

# **GRADUATE TRACER STUDY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF SAINT ANTHONY IRIGA CITY**

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## **Abstract**

The graduate tracer study is a survey designed to track the employment or the current positions or designation of the graduates of the USANT Graduate School department. To acquire the needed data, the graduate tracer tool developed by CHED as the basis in designing the tracer instrument in the survey conducted by the University Research Center (URC). Some variables were changed because it is no longer necessary and not appropriate for postgraduate students.

The subjects of the study are the USANT graduates of 2011-2019 of the Graduate School Department whose names were drawn from the master list of graduates provided by the Registrar's office.

Findings of the study revealed that the USANT graduates of SY 2010-2011 to 2018-2019 are employed as regular in their present or current job either as professionals or as clerks. Most of the respondents work in academic institutions and are connected to the Department of Education, some are working in either Private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) or State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), and some are bank employees, hospital nurses, and employed in the Philippine National Police. A few respondents work abroad but were also former teachers who opted to leave their teaching careers and seek employment abroad. Many of the graduates are still having the same job they had as their first employment or first job only that some were already reassigned to other places within Bicol. It was further revealed that their

main purpose of pursuing graduate studies is purely for professional development.

## **Introduction**

A tracer study or graduate survey is a survey (in written or oral form) of graduates from education institutions, which takes place sometime after graduation or the end of the training. The subjects of a tracer study can be manifold, but common topics include questions on study progress, the transition to work, work entrance, job career, and use of learned competencies, current occupation, and bonds to the education institution. (Schomburg, H. 2016). Tracing the employability or employment of graduates gives the institution a chance to review and reflect on the operations of the program. The strategies and policies on fees, requirements, title defense, pre-oral and final oral defense, advising, and others. Because tracer study does not only limit to find out the employment of graduate but also finding out what are the weaknesses and strengths of the university that affects the process of their application for employment or for promotion. Hence the result will help improve everything in the graduate school department which is vital in attaining its vision to be accorded with level II status and qualify for level III status. This study, therefore, seeks to find out the profile of graduate alumni as to civil status, sex, and location of residence; the knowledge and skills learned, and; the factors that are contributory to the promotion or employment of those who finished in the USANT Graduate School.

## **Methodology**

This research made use of the descriptive research design with the aim of providing an appropriate representation of the factors or variables that are relevant to the research question.

Descriptive research designs are considered more structured in comparison to the exploratory research design. This design also helps in finding the answers to the questions that are associated with the specific research study. Through this, the

data collected is measurable in order to produce the description of the variables (Fiscal, 2010).

The researcher considered ethics into account to preserve the anonymity of the respondents.

The main data gathering tool used is a questionnaire that was patterned on the Graduate Tracer Study survey questionnaire of the CHED.

With the use of the URC staff, the Senior High School Immersionists, and the Graduate students, the questionnaires were successfully distributed and retrieved.

## **Results and Discussion**

Most of the graduate school alumni from 2011-2019 were married; female and residing within the City and the nearby municipality. This means that work immersion is most likely to have the ambition of finishing graduate studies because of their hope of being promoted which is tantamount to an increase in salary.

Apart from being promoted, it was further revealed that the respondents' reasons for pursuing graduate education were purely for professional development and advancement in knowledge although there were few who revealed that they enrolled and finished their graduate studies for prestige.

This is supported by an article on the top ten reasons for pursuing graduate education published on the internet which provides that although it's not strictly necessary to have a firm view of your future career before applying to graduate school, it certainly helps. This is because grad school often acts as the academic version of professional training, enabling students to graduate with all the right knowledge in all the right places, ready to jump straight into their desired careers.

Either way, students applying to graduate school should do so with their eyes on the future, seeing further study as an

investment in their own potential and not simply as a way to postpone the end of student life (Laura Tucker, 2014)

Tucker further revealed that whereas much of the worth of an undergraduate degree is in the qualification itself, the most important reasons to go to grad school may be more for the professional skills you'll gain, the personal development you'll undergo and the valuable connections you'll make with fellow graduate students, academics and industry experts.

It's frequently said that grad school is about much more than obtaining a few letters behind your name and a fancy piece of paper; it's about developing yourself professionally so that you're ready to enter the world of work. If you act smart in grad school, by the time you graduate you'll have built yourself a professional landing mat of contacts and relationships, which will serve to keep you in the field and, ultimately, employed.(Tucker, 2014).

She also said that graduate education would give you academic recognition. Grad school provides a stable forum to research and explore theories and ideas. If during your degree you conduct any research that is particularly exceptional, the chances are you'll be recognized for that achievement by the academic community – perhaps by being invited to present your paper at a conference, contribute to a research project, and even receive accreditation in a piece of work published in a journal. International recognition is also a prospect for those who continue their research after graduation, and one day, who knows, you may well become a prominent expert in your field.

When asked of the factors and skills the graduates learned that are contributory to their promotions, the tallied results revealed the following factors arranged according to their rank: Critical thinking skills, Communication skills, Human relations skills, Entrepreneurial skills, Information technology skills, problem-solving skills and management, and leadership skills.

Summing it up, all the skills enumerated above are the skills that 21st-century learners and teachers should possess. It is therefore vital for professionals especially those in the teaching profession the need to enroll in graduate school for professional advancement and/or development.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, it is therefore concluded that most of the alumni of the graduate school of USANT are married moms and DepEd employees. And that they wanted to be academically advanced for promotion and for recognition. Although they revealed that they stayed in graduate school for professional development but attributed it to it is the promotion and at the same time recognition.

It is further concluded that 21st-century learners' and teachers' skills are more developed in graduate school.

## **References:**

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