

## **EDUCATION GRADUATES OF WEST VISAYAS STATE UNIVERSITY CALINOG CAMPUS (2013-2016): A TRACER STUDY**

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### **Abstract**

The effectiveness of a program can be truly gauged best through a tracer study. This pioneer tracer study sought to track down the demographic data and extent of application of training received by the education graduates of the West Visayas State University – Calinog Campus from 2013-2016 focusing on three (3) academic programs: Bachelor of Elementary Education major in General Education, and Bachelor of Secondary Education majors in English and Mathematics. Of the 276 total graduates, 92% were traced using an adopted and duly validated questionnaire. Data showed that the majority of the graduates were females, single, and LET passers within the modest rating. Most of their undergraduate students were financed by their parents. Majority are now permanent teachers at the Department of Education (DepEd) in Iloilo City and Province and have an annual income which ranged from Php 101,000 to Php 250,000. They likewise believed that the human relation skills they learned from their tenure on the Campus have been very useful to a very great extent in their current work. Similarly, they found other

skills applicable to a great extent in their profession, to wit: communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, and research skills. It is recommended that the University intensifies its linkages with educational institutions to create jobs for its education graduates.

*Keywords: Education Graduates; Extent of Application of Skills; Tracer Study, West Visayas State University Calinog Campus*

### **Introduction**

The quality of graduates reflects the kind of education that an institution offers. Being a premier university in Western Visayas, the West Visayas State University-Calinog Campus (WVSU-CC) has never failed in carrying out the Core Values of the University – Scholarship, Harmony, Innovation, Nurturance, Excellence and Service (SHINES) in all of its academic and non-academic endeavors. This can always be gleaned in every facet of its undertakings and as shown most especially on its outcomes. And to further prove this, the graduates who have gone through the system are in the best position to appraise the quality of education that the university has offered them over the years. It is also interesting to note how these graduates embody and live out the knowledge and skills imparted to them by their Alma Mater (Garganza, 2014).

The WVSU-CC College of Education has been in existence for several decades. At present, it offers three (3) academic programs, namely: Bachelor of Elementary Education Major in General Education and Bachelor of Secondary Education Majors in English and Mathematics. In 2018, these programs successfully passed the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities (AACCUP) Level III Phase 2 and 9000:2015 ISO Certification of AJA Registrars. As the college continuously seeks higher accreditation; more complex tasks are expected to be accomplished by the University pursuant to the benchmark statements of these accrediting bodies.

As a State University, WVSU-CC is mandated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and required by AACCUP to conduct tracer studies of its graduates to periodically monitor their movements and provide feedback for further improvements of its academic programs. This is to ascertain the type of 21st century skills imbued by the graduates that help them find a job and sustain the demands of their current work in consonance with the economics of employment in the context of fourth industrial

revolution (Amiron et al., 2019 in Farhadi Rad, et al., 2020). This theory insists on education as the fundamental element of economic empowerment. Human Development Theory, on the other hand, contends that education provides great opportunity for individuals to develop his or her abilities such as knowledge generation, professional preparation, and cultural knowledge (Sharif, et al., 2017 in Farhadi Rad, et al., 2020). The preceding theories build the goals of the Philippine Commission on Higher Education to invest on education for human development.

Yet, in the many years of its existence and over thousands of graduates it has turned out no trace study has been conducted among its education graduates. Hence, the researchers found it timely and appropriate to conduct a tracer study to determine the demographic profile and extent of training received by the education graduates of WVSU-CC from 2013-2016.

### **Methods**

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design. A roster of education graduates from 2013-2016 was secured from the Office of the Registrar and Office of the Dean of the College of Education. Of the 276 graduates, 253 or 92% of graduates responded to the study. However, only 251 were analyzed because the remaining two (2) graduates had already passed away. Originally, the total enumeration of graduates was targeted as per a recommendation of former CHED Region 6 Director Cesar H. Medina during the Regional Conference of the State Universities and Colleges for Teacher Education Association (SUCTEA) in Iloilo City last April 2018. The data gathering ended after reaching more than 90% of the responses as affirmed by Schomburg (2003). A composite of the questionnaire by Michelle Garganza's (2014) Tracer Questionnaire, CHED & Xavier University (XU) Tracer Study Questionnaire, Tracer Study Proposal of Dr. F Cinches Australian National University Graduate Survey, Cabaihm Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) underwent content and construct validation by three (3) education practitioners/experts. These experts used rubrics in determining the validity of the instrument made. This research instrument was then tried out to 10 alumni of the academic programs who were excluded from the study. The instrument yielded 0.85 Cronbach's alpha. All suggestions and comments were considered in the preparation of the final version of the tracer questionnaire. Hard and soft copies of the questionnaire were then prepared. The questionnaire consisted of two (2) parts: Part One dealt with

the demographic data of the education graduates. Part Two contained the extent of application of training received by the education graduates from the university. It was divided into five (5) components with five (5) corresponding items: communication skills, information technology skills, critical thinking skills, human relations skills, and research skills. Further, the instrument had used a 5-point Likert scale (great extent, some extent, limited extent, very limited extent, and not at all). The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the rights of the respondents and assurance of the confidentiality of their identity. All means were exhausted to reach out to the graduates. Referral or snowball was asked from students, faculty, and alumni. Those graduates who responded were likewise asked to help distribute or convince the rest of their classmates to answer the questionnaire. On a similar note, those who were familiar with the researchers were personally visited or contacted via phone call, text messaging, and instant messaging using Facebook messenger. Some respondents directly answered the questionnaires but some, especially those contacted online, wrote down their answers on paper, while others used the features available in messenger to accomplish the questionnaire. The unanswered portions of the questionnaires were followed-up with the respective respondents. This tracer study was conducted from October 2018 to August 2020. The returned questionnaires were analyzed using Stata v. 14 with the following statistical treatments: frequency count, percentage distribution, mean, and weighted mean.

Table 1

*Profile of the Respondents (2013-2016) by Year Level, Sex, and Academic Programs.*

Year	BEED			BSED English			BSED Math		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2013	13	36	49	4	6	10	0	0	0
2014	15	40	55	4	8	12	6	4	10
2015	11	31	48	2	9	11	1	5	6
2016	1	39	40	1	4	5	1	6	7
Total	40	149	192	11	27	38	8	15	23

## Results and Discussion

Table 2

*Percentage Distribution of the Respondents (2013-2016) by Category.*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
A. Entire Group	251	100.00
B. Course		
BEED	192	76.5
BSED English	37	14.7
BSED Math	22	8.8
C. Sex		
Male	62	24.7
Female	189	75.3
D. Marital Status		
Single	175	69.7
Married	76	30.3
E. Work Location		
Within Iloilo City & Province	153	61.0
Outside Iloilo but Within Visayas Region	23	9.2
Metro Manila	28	11.2
Abroad	17	6.8
None	30	12.0
F. LET Status		
Passed	185	73.7
Failed	47	18.7
Not Taken	19	7.6
G. LET Rating		
75-78	127	50.6
79-82	50	19.9
83-86	9	3.6
None	65	25.9
H. Highest Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	228	90.8
With Masters Units	23	9.2
I. Source of Educational Support		
Parents	179	71.3
Relatives	27	10.8
Self	21	8.4
Scholarship	18	7.2
Others	6	2.4
J. Nature of Work		
Teaching	128	51.0
Non-teaching	93	37.1
None	30	12.0
K. Use Skills		
Yes	195	77.7
No	56	22.3

As shown in Table 2, three (3) out of 4 respondents were BEED graduates, 16% were BSED (English) graduates and 9% were BSED (Math) graduates. These data indicated that BEED is a more attractive course than the BSED courses for the school years 2013 to 2016. The table further shows that when the respondents were grouped according to sex, most (75%) of them were females. This means that education programs remain a female-dominated course as stated by former CHED Chairperson Patricia Licuanan in her statement during the 55th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women in New York (2011). As to marital status, a great majority (70%) were singles. Such finding seems to complement with the notion that millennial teachers nowadays are both economic and career-wise rather than bent on raising their own families. When grouped according to work location, a great majority (61%) were working within Iloilo City and Iloilo Province, 11% were in Metro Manila, 9 % were working outside Iloilo but within the Visayas region, 7% were working abroad and 12% were not working. These data imply that most of the respondents preferred to work locally due to some personal or professional opportunities than working anywhere else. Such findings conform with the idea of Wangchuk (2002), that most graduates in teacher education are hired in urban or semi-urban areas than in rural areas due to the comforts of a better life and more accessible use of technology for instructional purposes. The table moreover shows that a modest percentage (74%) of the respondents have passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), 18% did not pass the LET, while 8% did not take the licensure examination. As to LET rating, the table shows that a modest percentage of 51% of the respondents had ratings of 75.00-78.00%, 20% had ratings of 79.00-82.00, 3% had ratings of 83.00-86.00%, while 26% had no ratings because they did not yet take the licensure examination. This result further indicates that the ratings of the WVSU graduates are generally passing but need to be improved for them to significantly contribute to the WVSU's goal of producing excellent and board toppers. Further, when grouped according to highest educational attainment, the table shows that almost all (91%) were bachelor's degree holders, while only 9% had obtained masteral units. These data negate the notion that fresh graduates are more aggressive than old graduates in taking advanced studies. As to the source of educational support, seven (7) out of 10 respondents were financed by their parents, 11% was financed by relatives, 8% was self-financed, 7% were through scholarships, while the other 2% was financed by other sources such as spouses, and other family members. When classified as to the nature of work, the majority (51%) were involved in teaching, 37% were involved in non-teaching jobs, while 12% were unemployed. Moreover, most (78%)

of the respondents were able to use the skills acquired from their course in their current work. These graduate-respondents indicated that their pieces of training at WVSU Calinog are useful in their field of work so far.

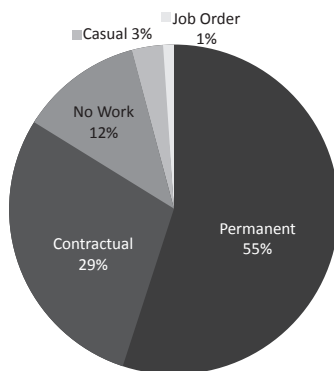


Figure 1. Status of employment of the respondents (2013-2016).

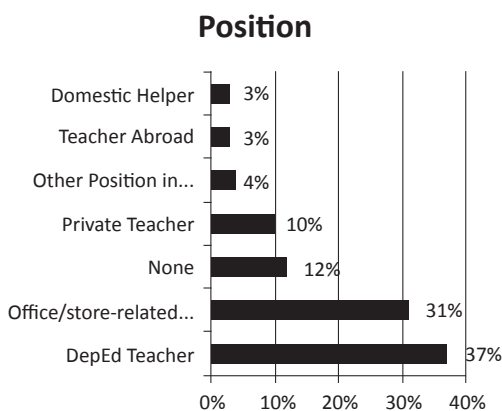
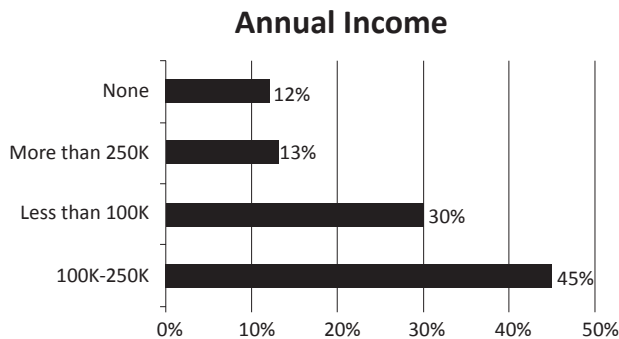


Figure 2. Status of employment of the respondents (2013-2016).

Figure 1 shows that, as to the status of employment, the majority (55%) of the respondents held permanent positions, 29% had contractual positions, 3% had casual positions, 1% had job order positions, while 12% were not employed. Moreover, in terms of position, figure 2 shows that 37% of the respondents were DepEd teachers, 31% had an office or store-related positions (as cashier, receptionist, bookkeeper, disbursing officer, crew, recruitment officer, market assistant, accounting assistant, selling-in-charge, agent, or security administrator), 10% were private school teachers, 4% had other positions in the government (Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology

(BJMP), Philippine National Police (PNP), and barangay official), 3% were teachers abroad and domestic helpers, and 12% were unemployed. These figures further imply that the graduates of Calinog Campus are recommendable to secure a job in both industry and academe. On a similar note, these findings confirm the claim of Antiojo (2018) that the DepEd remains a lucrative workplace because of its salary advantage as compared to the private schools. Moreover, most of the new graduates preferred to stay in private school to gain the necessary experience as required in the ranking system of the DepEd.



*Figure 3. Annual income of respondents (2013-2016).*

As shown in Figure 3, almost half or 45% of the respondents earned between 100,000-250,000 pesos annually, 30% earned less than 100,000 pesos, 13% earned more than 250,000 pesos and 12% had no earnings due to unemployment.

Table 3

*Extent of Application of Training Received by the Respondents from the University*

Components	Mean	SD	Weighted Mean	SD	Interpretation
<b>Communication Skills</b>			4.46	0.03	Great Extent
1. Good written and oral communication skills.	4.48	0.59			
2. Strong, pleasing voice.	4.48	0.64			
3. Clear enunciation.	4.41	0.65			
4. Handling questions well.	4.44	0.64			
5. Appropriate verbal and non-verbal.	4.48	0.61			
<b>Problem Solving Skills</b>			4.35	0.05	Great Extent
1. Anticipating problems/foresights.	4.26	0.68			
2. Solving problems.	4.37	0.67			
3. Being able to take control/handle unexpected situation.	4.40	0.65			
4. Recognizing and solving problems while they are still minor.	4.38	0.70			
5. Intuitively sensing where the problem is & usually being right.	4.34	0.70			Great Extent
<b>Critical Thinking Skills</b>			4.37	0.07	
1. Using logic, inference, cause and effect among others.	4.33	0.71			
2. Stressing meaningful conceptualization.	4.28	0.69			
3. Making appropriate recommendations.	4.40	0.64			
4. Developing alternative actions in case the primary plan fails, resort to plan B, C, etc... in case the primary plan does not work as expected.	4.39	0.71			
5. Promoting innovative methods and techniques.	4.47	0.66			Very Great Extent
<b>Human Relations Skills</b>			4.63	0.04	
1. Understanding human behavior.	4.67	0.57			
2. Communicating with warmth.	4.63	0.59			Great Extent
3. Being sensitive to others' needs.	4.63	0.61			
4. Establishing rapport.	4.56	0.59			
5. Treating others as equal.	4.67	0.54			
<b>Research Skills</b>			4.43	0.11	
1. Working on research projects.	4.31	0.82			
2. Researching in library/websites for the lesson.	4.43	0.69			
3. Knowing how to find information.	4.58	0.64			
4. Organizing a large amount of data & information.	4.36	0.69			
5. Gathering information from people.	4.49	0.69			

Notes: Interpretation is based on the scale: 1.00-1.50 (Not at All); 1.51-2.50 (Little Extent); 2.51-3.50 (Some Extent); 3.51-4.50 (Great Extent); 4-51-5.00 (Very Great Extent)

As regards the extent to which the skills learned in school are used by the graduates in their current work, Table 3 shows that the respondents use human relations skills to a 'very great extent' (Weighted Mean = 4.63, SD =0.04), while they use communication (Weighted Mean = 4.46, SD =0.03), problem-solving (Weighted Mean = 4.35, SD =0.05), critical thinking (Weighted Mean = 4.37, SD =0.07), and research skills (Weighted mean = 4.43, SD =0.11) to 'great extent'. These data agree with the idea of Aquino, et al. (2015) that companies or the academe nowadays needs highly skilled graduates to be competent, thus compelling universities to adopt outcomes-based education to survive in the world of work relative to the respective careers that their students/graduates have chosen.

### Conclusions

The findings of the present study have led to the following conclusions:

The WVSU Calinog Campus education programs are relatively successful in producing relevant and employable graduates from 2013 to 2016 as indicated by their demographic profile. These education graduates are predominantly BEED, single, females, and working within Iloilo City and Province.

A great number of them are LET passers which help them secure permanent positions in the DepEd and earn an annual income of Php 101,000 to Php 200,000. These overwhelming results can be attributed to the forwarding quality education of Calinog Campus during the said batch range which coincides with the years when the College of Education started AACCUP accreditations. Similarly, the profile might be defined by the kind of batch to which they belong, and the education and training they received during their tenure status in the University. Thus, the selection and retention policy of any education institutions should be strengthened to produce quality and employable graduates.

The respondents further reveal that human relations skills primarily help them secure and stay in their current employment. This might be due to their relatively short span of service in their workplace which, in the long run, would require them to acquire other skills to succeed such as communication skills, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and research skills. This finding further shows how the education graduates have developed and grown by the competencies they had gained from their college tenure.

This is to ascertain the type of 21st century skills imbued by the graduates that help them find a job and sustain the demands of their current work in consonance with the economics of employment in the context of fourth industrial revolution (Amiron, et al., 2019 in Farhadi Rad, et al., 2020). This theory insists on education as the fundamental element of economic empowerment. Human Development Theory, on the other hand, contends that education provides great opportunity for individuals to develop his or her abilities such as knowledge generation, professional preparation, and cultural knowledge (Sharif, et al., 2017 in Farhadi Rad, et al., 2020). The preceding theories build the goals of the Philippine Commission on Higher Education to invest on education for human development.

An intervention program is needed to increase the performance of the education graduates in the licensure examinations and be able to secure graduate jobs related to teaching.

### **Recommendations**

On the bases of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

The WVSU-Calinog Campus College of Education should intensify its campaign to attract more BSED English and Mathematics students. Adding in-demand majors such as Social Studies, and General Science to the existing BSED programs may be considered to make the College more relevant and responsive to the needs of the community and academe. Further, it is recommended that the College intensifies and offers attractive incentives to graduating senior high school male students to enter the teaching profession. This implies that other Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) may consider the preceding context in recruiting or accepting education students. Clear parameters and policies must be in place.

Faculty members, especially those who are teaching pedagogy courses, may use LET-like examinations and focus on Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) to better prepare the students to take the LET. If done properly, this may be an added value to increase the LET percentage status of any other TEIs, like Calinog Campus and at the same time improve the ratings of the graduates. On a similar note, the College may conduct an extension program

that will offer refresher courses or LET reviews to its alumni especially the old non-LET passers. Diagnostic tests may be administered by the College to the identified alumni to determine the foci of the review. Experts may also be invited to conduct review classes.

The Guidance Office, in close coordination with the College of Education Office, should strengthen its linkages with other educational institutions to participate in job fairs. Similarly, the office should devise a strategy to entice education graduates to attend such job fairs and provide necessary assistance pertaining thereto.

The College of Education or education ministry may also devise mechanisms to encourage its graduates to pursue advanced studies. The said academic unit may offer more scholarship grants to deserving alumni. Moreover, offering Master of Arts in Education Majors in Mathematics and English is vital for the continuity of the BSED programs of the College.

Continuous retooling of faculty competencies is highly recommended. The existing curriculum may be revisited to conform to the skills required in job markets especially in the academe. Emphasis on communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, and research skills which are used in the workplace to a great extent must be sustained or improved.

The College of Education, in coordination with the alumni and Guidance Office, may improve its alumni network by undertaking regular tracer study and not merely to satisfy a requirement of any accrediting body, like AACUP evaluation. A deeper evaluation and empirical study of the education curriculum is highly encouraged.

Future research may employ a qualitative approach to verify the claims of the respondents as to the extent of application of training received by the graduates in their current workplace and at the same time determine their strengths and weaknesses. It is further recommended that the tracer study be expanded by adding questions related to content and pedagogical knowledge of the academic offerings of the College.

The Guidance Office with close coordination with the College of Education Office may strengthen its linkages with other educational institutions to participate in the job fair. Similarly, the office shall devise a strategy to entice education graduates to attend in the said job fair and provide necessary assistance pertaining thereof.

The College of Education may devise mechanisms to encourage its graduates to pursue advance studies. The College may offer more scholarship grants to its deserving alumni. Moreover, the offering of Master of Arts in Education Majors in Mathematics and English are vital for the continuity of the BSED programs of the College.

Continuous retooling of faculty competencies is highly recommended. The existing curriculum may be revisited to conform to the skills required in job markets especially in the academe. Sustain emphasis on communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, and research skills which are used in the workplace to a great extent.

The College of Education in coordination with the alumni and guidance office may improve its alumni network by doing tracer study regularly and not only to satisfy one requirement of AACCUP evaluation. A deeper evaluation and empirical study of the education curriculum is highly encouraged.

Future research may employ a qualitative approach to verify the claims of the respondents as to the extent of application of training received by the graduates in their current workplace and at the same time determine their strengths and weaknesses. It is further recommended to expand the tracer study by adding information not included in the present tracer.

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