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Research Article

Curriculum Responsiveness and Employability Performance: Bases for Curricular Innovations

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Abstract: The employability of university graduates is a concern of every higher education institution as labor markets change more and more rapidly and competition gets tougher and more challenging. The study mapped the Bachelor of Arts in English Language (ABEL) and Bachelor of Science in Mathematics (BSM) of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), Central Bicol State University of Agriculture (CBSUA)-Calabanga Campus. Using Google form, the researcher traced one hundred ninety-four respondents from batch 2017, 2018, and 2019. This study highlighted the job placement profile, employability performance, and curriculum congruency. A large percentage were employed on clerical-related works. They worked on jobs related to their course 1 to 6 months after graduation and stayed on a job that same length. More were hired because of their area of specialization and acquired employment through the recommendations of friends and relatives. Perseverance and hard work, as well as a love of God, were the predominant work-related values instilled among graduates. In contrast, human relations skills, personality development, and communications were the soft skills/competencies they acquired.
Keywords: Curricular congruency, Employability Performance, Policy Innovation, Tracer Study.

Introduction

Educational systems among countries around the world face different challenges in curriculum reforms. The falling of employment rate outcomes, the increased competition for jobs, and an increase in university student numbers have meant more graduates are available for the workplace than the workplace requires, resulting in more attention being given to employability skills (Norton, 2017). Employers continue to report that graduates often lack the right employability skills (ACER, 2001; Curtis & McKenzie, 2001; DEST, 2002, 2006) and that university degrees are becoming less relevant for the workplace (Burke, 2016; Krook, 2017a, 2017b; Singhal, 2017). In India, for example, the rote learning system (using repetition as a technique for memorisation) still prevails in many Indian schools, impeding the development of curricula focused on skills for innovation (OECD (1996). That is why the graduate skills gap has generated discussion and debate about the extent to which universities are willing or able to integrate employability skills within the curriculum (Ansell, 2016; B-HERT, 2002a, 2002b; BIHECC, 2007).

University responses to the issues described above typically include curricular, policy, and educational innovations in response to employers' preferences. The introduction of new courses and teaching methods approaches and strategies and expanded opportunities for work experience are all intended to enhance employability skills and ensure that the acquisition of such skills is made more explicit. There has also been a shift in the university curriculum, which now focuses on including learning outcomes aimed explicitly at developing graduates who possess a set of employability skills that will enable them to respond to the continually changing labour force. Hence, one significant stint

in the role and responsibility of the University is the focus on furthering graduate employability skills development (Oliver, 2011, 2015).

In Costa Rica, for example, the Innovating at Home programme aims to teach parents how to develop their children's creativity from an early age. In some cases, university departments have sought to 'embed' the desired skills within courses; in other departments, students are offered 'stand-alone' skills courses that are effectively 'bolted on' to traditional academic programmes. Many university departments now use a mix of embedded and stand-alone teaching methods to develop employability skills. These examples show increasing emphasis and interest in developing wider skills in a variety of country contexts. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has developed measures of university performance that include indicators of graduate labour market outcomes, for example, the probability of new graduates finding employment after a specified time interval. This further proves the growing importance attached to graduate employability (HEFCE 2001, 2002, 2003).

Industries and employers are key players of this shift; the fast-paced and rapidly changing contemporary workplace environment requires employees equipped with discipline knowledge and technical skills and possess employability skills that enable them to succeed in a rapidly and continually evolving contemporary workplace. Employers today are concerned about finding good workers who have basic academic skills like reading, writing, science, mathematics, oral communication and listening, and higher-order thinking skills like learning, reasoning, thinking creatively, decision making, and problem-solving. In addition, they are also looking for employees with personal qualities such as but not limited to: responsibility, self-confidence, self-control, social skill, honesty, integrity, adaptability and flexibility, team spirit, punctual and efficient, self-directed, good work attitude, well-groomed, cooperative, self-motivated and self-management.

However, most of our graduates are unaware of this current phenomenon whereby they sometimes don't see the connection between what they do in class with the actual job world they will venture into later (Nayan, 2010). Thus, policymakers continue to emphasise the importance of 'employability skills for graduates to be fully equipped to meet the challenges of an increasingly flexible labour market (DIUS, 2008).

In this context, the researcher attempted to investigate the curriculum responsiveness and employability performance of courses in the college to serve as the basis for curricular innovations.

Methodology

The study initially targeted to obtain the entire population of graduates from 2017-2019. However, only 62.6 percent were retrieved from ABEL and 81.4 percent from BSM (Table 1). The total retrieved questionnaires from Batch 2017 were 38 out of 62; in 2018, 66 of 101; and in 2019, 90 of the 126. In sum, the total frequency of the retrieved questionnaires was 194. This comprised 67.1 percent and is way above the expected response rate of 30 to 60 percent recommended by (Schomburg 2003) on the conduct of graduate tracer studies. The study utilized a self-developed questionnaire which was crafted through item pooling. The names, addresses, and contact numbers of the graduates were obtained from the registrar for the facility of trailing. The researcher administered some of the questionnaires using electronic mail or e-mail or Facebook messengers, for most of the graduate respondents use computers in their offices or companies. The gathering of data was done from April 3, 2020, to September 5, 2020. Data was processed, organized, and analyzed using SPSS version 19. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and collect data in frequency and percent distribution tables. To define the content validity of the questionnaires, the researcher consulted experts in instrument development in the University. Their suggestions and recommendations were noted and integrated into the final form. The questionnaire was pretested with sampled population or graduates of other courses in the University. Thereafter, the results were subjected to reliability testing.

Results and Discussion

Job Placement Profile

Job placement covers graduates' occupation and occupational classification, employment status, employment situation, length of job search, length of job stay, factors facilitating job acquisition, and means of getting a job. Results of which were presented in Tables 2 to 7. As can be gleaned in Table 2, admin aide, office staff, and clerk occupied the most prominent group for ABEL at 24.4 percent. Ranking second was the group of call center agents at 11.8; comprising third was selling and sales at 13.4. For the BSM group, almost half of their population work as admin aide, office staff, and clerk (40.8%). Some are on teaching (10.2%), accounting staff, and treasury assistant (10.2%).

Table 1. Occupation and occupational classification

Congruency	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
I. Professional, Technical and Related Courses					**28**	**16.7**
Teacher/Veterinarian	5	42.2	5	10.2		
Accounting Staff, Treasury Assistant	7	5.9	5	10.2		
Quality Assurance Analyst/Inspector	2	1.7	1	2.0		
Artist, Associate Editor	1	0.8				
IT Web Developer	2	1.7				
II. Administrative, Executive, Managerial Workers					**10**	**6.0**
Store Manager, Assistant Branch Coordinator	2	1.7				
Managing Supervisor, HR-OIC	4	3.4				
SK Chairperson, Brgy. Official	2	1.7	2	4.1		
III. Clerical and Related Workers					**91**	**54.2**
Call Center Agent	14	11.8	4	8.2		
Admin. Aide, Office Staff, Clerk	29	24.4	20	40.8		
Secretary, Cashier, Bank Teller	11	9.2	4	8.2		
Data Encoder/Controller, Validator	4	3.4	2	4.1		
Customer Service Associate	4	3.4				
IV. Sales					**17**	**101.1**
Selling Supervisor, Sales Associate	16	13.4				
Car Agent	1	0.8				
V. Service					**6**	3.6
OFW	1	0.8				
House Keeper	1	0.8				
Service Crew, Waitress	2	1.7	2	4.1		
VI. Production, Transport, Mining, Construction					**15**	**8.9**
Production Worker, Machine/Operator Staff	7	5.9				
Laborer/Skilled Worker	4	3.4	4	8.2		
Total	**119**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**	**168**	**100.0**

As to occupational classification, more than half of the graduates worked as clerical and related workers. This comprised 91 of the 168. The next occupational classification with the largest percentage was related to professional and technical-related courses at 16.7%. The smallest frequencies were from services like OFW, housekeeper, service crew, and a waitress, with only 3.6%. The relatedness of the type of job they are currently on is exhibited in Table 12. The average results of the survey have indicated that the majority (105 or 62.5) of their works are linked with

their course completed. About one-fourth, however, have expressed that the course they have taken has nothing to do with their job.

Table 2. Curriculum Relevance to Respondents' First Job

Congruency	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Not related to the course completed	51	42.9	12	24.5	63	37.5
Related to the course completed	68	57.1	37	75.5	105	62.5
Total	**119**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**	**168**	**100**

Comparatively, the percentage of graduates who conveyed that their job is related to the course they have completed was higher in BSM (75.5%) than in ABEL (57.1%). Correspondingly, many (42.9%) of the graduates of ABEL declared that their course has nothing to do with their job. This is compared to the results from BSM with only 24.5%. The result in this study lends support to the idea that "competitive graduates in the job market often depend on a strong curriculum of the programmes" (Ahmad *et al.,* 2012). It goes beyond telling that the curriculum has to be relevant in relation to the demands of the industry, because "impractical university curriculum is one of the factors that cause graduates' skills gap, along with other factors like constant changes in the labor market, and students' passivity in planning and developing their career" (Tran, 2018).

The employment status of graduates from 2017 to 2019 indicated that 39.1% are already regular/permanent in their work. It can be deduced from the data there is a good development in the graduates' career since they have already obtained security of tenure. This parallels the findings of Woya (2019) which recorded a much higher percentage of respondents with permanent employment status which is 65.8% (52 out of 79) among statistics graduates from year 2012–2016 at Bahir Dar University in Ethiopia. The run down further showed that 27.2% of them are on contractual, 13 percent are on temporary status, 12% casual, and 8.7% are self-employed.

Moreover, the comparative analysis of the data disclosed that the percentage of regular/permanent employees from ABEL (41.2%) are higher than BSM (34.%). The trend, however, is opposite with the number of contractual and casual employees in the two programmes. There were more contractual and casual status of employment among BSM than ABEL graduates. Contractual and casual employees for BSM were at 30.2% and 20.8% respectively; whereas, for ABEL there were only 26.0 and 8.4 percent.

Table 3. Respondents' Employment Status

Status	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Regular/Permanent	54	41.2	18	34.0	72	39.1
Contractual	34	26.0	16	30.2	50	27.2
Temporary	20	15.3	4	7.5	24	13.0
Casual (Seasonal)	11	8.4	11	20.8	22	12.0
Self-employed	12	9.2	4	7.5	16	8.7
Total	**131**	**100.0**	**53**	**100.0**	**184**	**100.0**

The employment situation exhibited in Table 4 revealed that the majority of the graduates were underemployed (51%). This was more evident among BSM graduates (54.4%) than ABEL (49.6%). Although, 35.6% of them were already gainfully employed. The 37.2% were from ABEL, and its corresponding percentage for BSM was 31.6%. Moreover, there were 8.2% who were self-employed and 5.2% who were unemployed.

Table 4. Respondents' Employment Situation

Nature	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gainfully Employed	51	37.2	18	31.6	69	35.6
Underemployed	68	49.6	31	54.4	99	51.0
Self-Employed	12	8.8	4	7.0	16	8.2
Unemployed	6	4.4	4	7.0	10	5.2
Total	**137**	**100.0**	**57**	**100.0**	**194**	**100.0**

Length of Job Search: Finding employment takes time. However, ABEL graduates, 35.3 were employed within 1-6 months and the other 31.9 percent even in less than a month. The trend was almost the same with BSM graduates, the corresponding percentage for those employed within the 1-6 months after their graduation was 49 percent. Moreover, about 21% of the graduates were employed in less than a month. In total, 66 were employed after 1 to 6 months from graduation, and the rest in less than a month. The immediate hiring or the higher percentage of employment after graduation may reflect the program's relevance to industry, for, despite the state of the economy and stiff competition in career, they remain employable.

Table 5. Length of Job Search after Graduation

Length	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
3 years to less than 4 years	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	0.6
2 years to less than 3 years	7	5.9	0	0.0	7	4.2
1 year to less than 2 years	17	14.3	6	12.2	23	13.7
7-11 months	13	10.9	9	18.4	22	13.1
1 year and 6 months	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	0.6
1-6 months	42	35.3	24	49.0	66	39.3
Less than a month	38	31.9	10	20.4	48	28.6
Total	**119**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**	**168**	**100.0**

Length of Stay: As to the length of stay, there were three categories with approximately the same percentages for ABEL. Ranking first was those who stayed in their job only for about 1-6 months (29.4)—followed by those from 7 to 11 months (26.9%), and lastly, from 1 year to less than two years. For BSM, the number of respondents who continued their job for 1-6 months also had the largest percentage at 44.9%. Ranking next was those who stayed for about 7-11 months with 30.6%. Overall, there were 57 of 168 whose length of job stay lasted only for 1-6 months, 47 for 7-11 months, and 30 for less than two years.

Table 6. Length of Stay in First Job

Length	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
3 years to less than 4 years	5	4.2	0	0.0	5	3.0
2 years to less than 3 years	7	5.9	5	10.2	12	7.1
1 year to less than 2 years	26	21.8	4	8.2	30	17.9
7-11 months	32	26.9	15	30.6	47	28.0
1 year and 6 months	0	0.0	2	4.1	2	1.2
1-6 moths	35	29.4	22	44.9	57	33.9
Less than a month	14	11.8	1	2.0	15	8.9
Total	**119**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**	**168**	**100.0**

The length of stay as shown in the result may be ascribed to the employment status and situation, if not because of their being demanding, as many are still underemployed. Some are in temporary

positions, and others are contractual and casual employees. The length of stay of graduates in their respective jobs could be accounted to their employment status, for most of them are on contractual, casual, and temporary employment. Accordingly, they have no security of tenure. The statistics could also mean that they may have found a more stable job or experienced dissatisfaction in their work. Hence, they did not stay long in their career.

Acquisition of First Job: The results on the factors that facilitated the acquisition of their first job have shown that their specialization was primarily the most significant factor in the acquisition of their career. This was expressed by 81.5% and 83.7% of graduates from ABEL and BSM. The refutation of the school, unfortunately, had very minimal contribution based on the survey. There were only 6.7% and 10.2% of ABEL and BSM graduates, respectively, who declared that university refutation had helped in their employment.

Table 7. Factors Facilitating the Acquisition of First Job

Factors	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Area of Specialization	97	81.5	41	83.7	138	82.1
Scholastic Standing	14	11.8	3	6.1	17	10.1
Refutation of the University	8	6.7	5	10.2	13	7.7
Total	**119**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**	**168**	**100.0**

This is in contrast to the common expectations that the higher the school's reputation, the higher the possibility of a graduate finding a job. Or, these results may indicate that the refutation of the university may be, at present, open to doubt right. If refutation is still established, the process for such graduates is both easier and speedier because the employers regard students from prestigious universities and colleges as employees with greater potentials. The role of the university remains indisputably paramount to employability. Other studies acknowledged not just the two factors described above. Tomlinson (2008), for instance, recognised that academic qualifications are still necessary for employability. He considered having a degree would place them on high advantage in landing a job. Kokemuller (2010) supported the statement as mentioned earlier. He said education could affect the breadth and depth of jobs available to a person; graduates typically could apply for a broader range of jobs with more education and yield more excellent pay and chances for upward mobility.

Means of Obtaining a Job: As indicated in Table 7, a recommendation from friends and relatives was considered both by ABEL and BSM graduates as the most effective means of getting a job. Of the 128 graduates of ABEL, 60 had ranked this first among the given factors, and 22 of the 58 was the corresponding frequencies that resulted from BSM graduates' survey.

Table 8. Ranking of Effective Means of Obtaining a Job

Factors	ABEL		BSM		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Recommendation from friends and relatives	60	46.9	22	37.9	82	44.1
Personnel office of hiring companies	32	25.0	12	20.7	44	23.7
Media advertising	18	14.1	10	17.2	28	15.1
Government placement office	2	1.6	9	15.5	11	5.9
Through written enquiries	6	4.7	3	5.2	9	4.8
School placement office	6	4.7	0	0.0	6	3.2
Recommendation from former teacher	3	2.3	1	1.7	4	2.2
Through Job Fair	1	0.8	1	1.7	2	1.1
Total	128	100.0	58	100.0	186	100.0

The second most effective was the information from the personnel office of the hiring companies; 25% and 20.7% of ABEL and BSM graduates pointed this out as their means of getting their job. Obtaining a job through a job fair, recommendations from their former teachers, and job placement, on the contrary, did not work as shown in their results.

Generally, the advice from friends and relatives worked best. Aside from that, graduates had also found the information from hiring companies and media advertising as facilitating factors. These findings contradicted the view of Mason *et al.,* (2006), who found placements and employer involvement in course design and delivery to be the most effective. Now, the declining role of the school placement office, including job fairs, while, on the other hand, the effectiveness of media advertising, information from hiring companies, and recommendations from friends and relatives, may mean moving away from the business as usual. This can be explained by (McNair *et al.,* 2012), who have produced reports that include numerous case studies of employability measures adopted by HEIs.

Overall, the case studies illustrate how some universities are changing their courses to build employability skills into the curriculum, including work-based experience. These case studies are often descriptive, but some include impact assessments such as obtaining a better degree and boosting confidence. Moreover, Knight & Yorke (2003) said that HEIs should integrate employability skills and attributes within the curriculum. They say that students should be entitled to experiences in HEI that develop understandings, skills, self-theories, and reflection and that this good learning and education improves employability. In practise, HEI approaches to promote employability skills and attributes in graduates vary: they include support in career decision-making and job search, development of employability attributes as part of study programmes, placements/work experience, and personal development planning.

Employability Performance

Employability Performance by Course: As reflected in Table 9, ABEL graduates are more employable than BSM. The differential is negligible since, overall, the employability level was only 86.9% for ABEL and 86.0% for BSM. The gap, however, was well-defined in 2017, where employability for ABEL was 84.0%, whereas, for BSM, it was only 61.5%. Among periods, it was this period where unemployment was so pronounced; 16 % were from ABEL graduates and 38.5% for BSM. Furthermore, it was noteworthy that there was increasing employability yearly from 2017 to 2019. The employability started with only 76.3%; then, there was a rise of 87.9% in 2018 and 90% in 2019.

Table 9. Employability performance of respondents by year and course

Factors	**ABEL**				**BSM**				**Total**			
	Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed		Employed		Unemployed	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	N	%
2017	21	84.0	4	16.0	8	61.5	5	38.5	29	76.3	9	23.7
2018	40	85.1	7	14.9	18	94.7	1	5.3	58	87.9	8	12.1
2019	58	89.2	7	10.8	23	92.0	2	8.0	81	90.0	9	10.0
Total	**119**	**86.9**	**18**	**13.1**	**49**	**86.0**	**8**	**14.0**	**168**	**86.6**	**26**	**13.4**

This implies that the ABEL and BSM programs still yield higher demands in the labour market, thus offering a massive opportunity for the graduates to get employed. It further indicates that even though they are fresh graduates, employers trust their strong skills and competencies for the job. This further means that the CAS, or the university, is successful in its mission to prepare and produce competent graduates capable of positively contributing to the profession and society in which they work.

Employment Performance by Age: Table 9 reflects the data on employment performance by age. It disclosed that the most employable age was those aging 30-32 years old. The encompassed more than half (55.7%) of the total number of respondents.

Table 10. Distribution of respondents by age and employment performance

Range	Employed						Unemployed						Total			
	2017		2018		2019		2017		2018		2019		Employed		Unemployed	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	N	%
30-32	11	78.6	35	83.3	62	89.9	3	21.4	7	16.7	7	10.1	108	55.7	17	8.8
27-29	14	77.8	11	91.7	14	93.3	4	22.2	1	8.3	1	6.7	20.1	20.1	6	3.1
24-26	2	66.7	10	100.0	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0.0	1	33.3	7.2	7.2	2	1.0
20-23	2	66.7	2	100.0	3	100.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3.6	3.6	1	0.5
Total	29	76.3	58	87.9	81	90.0	9	23.7	8	3.0	9	6.7	86.6	86.6	26	13.4

All the remaining had very insignificant percentages, like 20.1% for age ranged from 27-29; 7.2% for 24-26; and 3.6% for 20-23. For the results across periods, in 2017, the age group with the highest percentage of employment was those from 27-29 years old. In 2018, two age groups had both 100% employment. They were those aging 20-23 and 24-26 years old.

Lastly, in 2019, those under the 20-23 age bracket had 100% employment. It was also notable that as to frequency, the largest number of employed graduates recorded in 2017 was on the age range, 27-29. The statistics for 2018, however, revealed that those in the 30-32 age group had the biggest number. This was consistent with the data in 2019, where there were 62 of 81 total respondents. Consequently, these findings could lead to some important implications. One is that it takes time for one to land a job. Two, experience is significant.

Employment Performance by Sex: The predominance of females in the survey is quite pronounced. It comprised a total of 137 compared to only 57 male respondents. The greater proportion of females may connote the appeal, particularly of the ABEL program, that is, into writing and speaking, to students. In terms of employment, the increasing employability was noted among ABEL graduates from 2017 to 2019.

Table 11. Distribution of respondents by sex and employment performance

Sex	Employed						Unemployed						Total			
	2017		2018		2019		2017		2018		2019		Employed		Unemployed	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	N	%
Female	18	85.7	44	95.7	68	97.1	3	14.3	2	9.5	2	4.3	130	94.9	7	5.1
Male	11	64.7	14	70.0	13	65.0	6	35.3	6	35.3	7	35.0	38	66.7	19	33.3
Total	29	76.3	58	87.9	81	90.0	9	23.7	8	3.0	9	6.7	168	86.6	26	`13.4

There was an increase of 10% in 2018 and 1.4% in 2019. The corresponding percentages for BSM were fluctuating or shifting. From an increase of 5.3% in 2018, it had a decrease of 5% in 2019. Hence, it showed that that unemployment among female graduates was lowering from 2017 to 2019. However, unemployment of males was practically the same across periods. On average, the differential in employment between males and females had reached 27.9 percent.

Employment performance by civil status: Respondents who were single at the survey time experienced a higher employment rate than those of their married counterparts. On average, the employment rate of the unmarried respondents was 88.1% whereas, the married employment level was only at 70.6%.

Table 12. Distribution of respondents by civil status and employment performance

Civil Status	Employed						Unemployed						Total			
	2017		2018		2019		2017		2018		2019		Employed		Unemployed	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	N	%
Married	5	55.6	3	100.0	4	80.0	4	44.4	0	0.0	1	20.0	12	70.6	5	29.4
Single (Never Married)	24	82.8	55	87.3	77	90.6	5	17.2	8	12.7	8	9.4	156	88.1	21	11.9
Total	29	76.3	58	87.9	81	90.0	9	23.7	8	12.1	9	10.0	168	86.6	26	13.4

Married graduates had their peak of employment in 2018. They had 100% employment. The unmarried, on the other hand, had their highest employment at 90.6% in 2019. The lowest results for both civil status were observed in 2017 with only 55.6% for married and 82.8% for unmarried. It may be possible that the extent of responsibilities and roles played by married graduates and their many other preoccupations like rearing their children, finding extra income, among others, may have contributed to their unemployment. Also, the bias among employers for married applicants who may think to have divided attention could be an added factor to their difficulty in landing a job.

Curriculum Responsiveness

Curriculum responsiveness has been understood and comprehended in this study to mean twofold: First, as expressed on usefulness and relevance of work-related values provided by the college in facilitating job acquisition and skills; and, Second, as shown in the usefulness and relevance of skills and competencies provided by the college in their respective work.

Work-Related Value Responsiveness: With the growing number of aspiring applicants, fresh graduates today are undoubtedly facing severe competitions and obstacles in getting a new job. In securing a job after graduation, consider factors if one wants to get employed readily. One of these factors and most important of the graduate is work-related values (Caiyod, Escamillas, Guarina, & Gesmundo, 2015).

Table 13. Work-related value congruency in terms of usefulness and relevance

Usefulness			Particulars	Relevance		
Mean	VI	Rank		Rank	VI	Mean
3.82	VM	1	Perseverance and hard work	1	VM	3.85
3.78	VM	2	Love of God	10	VM	3.74
3.75	VM	4.5	Honesty and love for truth	2	VM	3.80
3.75	VM	4.5	Nationalism	3	VM	3.79
3.75	VM	4.5	Unity	10	VM	3.74
3.75	VM	4.5	Supportiveness	10	VM	3.74
3.74	VM	7	Courage	10	VM	3.74
3.73	VM	9	Self-discipline	4	VM	3.77
3.73	VM	9	Perseverance	7.5	VM	3.75
3.73	VM	9	Obedience to Superior	5.5	VM	3.76
3.72	VM	11	Self-reliant	14.5	VM	3.70
3.71	VM	12	Love for co-workers and others	12	VM	3.73
3.69	VM	13.5	Creativity and innovativeness	18	VM	3.66
3.69	VM	13.5	Professional Integrity	5.5	VM	3.76
3.67	VM	15	Fairness and justice	16	VM	3.69
3.65	VM	16	Efficiency	17	VM	3.68
3.64	VM	17	Leadership	13	VM	3.71
3.63	VM	18.5	Punctuality	19	VM	3.65
3.63	VM	18.5	Open-mindedness	14.5	VM	3.70
3.59	VM	20	Tolerance	20	VM	3.63
3.71	VM		Overall Mean		VM	3.73

The job responsiveness of work-related values was understood and measured in this study according to their usefulness and relevance. The survey results on the usefulness and relevance of work-related values are illustrated in Table 13. As shown, the respondents expressed perseverance and hard work as the most useful (3.82) and relevant (3.85) work-related values that have facilitated their job acquisition. However, interestingly, ranking next to the most useful value was the love of God (3.78), while honesty and love for truth were the following most relevant (3.80). Oppositely, respondents agreed that tolerance was the least valuable and relevant they have developed in the university. Other than these, open-mindedness (3.63) and punctuality (3.63) were among the identified work-related values that received the respondents' least assessment score. Their corresponding least rated items along relevance were punctuality (3.65) and creativity and innovativeness (3.66).

Table 14. Skill and competence responsiveness as to usefulness and relevance

Usefulness			Particulars	Relevance		
Mean	VI	Rank		Rank	VI	Mean
3.73	VM	1	Human relation Skills	3	VM	3.72
3.72	VM	2	Personality Development	2	VM	3.73
3.68	VM	3	Communication Skills	1	VM	3.75
3.65	VM	4	People Skills	4	VM	3.69
3.64	VM	5	Critical Thinking Skills	5	VM	3.66
3.63	VM	6.5	Interpersonal Skills	8	VM	3.63
3.63	VM	6.5	Team Spirit	6	VM	3.65
3.57	VM	8	Problem Solving Skills	7	VM	3.64
3.49	VM	9	Exposure to local community within field of specialization	10	VM	3.53
3.48	VM	10	Research Skills	11	VM	3.50
3.39	VM	11	Information technology Skills	9	VM	3.57
3.32	VM	12	Entrepreneurial Skills	12	VM	3.37
3.29	VM		Mean		VM	3.41

However, overall, they conveyed that these work-related values are congruent with their work after graduation. This was supported by the mean score of 3.73. These findings indicate that even at this present period, employers still prefer people who are not just persevering, but more importantly, those who are God-fearing. These findings, to some extent, are consistent with Patay (2017), who cited the characteristics or work-related values. The potential employers want to have when they interview an applicant for a position. These include honesty, good personal appearance, attendance, straightforward, accepting criticism, and a positive attitude. All of these would have been taught by parents at one time. However, there has been a fundamental shift in our society. Significant changes in the family the routines and realities of family life have made it financially impossible for many families to supervise, educate, and nurture their children.

It would be imperative for schools to teach these needs, such as understanding how to apply and interview for a job, possessing good work habits and attitudes, adapting to change and learning new skills, solving problems, and developing thinking skills. At this point, schools have to assume the commitment to the responsibility of producing graduates who can land a job. Education holds a key role in finding a job and landing one that offers both financial and intrinsic rewards.

Skills and Competence Responsiveness: In Globalisation and Education: An Economic Perspective, David Bloom, cited by Vega, Prieto Carreon (2009) claimed that because of globalisation, education is more important than ever. It requires youth to develop new skills that are far ahead of what schools before delivered. Educations' challenge is to impart not only values but skills and competence. As to skills and competence, human relations topped the ratings of graduate respondents in terms of usefulness, while they found communication skills to be the most relevant

(3.75). Results also revealed that personality development was next in their ranks with 3.72 and 3.73 mean scores for usefulness and relevance, respectively. Furthermore, compared to their usefulness, human relation skills (3.72) were just ranked third of the 12 skills and competence enumerated.

Entrepreneurial skills (3.32), information technology skills (3.39), and research skills (3.48), on the contrary, were some of the least useful skills identified by the graduates. In addition to entrepreneurial and research skills, exposure to the local community within the field of specialisation was among the least relevant items. On average, the survey resulted in 3.29 for usefulness and 3.41 for relevance which indicates that the skills and competence that the university provides are very much helpful and relevant to graduates in facilitating their job acquisition.

This implies that the university honed graduates' character and attitude over and above other skills. These findings were in line with Archer and Davison (2008) found that regardless of the size of the company, 'soft skills (e.g., communication skills and team-working) were perceived to have more weight than technical or 'hard skills (e.g., a good degree qualification, IT skills). Indeed, Glass *et al.*, (2008) found that a minority of employers in their case studies recruit individuals from universities specifically for the technical skills that they hope they will bring to the organisation. Instead, most employers see a degree as a proxy for achieving a certain level of competence that represents the minimum standard they seek in a recruit. Archer and Davison (2008) stress that such findings convey a solid message to HEIs. In addition, proficiency in communication addresses the demands and challenges of the day-to-day activities in their respective workplaces. It is always necessary to develop these skills to connect as they interact with the people, boost their self-confidence and resourcefulness that would make them successful in dealing with clients.

These results, however, mismatched the study conducted by Weligamage (2009); he concluded, in his research, that practical experience, not only skills, is one thing that emphasises the importance of education for employability in the current changing business environment. Students need to develop employability skills and acquire subject-specific knowledge to enhance competitive advantage for graduate employment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It can be deduced from this study that tracer studies can be an information provider to reform educational programmes to keep up with the employer demands, live up to the expectations of the rapidly changing technological and scientific working environment; modify programmes to expand professional advancement, and enhance the quality of courses offered in the University. The results also confirmed that the University is making a significant contribution to its graduates by providing opportunities and venues to improve their skills and values.

It is therefore recommended that Higher Education Institutions may: regularly conduct market demands and opportunities analysis for congruency of its curricular and educational innovations and policies; bridge the chasm between the graduates' competencies and the labour market; and, use academic curriculum as a tool to develop graduates' skills and values. Moreover, continuous efforts should be made to collect data progressively before and after graduation, which will improve the analysis of future tracer studies. This could be done through: data base development for graduates; established network between the University and its graduates; and a tracer study committee.

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