzing the data, mean and standard deviation were utilized in the quantitative analysis while Lichtman's (2013) 3C's were used in the qualitative data. The data revealed a very great extent of the contribution of graduate studies, extremely satisfied with the delivery, and a very great extent of graduate attribute practice. Meanwhile, the qualitative data presented salient findings. The graduate education experiences provide the development of their competencies, knowledge, skills, and attributes, which leads to better opportunities in their profession. Also, their satisfaction develops their attributes of humility, Christian values, integrity, love, and the quest for excellence, thus forming values essential to the practice of profession and life in general. Moreover, this study validated that tracer studies could assist the graduate school in complying with the accreditation and quality assurance measure requirements for a quality management system. Furthermore, the satisfaction of graduates encourages continual improvement towards engaging the alumni in open, mutually beneficial ways and spreading knowledge to uplift others and positively use their influence to impact the community, the country, and the world.

Keywords. Tracer studies, education graduate programs, explanatory sequential mixed method, Philippines

1.0 Introduction

Graduate education is important in developing research capabilities that improve educational theory and practice, uplifting socioeconomic conditions to become valuable members of society, and ensuring high employability of graduates for the world of work (Bueno, 2017; Daguplo et al., 2019). It also advances career and promotion, develop

professional networks and linkages, fulfill purpose-driven personal and professional life, and encourage theory to work-based praxis (Sumande et al., 2022; Jorilla & Bual, 2020). Moreover, this can also be one mechanism for teachers to develop their competence in the profession, as quality teachers are important for sustainable nation-building (Gepila Jr., 2020; David et al., 2020; Petalla & Madrigal, 2017; Jorilla & Bual, 2021). As a result, graduate students' research outputs largely contribute to the country's socioeconomic growth, ensuring a country's competitiveness in innovation and learning (Zimmerman, 2015; Bual & Madrigal, 2021). Hence, tracer studies are necessary to check the quality delivery of graduate schools vis-a-vis the advancements of these objectives are concerned (Omar & Wahome, 2016).

Graduate tracer studies are essential sources of information about graduates of academic programs at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Dela Cruz, 2020). It provides valuable information to evaluate higher education outcomes to be used as material for continuous improvement and quality assurance of the educational institutions (Tutor et al., 2021). These studies are essential tools also to assess and improve the outcomes of graduate education programs as well as their marketability and sustainability (Woya, 2019). The growing emphasis on the employability and career advancement of graduates in the global market necessitates continuous improvement of the delivery of the graduate programs to be responsive to the global market demands (Qureshi et al., 2014; Abulencia et al., 2021; Burke et al., 2017; Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017).

In the Philippines, graduate education is seen vital among educators in the academe (Banusing & Bual, 2021; Esman et al., 2023). One of the key areas in the Department of Education's (DepED) is quality education through teachers' upskilling and reskilling through a professional development program. Meanwhile, the implementation of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has promulgated revised policies, standards, and guidelines (PSG) for graduate programs to assist in improving the quality of graduate education in the Philippines, meeting the demands of the 21st century. The new PSG for graduate studies underscores the need to improve the skills and abilities of education professionals to continuously advance teaching and learning, deliver student services, and manage educational programs. These skills include but are not limited to knowledge and technical, communication, leadership, research, and information and communication technology skills. The graduate students develop these skills and become confident in decision-making in a complex work environment. Through the acquisition of these skills, they learn to evaluate, articulate, and discover more efficient ways to perform their tasks and responsibilities (CHED, 2019).

The University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos (UNO-R) Graduate School has pioneered offering graduate programs in the province. Among its pioneering graduate programs in education include a Master of Arts in Education (1955), Doctor of Education (1985), and Doctor of Philosophy major in Educational Management (1988). With the implementation of the CMO 15 series of 2019, the graduate school has initiated the assessment of the compliance of its education graduate programs with the new policies, standards, and guidelines (PSG) in terms of the curriculum, faculty, research, student services, and administration. For this purpose, the conduct of the tracer study is vital in implementing the graduate school quality policy to ensure that it contributes to the graduates' professional growth and development, quality delivery of programs and services, and practice of graduate attributes in the workplace (UNO-R Recoletos de Bacolod Graduate School Student Manual [UNOR-R RBGS], 2018).

Several tracer studies on graduate programs in the Philippines were conducted. Cagasan et al. (2017) surveyed the employment characteristics, job experiences, and feedback on the educational experiences of graduate students. Bansig and Iringan (2020) determined the

effects of getting a PhD in Educational Management on the professional life of graduates. Likewise, Buenvinida and Yanzon (2017) profiled the graduates of the Master of Arts in Education at a State University in the Philippines and assessed the use and adequacy of skills acquired and satisfaction with the services and learning environment. Also, Dela Cruz (2022) profiled the graduates of a state university and the extent of the contribution and applicability of skills gained from graduate studies. Institutionally, tracer studies were conducted for business programs (Lopena & Madrigal, 2023) and public administration, governance, and development management (Nunez et al., 2022). Given the available studies, a tracer study has never been conducted at the university regarding education graduate programs. This is the gap which this study would like to fill in.

Hence, this explanatory sequential inquiry determined the contribution of graduate education to the development of various skills, the satisfaction with the delivery of the graduate school program and services, and the practice of graduate attributes of the graduates of education graduate programs of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos Graduate School during 2018-2022. Likewise, it explored deeper insights on the quantitative data to generate a broader perspective on the graduates' experiences on the contributions of the graduate school to the development of their skills, satisfaction with the delivery of programs and services, and graduate attribute practice. The findings may serve as baseline data in formulating a proposed strategic plan for the continuous improvement of the graduate school's delivery of the programs and services.

2.0 Worldview

A worldview is a set of beliefs that guides the research direction (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This mixed method inquiry adhered to post-positivist, social constructivist, and pragmatist perspectives. In post-positivist perspective, it holds a philosophy that the emerging knowledge is founded on empirical observation and measurement of the objective reality that exists in the world. In this case, the objective knowledge is grounded on the quantitative phase where the graduates provided empirical data on the contribution, satisfaction, and practice of attributes of graduates. Meanwhile, in social constructivist perspective, individuals seek to understand their world and develop meanings corresponding to their experiences. In the context of the study, this is manifested in the qualitative phase where the researcher interviewed the graduates of their insights and experiences regarding the phenomena being studied. Lastly, in the pragmatist perspective, this philosophy holds that the human actions can never be separated from the past experiences and from the beliefs that have originated from those experiences. Meaning, there is the integration of the quantitative and the qualitative phases to derive meaningful outcomes of the study which in this case the proposed strategic plan for the continuous improvement of the delivery of the programs and services of the graduate school.

3.0 Methods

Research Design. The study used the explanatory sequential mixed method which entailed a two-part data collecting process. First, it gathered the quantitative data, evaluated the results, and planned the second qualitative phase based on the findings. The quantitative findings usually guided the types of people that were purposefully chosen for the qualitative phase and the questions that were asked of them (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Respondents and Sampling Procedures. The respondents for quantitative were a total enumeration of 94 graduates of Master of Arts in Education (MAEd), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Educational Management, and Doctor of Education (EdD) of UNO-R Graduate

School. Meanwhile, eight graduates from PhD in Educational Management, EdD, and MAEd were chosen for the qualitative data using purposive sampling to provide in-depth information about the phenomenon under investigation considering highest and lowest scores per batch and representatives from masters and doctoral programs.

Research Instruments. The first phase used the modified questionnaires from Madrigal (2015) and Nunez et al. (2022) on the contribution of graduation education to graduates, satisfaction with the delivery of graduate programs and services, and practice of graduate attributes. The instrument underwent validity using Good and Scates (1954) with an index of 4.68 and reliability testing with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.942, interpreted as highly reliable. In terms of the extent of contribution and practice, these were responded using the scale 1-very poor extent, 2-poor extent, 3-great extent, and 4-very great extent. For the satisfaction, it employed the scale, 1-very low, 2-moderate, 3-high, and 4-very high. Meanwhile, a semi-structured interview was used to collect data for an in-depth explanation of the quantitative results.

Data Analysis Procedure. Using descriptive analysis, mean, and standard deviation were used to determine the contribution of graduate studies to professional growth and development, and satisfaction with graduate programs and services, and practice of graduate attributes. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The data analysis was guided by Lichtman's (2013) three Cs—coding, categorizing, and conceptualizing. The researchers generated initial codes based on the significant statements and phrases that constitute categories and themes that surfaced. The constructs were simultaneously identified and coded the text segments and themes from the participants' experiences. It generated different codes until the researchers could develop many codes; redundant ones were taken out as either one or renamed or modified. Then, the researchers highlighted important words, phrases, and statements and clustered them into categories. Finally, these categories were grouped under major themes and sub-themes.

Data Trustworthiness. Quality criteria for qualitative research speak of trustworthiness. Thus, the researchers used the criteria set by Lincoln and Guba (1985), such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. For credibility, the researchers observed member checking or gathering feedback on data and analytical categories interpretation. Also, the researchers facilitated the transferability judgment by a potential user through the thick descriptions, which provides adequate details on the site, participants, and methods or procedures used to collect data during the study. To achieve dependability, the researchers ensured the research process was logical, traceable, and documented using field notes, a functional recorder, and good internet connectivity for online interviews. Lastly, an audit trail was performed consistently to establish the confirmability of the findings based on the graduates' responses instead of the researchers' understanding.

Ethical considerations. Lastly, the researcher ensured the paper's ethical soundness in adherence to the general principles of respect for persons, justice, and beneficence by the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB). Specifically, it ensured their participants' anonymity and the confidentiality of the data gathered.

4.0 Results and Discussion
4.1 Quantitative Results
Contribution of Graduate Studies to Graduates' Professional Growth and Development

Table 1 presents the contribution of graduate studies to the professional growth and development of the graduates. It is shown that the participants have rated all 13 items in the checklist to a great extent regarding the contribution of graduate studies to their professional growth and development. Based on the mean scores, the results indicate that the top three items are enhancement of research skills (M=3.87, SD=0.34), acquisition of lifelong learning skills (M=3.86, SD=0.35), and enhancement of self-efficacy skills (M=3.84, SD=0.37). Meanwhile, the bottom three items, but still described to have a very great extent are increasing opportunities for travel and exposure (M=3.39, SD=0.63), received promotion and salary increase (M=3.50, SD=0.77), and improved information technology skills (M=3.53, SD=0.60).

The result implies that the graduate degree of the graduates has significantly contributed to the development and enhancement of their knowledge and skills in the practice of their profession. This means that their curricular training through OBE adepts their skills towards the level of expertise in their field of specialization. The foregoing findings are validated by the research of Culala (2017), who explained that the MAEd in Administration Program is designed for teachers who intend to develop and gain theoretical, conceptual, and practical knowledge, strengthen teaching abilities, and hone leadership skills. Segismundo and Zacarias (2016) support this by stating that the study of the Master's Degree in Education Programs has very high contributions to the graduates' personal and professional growth.

Thirunavukarasu et al. (2020), Meñez (2014), and Tutor et al. (2021) all affirmed these findings by reporting in their respective studies that graduate education contributed to the professional advancement of graduates. Further, the rationale of De La Salle University's Graduate Education Program is also geared towards this end. According to Gonzales (2017), this enables the students to develop competence and skills as educational leaders and managers in research, strategic planning and management, curriculum and instruction, and other related areas. The integrating courses enable the students to connect meaningfully and integrate theory with practice.

This is similarly emphasized in the goals of the Graduate Education Program of the Philippine Normal University. In its brochure, the Philippine Normal University (2016) states that the program is intended to increase and strengthen their knowledge, skills, and attitudes as well as values and ethics. All these are necessary to effectively lead schools and educational institutions and related learning organizations to new parameters and domains of educational excellence through the knowledge and practice.

An almost parallel outcome was revealed in Abulencia et al. (2021), which confirmed that Master of Education graduates of Philippine Normal University for 2010-2018 had acquired highly developed teaching skills and competencies in the various aspects of the profession. The study of Andrin et al. (2022) involving 2012-2021 graduates of St. Paul University Graduate School and Professional Studies, who are MAEd, PhD-EM, and EdD degree holders, also came up with identical results. There is indeed a rich research literature that supports the above findings.

Tracer studies undertaken on the contribution of graduate education programs that came up with similar results include those undertaken by Kaya (2014), Banville et al. (2014), Sahlberg (2015), Snoek and Volman (2014), Calisoglu and Yalvac (2019), and Kowalczuk-Waledziak et al. (2017). Even studies carried out or sponsored by international organizations

such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2020) as bases for their policies and program grants also revealed similar findings.

On the contrary, the study of Buenvinida and Yazon (2017) involving MAEd graduates of the Laguna State Polytechnic College revealed that the participants could only acquire some of the program competencies to some extent. These results were noted in their skills in critical thinking, communication, research, use of a variety of teaching methods, problem-solving, and use of information and communication technology. Still, the study found that the respondents have acquired human relations skills to a great extent.

Table 1. *Contribution of Graduate Studies to their Professional Growth and Development*

Items	M	SD	Int
1. Advancement of knowledge and skills in my specialization	3.80	0.40	VGE
2. Development of higher-order thinking skills	3.82	0.41	VGE
3. Enhancement of research skills	3.87	0.34	VGE
4. Enhancement of communication skills	3.79	0.41	VGE
5. Improved information technology skills	3.53	0.60	VGE
6. Enhancement of leadership skills	3.65	0.54	VGE
7. Acquisition of lifelong learning skills	3.86	0.35	VGE
8. Enhancement of collaboration skills	3.81	0.42	VGE
9. Enhancement of problem-solving skills	3.80	0.40	VGE
10. Enhancement of self-efficacy skills	3.84	0.37	VGE
11. Increasing opportunities for travel and exposure	3.39	0.63	VGE
12. Expanding network, linkages, and partnerships	3.55	0.58	VGE
13. Received promotion and salary increase	3.50	0.77	VGE
Whole	*3.71*	*0.29*	*VGE*

Mean Range: 1.00-1.75=Very Poor (VPE), 1.76-2.50=Poor (PE), 2.51-3.25=Great (GE), 3.26-4.00=Very Great (VGE)

Graduates' Satisfaction with the Delivery of the Graduate School Program and Services

Table 2 presents the overall very high level of satisfaction of the graduates with the delivery of the graduate school program and services in terms of vision, mission, goals and objectives, faculty, curriculum and instruction, student services, and research, community service and involvement, physical facilities, and administration. The results indicate that the graduate school is an exceptional provider and pioneering in delivering and implementing the programs and services. It shows that the graduate school offers a good quality graduate education, has qualified and competent professors, and implements effective policies and procedures. This means that graduates are highly satisfied with graduate education programs that are responsive to the needs of the graduates. It is also delivering and implementing quality graduate education programs and services exceeding graduate's expectations. This is crucial to consider how relevant the curriculum is to the demands of the stakeholders.

In terms of vision, mission, goals, and objectives, the respondents have a very high level of satisfaction with a mean score of 3.90 (SD=0.23). The highest level of satisfaction was indicated by those who completed their EdD/PhD in Educational Management degrees (M=3.96, SD=0.07). Likewise, in faculty, the respondents manifested a very high level of satisfaction with a mean score of 3.88 (SD=0.22). The highest mean score is shown by those

who are graduates of 2020-2021 (M=3.91, SD=0.12). Further, as to curriculum and instruction, the respondents also have a very high level of satisfaction in all the identified variables, as indicated by the mean score of 3.84 (SD=0.26). In this area, the highest mean score was manifested by respondents who graduated in 2021-2022 (M=3.90, SD=0.21).

Moreover, in student services, the respondents also expressed a very high level of satisfaction, with a mean score of 3.80 (SD=0.32). The highest mean scores were noted for those who are older graduates (M=3.83, SD=0.23), EdD/PhD in Educational Management graduates (M=3.83, SD=0.28) as well as for those who graduated in 201-2022 (M=3.83, SD=0.24). In research, the respondents still manifested a very high level of satisfaction, with a mean score of 3.92 (SD=0.32). The highest mean scores were noted for EdD/PhD in Educational Management graduates (M=3.96, SD=0.09) and those who graduated in 2021-2022 (M=3.96, SD=0.07).

In the area of community service, the graduates of RBGS graduate education programs manifested a very high level of satisfaction with a mean score of 3.70 (SD=0.46). The highest mean in this area is noted in the score of those who graduated in 2022 (M=3.80, SD=0.33). In terms of physical facilities, the graduates' level of satisfaction is also very high with a mean score of 3.79 (SD=0.43). Older graduates manifested the highest mean score in this area (M=3.85, SD=0.29).

Further, in terms of administration, the graduates' level of satisfaction is still very high with a mean score of 3.79 (SD=0.37). The highest mean score in this aspect is manifested by EdD/PhD in Educational Management graduates (M=3.97, SD=0.14). Finally, in terms of overall satisfaction, the level of graduates' satisfaction is also very high in all the identified variables, with an overall mean score of 3.84 (SD=0.21). In this aspect, the highest mean score is noted among EdD/PhD in Educational Management graduates (M=3.90, SD=0.10).

The foregoing results indicate that the participants were very highly satisfied with the delivery of the graduate school program services of the UNO-R Graduate Education Program in all the areas and variables considered in this study. This implies that the graduate school is able to meet the needs of the stakeholders, who are the students, and exceed their expectations due to the very high level of satisfaction.

Many studies in the reviewed related literature support this outcome. Among them are the studies of Cagasan et al. (2017) and Genovate and Madrigal (2021), which revealed that the graduates were generally satisfied with curricular offerings, quality of program delivery, and teaching and learning environment.

In effect, this is also the essence of the findings of Azam (2018) and Mahajan and Golahit (2017), emphasizing that the services people provide are premium satisfaction measures over other considerations. Generally, the level of satisfaction in the delivery of graduate school programs and services in the related literature reviewed by the researchers is either high or very high across all the items included in the research instruments. This came out in the studies of Obehi (2020) among 2015-2019 graduates of the Research in Teaching and Learning Program of the Technical University of Munich, Buenvinida and Yazon (2021), involving MAEd graduates of the Laguna State Polytechnic College, and Calub (2017), with MAEd-English graduates of the Tarlac State University as respondents.

It can be noticed that during 2021, vision, mission, goals and objectives, faculty, curriculum and instruction, and research were numerically high, while the areas of student services, community service, physical facilities, and administration were numerically low. This is attributed to the pandemic and lockdown where students did not have on-campus classes but online classes. Hence, they could not experience the services of the above-mentioned offices.

Table 2A. *Graduates' Satisfaction with the Delivery of the Graduate School Program and Services*

Variables	Vision, Mission, Goals & Objectives			Faculty			Curriculum and Instruction			Student Services			Research		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex															
Male	3.92	0.21	VH	3.90	0.21	VH	3.88	0.23	VH	3.78	0.40	VH	3.91	0.22	VH
Female	3.89	0.24	VH	3.86	0.22	VH	3.82	0.27	VH	3.81	0.25	VH	3.93	0.15	VH
Age															
Younger	3.92	0.21	VH	3.88	0.23	VH	3.84	0.25	VH	3.78	0.37	VH	3.91	0.21	VH
Older	3.88	0.26	VH	3.89	0.20	VH	3.85	0.28	VH	3.83	0.23	VH	3.95	0.10	VH
Civil Status															
Single	3.89	0.24	VH	3.87	0.24	VH	3.86	0.23	VH	3.81	0.35	VH	3.92	0.18	VH
Married	3.91	0.20	VH	3.90	0.18	VH	3.82	0.30	VH	3.78	0.28	VH	3.92	0.17	VH
Degree Program															
MAEd	3.91	0.20	VH	3.89	0.21	VH	3.87	0.21	VH	3.82	0.31	VH	3.93	0.17	VH
EdD/PhD in Ed. Mgt	3.96	0.07	VH	3.90	0.19	VH	3.87	0.21	VH	3.83	0.28	VH	3.96	0.09	VH
MAEd and EdD/PhD	3.67	0.52	VH	3.69	0.28	VH	3.50	0.56	VH	3.50	0.37	VH	3.77	0.33	VH
Year Graduated															
2019	3.90	0.24	VH	3.89	0.22	VH	3.83	0.24	VH	3.81	0.24	VH	3.91	0.18	VH
2020	3.85	0.27	VH	3.90	0.24	VH	3.80	0.34	VH	3.82	0.25	VH	3.92	0.19	VH
2021	3.94	0.14	VH	3.91	0.12	VH	3.86	0.21	VH	3.69	0.61	VH	3.91	0.27	VH
2022	3.94	0.22	VH	3.83	0.24	VH	3.90	0.21	VH	3.83	0.24	VH	3.96	0.07	VH
Whole	*3.90*	*0.23*	*VH*	*3.88*	*0.22*	*VH*	*3.84*	*0.26*	*VH*	*3.80*	*0.32*	*VH*	*3.92*	*0.18*	*VH*

Table 2B. *Graduates' Satisfaction with the Delivery of the Graduate School Program and Services*

Variables	Community Service & Involvement			Physical Facilities			Administration			Satisfaction		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex												
Male	3.68	0.55	VH	3.72	0.55	VH	3.75	0.47	VH	3.83	0.25	VH
Female	3.71	0.40	VH	3.84	0.31	VH	3.81	0.28	VH	3.84	0.18	VH
Age												
Younger	3.69	0.52	VH	3.75	0.49	VH	3.77	0.41	VH	3.82	0.23	VH
Older	3.71	0.35	VH	3.85	0.29	VH	3.83	0.28	VH	3.85	0.18	VH
Civil Status												
Single	3.66	0.53	VH	3.75	0.49	VH	3.75	0.42	VH	3.82	0.23	VH
Married	3.75	0.33	VH	3.84	0.30	VH	3.84	0.25	VH	3.85	0.18	VH
Degree Program												
MAEd	3.69	0.49	VH	3.82	0.42	VH	3.78	0.38	VH	3.85	0.20	VH
EdD/PhD in Ed. Mgt	3.78	0.21	VH	3.78	0.36	VH	3.97	0.14	VH	3.90	0.10	VH
Both MAEd and EdD/PhD	3.63	0.37	VH	3.38	0.49	VH	3.60	0.37	VH	3.61	0.31	VH
Year Graduated												
2019	3.70	0.39	VH	3.83	0.30	VH	3.79	0.33	VH	3.84	0.18	VH
2020	3.75	0.34	VH	3.82	0.33	VH	3.89	0.20	VH	3.85	0.20	VH
2021	3.46	0.82	VH	3.73	0.80	VH	3.63	0.65	VH	3.78	0.35	VH
2022	3.80	0.33	VH	3.73	0.39	VH	3.77	0.31	VH	3.85	0.16	VH
Whole	*3.70*	*0.46*	*VH*	*3.79*	*0.43*	*VH*	*3.79*	*0.37*	*VH*	*3.84*	*0.21*	*VH*

Practice of the Graduate Attributes of the Graduates

Table 3 presents the graduates' extent of the practice of graduate attributes: spiritually sound, intellectually inspired, morally healthy, physically healthy, culturally conscious, socially concerned, technically proficient, and scholarly leaders of science. As to spiritual soundness, the extent of the practice of the graduates is very high with a mean score of 4.75 (SD=0.39). Older graduates manifested the highest extent of practice in this area (M=4.86, SD=0.21). As

to being intellectually inspired, the extent of the practice is also very great with a mean score of 4.71 (SD=0.40). For this attribute, the highest extent of practice is noted among male graduates (M=4.84, SD=0.29). For the next attribute, morally healthy, a very great extent of the practice is also noted, with a mean score of 4.77 (SD=0.38). For this attribute, the highest mean score is noted among older graduates (M=4.89, SD=0.27). Further, when being physically healthy is considered, the extent of practice is still very high, with a mean score of 4.55 (SD=0.51). For this attribute, the highest extent of practice is noted among those who graduated in 2020-2021 (M=4.64, SD=0.45).

Moreover, for culturally conscious, the extent of the practice of the graduates of this attribute is also very high, with a mean score of 4.79 (SD=0.35). For this attribute, the greatest extent of practice was manifested by those who are graduates of EdD/PhD in Educational Management graduates (M=4.93, SD=0.14). In terms of socially concerned, the extent of practice of this graduate attribute by the graduates is very high with a mean score of 4.78 (SD=0.36). For this attribute, the greatest extent of the practice is noted among EdD/PhD in Educational Management graduates and those who graduated in 2020-2021 with a similar mean score of 4.87 (SD=0.26).

For technically proficient, the extent of the practice of this graduate attribute by the graduates is still very great with a mean score of 4.66 (SD=0.50). For this attribute, the highest extent of practice is noted among those who graduated in 2020-2021 (M=4.83, SD=0.26). For the following attribute, which is scholarly leaders of science, the extent of the practice of this graduate attribute by the graduates is also very great, with a mean score of 4.59 (SD=0.56). For this attribute, the highest extent of practice is also noted among those who graduated in 2020-2021 (M=4.90, SD=0.26). Finally, in terms of the overall extent of practice of graduate attributes, the graduates have a very high extent of practice, with an overall mean score of 4.70 (SD=0.32). Generally, the highest mean score is noted among those who graduated in 2020-2021 (M=4.81, SD=0.23).

Graduate attributes are practiced all the time. This implies that graduates' qualities, skills, and understandings desirably developed during their time at the institution and consequently shape their contribution to their profession, in their workplace, and as a citizen. These graduate attributes are the high-level qualities, skills, and understandings that graduate school students gain and practice due to the learning and experiences they engage with while at university. The above results coincide with the findings of earlier studies reviewed by the researchers. For one, in the study of Madrigal (2015), it was determined that the respondents were formed and transformed in many positive ways, making them competent in the practice of their profession and work/employment ready, bringing them a sense of wellness in their lives, and motivating them to be advocates of social transformation.

This is also the gist of the findings of Lopena and Madrigal (2023), stating that the respondents were capacitated in the successful integration of the program attributes in their profession. In the study of Bansig and Iringan (2020) with PhD-EM graduates of St. Paul University of the Philippines for the school years 2009-2010 and 2013-2014 as respondents, it was revealed that the participants were able to practice the Paulinian graduate attributes to a very great extent. This enabled them to immediately land a job and achieve outstanding performance ratings, consequently promoting their jobs. In the same breadth, Bueno's (2017) study showed that the respondents "…indicated a maximized practice of the graduate attributes in their respective workplaces and communities. These attributes were coupled with enabling values of Love of God, honesty, punctuality, obedience to superiors, perseverance, creativity,

professional integrity, unity, fairness, love for others, nationalism, and love for the environment."

This, to a large extent, is also the overall finding of the study of Andari et al. (2021) in their tracer study involving graduates of the Educational Management Department of the Universitas Negeri Surabaya of Indonesia for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. The study indicated that the internationalization and accumulation of knowledge, practical knowledge, skills, affection, and competencies enabled the graduates to perform at par, if not better than their counterparts. Even those who managed to land overseas employment were all praises of the graduate attributes they have acquired from their program as these afforded them the needed competency and helped them gain the respect of their colleagues.

Table 3A. *Practice of the Graduate Attributes of the Graduates*

Variables	Spiritually-sound			Intellectually inspired			Morally healthy			Physically healthy			Culturally-conscious		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex															
Male	4.75	0.48	VH	4.84	0.29	VH	4.77	0.42	VH	4.63	0.49	VH	4.83	0.29	VH
Female	4.75	0.32	VH	4.63	0.44	VH	4.77	0.35	VH	4.50	0.51	VH	4.76	0.39	VH
Age															
Younger	4.68	0.46	VH	4.70	0.40	VH	4.70	0.41	VH	4.54	0.54	VH	4.80	0.35	VH
Older	4.86	0.21	VH	4.74	0.40	VH	4.89	0.27	VH	4.58	0.45	VH	4.76	0.35	VH
Civil Status															
Single	4.70	0.46	VH	4.74	0.36	VH	4.74	0.40	VH	4.51	0.53	VH	4.79	0.35	VH
Married	4.82	0.25	VH	4.67	0.44	VH	4.82	0.34	VH	4.61	0.47	VH	4.77	0.35	VH
Degree Program															
MAEd	4.77	0.38	VH	4.73	0.37	VH	4.78	0.37	VH	4.57	0.49	VH	4.79	0.34	VH
EdD/PhD in Ed. Mgt	4.58	0.44	VH	4.76	0.43	VH	4.82	0.34	VH	4.60	0.52	VH	4.93	0.14	VH
MAEd and EdD/PhD	4.67	0.39	VH	4.50	0.63	VH	4.50	0.45	VH	4.17	0.64	VH	4.53	0.55	VH
Year Graduated															
2019	4.75	0.46	VH	4.78	0.35	VH	4.78	0.41	VH	4.58	0.54	VH	4.83	0.33	VH
2020	4.78	0.29	VH	4.58	0.49	VH	4.78	0.41	VH	4.53	0.51	VH	4.68	0.38	VH
2021	4.77	0.28	VH	4.79	0.35	VH	4.77	0.38	VH	4.64	0.45	VH	4.89	0.20	VH
2022	4.69	0.45	VH	4.71	0.36	VH	4.74	0.29	VH	4.48	0.50	VH	4.76	0.41	VH
Whole	*4.75*	*0.39*	*VH*	*4.71*	*0.40*	*VH*	*4.77*	*0.38*	*VH*	*4.55*	*0.51*	*VH*	*4.79*	*0.35*	*VH*

Table 3B. *Practice of the Graduate Attributes of the Graduates*

Variables	Socially concerned			Technically-proficient			Scholarly leaders of science			Practice		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex												
Male	4.82	0.35	VH	4.74	0.41	VH	4.67	0.53	VH	4.75	0.29	VH
Female	4.75	0.38	VH	4.61	0.55	VH	4.53	0.58	VH	4.66	0.34	VH
Age												
Younger	4.75	0.41	VH	4.64	0.50	VH	4.58	0.55	VH	4.67	0.34	VH
Older	4.82	0.26	VH	4.69	0.50	VH	4.61	0.59	VH	4.74	0.30	VH
Civil Status												
Single	4.75	0.39	VH	4.64	0.47	VH	4.59	0.53	VH	4.68	0.31	VH
Married	4.82	0.32	VH	4.69	0.54	VH	4.58	0.62	VH	4.72	0.34	VH
Degree Program												
MAEd	4.78	0.35	VH	4.68	0.47	VH	4.62	0.52	VH	4.72	0.31	VH
EdD/PhD in Ed. Mgt	4.87	0.26	VH	4.78	0.34	VH	4.62	0.70	VH	4.74	0.22	VH
MAEd and EdD/PhD	4.57	0.65	VH	4.23	0.91	VH	4.13	0.73	VH	4.41	0.52	VH
Year Graduated												
2019	4.84	0.34	VH	4.73	0.50	VH	4.61	0.65	VH	4.74	0.33	VH
2020	4.63	0.46	VH	4.52	0.64	VH	4.37	0.55	VH	4.61	0.40	VH
2021	4.87	0.26	VH	4.83	0.31	VH	4.90	0.19	VH	4.81	0.23	VH
2022	4.77	0.33	VH	4.60	0.39	VH	4.60	0.51	VH	4.67	0.26	VH
Whole	*4.78*	*0.36*	*VH*	*4.66*	*0.50*	*VH*	*4.59*	*0.56*	*VH*	*4.70*	*0.32*	*VH*

4.2 Qualitative Results

Thematic Insights. Graduate education plays an important role in developing manpower that can lead efforts geared toward national development (Cagasan et al., 2017). In interviewing the eight participants, the researcher followed Lichtman's (2013) 3Cs in identifying relevant information from individual data. Composite descriptions that derived the essence of the phenomenon were developed. The descriptions contextualized "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced the phenomenon. Similar insights were organized into five (5) themes and seventeen (17) sub-themes.

Theme 1: Pursuing graduate studies for self-fulfillment, personal, and community assistance.

Graduate students shared their experiences and thoughts in pursuing graduate studies. Similar statements were organized into three (3) subthemes: Professional growth and development, boosting self-esteem, and professional advancement.

Professional and personal growth and development. As embedded in their statements, graduates pursued graduate studies to attain professional and personal growth. Their experiences paved the way for pursuing their studies. According to Nunez et al. (2022), the mission of the graduate school of the University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos (UNO-R) is to help students achieve professional growth and develop their technical competence, character, and faith in God through quality graduate education programs in the spirit of Caritas et Scientia. Thus, graduate students were confronted with the realization of pursuing graduate studies as an opportunity to grow and develop their professional and personal being. In comparison, it allows them to continue their needs as professionals.

It is not to brag about the title of my name but rather for me to grow professionally and embrace the challenges within that degree. It said that when you have your Ph.D. degree, responsibility comes along the way, which I find true… I took up Doctor of Philosophy not to brag about the title but rather because I want to grow and embrace the challenges overcoming the Postgraduate program (Chris, personal communication, June 10, 2023).

I pursue graduate studies because I want to create the need in the future. Also, I had my master's degree for continuous improvement) (Judee, personal communication, May 31, 2023).

First and foremost, for my personal and professional growth. That fuels me to decide to enrich my management and leadership degree. Nevertheless, when handling people, you must qualify yourself for that certain position. Since it is my passion to lead people, I should have to take Ph.D. in the aspect of leadership and management. And that I should have to hit the two (2) personal and professional growth.) (Minchin, personal communication, May 23, 2023).

Boosting self-esteem. Graduates' experiences in the graduate education program improved their feelings about pursuing graduate studies. Graduates with high self-esteem participate enthusiastically in the learning process, which allows them to excel at the task laid

on their hands (Hadinezhad & Masoudzadeh, 2018). Graduate students shared their experiences on how self-esteem opens opportunities to establish their personal needs.

For me, it's more of sharing my knowledge with everyone, especially youth and young people. It is very satisfying to share it with others, and when I learn to love teaching, I love interacting with students and teachers (Peter, personal communication, May 24, 2023).

When you have your degree in PhD people will look at you as unsurmountable person. They feel like you are so intelligent much that UNO-R has publication scheme before finishing the course. They often told me your only Teacher II but you have publication. That brings pride for me (Arif, personal communication, June 7, 2023).

Professional advancement. Graduates in education programs perceived that pursuing graduate programs leads to professional advancement. This allowed self-fulfillment among graduates, reaping their labor through high salaries. The findings of the study affirmed Thirunavukarasu et al. (2020) and Tutor et al. (2021), who all found that graduate education contributed to the professional advancement of the graduates. This factor attributed graduates pursuing graduate school as a channel of hope for their future endeavors toward promotion and attaining a brighter future.

I am looking into the opportunity of having a brighter future, like a promotion and a high salary. I believe that when you have a certain degree, you are too close to promotion, and that means promotion entails a high salary. Therefore, the bottom line is a promotion that will provide my needs (Arif, personal communication, March 3, 2023).

In my case, it develops my leadership and management skills, which allows me to be promoted. It boosts my morale and confidence, for it also brings maturity in me (Minchin, personal communication, May 23, 2023).

Support system through interpersonal relationships. Graduates felt that their academic journey toward graduate programs was supported by strong interpersonal relationships. The strong support from their teachers and colleagues encouraged them to pursue their graduate studies. The teacher-student relationship is an important, although complicated, interpersonal relationship in education, and in pursuit of its commitment to sustainable development, the interpersonal relationship should be strengthened (Cui et al., 2020; Pentang, 2021). Support systems such as professors, colleagues, classmates, etc., both internal and external, should invest in this interpersonal relationship to attain certain goals for the institution and the graduates.

Professors have different motivating strategies, but their support system is immensely commendable. They let me feel they are at my side whenever I need them, especially during the pandemic. Also, the presence of my classmates as a support system is present and well appreciated (Cute, personal communication, May 24, 2023).

We learn from each other, and in other ways around, I need to build deeper relationships and connections with others, even with our professors, for they have impressive

backgrounds and experiences in leadership and management. Their teachings are relatable to my experiences) (Minchin, personal communication, May 23, 2023).

Theme 2: The RBGS is a prestigious provider of quality education.

Graduates were provided with well-rounded development of skills and potential to achieve success. Their experience pushed them to pursue their education graduate studies. According to the study of Nunez et al. (2022), the quality of graduate education, professors' competence, Catholic values, facilities, and research training were reasons for enrolling. These factors allow graduates to pursue their studies in RBGS and consistently affirm their commitment to excellence.

Instilling the culture of research. Graduates were influenced by researchers' career paths, which led them to pursue their graduate studies. It also determines the way that research is conducted. Bok (2017) has mentioned that research is urgently needed to improve the quality of undergraduate education. Research rigor entails a great contribution to the global body of knowledge. It is not limited to one perspective only, but it has a wider scope to appreciate its essence as a factual, rich, and reliable source of information. As a quality education provider, UNO-R thrives on providing quality research activities and output for global utilization. Participants cited how the research was done in the graduate school as its trademark. Judee said:

First is research. UNO-R allows me to present my paper locally, nationally, and internationally, and it plays a big role in that endeavor. Also, the publication. To sum it up, it falls under the umbrella of research (Judee, personal communication).

Updated trends in education. With the new trends in education, graduates keep up with it and determine what is currently accepted as the best way to teach. Graduate studies are a two-way mechanism between professionals and the institution that trained them which is essential in pursuing studies (Ramos-Hernández et al., 2023). With the advancement of technology and teaching mechanisms, institutions are becoming adaptable to changes in processes and systems. Thus, graduate students shared their experiences coping with the mechanism brought by the present educational system. Judee shared:

It is the name of the school UNO-R that keeps me going back. The quality education that they provided pushed me to go back. That quality of education is too rare to find in other institutions (Judee, personal communication, May 31, 2023).

Augustinian values formation. In the search for God through the pursuit of truth, graduates seek union with God through love and others. As a Roman Catholic university, values education is integral to the curricula (Lopena & Madrigal, 2023). Evident to the practices of graduate students during graduate education, value formation inculcated is generally adept in pursuing graduate studies. The embodiment of the values formation of graduates urges them to pursue graduate studies. Minchin shared that:

First is Christ-centeredness. What I miss the most is the adoration chapel. Second is humility, in a way that regardless of our status in our present positions, we are taught to share with others as students who want to learn and share among others. You can never feel that the

other is higher than you, but you are humble enough to learn with others (Minchin, personal communication, May 23, 2023).

Theme 3: Graduate education's contribution to professional growth and development

Graduates of teacher education programs are key players in today's educational paradigm shift. Their gained knowledge, skills, and attributes contributed to the demands of the institution in catering quality education towards professional growth and development.

Enhancement of intellectual abilities, specifically in management and leadership skills and abilities. Graduates in pursuit of excellence kept their intellectual upliftment in pursuing graduate studies. In their continued pursuit of excellence and competence, graduates acquired the leadership and management skills necessary for their positions. They were to share their acquired skills to share with their constituents. Minchin shared:

I have a passion for leadership and management that qualifies me aside from teaching, but it added when I pursued a Ph.D. Educational Management (Minchin, personal communication, May 23, 2023).

Increase in salary. An increase in graduate's economic increment motivated them to pursue graduate studies. Findings reflected that they are fulfilled when they are paid accordingly. Tutor et al. (2021) found that graduates are motivated by wages and career advancement. It is the mechanism where graduates participate in the labor market, which means that graduates with more educational skills training deliver higher productivity and, hence, can avail of higher employment probability and wages (Hung & Ramsden, 2021; Holden & Biddle, 2017). Thus, Minchin shared her benefits in upgrading and continued pursuit of finishing the graduate program. She stated that:

I secure a higher salary and better opportunities to expand my network of connections (Minchin, personal communication, May 23, 2023).

Theme 4: Great satisfaction has been achieved by the graduates in the delivery of various programs and services.

Graduates' satisfaction with the delivery of the programs and services of the graduate studies motivated them to enrol and finish their studies. The Graduate School is committed to providing students with essential professional skills they will need in the workplace (Dela Cruz, 2022). Thus, anchored on its obligation is to provide services and programs accessible to everyone.

Competent teachers. Graduates experience quality learning from their competent teachers. They were motivated to pursue their studies as it positively affected graduates' academics and skills. Relative to the study of Gentova and Madrigal (2020), teachers need to collaborate with students to attain a more positive classroom climate, which allows everyone to produce quality output. Thus, competent teachers motivate graduates to thrive by providing quality training for their personal growth. Cute expressed her experience on how professors trained her to survive graduate studies. She shared:

It is not easy, and it reminds me not to settle for less over quality. Especially there are those competent teachers who are willing to guide and help the graduate students to survive graduate school (Cute, personal communication, May 24, 2023).

Community service. Community service is voluntary unpaid work performed by graduates for the benefit and betterment of the community without compensation. Graduate studies, as a provider of quality services, provide various skills in the development of graduates. Community services as an external activity allow graduates to reflect on the attributes they gained in the institution. This act of goodness entails paying forward that the institution is not only into academics but also acts of kindness to humanity. Cute shared that:

There is an outreach and community service program. UNO-R is trying its best to provide services through community and outreach programs as part of its services in the institution (Cute, personal communication, May 24, 2023).

Affordable tuition fees. Gines (2014) discovered that teacher education graduates enrolled in the program because of the affordable tuition fees. This divergent statement proved that tuition fee matters in pursuing graduate studies and attaining an educational degree. Arif states that:

I chose UNO-R because of its low tuition fee compared to other universities in the city with my specific program. The tuition fee is very reasonable to pursue my studies (Arif, personal communication, June 7, 2023).

Accessible library services. In the services of the library facility, graduates were provided with satisfactory service to address the information needs of the graduates. In Lopena and Madrigal (2023), graduate students were extremely satisfied with the delivery and implementation of graduate programs, with a mean percentage of 3.38%. Thus, library facilities and services are key in encouraging graduate students to pursue their studies.

Services are good for me. I can feel that I am well accommodated with the necessities that I need (Judee, personal communication, May 31, 2023).

The library services are very good. They can scan the needed materials you want even if you are far away (Chris, personal communication, June 10, 2023).

If I rate the services from 1-10 as the highest, it would be 9.5 because of some aspects the institution needs to develop. But the library services offer direct service, especially with our international students (Arif, personal communication, June 7, 2023).

Accounting services cater to stakeholders' needs. Graduates were provided with satisfactory accounting services in such a way that it helped graduates process their accounts and bills. They were assisted with the main function of the school's business and transactions. Services and facilities are common grounds for choosing an institution to pursue studies. This divergent statement of the participant provides an avenue to lessen the burden of reaching the needs of every client-student. Chris stated that:

The service in accounting is very accessible. You are well accommodated even though you were out of the country. Online transaction is everywhere (Chris, personal communication, June 10, 2023).

Additional program services aligned to students' needs. Graduates believed there was no perfect institution, but they strived to produce quality services and programs for every graduate. Nonetheless, recommendations and suggestions were provided for the betterment of the institution. Pursuing graduate studies is also an opportunity to align the competencies required for certain assignments or positions (Lopena & Madrigal, 2023). Thus, graduate students suggest that the additional programs aligned with their needs will also be considered as they provide a wide array of opportunities to encourage others to pursue studies.

Maybe it is more of the course offerings to expand in which other graduates could not look into other universities, but with UNO-R, all are offered (Don, personal communication, May 24, 2023).

I think UNO-R will offer more options of courses and programs to choose from. So, offering more programs, that would be better (Chris, personal communication, June 10, 2023).

(Excellence is already present and it's noteworthy in every program that they have in the university but to offer more programs for access would also beneficial (Lito, personal communication, May 26, 2023.

Theme 5: The various attributes of the Graduate School competently inculcated by the graduates.
Graduates gained various attributes that helped them grow personally and professionally. These attributes and character were transcended into actions not limited to their profession but also to their living. Nunez et al. (2022) affirmed that there is a very great extent of the practice of graduate attributes demonstrated by graduates in the workplace, which means that graduate attributes are practiced all the time. These attributes embodied by the graduates are reflected in their statements as to how they impacted their profession.

Imbibing the values of "Caritas et Scientia". Graduates accepted and were influenced by qualities and values that helped them to lead a good life. Graduates could embody the love of knowledge and a quest for excellence as these helped them grow. According to Nunez et al. (2022), the mission of the graduate school of the University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos (UNO-R) is "to help students achieve professional growth and develop their technical competence, character, and faith in God through quality graduate education programs in the spirit of Caritas et Scientia." Participants shared their personal experiences in the practice of the institutions' motto "Caritas et Scientia".

UNO-R graduates are expected to embody the mind and heart learning, where the heart speaks from values and the mind for competence. That is why knowledge, skills, and attitude greatly impact me, which depicts the mind and heart motto of Caritas et scientia of UNO-R (Judee, personal communication, May 31, 2023).

Excellence, integrity, Christian values, quality education, the quest for knowledge, and love of learning are really in one at UNO-R.) (Cute, personal communication, May 24, 2023).

We are grounded with the Recoleto value that they will teach you to be humble. It is rooted in the UNO-R the humbleness that students emulated, and regardless of the achievements and attainments, you were still grounded with humbleness (Chris, personal communication, June 10, 2023).

Quest for excellence. Every graduate aims to share knowledge as it is their ultimate goal. Their quest for excellence would mean that they will not settle for less. University of Negros Occidental – Recoletos (UNO-R) envisions as a "Catholic University committed to the integral formation of the human person with a passion for excellence and service to the Church and society" (Recoletos de Bacolod Graduate School Student Manual, 2018, p. 8). Thus, its quest for excellence entails competent graduates who are lovers of excellence.

On the competence side, we are pursuing continuous learning, which impacted me, and I applied the graduate attribute to some external school factors (Judee, personal communication, May 31, 2023).

Competence and the quest for excellence are great factors that should be possessed by RBGS graduates. Lovers of excellence and quality education as a trademark of RBGS (Chris, personal communication, June 10, 2023).

I have a lot of things to learn, especially since I am on the Ph.D. journey, and it provides me with a wide array of opportunities in the quest for learning. That is why I am pursuing my graduate studies (Arif, personal communication, June 7, 2023).

Qualitative Discussion

The graduate experience persuaded me to pursue graduate studies toward self-fulfillment. The distinguishing way that education graduate contributes to the advancement and development of competencies is by building on the foundational knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired during undergraduate and post-graduate studies. This allows graduates to reflect on pursuing graduate studies to advance their careers and professions. Universities must ensure that graduates' acquired skills and competencies align with society's labor market demands, which call for qualified workers (Rojas & Rojas, 2016). Thus, continuing and ongoing professional advancement meets the demand of the department of upskilling professionals for personal and professional growth.

The graduate's acuity on the trademark of graduate studies encourages them to thrive with excellence. The graduates' perceptions of the culture of the graduate studies provide an opportunity to pursue their studies. The culture of research paved the way for graduates' pursuit of continuing their studies. Its rigor and culture of instilling research competence do not compromise the quality of education graduates deserve towards their studies. It provides an avenue for the graduates to become more competent and adaptive to the change of time, technology, and undertakings to cope with the demands of the department. Thus, it encourages graduates to pursue their studies. Nevertheless, the Augustinian values

formation honed graduates to embody the graduate studies culture impacted graduates to share, reflect, conquer, and quest for excellence.

The education graduate program develops the professional growth and development of graduates. Graduate education is becoming a major factor in industries when it comes to career advancement (Lopena & Madrigal, 2023). The education graduates develop skills, attributes, and competencies deemed necessary for the industry's needs. These qualities of graduates contributed by graduate education paved the way for career and professional advancement, management, and leadership in organizing tasks, undertaking, and managing the institution. Graduate education programs provide better opportunities for graduates to alleviate their lives through gaining salary and benefits.

The graduate studies program gained helpful feedback from the graduates. The experience of graduate education impacts their degree of satisfaction, which is evident in the result that when students are satisfied with helpful and positive feedback reflected. To review and assure the quality of its execution, it is always crucial to consider how relevant the curriculum is to the demands of the stakeholders (Leavitt et al., 2016). Therefore, the greater the satisfaction of the graduate with the programs and services of the graduate education, and as a result positive feedback reflected from the graduate's statement. Institution's programs and services, when well delivered to the stakeholders, will impact the graduate's perspectives in pursuing graduate studies.

The education graduate program formed values essential to the practice of the graduates' profession in the workplace and life in general. Graduates pursuing graduate studies toward professional growth use the graduate qualities as a guide for teaching and living. These values equipped students to perform with excellence. Furthermore, it reflected on the university on how they successfully transcended the theories and learnings into practice in their specific field of teaching-learning processes. Also, it manifested that the embodiment of the Augustinian values formation furnished graduates in their field of work with competence. A study by Madrigal (2015) showed that the participants grew into graduates with significant qualities. The findings demonstrated that there is a substantial process implementation in the creation of graduate attributes between students. A significant inference means that the quality standard system of the University is prepared effectively by industry-mandated skills and competencies and prepares the participants to handle the challenges of employment and internationalization.
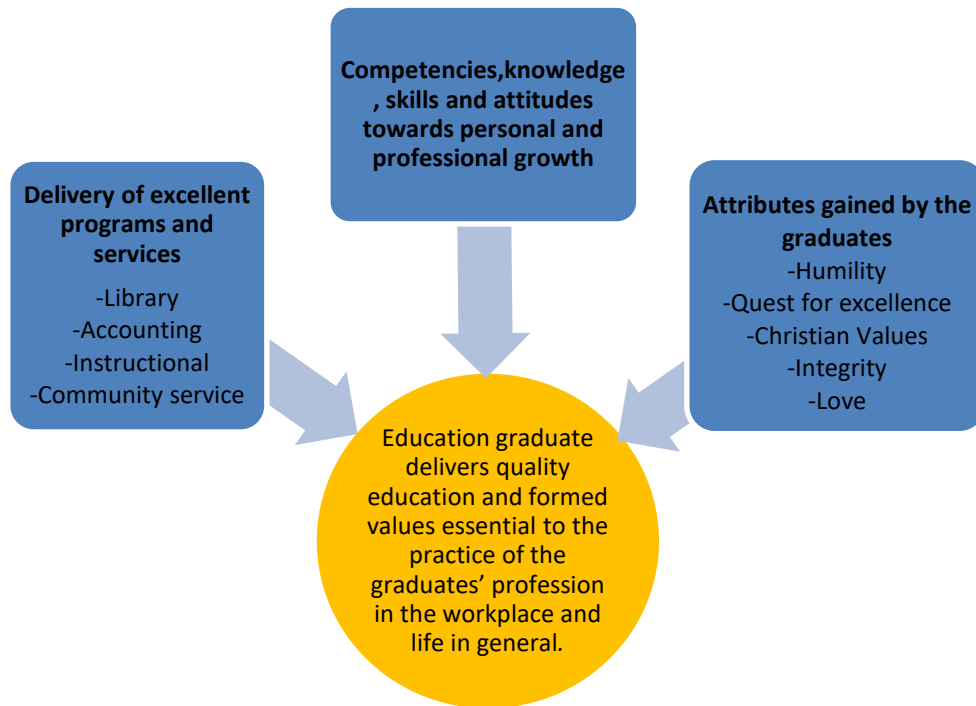
4.3 Mixed Method Data

The researchers provide a theoretical explanation for the study's consistent findings. The education graduate program contributed to the development of graduates' competencies, which led to unlocking knowledge, skills, and abilities. In addition, the education graduate program gained positive feedback from the graduates, especially their satisfaction with the competent teachers, support system, and institution services such as library facility, accounting, and interpersonal relationships with professors. The program also formed values essential to the practice of the graduates' profession. Finally, it contributed to the career advancement of the graduates, which is a predictor of the career success of the graduates, as shown in the quantitative and qualitative findings. The meta-inferences are as follows:

Table 4. *Joint Display of the Quantitative and Qualitative Results*

Quantitative Results	Qualitative Themes	Meta-inferences
Graduate experiences in pursuing graduate studies.	Theme 1. Pursuing graduate studies for self-fulfillment, personal and community assistance. 1.1 Professional and personal growth and development 1.2 Boosting self-esteem 1.3 Professional advancement 1.4 Support system through interpersonal relationship	A. The graduate experience persuaded me to pursue graduate studies toward self-fulfillment.
The graduate studies trademark in pursuit of excellence.	Theme 2. The RBGS is a prestigious provider of quality education. 1.1 Instilling the culture of research. 1.2 Updated trends in education 1.3 Augustinian values formation	B. The graduate's acuity on the trademark of the graduate studies encourages them to thrive with excellence.
Very great extent of the contribution of graduate studies to the professional growth and development of graduates	Theme 3. Graduate education's contribution to professional growth and development. 1.1 Enhancement of intellectual abilities, specifically in management and leadership skills and abilities 1.2 Increase salary	C. The education graduate program develops the professional growth and development of graduates.
Extremely satisfied with the delivery of graduate school programs and services	Theme 4. Great satisfaction with the delivery of programs and services. 4.1 Competent teachers 4.2 Community services 4.3 Accessible to library services 4.4 Affordable tuition fee 4.5 Accounting services cater to stakeholders' needs. 4.6 Additional program services aligned with students' needs.	D. Graduate education program responds to the needs of the graduates through delivering and implementing quality graduate education programs and services exceeding graduate's expectations. This is crucial to consider how relevant the curriculum is to the demands of the stakeholders.
Very great extent practice of graduate attributes in the workplace.	Theme 5. The various attributes of the graduate school are competently inculcated by the graduates. 1.1 Imbibing the values of "caritas et scientia" 1.2 Quest for excellence	E. The education graduate program formed values essential to the practice of the graduates' profession in the workplace and life in general.

Emerging Framework

The results and findings of the study revealed that the satisfaction of the graduates towards programs and services of the graduate studies such as library facility, accounting services, instructional competence of teachers, and community services humbled the graduates to develop their attributes of humility, Christian values, integrity, love, and the quest for excellence. The diagram shows the relationship between the delivery of education graduate programs necessary to the development of the graduates demonstrated in their profession and life in general.

5.0 Conclusion

The results of the present study are consistent with the emerging framework of the quality delivery of education graduate programs. It upholds the satisfaction of the graduates, the delivery of programs, and the services of the graduate programs, resulting in the development of competencies and unlocking knowledge, skills, and abilities. The graduate attributes helped develop and shape the graduates' experience to develop a strong foundation for their personal growth, which is valuable in academic settings and the practice of their profession in their field.

Moreover, the results of the study validated that, indeed, the tracer study could assist the graduate school in complying with the accreditation and quality assurance measure requirements for a quality management system. It also helped evaluate the landscape for graduate education studies in light of rapid advancement in education as marked by the 21st century and exactly how these graduate studies have contributed to graduates' personal quest for bettering their lives, careers, opportunities, and advancement. Furthermore, the findings of great satisfaction of graduates on the implementation and delivery of programs and services encourage continual improvement towards engaging the graduates in open, mutually beneficial ways and spreading knowledge to uplift others and positively use their influence to impact the community, the country, and the world of domination.

6.0 Limitations of the Findings

The present study recognizes several limitations. First, in terms of the respondents in the qualitative phase, not all the graduates from 2018-2022 have responded because of the limited number of graduates in every program, specifically in PhD and EdD, for every school year. Finally, in terms of the generalizability, the results will only apply to the education

graduate programs such as Master's Education and Doctor of Philosophy and EdD major in educational management.

7.0 Practical Applications

The tracer study may provide the graduate school with the baseline data relative to the realization of the educational thrust of the graduate school, which is outcome-based education. Moreover, the results of this study show that quality management is provided to its stakeholders/students by meeting their needs and exceeding their expectations. Apparently, Caritas et Scientia is embodied by the graduate school students from their lived experiences brought about by their curricular training. Further, the strategic plan is designed to give direction to Recoletos de Bacolod Graduate School for the continuous improvement in the curricular training of the students, responsive to the Philippine Qualifications Framework VII and VIII, and cater to the stakeholder's needs. In addition, it may enhance the delivery of services to graduate school students under the education program.

8.0 Directions for Future Research

The findings of the study focused on education graduates. Furthermore, future researchers may utilize the data from this study to expand the extent of this topic's coverage and develop new research strategies and approaches to fill in the gaps. Future researchers will be able to solve the study's limitations and offer considerably more nuanced and data-driven outcomes. This study can be replicated by other programs in the graduate school that can be resulted in the emergence of a new theory.

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