



## Reaching the inner voice of the graduates: An online tracer study of Davao de Oro state college

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### Abstract

Davao de Oro State College aspires to give its stakeholders a golden opportunity to produce globally competent graduates grounded in good governance. The institution needs to know what career paths students can expect and what kind of guidance and development will best prepare them for life after college. The study reveals that the alumni preferred to work their first job related to their course because of the salaries and benefits, career challenges, and special skills. The graduates need more professional skills because they can benefit from nearly all job positions, industries, and work environments. Graduates are just receiving enough salary for their basic needs. They chose their course because of its availability of intense passion for the profession in the institution. However, most graduates did not pursue advanced studies because they focused more on work or severe financial commitment. Also, the study discovered that graduates lack permanent opportunities in public and private organizations. Most respondents work on a contractual or temporary basis. Indeed, this study recommended that the institution provide more facilities, resources, holistic development, and personal and professional development, such as webinars, training, and workshops for better instructions, and hire more teachers with highly competitive and diverse qualifications. Moreover, the curriculum must be reviewed and updated to fulfill the recent graduates' required skills and competencies.

**Keywords:** graduates, inner voice tracer study, mixed-method sequential exploratory design, Philippines

### Introduction

Graduates' transition from graduation to employment is increasingly becoming a center of interest (Egesah, Wahome, Langat & Wishitemi 2014). On the other hand, graduate results demonstrated that universities or state colleges provided excellent services in academic program completion timeliness, study program relevancy, and employment competency. Higher learning institutions are accountable for comprehensively sharing knowledge, abilities, and value systems within a holistic methodology. In Davao de Oro State College, as stated in its mission, the institution shall provide its stakeholders golden opportunities to produce globally competent graduates anchored on good governance. In this case, college graduates must achieve the working environment with the skills needed most to achieve success and expand their career paths. However, graduates are frequently never sufficiently prepared for advancement when entering the workplace (Conference Board, 2006).

As eloquently stated by Paranto and Kelkar (2008) that employers are more impressed with degree holders who embody core skills, such as innovative and critical reasoning, personal and social skills, and leadership, compared to those who are accurate and efficient and unique to their profession. Methodological approaches to tracer studies and suitable designs and topics can produce desirable and usable data that may be used to enhance research needs. Flotcher (2010), Herrmann (2010), and others have argued similarly. According to Dillman (2008), tracer studies have their own distinct yet widely used and robust methodology. If input from graduates is used effectively, study facilities, circumstances, provisions, and infrastructure may be improved, and academic and service program quality requirements can be upgraded.

In Botswana, there has been a long-term investment in education, and high unemployment among young people, women, and university graduates remain a significant challenging issue for the country. Furthermore, the United Nations system in Botswana (2007) further argued that other factors besides education affect youth unemployment. The country's youth unemployment degree indicates that education does not prepare school leavers adequately for work, whether in skills, attitudes, or aspirations.

The unemployment rate in the Philippines was estimated at 5.3% in January 2020. The unemployed age group was between 15 and 24 years, 42.4%, while the age group was between 25 and 34 years, 32.1%. Educational attainment accounted for 26.9% of the unemployed, 10.0% of university graduates, and 28.7% for junior high school graduates. Those secondary school graduates are part of the old curriculum (PSA, 2020) <sup>[17]</sup>. In colleges, learners will attend and get a degree, and the prospects for future employment carry much weight. It is of great importance to employment, graduate employment status, the monthly wage, and job search length to identify and resolve curriculum-related issues (Albina & Sumagaysay, 2020) <sup>[3]</sup>.

Higher education institutions are constantly required to respond to the demands of today's world. Graduate employability and skills enhancement around the globe strive for a clear sense of creativity and teamwork practice in higher education. Employers are inevitably in the continuous quest for employable graduates capable of providing employability skills and who are highly skilled to include these skills to create a productive working environment for the substantially positive success of the company. Though some workers are expected to maximize their capabilities to be productive and effective, it is vital to guarantee that what they do inside the organization leads to better impacts (Abas & Imam, 2016).

There is no research conducted yet in tracking the Graduates' Employability of the Davao de Oro State College – New Bataan Branch. This study will prioritize the first batch of graduates produced by this branch. This is precisely in the Academic Year 2017-2018. There were 48 students from the Bachelor of Elementary Education, 19 students from Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in English, 13 of them were from the Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in Mathematics, 43 students from the Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in MAPEH, and 41 students from Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship. The total number of graduates of this batch is 164.

Using improvement indicators for specific results, it is evident that, despite hurdles, the institution was on the right track to reaching quality gold standards in many respects. This may be observed in the institutions' growth programs and reorientation of learning and teaching modalities. Universities and Colleges need to know what career trajectories can expect and what sort of guidance and development will best equip them to deal with life beyond college. The latter justifies the need to conduct to explore and reveal the educational aspirations of athletes and ensure that college graduates are employable. Accordingly, this research has been undertaken.

### Objectives of the Study

Generally, this study aimed to explore the experiences and trace the graduates of the Davao de Oro State College New Bataan from the academic year 2013 to 2018. Specifically, it answers the following problems.

1. To determine the graduates' demographic profile in terms of:
  - 1.1 civil status;
  - 1.2 sex
  - 1.2 honors;
  - 1.3 awards received;
  - 1.4 degree;
  - 1.5 specializations;
  - 1.6 professional examinations passed;
  - 1.7 place of work;
  - 1.8 job level position in their first job;
  - 1.9 job level position in their current job, and
  - 1.10 Gross monthly earnings in their first job?
2. To describe the thoughts of alumni in their preferred course program in terms of:
  - 2.1 choosing their undergraduate course and
  - 2.2 pursuing advanced studies?
3. To identify the alumni's joint training and advanced study after graduation?
4. To find out the alumni employment features in terms of:
  - 4.1 if presently employed;
  - 4.2 reasons if not employed or never been employed, and
  - 4.3 Employment type?
5. To determine the level of alumni perception on their first job in terms of:
  - 5.1 occupation classifications;
  - 5.2 employer, and
  - 5.3 the central line of business of the company they are presently employed?

6. To determine the level of alumni perception on their first job in terms of:

- 6.1 current job and their first job after college
- 6.2 reasons for staying in a job
- 6.3 relevance of preferred course in a job
- 6.4 reasons for accepting a job time spent staying in a job getting their first job

For an individual interview, the researcher used the following questions:

1. A graduate of the learning institution, what are your experiences with employment mobility and work opportunities?
2. What employment opportunities have you encountered after graduating from the course program?
3. How can you describe your employment situation after graduating from a specific course program in college?
4. How has your professional education contributed to your career goals?
5. What particular job-related skills and competencies have you acquired from the institution that prepares you to withstand the world of employment?
6. To further develop the technical and academic programs of the institution, what specific recommendations and suggestions can you offer for the course program enhancement and curriculum development?

### Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the three theories. The first theory is the human capital theory of Bercks (1964) which highlights how education increases the knowledge and skills necessary by increasing the level of cognitive stock of economically viable people's capability, which is the product of innate human ability and human investment. From an economic point of view, the theory of human capital education and training is considered an investment mechanism that produces a potential income flow. Investment in education is expected to affect employees' productivity and incomes positively. As eloquently stated by McConnell *et al.* (2009), "a more skilled, better-trained individual can provide more valuable noteworthy measure than one with less education and training." The importance of human capital theory is widely acknowledged to improve organizational success because the company relies on employees' skills, expertise, and capacity as a core perspective of value creation.

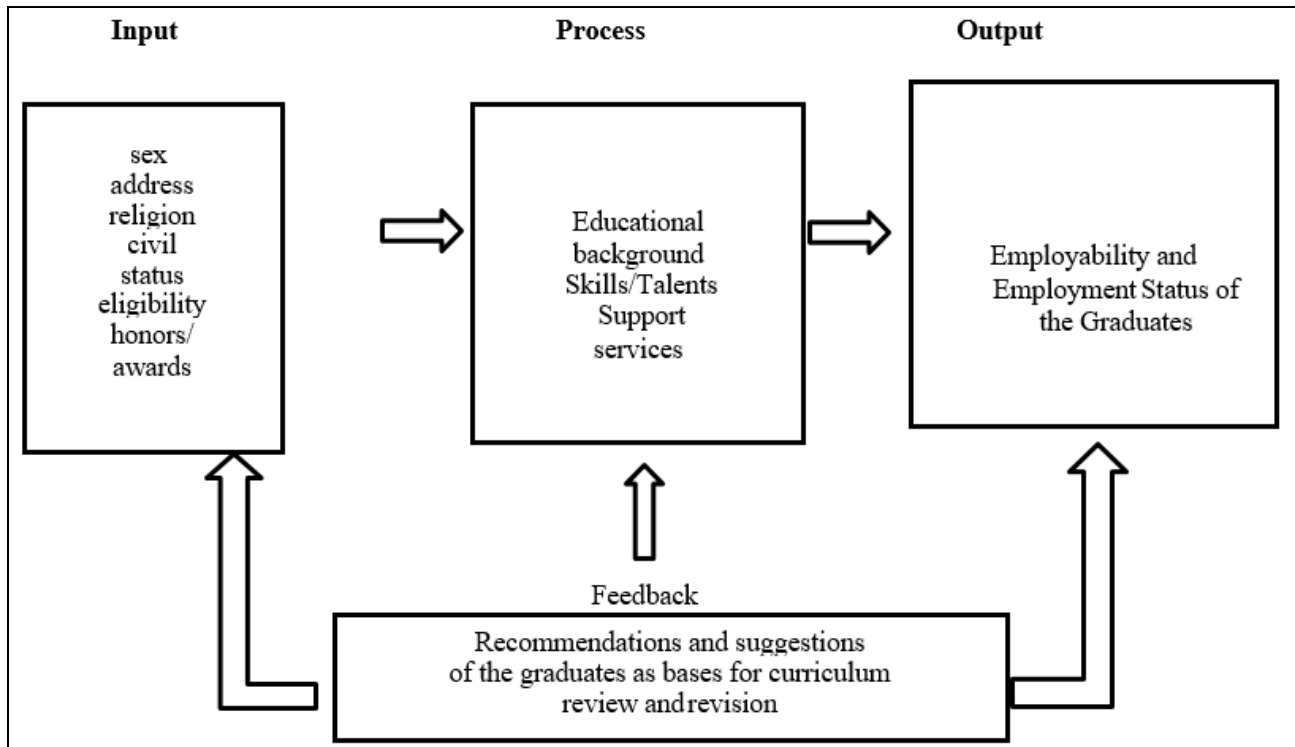
The second theory is the Signaling theory of Michael Spence (1973). Spence believes that schooling is mainly used to select and filter individuals with possibly greater productivity and better abilities that employers cannot observe. According to this theory, students who have a better future in education are expected to grow faster in the job market in terms of greater efficiency, a better understanding of new skills, and more valuable to employers as candidates for jobs and investment in training. The theory states that the information supplied by applicants is an indication to employers of the potential for successful job performance of applicants (Celani and Singh, 2011) <sup>[5]</sup>.

The last theory is the self-determination theory of Edward Deci and Richard Ryan. This theory emphasizes that individuals have an inherent need to behave autonomously, as genuine independent agents based on their internal values, to have absolute competence and adequate mastery

to affect the results of the activities they are engaged in. In addition, relatedness to have a good relationship and interaction with those around them (Deci & Ryan, 2010). Moreover, the central proposition of this theory is that individuals have profoundly developed psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When these needs are met at work, either through work itself, the working environment, or relationships with colleagues and employers, workers appear to have more self-reliance, high-quality motivation, and greater well-being (Chong & Gagné 2019).

As reflected in the conceptual model, the researcher adopted the input-process-output paradigm. The model emphasizes that inputs are converted into outputs through a team process. The researcher conceptualizes that the inputs are the demographic profile of the respondents, such as a permanent address, age, sex, civil status, licensure examination or eligibility, and religion. The processes are designed as educational background, educational background, training attended, skills/talents, academic curriculum, and support services. The output was their employment status on the nature of their work.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Fig 1:** shows the interplay of the Input-Process-Output model of the study.

**Review of Related Literature**

The employability of the ISU-Echague Campus BSIT graduates has shown that their high employment status represents the quality of their graduates' success and the quality of their university education. The college improves the courses that fulfill the ICT industry's work requirements by monitoring the graduate's employment situation (Plata, 2020) [18].

It was also stated by Castro *et al.* (2015) that the Office of Student Affairs might continuously provide extracurricular activities like leadership camps for students with inherent leadership abilities and those students who need to develop their leadership qualities. It was reiterated by Laguador, Velasquez & Forendo (2013) that teachers have to guide their students well. They must have patience and understanding for the learners who need to be nourished their management ability to survive more complex challenges in life.

According to Osei *et al.* (2015) [16], most graduates in the three programs, especially education, were employed in the public sector. The graduates considered the program's content necessary for their professional life. The findings showed that graduates increased their work performance

after their studies. The supervisors assessed graduates as very high in terms of metrics for job success, such as 'improved work skills' and 'team skills.' It is advised to use the findings/results of the study for the Institute of Distance Learning and the Department of Mathematics to revise their curricula to fulfill demands in the workplace.

This is supported by the study by Gines (2014) [7] that there are critical factors in the area of specialization and PNU reputation. There were considered for the instant acquisition of work, having given skills as well as expertise and technical skills, communication, human relationships, leadership, analysis, problem-solving, and other specialization skills. This being said, the valuable skills of the graduates were the skills in communication and critical thinking they acquired in school. Furthermore, human relationships, communication, and critical thinking are useful skills to hire most graduates. On the other hand, the main reasons why graduates are not working or are not employed are family problems, the reasons for health, no job opportunities, and a review of the licensing examination for teachers (Navida, 2017) [12].

Sagarino *et al.* (2017) [22, 23] revealed that 51.8 percent of graduates got into work within six months of completion,

the majority being teachers, therefore in an academy or workshop. 42% are now regular, and most have found their work with someone's recommendation. In particular, the curriculum and the ideals they have gained from the institution influence their UIC education. Besides, their employers admire their ability to work as a team, relational skills, adaptability to various circumstances, positive attitudes, and special and limited musical skills.

One study shows that BS Computer Engineering graduates' average job ratings between 2013 and 2015 are 84.6%. Information, troubleshooting, and communication skills are considered the most valuable skills they have gained at university. They regard qualities as work-related with outstanding contributions to their placements: perseverance, love of God, and hard work (Aguila, 2016)<sup>[2]</sup>.

In the same way, Humburg (2013)<sup>[10]</sup> revealed in his study that several studies showed a consistent set of desired attributes: communication skills, skills, and teamwork, problem-solving, analytical, critical, and reflective capacity, readiness to learn and to continue learning, flexibility, and adaptability, risk-taking, and self-skills. Universities provide extracurricular activities in their program of study and change their subjects by developing specialist modules. They recognize the skills best served by the future labor market.

Menes (2014) claimed that most Masters of Business Administration graduates of 2008-2012 are gainfully working locally with daily status and are holding technical and managerial roles. The MBA course helped to improve the professional development of the graduate. Honesty, respect for reality, perseverance, and hard work are all critical for your career and the technical skills of humanity and principles for love for God. Also crucial for their respective work are professional subjects, curricula, and instruction from LPU – MBA. This is similar to Refozar's (2017) study that for most BSBCM graduates, communication and human relationship skills are beneficial to fulfill their current work demands. Most BCM graduates were truthful, loving, and honest with reality, perseverance, leadership, Gospel love, and courageous contributions to their hard work.

Based on Cagasan's (2017) findings, a large majority (92 %) thought their degrees were significantly essential to their current employment. They found the top five skills in VSU functional included teaching (78%), communication (69%), critical thinking (63%), problem-solving (55%), and human relation skills (52%). The Graduate programs, according to seven criteria, were ranked high by the respondents: relevance of the program to professional requirements (4.65), teaching/learning environment (4.33), teacher-student relationship (4.31), quality of program delivery (4.29), range of courses offered (4.20), library, laboratory and other facilities (4.10), and work placement (4.07). On the other hand, one study argued that the majority of the respondents agreed that the graduates' competency and quality of education (including curriculum studies and teaching and learning) are the main factors affecting the problem of unemployment among graduates of technical (Hanapi, 2014)<sup>[8]</sup>.

According to the study of Oboza *et al.* (2017)<sup>[14]</sup>, the graduates figured that their skills in PSU were beneficial in their work today. They also deemed their communication, human relations, leadership, and problem-solving training entirely appropriate. The tracer analysis involves the other

initiatives to evaluate the overall success of the campus by way of its first group of graduates. Moreover, graduates found communication skills as one of their first helpful skills. The fundamental safety skills of the maritime transport curriculum are considered the number one very significant and essential skill (Orence & Laguador, 2013). Study programs have substantially contributed to graduates' personal and professional development, especially in people's skills, learner autonomy, values training, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and academic fields (Segismundo & Zacarias, 2017)<sup>[19]</sup>.

Rahmat (2012)<sup>[20]</sup> stated that four types of skills contribute to the employability rate, but only three have an essential connection with employability. These competencies are the ability to program, improve the framework, and develop competencies. The employability of graduates in the work market is negligible for entrepreneurship skills. By looking at the percentages (56.4 %) of working graduates within five months of their education, they have shown that their skills since their university studies have made them competitive in the labor market. This also demonstrates that graduate qualifications meet the criteria of the industry.

Another study examined that lack of employment was the primary reason for not working and never be employed. Most of the students said they could find a job related to their college course. The top three skills learned in school were communication skills, skills in human relationships, and know-how in information technology. The profile of respondents in the area of origin and their job status were significantly linked. They concluded that graduates were employable. UCLM graduates' employability was determined by their country of origin (Negro & Amparado, 2017)<sup>[13]</sup>.

For the same reason, graduates can find work relevant to their field of study within six months. Even though they take a review course immediately after graduation, it does not stop them from finding a job. It is becoming a great help in addressing the shortage of teachers required primarily in the Philippines and some abroad. Some of them want to upgrade, leading to employability and prospects for better jobs and higher salaries (Aclan *et al.*, 2018)<sup>[1]</sup>.

Lastly, a study of Ariyawansa, (2013)<sup>[4]</sup> argued that among some areas of science and social science, the unemployment issue is particularly important and some management students graduate each year. It can be observed that for private-sector graduates, there are booming jobs mainly for science, engineering, management, and trade graduates, but for social sciences and humanities graduates, there are fewer opportunities. Training and experience, particularly in the private sector, is a very demanded factors in the labor market. An important consideration is the competence of the English language. Additional skills such as IT skills, leadership abilities, analytical skills, teamwork, and interpersonal relations along with a degree are also highly demanded.

## Methodology

### Research Design

In this study, the researcher used the mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, which signifies collecting and analyzing qualitative data in two consecutive phases within one study. Such issues include deciding on the priority or weight given to the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in the study, the sequence of the

data collection and analysis, and the stage/stages in the research process at which the quantitative and qualitative data are connected, and the results are integrated (Ivankova *et al.*, 2006).

### Research Instrument

A questionnaire was patterned from the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) standardized form. The primary source of dissemination and processing of survey questionnaires was social media and email systems. The basis was the tracer study among graduates from the Academia Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED), the Bachelor of Secondary Education, and the Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship (BSE) of Davao de Oro State College New Bataan Branch. The researcher made a research questionnaire for individual interviews with the selected participants of this batch.

### Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the 164 graduates in the Academic Year 2013-2018; 48 students were from the Bachelor of Elementary Education, 19 students from Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in English, 13 were from the Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in Mathematics, 43 students from the Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in MAPEH and 41 students from Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship.

### Data Gathering Procedures

The registrar's office took lists of the graduates. Questionnaires were floated to the 141 respondents directly, while students with family and friends circulated other questions. Emails have been used on social media, including Facebook. The researcher seems to have reached some respondents with technology such as mobile phones and references.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

For the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, this study used descriptive statistics and quantitative methods such as frequency, percentage, mean, and rank. The researcher used qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a quantitative result.

### Results and Discussions

There were 164 graduates in the Academic Year 2017-2018. The total enumeration was considered in this study. However, there were 110 who responded. Twenty-eight (28) out of forty-eight (48) were from the Bachelor of Elementary Education, Nine out of 19 students from Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in English, ten (10) out of 13 from the Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in Mathematics, thirty-two (32) out of 43 students from the Bachelor of Secondary Education – Major in MAPEH and thirty-one (31) out of 41 students from Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship or 67.07 percent of the total population responded due to residence, the proximity of work or unavailability of time.

Regarding civil status, the single status surmounted the married level since most alumni would like to prioritize their careers to achieve their dreams. More alumni females were inclined to graduate from the institution, or data implies that females were more predominated than males in their batch. Most alumni have no participation in non-

academic activities; however, some are expelled from the other awards. The result implies that the institution should encourage more students, both academics and non-academics. Most of them are demotivated because of a lack of confidence in their ability, unappealing characteristics of the academic tasks, and finally, lack of value placed in the activities or tasks.

In terms of professional examinations passed, most alumni graduates are still working hard to get professional licenses. Some prioritized finding work, others felt underqualified because they lacked the skills listed in the employer's job advertisement. However, some also obtained a license or eligibility because they know that is one of the vital requirements in their professional development. Furthermore, it confers not just respect and dignity but also a competitive edge over those who do not pass.

This was evident when this IDI P2 shared her experience, *"After my review for LET, it cost me too much, and then I don't want to stay at home; that's why I grabbed the opportunity as GIP. It is not productive because it's not my field in the program I graduated from, which is education, and it's not connected. Now, I am here in DDOSC New Bataan (formerly CVSC). The LET result came out in December 2018, and I applied in January in DepEd. I tried there, but my name wasn't included in the results; that is why I rested for two months before I applied to DDOSC; by August 2019, I got hired as teaching personnel, and up until now, I'm still here in DDOSC."*

IDI P6 supported this and stated that

*"So far, after I graduated then, I took my Licensure Examination for Teachers; it just takes me one month to apply and then get my first job; then actually, my first job is still my job up to today, so it's already two years and three months. This is actually my first job after graduation, so maybe, with my experiences, I don't have any problem with my job application being a graduate of CVSC."*

Alumni preferred to work in a local rather than another workplace. The result implies that they are motivated to work locally because it presents many opportunities for training and career enhancement. Given a choice between slightly less pay and have a long commute that adds hours to their workday, some favor staying close to home. According to Osei *et al.* (2015) <sup>[16]</sup>, most graduates in the three programs were employed in the public sector, especially in education. The graduates considered the program's content necessary for their professional life. The findings showed that graduates increased their work performance after their studies. The supervisors assessed graduates as very high in terms of metrics for job success, such as 'improved work skills' and 'team skills. In terms of place of work, IDI-P1 shared his experiences,

*After I graduated from New Bataan, the opportunities were not enough, but I decided to work for the meantime in the municipality of New Bataan for three months. The salary is meager, so I tried to apply abroad, but I didn't pursue it. I am also thinking of going to the training center. But, regarding the experience of job opportunities, when I was here in Davao, there were many jobs that I am not qualified for since those job offers require skills that I don't have."*

IDI P4 - substantiated by saying;

*As experienced, it's okay, Ma'am, especially in my work right now, it's a big help because my program is connected since I'm now on the Committee on Sports and Development.*

**Table 1:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents in terms of the level of the job level position in their current job.

	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Rank or clerical	25	22.7	3
Professional, Technical, or Supervisory	26	23.6	2
Managerial or Executive	5	4.5	6
Self-employed	8	7.3	5
Others:	10	9	4
N/A	32	29.1	1
Total	110	100	

It is indicated in the table that most of the respondents have no job yet. However, some are working in professional, technical, and supervisory. The result implies that graduates need more professional skills because they can benefit in nearly all job positions, industries, and environments. Graduates can find work relevant to their field of study within six months of graduation. Even though they take a review course immediately after graduation, it does not stop them from finding a job. It is becoming a great help in addressing the shortage of teachers required primarily in the Philippines and some abroad. Some want to upgrade their employability and prospects for better jobs and higher salaries (Aclan *et al.*, 2018) <sup>[1]</sup>.

This was evident when IDI- P1 shared his insight. *After I graduated from New Bataan, the opportunities were not enough, but I decided to work for the meantime in the municipality of New Bataan for three months. The salary is meager, so I tried to apply abroad but didn't pursue it. I am also thinking of going to the training center. But, regarding the experience of job opportunities, when I was here in Davao, there were many jobs that I was not qualified for since those job offers require skills that I don't have."*

IDI P2 narrated;

*After my review for LET, it cost me too much, and then I don't want to stay at home; that's why I grabbed the opportunity as GIP. It is not productive because it's not my field in the program I graduated from, which is education, and it's not connected. Now, I am here in DDOSC New Bataan (formerly CVSC). The LET result came out in December 2018, and I applied in January in DepEd. I tried there, but my name wasn't included in the results; that is why I rested for two months before I applied to DDOSC; by August 2019, I got hired as a teaching personnel, and up until now, I'm still here in DDOSC.*

**Table 2:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents in terms of the level of the gross monthly earnings in their first job.

	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Below P 5,000.00	21	19.1	2
5,000.00 less than 10,000.00	46	41.8	1
10,000.00 to less than 15,000			
	8	7.3	4
15,000 to less than 20,000.00	10	9.1	3
20,000 to less than 25,000.00	2	1.8	5
25,000.00 and above	1	.9	6
Total	110	100	

In terms of the gross monthly earnings of the first job of the graduates, alumni are just receiving enough salary for their basic needs. It is seen in the table that item no.2 has the 2<sup>nd</sup>

highest means most of the respondents are not yet in stable or permanent work. Slaughter *et al.* (2006) state that employees report that pay is less important to them than it is compared with other aspects of a job due to socially desirable answers.

IDI –P7 shared his insights;

*I worked in SBB at Magangit Integrated School; then, I found ways to experience more that's why I asked for someone to help me, and that's why I volunteered there for two years. I don't have a salary, but sometimes, they will give us a P1000 allowance, but for me, Ma'am, that doesn't matter as long as I can gain experience because it's needed to apply to DepEd ranking. After two years, the Teacher In-charge in Cagan recommended me because they don't have a math teacher there. I went to Mayor and asked for help to be in LSB, and now, I am still here in Cagan as LSB. We have a monthly payment of P8 000. I didn't apply to any company because I want that my work is related to my course, which is teaching.*

In addition, IDI-P stated that;

*There are offers from private schools. There are hirings. I was trying to get into those hirings. Still, I didn't pursue it because I see it as difficult working as SK Chairperson; then, it's hard to manage if I will have my part-time teaching although I am on call in the barangay, but what if I have my duty of teaching? Then someone will call from the barangay, so I didn't go after it because it could be a conflict. Right now, I'm working in the church, but it's not proper employment, but it has a salary, Ma'am. It's like my part-time job, but it can never create a conflict because I'm staying here in the church, and I can ask permission anytime if I have meetings and seminars."*

**Table 3:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents in terms of the thoughts of alumni in pursuing advanced studies

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Rank
For promotion	10	9	3
For professional development	46	41.4	2
Others	2	1.8	4
N/A	60	54.1	1
Total	110	100%	

The table indicates that most respondents did not pursue advanced studies because they focused more on work or several commitments. However, some respondents wanted to pursue advanced studies because they wanted to enhance their industry field expertise and credibility in their field and become more competent and competitive in their chosen field. This being said, study programs have contributed significantly to graduates' personal and professional development, especially regarding people skills, learner autonomy, values training, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and academic fields (Segismundo & Zacarias, 2017) <sup>[19]</sup>.

This concept is linked to the response of IDI- P6 that said; *Well, my career goal, specifically, I wanted to be a teacher. So, in my professional growth as a teacher, I continue I subject myself to continue studying for my Master's degree, so I'm actually about to finish my Master's degree, and I think it helps me a lot when it comes to my professional growth because of course, my baccalaureate degree is*

*different from my Master’s degree. Of course, I could learn so many things in my Master’s degree that are not present in my baccalaureate degree, so maybe, at some point, it will add to my understanding more on my career. It adds more experiences to me that I could apply to my profession, and hopefully, I could finish my Master’s degree in June of 2022 and still would subject myself to enrolling for a post-graduate degree. Hopefully.*

In addition, IDI-P4 shared his thoughts;  
*I am confident enough to face people, face the youth, and handle them. It’s a big help because it boosted my confidence to face them, talk to them, and work for them. MAPEH is more of performance; that’s why I gained confidence.*

**Table 4:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents in terms of the Employment Status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Regular or Permanent	30	27.3	1.5
Temporary	19	17.3	4
Casual	4	3.6	5
Contractual	30	27.3	1.5
Self-employed	3	2.7	6
N/A	24	21.8	3
Total	110	100%	

**Table 5:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents concerning the reasons if not employed or never been employed

Reasons if not employed or never been employed	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Advance or further study	30	27.3	2.5
The family was concerned and decided not to find a job	19	17.3	5
Health-related reason (s)	4	3.6	7
Lack of work experience	30	27.3	2.5
No job opportunity	3	2.7	8
Did not look for a job	24	21.8	4
Other reason (s), please specify	5	4.5	6
Not applicable	79	71.2	1
Total	110	100%	

As seen in the table, the majority of the respondents are employed. However, some are not employed for reasons such as lack of work experience, advanced or further study, family concerns, the mismatch between company demands and labor abilities, and discriminatory hiring practices are all structural obstacles to employment.

In this case, IDI-P1 shared his insights;  
*As experienced, it’s okay, Ma’am, especially in my work right now, it’s a big help because my program is connected since I’m now on the Committee on Sports and Development.”*

This was also evident to IDI-P5 as he shared his experiences:  
*“I think there are many, but I only applied for two and then got hired. But, in BEED Program, I think we are very competitive in the aspect of education because we have LSB Program in ALS, so we can easily apply for our course as a volunteer, but they have an honorarium from the barangay. However, I didn’t pursue that because I was hired by GIP. After GIP, I got engaged in DDOSC (formerly CVSC). Regarding the present occupation, some alumni work as professional technicians or associate professionals. This was followed by clerks and officials of government and special-*

*Due to the lack of permanent opportunities in both public and private organizations, most respondents work on a contractual or temporary basis. This might also be attributed to the conclusion of a contract with one employer and the rapid turnover of human resources for various reasons. Some respondents are working as regular employees, with a consistent salary and working around 40 hours per week.*

This was evident when IDI-P1 shared his insights:  
*I tried working in an accounting firm somewhere in Lanang, Davao, for three months. There’s just a little conflict that’s why I find another opportunity, and I landed to call center, and now, I am working there for almost one year as a call center agent.”*

In addition, IDI-P6 stated that:  
*My employment situation regarding my tenure after graduation was subject to a contract of service. Since the minimum requirement of my job is to have a Master’s degree, I could not apply for the regular position, so it took me two years to apply for a regular position. Now I think I have the item with me. So luckily, I am one of the newly hired regular faculty. I started being regular today. Effective today.*

interest organizations, corporate executives, managers, managing proprietors, and supervisors. This demonstrated that alumni might operate in the human services field. Further education will offer doors to other practices as well as other resources. Thirty respondents answered that it was not applicable.

In line with this, IDI-P1 stated that:  
*“When I applied in the municipal hall after college, I asked someone who could be my backer for me to be employed. I’d waited for one month before I was employed. Mostly, my tasks are paper works, asking about clients’ concerns, for example, to those who will ask solicitations. Here in IQOR, I got employed because the company is in-demand of agents, and they have fewer qualifications required than someone who knows basic English. As of this time, I still have plans to go abroad. Also, I would like to venture into business.”*

In addition, IDI-P2 expressed that;  
*“I experienced being the beneficiary of DOLE under Government Internship Program (GIP). As a clerk, I was assigned to our barangay hall at San Roque, New Bataan. I released certifications to those who requested them, like barangay certifications and even cedula if our barangay*

treasurer isn't available, Ma'am. I also do minutes if there will be a request for a hearing. I find it too boring because there are times that if there's no request, the barangay hall is so quiet, and at that time, there are few opportunities to teach, and my sole purpose of working is to earn income. Also, I worked as a volunteer teacher in Andap Elementary School under the program Summer Big Brother. However, I can't call it official employment since I am just a volunteer for 15 days, but they gave us 150 pesos per day after the program."

**Table 6:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents in the level of alumni perception concerning the reasons for accepting a job.

Reasons for accepting a job	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Salaries and Benefits	49	44.5	1
Career Challenge	15	13.6	4
Related to Special Skills	7	6.4	5
Proximity to residence	5	4.5	6
For experiences	1	.9	7.5
Recommended by someone	40	36.4	2
Response to an advertisement	1	.9	7.5
N/A	24	21.8	3
Total	110	100	

The table shows that in terms of the reasons for accepting the job, the respondents desire to accept the job because of the salary and benefits. Being offered a salary and benefits allows them to meet their basic needs and enhance their living quality. This was followed by recommending someone and a career challenge.

One study revealed that the top reason for the respondents to stay in the job, to accept the job even if they feel that the job is not related to the course completed in college, and to change job is salaries and benefits. They also mentioned career challenges and the relatedness of the job to special skills (Ayala et al., 2016).

In this case, IDI-P5 pointed out that:

"I see that instructors are not enough for MAPEH, especially when we in our time as a pioneering graduate of the institution, I can say that we are having difficulties in finding a job or landing any job primarily because, of course, the institution is young and our name is not that popular in the field of employment, so there are experiences wherein we were asked...what is CVSC? Where is it located? But in my experience, I am fortunate because it took me just two months to find a job since I was able to be employed in GIP assigned at Public Employment Office at our municipal hall in New Bataan and then after that, here in DDOSC (formerly CVSC)."

Also, IDI-P7 stressed that:

"I'm proud as a pioneering graduate of CVSC, and I experienced hard because I carry the name of CVSC and in the security of tenure, it affects and gives me pressure. I was confused and didn't know how to start landing a job because I didn't have experience and it's part of the life of a teacher in the battle of teaching, and I need work. I need to work related to my course because I don't want my time to be wasted. Even if it's hard, I'm still fighting, so I decided to volunteer in SBB (Summer Big Brother), and after that, I applied to LSB (Local School Board) to gain experience and learning."

**Table 7:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents concerning the time spent staying in a job.

Time spent staying in a job.	Frequency	Percent	Rank
1 to 6 months	33	30.0	2
One year to less than two years	9	8.2	3
Two years to less than three years	5	4.5	6
Three years to less than four years	2	1.8	7
7 to 11 months	6	5.5	5
Less than a month	47	42.7	1
N/A	8	7.3	4

Regarding the time spent staying a job, the majority stayed in their job for less than a month. Most do not have enough time to learn skills and build their qualifications. This was followed by 1 to 6 months and one year to less than three years, wherein the respondents were satisfied with their job and loved the environment.

This scenario is linked to the responses of IDI-P3 when we asked her about the employment opportunities he had encountered after graduating from the course program; she pointed out that

"Since I graduated as an education student, not only private schools offered me a job but also the Local Government Unit in New Bataan. I was also hired as a teacher in one of the private schools. Also, I was employed in DDOSC (formerly CVSC) for three months. But now, I am in LGU, at MCR."

Furthermore, IDI-P6 stated also that

"So far, after I graduated then, I took my Licensure Examination for Teachers. It just takes me one month to apply and then get my first job. Then, actually, my first job is still my job up to today, so it's already two years and three months. This is my first job after graduation, so maybe, with my experiences, I don't have any problem with my job application being a graduate of CVSC."

**Table 8:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents concerning getting their first job.

Getting their 1 <sup>st</sup> job	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Arranged by the school's job placement officer	1	.9	5.5
As a walk-in applicant	43	39.1	1
Family business	1	.9	5.5
Information from friends	10	9.1	3
Job fair of Public Employment Service Office	5	4.5	4
N/A	9	8.2	2
Total	110	100.00	

It is indicated in the table that in terms of getting their first job, the respondents exerted their effort as walk-in applicants. This was followed by information from friends. School job placement and family business were the least to assist them in finding a job.

In this concept, IDI-P6 expressed his thought that:

"After graduation, I actually applied for a call center job, and then I got the job offer, but sadly, I was not able to sign the job offer because I thought I was not that fit in the call center job, although I got the job, I was being hired. I actually called for a session to sign the contract, but I didn't sign the job offer because I think it's not relevant to my

profession being a graduate of teacher education, so right after that, right after my application for the job in the call center, I just pause for I think, four months and wait for my review at December to March, I subject myself to the review center and then pause in April and May and then June, I got passed the licensure examination, and then in July, I apply in CVSC and at August 1, 2019, I was employed in CVSC as an instructor as the contract of service.

**Table 9:** Frequency, Percentage, and Rank Distribution of the Respondents concerning competencies learned in their first job

Competencies learned in their first job	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Communication skills	75	65.3	1
Human Relations skills	8	7.3	2
Entrepreneurial skills	0	0	6
Problem-solving skills	4	3.6	3.5
Critical Thinking skills	4	3.6	3.5
N/A	4	3.6	5
Total	110	100.00	

It is indicated in the table that in terms of competencies learned in their first job, their agency/workplace has developed alumni' communication skills ranked first with a percentage of 65.3 %. This was followed by human relations skills.

Humburg (2013) <sup>[10]</sup> revealed in his study that several studies showed a consistent set of desired attributes: communication skills, skills and teamwork, problem-solving, analytical, critical, and reflective capacity, readiness to learn and to continue learning, flexibility, adaptability, risk-taking, and self-skills. This finding is parallel to the claim of Martin (2014) "that communicative competence can greatly help new graduates to develop their potential, both socially and occupationally. His study further suggests that "the importance of communicative competencies should be included in the new educational context to enhance the employability and productive force of future graduates" (Martin, 2014).

In connection with this, IDI-P6 expressed that *"In my present work, I could say that the training ground of CVSC in the education department is bombarded with lots of demonstrations, wherein those experiences would help us in the actual job or actual scenario. Our classroom training applies to our course. Communication skills are also fundamental which is very basic because we need to communicate. Coordination with other individuals for us to have good communication with those who surround us.*

This was evident also to IDI-P1 as he expressed that, *"Communication skills are required in talking to customers, in promoting your products. Another one is computer skills. I can't forget Ma'am Rosello teaching us formulas in excel."*

In addition, IDI-P6 also added that; *Hmmm. Maybe, I can consider the core values of the CVSC, which are integrity, solidarity, and the spirit of volunteerism. Maybe, I learned these things in CVSC. I never learned this one outside of the institution, and I believe this is one of the reasons why CVSC is now growing because it instills the culture of being excellent by having those core values, and I believe I applied these core values*

*after graduation in my job, so I still have with me the spirit of volunteerism, being...having that integrity in work set-up. So, I believe those are the things that I have learned from the institution, and I applied them in my current setting in my workplace.*

**Table 10:** The extent of the contribution of the program to the personal and professional growth of Alumni.

The contribution of the program in their study to their personal and professional growth.	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
Enhanced academic Profession	3.46	Very highly	5
Improved problem-solving skill	3.36	Very highly	8
Improved research skills	3.23	Very highly	10
Improved learning efficacy	3.45	Very highly	6
Improved communication/interpersonal skills	3.52	Very highly	1
Improved information technology skills	3.31	Very highly	10
Enhanced team spirit/people skill	3.47	Very highly	3.5
Meeting present and future Professional skills	3.41	Very highly	7
Exposure to the local community within the field of specialization	3.47	Very highly	3.5
Exposure to the International Community within the field of Specialization	3.13	Very highly	12
Critical Thinking Skill	3.32	Very highly	9
Salary Improvement and Promotion	3.19	Very highly	11
Opportunity Abroad	2.88	Highly	13
Personality Development	3.48	Very highly	2
Average Weighted Mean	3.33	Very highly	

The overall mean for the contribution of the program in their study to their personal and professional growth is 3.3, which means very highly. Data reveal that item no. one has the highest mean of 3.51. It implies that graduates observed that the programs of the institution encouraged them to improve communication/interpersonal skills. Next is personality development, with a weighted mean of 3.48 with a descriptive equivalent of very highly. Two items obtained 3.47, enhanced team spirit/people skills and exposure to the local community within the field of specialization. In contrast to the criteria, the opportunity abroad ranked as the least among them with a mean of 2.88, with a descriptive equivalent of highly.

This concept is linked to the response to IDI-P2 as she stressed that: *"Being dynamic and having the work under pressure is what I've learned in my college life. Also, the communication skills, Ma'am, can be applied through job interviews and communicating with the students. Here, the language is very applicable because it builds rapport to them that cannot be disregarded."*

In addition, IDI-P7 argued that *My professional education contributed to my career goals because knowledge, skills, and values I applied to my career goals.* Furthermore, in terms of exposure to the local community within the field of specialization, IDI-P4 expressed his thought;

*"I am confident enough to face people, in facing the youth, and to handle. It's a big help because it boosted my confidence to face them, talk to them, and work for them. MAPEH is more of performance; that's why I gained confidence."*

It is indicated in Table 21 that the overall mean is 3.3, which is very high. From the table, it can be seen that the teaching and learning environment has the highest weighted mean of 3.53 which is very highly. It implies that the program of the institution provides a teaching and learning environment that not only prepares the learners for a job but also improves the overall personality of an individual. Data revealed that the range of subject matter ranked second with a weighted mean of 3.46. This was followed by the extracurricular activities with a weighted mean of 3.45, descriptive equivalent to very highly. Last in rank was a laboratory resource with a weighted mean of 2.80 and descriptive equivalent as highly.

This chapter also presents the results of the research questions that reveal/ explore the experiences of selected alumni. We used purposive sampling to ascertain the participants. Purposive sampling is a technique that relies on the judgment of the researcher when choosing who to ask to participate. Researchers may implicitly thus select a representative sample to suit their needs or specifically approach individuals with certain characteristics. Finding the right people at the right time is crucial in collecting data that is usable, viable, and valuable (The Academic Triangle, 2017).

This was evident in the response of IDI-P7 as we asked him about the recommendations and suggestions, he could offer for the course program enhancement and curriculum development; he stressed that;

*Given that society is now very gender-sensitive, I believe those times; need to incorporate gender and development into their courses, even though I'm taking a professional education course. Maybe, we can contextualize the lessons in professional education to make more to make it more gender-sensitive. For example, if you're giving examples or making a lesson plan, we can incorporate gender and development. From there, it would change the approach of the teacher. It would make the teaching and learning experiences more child-centered and gender-sensitive. It wasn't that implemented yet; although it started, it wasn't that established yet, so I think we need to focus on that, and I think it would matter to the teacher itself how to teach the student more gender-sensitive. The facilities, to be honest, it was not that good. We don't have self-owned buildings at that time, or we have the buildings when we are about to graduate already. So, we lack facilities; we lack equipment, especially in laboratory courses. So, we lack experiences having those somehow physical experiences when it comes to laboratory assignments or activities. So, it's very vague for us students enrolled in the laboratory courses such as in science, specifically in Chemistry and Physics, so it's very ambiguous for us to learn such things through pictures only. So, maybe we can improve the facilities and have the equipment necessary for teaching and learning for the students. I believe this is not just a problem in teacher education; the other department could also benefit from this. Another problem with the facilities is maybe we lack classrooms given that we are growing. I don't have any issues with the administration since I experienced it now as a teacher. I experienced it in both worlds. Maybe, on the*

*instruction. Possibly, we can subject our teachers to more personal and professional development, such as providing them with webinars and workshops on how to teach students because I believe teachers in CVSC are well-equipped. Still, if we reinforce it, I think it would be better. I started schooling at CVSC in 2014, and honestly, we don't have an adequate number of faculty to teach lessons. Most likely, our faculty are handling three to four subjects in one section, so the problem there is somehow, I could consider it as there's no learning. Maybe, there is but very shallow because, of course, in every subject, we need to consider the field of expertise of our teachers and the specialization. It's not just about who is an available teacher; they will teach the subject. They should also consider the teacher's field of expertise, so, at that time, we lack teachers and teachers that are experts, especially in my major. I remember only one teacher who graduated with a Bachelor of Elementary Education, my major, handling us. I believe that is a problem because we need to learn from those who are experts in our courses, not from the different departments or whatsoever. Also, for the institution, if they permit, maybe they could hire or request more plantilla items for teachers under a contract of service and already...ahmm.. it's already in the requirement. The change of faculty per would affect the student, especially in terms of adjustment. Still, if we have this regular plantilla, we can consider that our teachers would stay, and there would be no adjustments regarding teacher-student relations.*

IDI-P1 also expressed his insights that;

*In our time, we were not focused on the business plan, and we were not exposed to the business industry. Our mindset is to go to school for compliance. Maybe, I suggest having activities that will let students realize how important business is, especially the business plan. Our instructors are competent, and they have their ways of handling us. It's just that equipment and books are not enough. I will also add the facilities before. We only have one comfort room, and it's tough for us. Then, the classrooms are inadequate."*

In addition, IPI-7 pointed out that

*During our time, it lacks laboratories and other things needed for us to learn, especially the library; it's not complete, as well as the laboratories. It needs improvement."*

Moreover, IDI-P5 argued that;

*My suggestion in the curriculum development is to describe your vision, focus objectives on students' records and develop methods and processes. My recommendation for the course program is to increase student engagement, build a connection with the students and motivate your students. In our time, there are no laboratories. When we graduated, that was when they made laboratories and also ICT. There are so many lacking, and it affects learning; for example, in Science, during laboratory time, there are no things to use. That is why students can't experience those because materials are inadequate."*

### **Concluding Remarks**

College graduates must achieve the working environment with the skills needed most to succeed and expand their career paths. This tracer study explored the educational

aspirations and the graduates' careers and ensured they were employable.

Based on the study findings, it can be concluded that most of the respondents are single and female and have no participation in non-academic activities; however, some stand out from the other awards. Most of the alumni graduates are still working hard to get professional licenses. Some prioritized finding work, while others felt underqualified because they lacked the employer's job advertisement skills. The result implies that they are motivated to work locally because it presents many opportunities for training and career enhancement.

The study reveals that the alumni preferred to work their 1st job related to their course because of the salaries and benefits, career challenges, and special skills. The graduates need more professional skills because they can benefit from nearly all job positions, industries, and work environments. They are just receiving enough salary for their basic needs. They have chosen their course because of the availability of the course offered in the institution. They chose their course because of their intense passion for the profession. Most respondents did not pursue advanced studies because they focused more on work or severe financial commitment. Due to the lack of permanent opportunities in public and private organizations, most respondents work on a contractual or temporary basis.

### Recommendations

From the findings, the researchers have come up with the following recommendations:

The institution should provide more facilities, resources, and school equipment to benefit the whole learning process and the holistic development of the learners.

The institution should provide the teachers with more personal and professional development, such as webinars, training, and workshops for better instructions.

The institution should hire more faculty and provide more plantilla items for teachers with highly competitive and diverse qualifications. These teachers are needed in the workplace for better education. It must be sustained by both Teaching Education Department and Entrepreneurship Department.

The institution should provide an alumni office and placement office for job fairs and post an announcement like job opportunities/ hiring from other agencies for Alumni and graduating students.

The institution's curriculum must be reviewed and updated to fulfill their recent grads' required skills and competencies.

Another graduate tracer research is needed to give more helpful information for analyzing graduates' whereabouts and progress/performance in the job.

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