

Tracking Down the Employability of the Teacher Education Graduates



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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) was to gather vital feedback about the quality and relevance of education obtained and employability of the 2019 graduates of Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSE) of the Isabela State University, City of Ilagan Campus. The 85 respondents were traced from September 2021 to March 2022.

One indicator of the success of ISU City of Ilagan Campus in equipping BSE Batch 2019 with quality education is reflected in the 80 percent turnout of passers in the Licensure Examination for Teachers. However, tight competition for a job and unavailability of job vacancy were claimed as reasons for the delay of the rest of the respondents' employment or had caused them unemployment – a feedback which may indicate concerns on quality and relevance. The respondents considered Educational Qualification as the factor most contributory to their first employment. A significant number of respondents were teaching in government but have yet to obtain security of tenure. The data on job description and monthly salary reveals that there were few who were gainfully employed and most of them are underemployed and are misfits in their present jobs at the time of the survey.

The respondents considered communication skills, human or interpersonal skills, leadership or managerial skills, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills very useful in their present job. Majority of the respondents assessed their college degree and educational trainings as very relevant but a significant number of the BSE Batch 2019 find it fairly relevant and not relevant. This may confirm the job mismatch analyzed from the data gathered which may impel the Program to review quality and the relevance and non-relevance of the curriculum to job requirements. Nonetheless, the overall assessment given by the respondents on the BSE Program was excellent. The utilization of result of GTS is in place.

KEYWORDS: GTS, Quality and Relevance, Employability, Underemployed, Misfits, Utilization of result

INTRODUCTION

Higher education is expected to significantly contribute to the development of a dynamic and self-sustaining economy, the pursuit of a better quality of life and the capacity to produce a burgeoning pool of skilled, versatile, technical, scientific, and managerial manpower that is internationally competitive (Amistad, 1999).

This study provides the Isabela State University Ilagan Campus a way to inquire about what had become of the graduates it has produced. The feedback of the graduates determines the degree to which ISU Ilagan has realized its institutional objectives in the Bachelor of Secondary education Program for Batch 2019. This has measured, in some way, the success of ISU Ilagan in its task of preparing young men and women for their future careers. Looking into the job placements of the graduates would inform the Campus authorities of the relevance or non-relevance of the Program to job requirements. This study also gives information to the administration of the various positions occupied by the graduates in their respective work places and how well their studies in ISU Ilagan have been put to use. The data which were collected in this study may serve as bases for updating, enhancing, or revising the curricular program and could assist the department in discovering the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. This study may also supply the ISU Ilagan Alumni Association data on the job placement of the graduates.

Graduate tracer studies (GTS) obtain both intrinsic and extrinsic results and benefits. If designed with rigor and inherent uniqueness, tracer study methodologies provide simple and utilizable results that can be consumed appropriately at individual and institutional level (Egesah Omar Badiru and Mary Wahome, 2016)

Based on the findings from tracer study program conducted by Farid Noor Romadlon and Muhammad Arifin (2021), it can be concluded.

- Information on alumna /graduate biodata currently recorded through graduation books should be able to be recorded more neatly using the Academic Information System that is already owned by the institution.
- The process of sending information via SMS is quite easy and efficient. However, it has several obstacles if the registered

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cellphone number is no longer used or is not active.

- The number of respondents who filled out the questionnaire was still below the expected target, this was possible because of a sense of concern or lack of interest in the alumni tracking process for graduates / respondents. So the team must find ways to make respondents more interested in filling out the questionnaire.
- The results of the questionnaire analysis can be input to the institution in making improvements in the learning process and services and facilities.

In an article, Sutaria (1989) pointed out that quality in education implies an upgrading of education standards – a condition that is similar to the development of excellence in education as well as in life. She suggested that higher standards of performance of the instructional system and consequently, the individual learner. It requires improvement in the input process and the output of education as well as the relevance of the content of what is taught. Curriculum evaluation was dynamic and never-ending activity that helped determined curriculum effectiveness and those who must make curriculum decisions. Decisions about curriculum should be wiser and the quality of the curriculum must be improved if research and evaluation were properly used (Orlosky & Smith, 1978).

The Isabela State University Ilagan Campus aims to train competent professionals and technicians equipped with the appropriate knowledge, values and skills as well as the technology needed to prepare them for gainful employment and help improve the productivity and quality of life of the rural poor through the attainment of the following objectives:

1. To evaluate and enrich prescribed curricular programs to make them more responsive for the development needs of Isabela;
2. To strengthen existing linkages with other agencies and seek for new linkages.

The goal of the College of Education of Isabela State University is to respond to the need for qualified elementary and secondary teachers in both vocational and academic fields. The College of Education shall:

1. Provide students with a broad knowledge in the arts and sciences.
2. Equip future teachers with knowledge and skills for an effective instructional delivery system in both elementary and secondary levels.
3. Make teacher education relevant and responsive to the demands of changing society.
4. Imbibe students with desirable Filipino values as a foundation for social citizenship participation.
5. Promote and efficiently facilitate learning to unfold student potentials.
6. Train students to undertake action research for the improvement of instruction; and
7. Provide adequate knowledge on the students' areas of specialization and major fields.

The quality of higher education obtained by a student depends on fairly well-known factors – his/her inputs into the study (inherent abilities), motivations, and discipline; the quantity and quality of school inputs; the effectiveness of the curriculum and teachers' methods and the quality of the school and home environment (CHED 1995).

The success of any school in attaining its basic purposes is determined by the adequacy and quality, and relevance of the educational programs it provides. In this context, former students could provide vital feedback about their employability, the adequacy and relevance of their training in college in relation to the needs of their present job or prospective employment. This feedback from the graduates may guide the school in its pursuit to provide quality education that is relevant

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. **What is the profile of the respondents with respect to:**
 - 1.1. sex
 - 1.2. age
 - 1.3. civil status
 - 1.4. graduate studies
 - 1.5. eligibilities
2. **How many of the respondents are employed, underemployed, self- employed, and unemployed?**
3. **What is the lead time before the respondents were employed?**
4. **What are the reasons for the delay of employment or unemployment of the respondents?**
5. **What was the factor most contributory to the first employment or present job of the respondents?**
6. **What is the status of employment of the respondents with respect to:**
 - 6.1. type of firm

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6.2. status of appointment

6.3. job title

6.4. monthly income

7. **How relevant is the college degree and educational training of the respondents to their present job?**

8. **What are the skills acquired in college by the respondents which they find useful in their job.**

9. **What is the level of assessment of the respondents on the BSE program relative to:**

9.1. course content

9.2. methods of Instruction

9.3. faculty

9.4. facilities

9.4.1. library

9.4.2. laboratories

9.4.3. physical plant

9.5. student Services

9.5.1. career Guidance

9.5.2. scholarship

9.5.3. housing/dormitories

9.5.4. alumni & job placement

9.5.5. medical/dental

9.5.6. registration/admission

9.6. research services

9.7. extension services

9.8. general administration

METHODOLOGY

This study used the descriptive survey method which is oriented towards the description of the present status of a given phenomenon (Good and Scates, 1972). The data gathered reflected the traced status of the 85 Bachelor of Secondary Education graduates of the Isabela State University, Ilagan Campus for the School Year 2019. The data were gathered via Google Survey from September 2020 to March 2022. The Researchers also gathered and verified information through Messenger, videocalls and phone calls.

The primary instrument used in this study was the questionnaire supplemented by interviews through the internet, phone calls, and documentary analysis. The questionnaire used in this study was patterned after the CHED Graduate Tracer Study Instrument with some modification to suit the purpose of the present study. The Five-point Scale was used to measure the indicators in the assessment of the respondents on the BSE Program and to measure the indicators on the usefulness of the skills acquired in their college to the present job of the respondents, corresponding to the following degree of intensity:

Description	Weighted Scale	Range
Excellent	5	4.20 – 5.00
Very Good	4	3.40 – 4.19
Good	3	2.60 – 3.39
Fair	2	1.80 – 2.59
Poor	1	1.0 - 1.79

Figure 1. Five-point Scale

This study was proposed in a Research In-house Review, and it was approved to be conducted. The Complete list of graduates was requested from the Office of the Registrar of the Campus. The profile of the respondents was presented in frequencies, percentages and weighted average mean. For the assessment of the BSE Program, frequencies, percentages, and weighted average mean were also used. The weighted average mean and ranking and the five- point scales were also utilized to scale the level of the indicators of variables in the questionnaire.

The Isabela State University, City of Ilagan Campus, Isabela 3300 Philippines where the respondents graduated is conveniently located at the center of Isabela. Figure 1 shows the location of ISU City of Ilagan Campus and the ISU System in the Province of Isabela.

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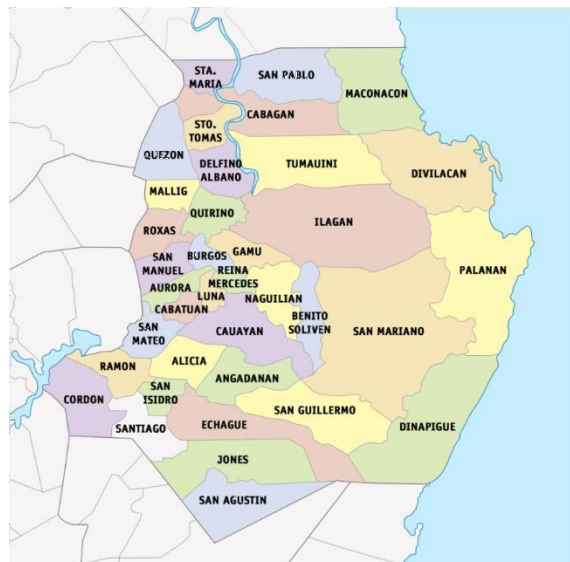


Figure 2. Map of Isabela. Location of ISU City of Ilagan Campus

RESULT

Profile of the Respondents.

1.1.1. Age

The data shows that 23 respondents or 27.06 percent were 20-21 years old; 41 or 48.24 percent were 22-23 years old; 11 or 12.94 percent were 24-25; 6 or 7.06 were 26-27; 2 or 2.35 percent were 28-29; and 2 or 2.35 percent were age 30 or above.

1.1.2. Sex

There were 28 or 32.94 percent male among the respondents and there were 57 or 67.06 percent female respondents.

1.1.3. Civil Status

Out of the 85 respondents, 79 or 92.94 percent were still single and only 6 or 7.06 respondents were married.

1.1.4. Graduate Studies

There were 31 or 36.47 percent respondents who were enrolled in graduate studies and 54 or 63.53 percent were not.

1.1.5. Eligibilities

The gathered data reveals that out of 85 respondents, 68 or 80 percent have already passed the Licensure Examination for teachers (LET) 17 or 20 percent have not yet passed.

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the indicators that describes the profile of the respondents.

Table 1. The Profile of respondents as to age, sex, civil status, graduate studies pursued, and eligibilities.

Indicators	Frequency N = 85	Percent
Age		
20-21	23	27.06
22-23	41	48.24
24-25	11	12.94
26-27	6	7.06
28-29	2	2.35
30-above	2	2.35
Sex		
Male	57	67.06
Female	28	32.94
Civil Status		
Single	79	92.94
Married	6	7.06
Pursuing		

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Graduate Studies	31	36.47
Yes No	54	63.53
Eligibilities		
Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET)	68	80

2. Number of Employed, Underemployed, Self-employed and Unemployed Respondents.

There were 55 or 64.72 percent respondents who were employed; 15 or 17.64 percent of them were self-employed; and also 15 respondents were unemployed during the time of the survey. Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the indicators stated above.

Table 2. Number of Employed, Underemployed, Self-employed, and Unemployed Respondents.

Indicators	Frequency N=85	Percent
Employed	55	64.72
Self-employed	15	17.64
Unemployed	15	17.64
Total	85	100

3. Lead Time Before the Respondents Were Employed.

Out of the 85 respondents 44 or 51.76 percent of the respondents were employed within 6 months after graduation; 8 or 9.41 percent were employed within 7 months to less than a year after graduation; 24 or 28.24 percent were employed a year after graduation; and 9 or 10.59 percent of the respondents have other varied lead time before finding a job.

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the lead time before the respondents were employed.

Table 3. Lead Time Before the Respondents Were Employed.

Indicators	Frequency	Percent
Within 6 months after graduation	44	51.76
Within 7 months to less than a year after graduation	8	9.41
A year after graduation	24	28.24
N/A Others	9	10.59
Total	85	100

4. Reason for the Delay of Employment or Unemployment of the Respondents.

The first 5 reasons for the delay of employment or contributory to the respondents' unemployment were "Tight competition for the job", Rank 1; "No immediate vacancy", Rank 2; "Available job/s is/are not in line with specialization", Rank 3; "Delay in taking/passing board exam" and "Lack of financial support for job hunting" tie at Rank 4.5 respectively. "Delay in the issuance of other (outside) needed documents" and "others" not specified varied reasons given by the respondents; "Health reasons" and "Not emotionally ready", tie at Rank 8.5; and "Delay in the issuance of school credentials", Ranked last at 10th.

Table 4 shows the frequency, percentage distribution of the reason/s for the delay of employment or unemployment of the respondents.

Table 4. Reason/s for the Delay of Employment or Unemployment of the Respondents

Indicators	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Delay in the issuance of school credentials	1	1.18	10
Delay in taking/passing board exam	10	11.76	4.5
Delay in the issuance of other (outside) needed documents	9	10.59	6.5

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No immediate vacancy	35	41.18	2
Tight competition for the job	49	57.65	1
Available job/s is/are not in line with specialization	19	22.35	3
Lack of financial support for job hunting	10	11.76	4.5
Health reasons	2	2.35	8.5
Not emotionally ready	2	2.35	8.5
Others	9	10.59	6.5

5. Factor Most Contributory to the First Employment or Present Job of the Respondents.

The factor considered by 50 or 58.82 percent respondents as most contributory to their first employment was their “Educational qualification”. This was followed by “Recommendations from relatives/friends”, Rank 2; “Media advertisement” and “Recommendations from politicians”, Rank 3.5; “Online applications”, Rank 5; “Job Fair/DOLE”, Rank 6; “Personnel office of the company”, Rank 7; “Assistance of the ISU’s Placement Office”, Rank 8; and “Former employer/s”, Rank 9.

Table 5 shows the frequency, percentage distribution of the factors most contributory to the first employment or present job of the respondents.

Table 5. Factors Most Contributory to the First Employment of the Respondents

Indicators	Frequency N=85	Percent	Rank
Educational qualification	50	58.82	1
Assistance of the ISU’s Placement Office	4	4.71	8
Media advertisement	13	15.29	3.5
Recommendations from relatives/ friends	34	40.0	2
Recommendations from politicians	13	15.29	3.5
Personnel office of the company	8	9.41	7
Job fair/DOLE	9	10.59	6
Former employer/s	2	2.35	9
Online applications	12	14.12	5

6. Status of Employment of the Respondents with Respect to:

6.1. Type of Firm

The Survey revealed that 26 30.59 percent of the employed or have been employed respondents were working in the government; 29 or 34.18 percent were in private firms; and 30 or 35.29 percent were in their family business.

6.2. Status of Appointment

On the status of appointment of the respondents, there were 11 or 12.94 percent who were permanent; 6 or 7.06 percent were casual or contractual; 34 or 40 percent were in voluntary work; and a similar number gave “Others” but unspecified answer.

6.3. Job Description

It was gathered that 24 or 28.24 percent of the employed respondents were in teaching; 6 or 7.06 of the percent respondents were either in Day Care/Private/Online Tutor; 12 or 14.12 were in sales and marketing related jobs; 16 or 18.82 percent were either office workers, admin aid or staff, brgy. officials or volunteers; 2 or 3.53 were working as either virtual assistant or a call center agent; 3 or 3.53 were police; and 22 or 25.88 gave “Others” as their answer but were not specified

6.4. Monthly Income

The monthly income of 21 or 24.72 percent of the respondents was 45,000.00 and above; 11 or 12.95 percent receives 40,000.00 – 44,999.00; 6 or 7.07 percent were receiving 35,000.00- 39,999.00; 5 or 5.82 percent receives 30,000.00 – 34,999.00; 3 or 3.54 receives 25,000.00- 29,999.00; 16 or 18.83 percent respondents receives 10,000.00-14,999.00; and 23 or 27.07 percent of the respondents said they are receiving less than Ph10, 000.00.

Table 6 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the job status of the respondents.

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Table 6. Frequency & Percentage Distribution of the Job Status of the Respondents

Indicators	Frequency	Percent
Type of firm		
Government Private	26	30.59
Family-owned business	29	34.18
	30	35.29
Status of Appointment		
Permanent casual/contractual voluntary	11	12.94
N/A	6	7.06
	34	40.0
	34	40.0
Job Description		
Teacher	24	28.24
Day Care/Private/online Tutor Sales and marketing	6	7.06
Office work/Admin Aid/SK/Brgy. Officials/Volunteer	12	14.12
Virtual Asst./Call center	16	18.82
Police	2	2.35
Others	3	3.53
	22	25.88
Monthly Income		
45,000.00 and above	21	24.72
40,000.00 –44,999.00	11	12.95
35,000.00 –39,999.00	6	7.07
30,000.00 –34,999.00	5	5.82
25,000.00 –29,999.00	3	3.54
10,000.00 –14,999.00	16	18.83
Below 10,000.00	23	27.07

7. Relevance of the College Degree and Educational Training of the Respondents to Their Present Job.

There were 42 or 49.41 percent respondents who find their College degree and educational training “Very Relevant” to their present job; 15 or 17.65 percent assessed it as “Relevant”; 14 or 16.47 percent says “Fairly Relevant” and another 14 or 16.47 percent claimed it to be “Not Relevant”

Table 7 shows the description of the employed respondents on the relevance of their college degree and educational training to their present job.

Indicators	Frequency	Percent
Very relevant	42	49.41
Relevant	15	17.65
Fairly relevant	14	16.47
Not relevant	14	16.47

8. Skills Acquired in College by the Respondents Which They Find Useful in Their Present Job

The employed respondents assessed that communication skills is the most useful skills they have acquired in their College. The respondents ranked these as human or interpersonal skills; problem-solving skills; human or interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, information technology skills; critical thinking skills; leadership or managerial skills, Entrepreneurial skills; and research and extension skills.

Table 8 shows the acquired skills of respondents.

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Table 8. Skills Acquired in College by the Respondents Which They Find Useful in Their Present Job

Skills	Frequency	Rank
Communication	74	1
Human/Interpersonal	57	2
Leadership/Managerial	29	6
Entrepreneurial	19	7
Information Technology	41	4.5
Problem-solving	43	3
Critical Thinking	41	4.5
Research and Extension	8	8

9. Level of assessment of the respondents on the BSE program relative to:

- 9.1. course content
- 9.2. methods of Instruction
- 9.3. faculty
- 9.4. facilities
 - 9.4.1. library
 - 9.4.2. laboratories
 - 9.4.3. physical plant
- 9.5. student Services
 - 9.5.1. career Guidance
 - 9.5.2. scholarship
 - 9.5.3. housing/dormitories
 - 9.5.4. alumni & job placement
 - 9.5.5. medical/dental
 - 9.5.6. registration/admission
- 9.6. research services
- 9.7. extension services
- 9.8. general administration

The BSE Batch 2019 assessed the Program as “Excellent” on Course Content with weighted average mean of 4.69; Faculty (4.59); Library (4.41); Physical Plant (4.38); Career Guidance (4.40); Scholarship (4.71); Research Services (4.31); Extension Service (4.32); and General Administration (4.34). The Following Services were assessed as “Very Good”: Methods of Instruction (4.12); Laboratories (4.03); Alumni & Job Placement (4.08); Medical/Dental (4.18); and Registration/Admission (4.18). The rating for Housing/Dormitories was “Good” with a weighted average mean of 3.80.

Table 9. shows the Level of assessment of the respondents on the BSE program.

Indicators	Weighted Average Mean	Description
9.1. course content	4.69	E
9.2. methods of Instruction	4.12	VG
9.3. faculty	4.59	E
9.4. facilities		
library	4.41	E
laboratories	4.03	VG
physical plant	4.38	E
9.5. student Services		
career Guidance	4.40	E
scholarship	4.71	E
housing/dormitories	3.80	G
alumni & job placement	4.08	VG
medical/dental	4.18	VG

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registration/admission	4.18	VG
9.6. research services	4.31	E
9.7. extension services	4.32	E
9.8. general administration	4.34	E
OWAM	3.25	G

Legend:	Description	Numerical Scale	Range
	Excellent	5	4.20 – 5.00
	Very Good	4	3.40 – 4.19
	Good	3	2.60 – 3.39
	Fair	2	1.80 – 2.59
	Poor	1	1.00 – 1.79

DISCUSSION

1. Profile of the Respondents.

The Profile shows that the respondents started and completed schooling within the prescribed years to finish the BSE degree and most of them are females. Studies on profile of teachers implies that teaching is a female-dominated profession. The impression that the respondents had managed to priorities their studies is evident as most of them are still single, although only few are pursuing graduate studies. The data reveals a very remarkable performance of BSE Batch 2019 in the Licensure Examination for Teachers as most of them are already passers.

2. Number of Employed, Underemployed, Self-employed, and Unemployed Respondents.

Majority of the respondents are employed. There was a significant number of them who already have good-paying jobs as reflected in their monthly income, however, further analysis of the data gathered reveals that most of the respondents were underemployed.

3. Lead Time Before the Respondents Were Employed.

Most of the respondents were immediately employed within months after graduation. However, in the gathered data, mismatches is very evident in the descriptions of their job.

4. Reasons for the Delay of Employment or Unemployment of the Respondents.

The most claimed reasons by the respondents that may have delayed their employment or may have contributed to their unemployment were “Tight competition for the job” and “No immediate vacancy”. This implies the level of competitiveness and or relevance of the Program.

5. Factor Most Contributory to the First Employment or Present Job of the Respondents.

The respondents claimed that their educational qualification is a factor most contributory to their first employment. This implies the relevance of the Program, however the respondents also claimed that the recommendations from their relatives also got them their first job after graduation. This data implies the relevance or non-relevance of the program to job requirements.

6. Status of Employment of the Respondents

Most of the employed respondents were working in government institutions but are not yet holders of permanent positions. The profile data reveals that most of the respondents are LET passers which qualifies them to be given a permanent position. This may imply the unavailability of permanent items in their institutions or the competition for permanent position is very tough. Most of the job description of the respondents do not commensurate to what the Program has prepared them to do. The data on the monthly salaries of the respondents also reveals that most of them are underemployed based from Philippine Minimum Wage which is 537 PHP/day (source: Department of Labor and Employment <https://tradingeconomics.com/philippines/minimum-wages>).

7. Relevance of the College Degree and Educational Training of the Respondents to Their Present Job.

Majority of the respondents claimed that their degree and educational training were either very relevant and relevant. A significant number of the respondents rate the educational training as fairly relevant and not relevant to their present job. This data confirms the prior analysis of mismatches or employed respondents who are misfits.

8. Skills Acquired in College by the Respondents Which They Find Useful in Their Present Job.

The respondents assessed that communication skills is the most useful skills they have acquired in their College. Along with this are: human or interpersonal skills; problem-solving skills; human or interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, information technology skills; critical thinking skills; leadership or managerial skills, Entrepreneurial skills; and research and extension skills.

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There is an old adage: One could not give what one doesn't have. There may be two contentions here: Did the curriculum able to sufficiently equip the graduates with these skills? On the other hand, did the graduates done their part to sufficiently acquire these skills?

9. Level of assessment of the respondents on the BSE Program

The overall assessment of the Batch 2019 on their BSE Program was "Excellent". Their feedback is remarkable. However, the BSE program could still stand several improvements especially on Methods of Instruction and housing services. Twenty two years ago, Vidania (2000), gathered the same assessment on housing services from the respondents in a tracer she conducted in 2000 for the Bachelor of Science in Industrial Education (BSIE) graduates of ISU Ilagan Campus Batch 1997.

CONCLUSION

The BSE Batch 2019 started and completed their schooling within the prescribed age-range and most of them are females and are still single. A significant number of them are already pursuing graduate studies. Most of them are LET passers. The tight competition for a job and no vacancy were claimed by the respondents as top most reasons for the delay of their employment or had caused them unemployment.

Educational qualification was considered by the respondents as most contributory to their first employment. A significant number of the employed respondents were in their field which is teaching and were in the government institutions but have yet to receive security of tenure. The data on job description and monthly salaries reveal that only significant number are gainfully employed and most are misfits and underemployed at the time of the study.

Majority of the respondents find their college degree and educational trainings as very relevant but a significant number find it fairly relevant and not relevant at all. This may confirm the mismatches analysis deduced from the gathered data which may impel the Program to review about the relevance and non-relevance of the curriculum to job requirements.

The respondents said they have acquired and find communication skills, human or interpersonal skills, leadership or managerial skills, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills very useful in their present job. The overall assessment given by the respondents on the BSE Program was excellent.

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