

**TRACER STUDY OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION GRADUATES OF JOSE MARIA COLLEGE
FOUNDATION, INC.: BASIS FOR AN INSTRUCTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Introduction

Education has long been regarded as one of the primary components for poverty reduction and socio-economic upliftment. Tertiary education particularly is tasked to train the nation's manpower in the skills required for national development, and to instill and foster the appropriate and relevant, knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable each individual to become a useful, productive and gainfully employed member of society. Investments in education would be considered "wasted" if people do not move into productive jobs that enable them to pay taxes and support public services. In an increasingly globalized world, there is a growing pressure for fresh graduates to compete for jobs which are not growing at the same pace with the growth in population of young people seeking gainful employment. According to the International Labor Organization Youth Employment Networks (YEN), young people are actively seeking to participate in the world of work and are two to three times more likely than the older generations to find themselves unemployed (Cuadra, et al, 2019).

A tracer study is a follow-up research tool which constitutes one form of empirical study. It can be considered as an appropriate means of evaluating the results of the education and training provided at a given institution. It brings together certain basic types of information concerning the level of employment,

unemployment and underemployment amongst graduates, the contemporary undergraduate experience, the first and current work position of graduates and the correspondence between educational qualifications and required work skills. Results of such studies can often demonstrate the success of education and training in relation to the graduates, labor market and employers.

The information acquired by means of tracer surveys can also indicate possible deficits in a given educational program and serve as a basis for future planning activities, at both the institutional and national levels, such that academic programs might be brought more closely in line with the needs of the economy. The tracer study technique is very flexible and can be conducted at any time after the students' exit. Thus, it can be designed to reveal students' short, medium or long-term pathways, identifying their involvement in employment, further study or other activities. The depth and type of information collected by the tracer study can be readily adjusted through modification of the questionnaire. If desired, the tracer study can also be modified to incorporate a survey of student satisfaction after they finish their studies in college.

The Philippines as a developing country faces these same challenges having been beset for decades with structurally high unemployment and underemployment rates. High population and labor force growth continues to outpace formal job creation. The Philippine education system churns out more and more college graduates with various professional disciplines such as commerce, engineering, health, sciences and law to name a few. But the jobs

are not really created as fast as the universities handing out of the college diploma, (Cornilles, Jr, 2021).

This study is a follow up to the research conducted in 2017 which established the whereabouts of the graduates of the College of Business Education. Aside from knowledge creation is to determine how the undergraduate program may be improved so as to increase the employability prospects of its graduates. It also conforms to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) mandate of ensuring the higher education institution's graduates match the requirements of both local and international standards by improving its academic and non-academic services.

The main objective of this study is to trace the destination of the BSBA graduates from the time they graduated from the institution with a view to establish among others their current activities, use of core competencies, unemployment and employment, their labor market employment as well as other relevant information.

This study is beneficial to the College of Business Education because this can serve as an evaluation of its efficiency in equipping the graduates with competence, knowledge and skills required in the working industry through their curriculum, thus the quality of education given to students. This will also help the program know the strengths of their curriculum and work on their weakness based on the feedbacks of their graduates . Further, this will enable the program to maintain contact with their graduates to expand their network of connections.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to trace the BSBA graduates of Jose Maria College Foundation, Inc. from 2015-2022. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 Age
 - 1.2 Gender
 - 1.3 Specialization
 - 1.4 Year Graduated?
2. What is the employment profile of respondents in terms of:
 - 2.1 Duration of job search
 - 2.2 Employment type
 - 2.3 Income
 - 2.4 Nature of Business of employment
 - 2.5 Relevance of college degree to present job?
3. What are the future career plans of respondents?
4. Based on the findings of the study what instructional programs can be developed?

Theoretical Framework

This theory is anchored on the theory of employability by Yorke and Knight, (2004) which states that employability as the outcome of one's learning, achievements and understanding of personal skills to be successful in

employment in their chosen career. Furthermore, employability can broadly explain in three ways: first is immediate employment, which states that most graduate seek an immediate employment for experience in short period of time. Second is immediate employability, which focuses on work readiness of the graduate to cope with the demand without requiring additional trainings and the third is aiming big for their future stability.

Conceptual Framework

Presented in Figure 1 is the conceptual paradigm of the study which reflects the Input, Process, and Output (IPO) system approach.

The Input contains the demographic profile of respondents, employment profile, and career plans the respondents. The Process include the data generation, instrumentation and profiling of demographic profile, employment history and career plans using the descriptive analysis. The Output provides inputs to data bank and instructional development plans.

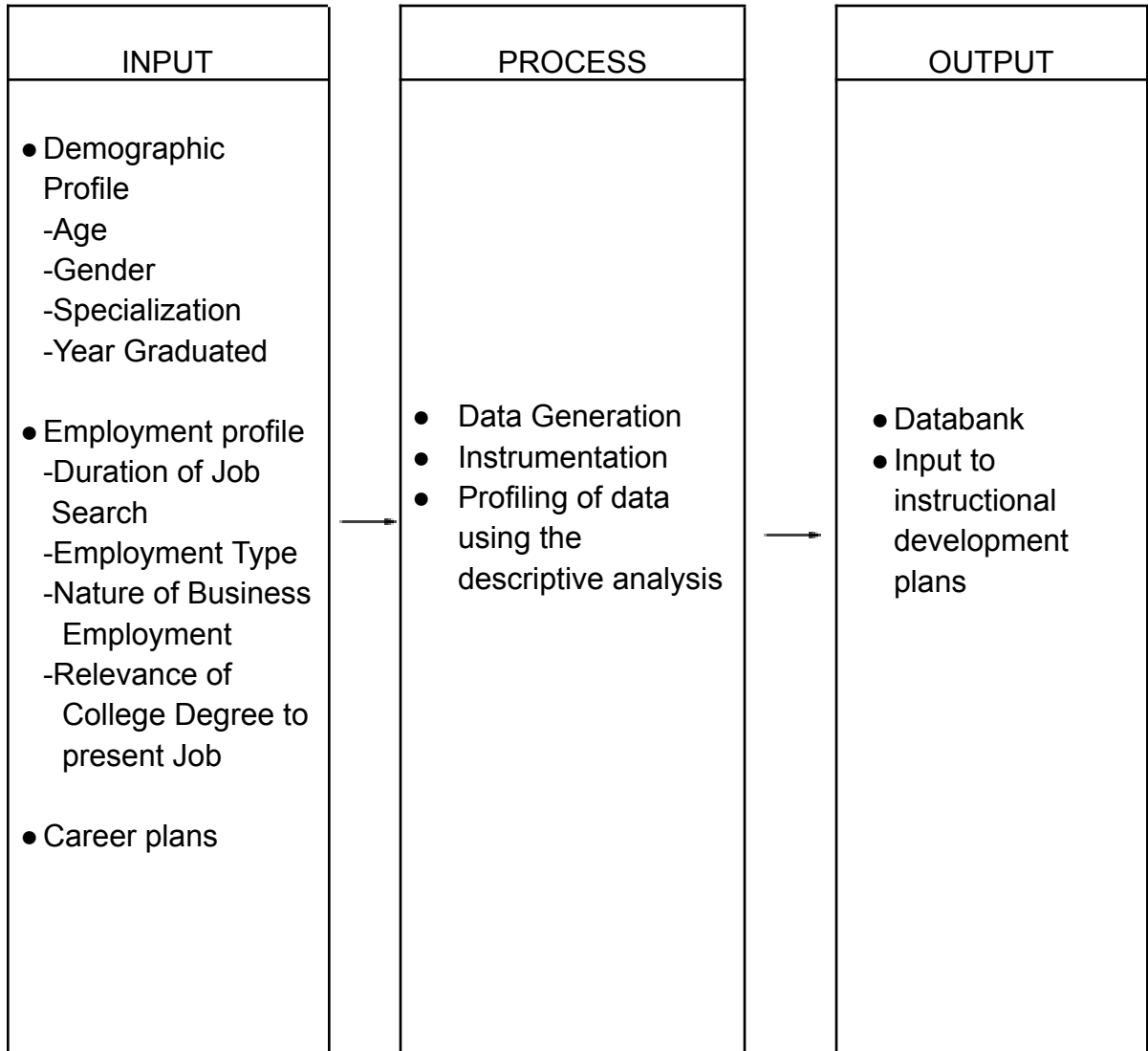


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

METHODOLOGY

This section provides the research design appropriate for this study, the description of the research environment where the study conducted, a clear description of the respondents and how they were selected, the research instrument used, a detailed information on the procedures used in gathering data, and the statistical tools that were used to analyze the data.

Research Design

The study is quantitative and has utilized the descriptive design. It contained a series of questions which were summarized and tabulated into frequencies and percentages. The researchers drew conclusions from the responses of the graduates and alumni. According to Hall (2015), descriptive method of research design helps researchers plan and carry out descriptive studies, designed to provide descriptive details about people, place and other phenomena.

Locale

The study was conducted through online via Google forms which were sent to social networking accounts of the graduates. At present online means is the most practical way to reach people since it is more accessible and does not cost much. This is one way of strengthening the claim that the respondents are not subject to any form of harm or danger during the conduct of the study.

Further, the graduates are already dispersed in different parts of the city, the region and some have even relocated in other parts of the country. There may also be a possibility that some have sought work abroad.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study are the graduates of Jose Maria College Foundation, Inc., Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. A total of 223 graduates were traced from the Registrar's Office list of graduates 2015-2022. The table below shows the distribution of respondents according to the year graduated and number of graduates. The total enumeration will be considered.

Year Graduated	Number of Graduates			
	BSBA-FM	BSBA-MM	BSBA-HRD M	Total Graduates
2015	48			48
2016	34			34
2017	35			35
2018	9			9
2019	32			32
2020	36			36
2021	14			14
2022	6	7	2	15
Total	214	7	2	223

Research Instrument

The Graduate Employment Survey (GradES) 2013 of the Commission on Higher Education was used. However, the following modifications were made to better suit the study: (1) a space for the permanent address, contact number and e-mail address was added to be able to serve the purpose of a tracer study, that is to trace the alumni; (2) an item was included to provide for the nature of

business and their gross monthly income, in case the respondent is self-employed, so the questionnaire would not be biased in favor of the employed; (3) an item for the gross monthly salary of the respondents in their first job and current job were included; (4) the question “Did you expect to receive training in your first job after graduation?” is retained, as this is deemed relevant; (5) information if the respondent is currently enrolled, what he/she is taking up, and in what school is he/she currently enrolled; (6) information as to the plans of the respondent to go back to school in the next 1 to 5 years, what he/she is planning to take up, and where he/she plans to enroll; and, (7) The questions were rearranged into a sequential order, for better organization and provide smooth connection and flow of the questions.

Statistical Tools

The study used the frequency count and percentage to interpret the data gathered from the graduates.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the study gathered the responses from graduates on the questions provided in the tracer study. The tables were arranged sequentially in the order they were written on the questionnaire.

Table 1 reflected the courses of the graduates who responded in the survey. Financial Management students comprised 52.8% or 38 students. Referring to the official count there were 218 graduates from the Financial Management program from 2015 to 2022. This means that only 15.77% of those who graduated were able to be reached by the researchers. On the other hand, 34 Marketing Management graduates responded to the survey while none among the Human Resources Management graduates were located for the tracer.

Table 1. Course and Major?

	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Financial Management	38	52.8 %	52.8 %
Marketing Management	34	47.2 %	100.0 %
Human Resource Management	0		

In terms of the gender of respondents (table 2), 61% of the respondents were female while only 39% were male. Records show that most of the students and graduates of the JMCFI College of Business programs were female.

Table 2. Gender?

	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Male	28	39.0%	39.0 %
Female	44	61.0 %	100.0 %

Projected on table 3 is the statics on whether the graduates were employed before graduation. Almost half of the respondents (47.2%) were found to have secured a job before their graduation. This may mean that some of them may have been offered jobs by their internship companies, were working while studying or were put in a situation where they needed a job to sustain them in their studies.

Table 3. Frequencies of Were you able to secure a job BEFORE your graduation?

Were you able to secure a job BEFORE your graduation?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	38	52.8 %	52.8 %
Yes	34	47.2 %	100.0 %

On table 4 it was revealed that most of the respondents graduated between the years 2019 to 2022. They comprised 75% of those who responded in the survey. This may be because the recent pandemic which hit the country in 2020 has prevented them from seeking employment elsewhere far from the city. It may also mean that they are more accessible as they still have friends who study in the institution. They may still also have contact with the faculty.

Table 4. Year Graduated

	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
2015	8	11 %	11 %
2016	1	2 %	13 %
2018	7	10 %	23 %
2019	16	22 %	45 %
2020	16	22 %	67 %
2021	8	11 %	78 %
2022	14	19 %	97 %
2023	2	3 %	100 %
TOTAL	72	100	100

In terms of how long it took the graduates to land a job, it is overwhelming that among those who responded 80.9% were able to land a job within six months after they graduated. This may relate to the effectiveness of training they receive in the institution making them readily employable. This may further show the credibility of the institution among the industry, government and non-government agencies that hire graduates of business education.

The employment rate of 80.9% within six months for our graduates is a strong indicator of the efficacy of our educational programs and career support services. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2019 revealed that employment rate within six months from graduation in the United States is

72%. In UK, 76.6% of graduates were employed within six months as reported by the Graduate Outcomes (GO) Survey in 2020 while 68.9% of Australians who graduated from college found a job within six months (Australian Graduate Outcomes Survey, 2021). Further the European Tracking Survey (2022) disclosed a 74% employment among Europeans. Compared to other studies conducted in different regions and timeframes, our graduates consistently outperform their peers. Several factors may contribute to this success including the relevance of the business curriculum to the needs of the industry, career services such as broadening of industry networks and job fairs, the internship program that prepares and trains students for the real work setting and the school's adaptability to rapid changes in the business industry.

Table 5. Frequencies of How long did it take you to land a job AFTER graduation?

How long did it take you to land a job AFTER graduation?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
2 years and up after graduation	2	2.9 %	2.9 %
6 months to 1 year after graduation	9	13.2 %	16.2 %
More than 1 year but less than 2 years after graduation	2	2.9 %	19.1 %
Within 6 months after graduation	55	80.9 %	100.0 %

When the graduates were queried on whether they had difficulty finding a job (table 5) after graduation, only 35.2% were found to have a hard time getting employment. Aside from the training they receive from the college, the broadening of industry players may have provided increased job opportunities for the entry level employees.

Table 6. Frequencies of Was finding a job difficult for you?

Was finding a job difficult for you?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	46	64.8 %	64.8 %
Yes	25	35.2 %	100.0 %

On table 7 the whereabouts of graduates after graduation were enumerated. It is interesting to note that some 15.3% who were employed at that time were still in a professional job search. The reason could be that they are not in the jobs they wanted or that their professional degree they earned do not commensurate their job description.

Table 7. Frequencies of After graduation you were –

After graduation you were –	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Accepted for a professional employment	44	61.1 %	61.1 %
Accepted for a professional employment, Continuing professional education, Starting up a business	1	1.4 %	62.5 %
Accepted for a professional employment, Managing family business	1	1.4 %	63.9 %
Accepted for a professional employment, Starting up a business, Pursuing skills training, Self-employed	1	1.4 %	65.3 %
Employed but still in a professional job search	11	15.3 %	80.6 %
Managing family business, Self-employed	1	1.4 %	81.9 %
Not seeking employment	1	1.4 %	83.3 %
Self-employed	5	6.9 %	90.3 %
Starting up a business, Employed but still in a professional job search	1	1.4 %	91.7 %
Starting up a business, Managing family business	2	2.8 %	94.4 %
Starting up a business, Unemployed but in a job search	1	1.4 %	95.8 %

Table 7. Frequencies of After graduation you were –

After graduation you were –	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Unemployed but in a job search	3	4.2 %	100.0 %

Most of the graduates who were self-employed are in the retailing, agriculture and insurance/real estate businesses. Aside from attractiveness of these businesses in this current time, these are also included in the list of needed products.

Table 8. Frequencies of If self-employed or starting up a business, please indicate primary nature of your business:

If self-employed or starting up a business, please indicate primary nature of your business:	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Agency Services	1	4.0 %	4.0 %
Agriculture	4	16.0 %	20.0 %
Communications Services	2	8.0 %	28.0 %
Distribution	1	4.0 %	32.0 %
Distribution, Health Services	1	4.0 %	36.0 %
Financial & Insurance Services	3	12.0 %	48.0 %
Franchising	2	8.0 %	56.0 %
Franchising, Distribution	1	4.0 %	60.0 %
Health Services	1	4.0 %	64.0 %
Manufacturing	1	4.0 %	68.0 %
Mining or Quarrying	1	4.0 %	72.0 %
Wholesaling & Retailing	6	24.0 %	96.0 %
Wholesaling & Retailing, Health Services	1	4.0 %	100.0 %

The graduates of BSBA who are self-employed (48.8%) receive P10,000 to P24,999.00 of monthly revenue. It is also noteworthy that 20.9% are earning P25,000 to 49,999 which is also equivalent to a supervisory or managerial level salary in the industry.

Table 9. Frequencies of What is your gross monthly income (if self-employed)?

What is your gross monthly income (if self-employed)?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
P10,000 to P24,999	21	48.8 %	48.8 %
P10,000 to P24,999,	1	2.3 %	51.2 %
P25,000 to P49,999	9	20.9 %	72.1 %
P50,000 to P74,999	3	7.0 %	79.1 %
P75,000 to P99,999	1	2.3 %	81.4 %
P9,999 and below	8	18.6 %	100.0 %

Our graduates have fulltime employment (95.5%) while only 4.5% are employed on a part time basis (table 10).

Table 10. Frequencies of Type of Employment (1)

Type of Employment (1)	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Full-Time	64	95.5 %	95.5 %
Part-Time	3	4.5 %	100.0 %

Those who landed jobs after graduation are receiving approximately P10,000 to P24,999 monthly income which is the industry average for entry level employees within the city. It worth noting that 25% of the graduates receive salaries below P9,999 when they got their employment after graduation. These may be the graduates who ventured into enterprising activities or those who had part time employment.

Table 11. Frequencies of Gross Monthly Salary (if employed after graduation)

Gross Monthly Salary (if employed after graduation)	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
P10,000 to P24,999	31	59.6 %	59.6 %
P10,000 to P24,999,	1	1.9 %	61.5 %
P25,000 to P49,999	5	9.6 %	71.2 %
P50,000 to P74,999	1	1.9 %	73.1 %
P75,000 to P99,999	1	1.9 %	75.0 %
P9,999 and below	13	25.0 %	100.0 %

In contrast to table 11, table 12 revealed that there are more graduates who have progressed to higher income in their current jobs (2023, the time of the study). Some 65% now have P10,000 to P24,999 salaries and 15% with salaries ranging from P25,000 to P49,999. It may be due to promotion or salary increases provided by the company. A progression from a salary level of P9,999 below can be seen with about 10% moving up to higher salary level compared to the previous salary.

Table 12. Frequencies of What is your gross monthly salary in your current job?

What is your gross monthly salary in your current job?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
P10,000 to P24,999	39	65.0 %	65.0 %
P100,000 and above	1	1.7 %	66.7 %
P25,000 to P49,999	9	15.0 %	81.7 %
P50,000 to P74,999	1	1.7 %	83.3 %

Table 12. Frequencies of What is your gross monthly salary in your current job?

What is your gross monthly salary in your current job?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
P75,000 to P99,999	1	1.7 %	85.0 %
P9,999 and below	9	15.0 %	100.0 %

In table 13 it can be gleaned that the college degree the graduates earned are required for employment for some 80.3% of the respondents.

Table 13. Frequencies of Does your current job require the college degree you earned in JMC COBE-BSBA?

Does your current job require the college degree you earned in JMC COBE-BSBA?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	14	19.7 %	19.7 %
Yes	57	80.3 %	100.0 %

Confirming the fact that the college degree was the passport of employment for 80.3% of the graduates (table 13), it is interesting to highlight that the graduates perceive that they have fared better in the job market because of their business degree or field of specialization. Business graduates tend to fare better in the job market due to a combination of practical skills, industry relevance, and strong professional networks developed during their studies. According to the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) Corporate Recruiters Survey 2020, employers highly value the versatile skill set of business graduates, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership abilities, which are directly applicable to a wide range of industries and roles (GMAC,

2020). Furthermore, many business programs offer robust internship opportunities and career services, which facilitate smoother transitions into the workforce. This practical experience, combined with the networking opportunities afforded by business schools, often results in higher employment rates and better job prospects for business graduates.

Table 14. Frequencies of Would you have fared better in the job market if you had a different major or field of specialization?

Would you have fared better in the job market if you had a different major or field of specialization?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	45	64.3 %	64.3 %
Yes	25	35.7 %	100.0 %

The graduates (78.9%) received training on their first jobs after they graduated from college. However, it is unfortunate that a good percentage (21.1%) was not given the needed training in their first jobs.

Table 15. Frequencies of Did you receive training in your first job after graduation?

Did you receive training in your first job after graduation?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	15	21.1 %	21.1 %
Yes	56	78.9 %	100.0 %

It is evident that the graduates need the necessary training to enable them to progress from their entry level jobs (table 16, 70.8%) to a desired position.

The graduates of the JMCFI College of Business are naturally competitive and may desire to move up the ladder in their corporate jobs.

Table 16. Frequencies of Do you need more training in order to get your desired job?

Do you need more training in order to get your desired job?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	21	29.2 %	29.2 %
Yes	51	70.8 %	100.0 %

In table 17, there are 56.5% who expressed their desire to pursue graduate studies. This may be congruent to the need by the industry of executives who have masteral or post graduate degrees. Filipino companies, both in the private and government sectors, favor executives who have master's or graduate degrees due to several compelling reasons. First, advanced degrees are often seen as indicators of a higher level of expertise and specialized knowledge, which are essential for making strategic decisions and leading organizations effectively. According to a study by Florendo (2019), Filipino companies value the advanced skills in management, critical thinking, and problem-solving that graduate education imparts, which are crucial for executive roles. Additionally, holding a master's or graduate degree often signifies a commitment to personal and professional growth, which is highly regarded in a competitive job market. Furthermore, advanced education fosters a global perspective and an understanding of contemporary business practices, which are beneficial in the increasingly globalized economy (Florendo, 2019). Lastly, the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) emphasizes the importance

of advanced degrees for leadership positions, reinforcing the trend across both private and public sectors (CHED, 2020).

Table 17. Frequencies of Do you plan to pursue a graduate level degree in order to further your career?

Do you plan to pursue a graduate level degree in order to further your career?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	30	43.5 %	43.5 %
Yes	39	56.5 %	100.0 %

Table 18 reveals that some graduates (7.45) are currently enrolled in further studies or second course.

Table 18. Frequencies of Are you currently enrolled?

Are you currently enrolled?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	63	92.6 %	92.6 %
Yes	5	7.4 %	100.0 %

Among those who are not currently enrolled in universities for a second course or graduate degree, 28.6% (table 19) expressed their desire to go back to school in the next five years. These graduates may have realized that currently, industries and government agencies in the Philippines require graduate school diplomas for employees who are in the managerial level.

Table 19. Frequencies of If NO, do you expect to go back to school in the next 1 to 5 years?

If NO, do you expect to go back to school in the next 1 to 5 years?	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
No	44	69.8 %	69.8 %
Yes	18	28.6 %	98.4 %
Yes, No	1	1.6 %	100.0 %

CONCLUSIONS

From the findings in the conducted tracer study it can be concluded that there is a high employment rate among the business administration graduates credited to its updated curriculum, instruction and adaptability to the current trends in business education. It can also be concluded that the graduates are competitive, willing to undergo training and endeavour to get their desired jobs. These graduates aspire to have graduate degrees that will enable them to get ahead in their chosen field of specialization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To sustain and further improve the performance of graduates in the job market the following recommendations are forwarded to the department:

1. Curriculum Enhancement and Alignment

- The department should regularly update the curriculum to align with the latest industry trends and technological advancements. Engage with

industry professionals and alumni to identify key skills and knowledge areas that are in high demand.

- The department should incorporate practical components such as case studies, simulations, and project-based learning to ensure that graduates have hands-on experience and can apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings.

2. Strengthen Industry Partnerships

- The department should develop and maintain strong partnerships with local, national, and international companies to create internship and cooperative education opportunities. These partnerships can provide students with valuable work experience and networking opportunities before graduation.
- The department should facilitate mentorship programs where industry professionals can guide students through career planning and development.

3. Enhance Career Services

- The department may invest in robust career services that offer resume writing workshops, mock interviews, and job search strategies. Provision of personalized career counseling to help students identify their strengths and career aspirations may be included in the Internship program.

- The department in coordination with the Office of Student Affairs may organize regular job fairs and employer meet-and-greet events to connect students directly with potential employers.

4. Foster Soft Skills Development

- The department may integrate soft skills training into the curriculum, focusing on communication, teamwork, leadership, and emotional intelligence. These skills are crucial for workplace success and are highly valued by employers.
- The department through its Internship program may offer workshops and seminars on professional etiquette, conflict resolution, and time management to better prepare students for the professional environment.

5. Promote Lifelong Learning and Continuous Improvement

- The department through its Internship program and alumni affairs may encourage a culture of lifelong learning by offering continuing education and professional development courses for alumni. This helps graduates stay competitive in their fields and adapt to evolving job market requirements.
- The department may improve the instrument and implementation of its feedback mechanisms where employers can provide insights on the

performance of graduates, allowing the institution to make informed adjustments to its programs.

6. Leverage Alumni Networks

- The department may continue to implementation of its alumni program to build and maintain a strong alumni network that can provide current students with mentorship, internship opportunities, and job referrals. Alumni can also offer valuable insights into industry trends and job market demands.
- The department organize networking events and alumni panels where successful graduates can share their career experiences and advice with current students.

7. Utilize Data Analytics

- The department in coordination with the external affairs and office of the student affairs may use data analytics to track employment trends, identify successful career pathways, and understand employer needs. This data can inform curriculum changes and career services enhancements.

- The department may be conduct regular surveys of recent graduates and employers to gather feedback on the effectiveness of the educational programs and career readiness of graduates.

8. Support Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- The department through the assistance of its Entrepreneurship program may encourage and support entrepreneurial initiatives by providing resources such as incubators, funding opportunities, and mentorship for students interested in starting their own businesses.
- The department through the assistance of its Entrepreneurship and relevant business courses may offer workshops on entrepreneurship, innovation, and startup management to equip students with the skills needed to succeed as business owners.

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