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# TRACER STUDY ON THE BACHELOR OF SECONDARY EDUCATION GRADUATES OF THE COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION BENGUET STATE UNIVERSITY

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## ABSTRACT

*This normative descriptive study has the overall goal of ascertaining basic information about graduates of the Bachelor in Secondary Education program of the College of Teacher Education, Benguet State University. Through survey technique using a constructed questionnaire and interview guide, seven hundred and fifty eight graduates of said program were traced. These are graduates from as early as 1993 to the graduates of 2007. The supervising instructors of the Department of Secondary Education and members of the faculty assisted in the collection of data with the help of their students.*

*Among those traced, 706 are employed which can either be in the form of self-employment, underemployment or appropriate employment. Almost 7% are not employed. The government is the primary agency where they are employed and the private sector absorbed about 32% of them. Of those employed, 89% are teaching mostly in the secondary level, while some find themselves teaching in the pre-school, elementary, tertiary, and even graduate school levels. Seven% of those who teach cannot be ascertained as to the level they teach because they are tutors. On the other hand, 10.90% are employed but not in the field of teaching; they are usually in the private sector as sales clerks, office assistants, food service crew or they are in the government but as police officers, civilian employees while some are in politics.*

*Sixty seven per cent of those traced reported that they were employed after they have successfully passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) and almost a quarter of the respondents found themselves with a job immediately after graduation, usually in the private sector and almost 9 per cent cannot be determined because they have left for employment overseas.*

*In conclusion, the BSE graduates find their niche in the society as evidenced by the high rate of employment and more so that they are teaching in the level where they have been prepared best to teach.*



## INTRODUCTION

The Philippines as a developing country is faced with one major socio-economic concern- the problem of unemployment. Partly to be blamed for this condition is the educational system. It has not been producing graduates that matches the labor or manpower needs of the country. This condition leaves a critical mass of unemployed not to over-emphasize the growing rate of underemployed.

A critical analysis of the situation reveals that education falls short of its function and role in preparing and training its clientele on their vocational and career development skills and competencies and, eventually their future employment.

As a panacea to this situation, the government on one hand has promulgated employment policies such as opening opportunities for overseas employment hence the exodus of graduates and even professionals to the foreign countries for employment. On the other hand, government has mandated public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to justify the usefulness of their programs, their funding, as well as their entire extent of effectiveness in producing employable graduates.

HEIs have the accountability to measure their performance particularly in the marketability of the graduates and valuation of more or less strategic action by their organized programs/units. The appraisal of the processes and effectiveness of programs among HEIs as well as graduates survey via a tracer study is in order.

BSU as one of the Regional Agricultural University (RAU) and premier state university in the Cordillera recognizes this major concern and its role in human resource development in this part of the country. The question is: " Has BSU been contributing to the problem of unemployment? Or has it alleviated the national employment situation?" To answer this question purposively, there needs to be a study such as a graduates survey as to what is the status of employment of BSU Graduates. Hence, the College of Teacher Education as one of the University's largest college in terms of student population and number of graduates produced every year proactively mandates itself to conduct this tracer study.

With the foregoing premises, the intent to conduct a tracer study may bring about some questions and considerations for subsequent affirmative action offering help to improve the College of Teacher Education's direction for an enriched instruction, curriculum and processes to

wit: *Which of the qualification required in the academic studies did they use for their employment/job? Which field of study do they consider to be especially useful? For which professional tasks were they appropriately prepared at the college and to which area of responsibility they state a lack of qualification?* On the whole, it has to be emphasized that the graduates are able to assess through the tracer study the correspondence between knowledge acquired and the professional work and success.

In general, tracer studies and surveys of graduates from institutions of higher education are often seen as important tools of institutional development especially when the world of work is changing rapidly. With this method, higher education institutions can get feedback from their graduates like in knowing their employment status and successes, their working conditions and their retrospective assessment of their course of study, and other important information that stimulate the curricular enrichment.

In particular therefore, this tracer study of the College of Teacher Education assesses the employment status of its BSE graduates with the end view of looking on labor market issues, in-depth view on the characteristics of work, related competencies and an evaluation of work conditions. Findings will serve as springboard for broadening perspectives among CTE administrators, teachers and other stakeholders on possible plans and actions for change related to its preparatory tasks to include among others enriched instruction.

## **Objectives**

This research undertaking intends to trace the graduates of the Bachelor in Secondary Education curriculum of the College of Teacher Education since it has graduated its first batch in 1993. Overall, it intends to ascertain the state employment /non-employment of BSE graduates. More specifically, the study aims to :

1. Identify the nature of employment or non-employment of the graduates;
2. Find out the agency where they are employed;
3. Know the nature of their job;
4. Determine the time of employment in reference to graduation date and passing the LET; and,



5. Find out levels that they teach.

### **Expected Output**

This undertaking has the overarching goal of establishing a baseline data of the whereabouts of BSE graduates of the College of Teacher Education.

Data will give information to the College of Teacher Education as well as to the Benguet State University on the employability of its graduates, that is, if they are properly placed or employed and with what agency. It will inform the college the levels the graduates are teaching and for those who are not teaching, what jobs they are in.

Information derived from this study will likewise have implications on how far the college is able to attain its goals and objectives.

Finally, since the Benguet State University is a government subsidized higher learning institution, it will determine if the funding is worthwhile for the graduates are able to serve back the society in general.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study is a normative descriptive research that uses a survey to meet its goal: trace the placement of its graduates in society.

A simple questionnaire that will generate the data needed was prepared by the faculty researchers. The items were in congruence with the objectives of the study. Because the questionnaire was simple and short, it also served as an interview guide by the researchers and student enumerators.

Data were collected through different techniques. One was through the prepared questionnaire administered to the graduates themselves. Another technique was through an informal interview in order to get the data needed. The graduates were interviewed where they are met by the researchers or persons who have personal knowledge on the employment status of the graduates like their relatives, friends, classmates and neighbors were interviewed. Phone calls and text messaging were the other means of reaching the graduates. Finally, the students enrolled in the College were asked to write the names and employment status of graduates whom they know personally by providing the information spelled out in the questionnaire/interview guide.



Data were organized and tabulated after the names of those traced were checked against the master list of BSE graduates.

### Statistical Treatment

Descriptive statistics like frequency counts, computation of percentages, simple ranking, tabular and graphical presentations are predominantly used in analyzing the collected data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The salient findings of the study are presented in this section.

### Nature of Employment BSE Graduates

A total of seven hundred fifty eight graduates of the BSE program were traced. It includes among the first graduates in 1993 to the graduates of 2007. Table 1 presents the placement of BSE graduates.

**Table 1.** Nature of employment of BSE graduates

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT	f	%
Employed	629	82.98
Self-employed	12	1.53
Underemployed	65	8.75
Unemployed	52	6.86
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>99.99</b>

Graduates who are employed according to their pre-service training comprise the greatest percentage. They are teaching either in the private or public schools mostly in the Cordillera provinces namely Benguet, Mt. Province, Ifugao, Abra, or in the City of Baguio. This is in line with the program of the Department of Education and the government on localization. Some are employed in La Union, Pangasinan, Cavite, Bicol Region, Metro Manila, and even as far as Mindanao.

There are 8.75% of graduates who are underemployed – meaning they are employed but not along the field of teaching. They are usually in department stores in La Trinidad or Baguio City like SM, Tiong San Bazar, fastfood chains like McDonald, Jollibee, or in restaurants. Some are in the sales of cosmetic products or educational or household items. The underemployed also include the police officers, clerks in private or government offices, the domestic helpers or missionaries, cashiers,



school registrar, including a few who were elected to the government offices in their respective hometowns.

Some of the graduates are self-employed. They are those who are managing family stores, are into farming and some run their own small scale businesses.

Of those traced, 6.86% are not employed. They are usually the females who got married and are caring for their children. Some say they had not been lucky to find job, some did not pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) and are still reviewing in preparation for the next scheduled examination. One or two admitted they did not want to be employed. A few are enrolled in another course like Bachelor of Laws, nursing aide or taking up units in the Elementary Education program.

Overall, 706 or 93% of the 758 traced are in a way earning a living, they are either properly placed, under-employed or self-employed.

The findings show that the BSE program of the College of Teacher Education is holistic and market-driven. The training is flexible as graduates may still find employment in other areas besides teaching. It implies further that they have developed in themselves the characteristics and qualities of an individual who are aggressive and flexible in seeking employment. Some remarks from employers and principals, claim that BSU graduates have shown willingness to do tasks not even directly related to their job and are humble to start with low paying jobs.

### **Employers of the BSE Graduates**

Table 2 presents the agencies where the BSE graduates were able to seek employment.

Educational institutions, specifically the Department of Education as well as the state colleges and universities are the primary employers of the BSE graduates. Most of these schools are in Benguet, Baguio City and other provinces of the Cordillera Administrative Region. Some are employed in the same institutions in La Union, Pangasinan, Nueva Vizcaya and Isabela where the students hail. A handful of graduates find themselves employed in government offices as clerks, in the police force, as local politicians, and in the Red Cross.

The 67.84% employment in the government sector points that the Philippine government has the capability of providing funds for the salary of teachers and work force. The hiring of teachers is an off-shoot

of its campaign to provide basic education to the young citizens.

The findings imply that as a state institution, the Benguet State University, particularly, the College of Teacher Education is geared towards training professionals who will serve back the government. Further, graduates may consider better job security and tenure in the public sector than in the private, thus the greater number of seeking employment in this sector.

**Table 2.** Employer of BSE graduates

EMPLOYER	f	%
Government	479	67.84
Private	227	32.15
<b>TOTAL</b>	706	99.99

On the other hand, the private sector also provides good employment opportunity for the graduates. Mainly, these are pre-school, elementary or secondary schools and tutorial centers. Some of the graduates also find themselves in department stores, fast food chains or in sales of products. Usually, those who find employment in non-school agencies are awaiting for the results of the LET and are making use of their time by being employed.

The good employment percentage in the private sector shows a complementary relationship of the two lines of agencies. It is a fact that more school-going children enter the public schools than the private ones considering the socio-economic condition in the country.

### **Nature of Job of BSE Graduates**

This study was further in knowing what kind of work the BSE graduates render- whether they are applying what they were trained for or otherwise. Table 3 shows the results of data gathered.

It is shown in the table that a very large percentage of the graduates are directly practicing what they have been trained for. This indicates that they are well prepared for the job and that they are well motivated to pursue their desire to earn a living through the "noblest profession". It implies also that the graduates are enjoying a high morale, are happy and satisfied that they perform tasks that they were prepared for.



**Table 3.** Nature of job of BSE graduates

NATURE OF JOB	f	%
Teaching	629	89.09
Non-teaching	77	10.90
<b>TOTAL</b>	706	99.99

Almost 11% of them are not properly employed. These may be the graduates who are awaiting teaching opportunities while the LET result has not been released at the time of the survey, or they are those in the Philippine National Police (PNP), or working with the politicians as well as the entrepreneurs. Nonetheless, these graduates are gainfully employed and are earning for themselves or their families hence are productive.

Considering that almost 11% of the graduates are not appropriately employed, several implications are raised. One is, while the graduates are assertive in finding employment, it may indicate that somehow education has not been their primary choice when they enrolled in college. Based on interviews, students say the course was their parents' choice, or it was one that would enable them to have a college degree but their motivation and interest is in another course, so that after graduation, they find employment in their first choice. Secondly, it tells the college to review its admission and retention policies and practices so that those who are intent to become teachers are taken and not to give the slots to academically qualified but uninterested and somehow forced-to take the course.

### Time of Employment

This research aimed to find out when were the employed 706 graduated hired. Table 4 presents the data.

A great majority of the BSE graduates were able to get their job after they passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers. This shows that the employers in the government and private sectors are strictly observing the government policy on hiring teachers who are qualified by virtue of the teachers' passing the board examination. This is a good measure to check that only those who are competent would teach the young and that quality instruction is assured to be provided to them.

Those who find employment after graduation may not be necessarily in the teaching job. As mentioned earlier, they may be self employed, or they may be working as salesclerks, sales representatives,

food crew or insurance agents. Those who are employed as teachers may be tutors hired in private agencies.

**Table 4.** Period of employment

PERIOD	f	%
After graduation	168	23.80
After passing the LET	475	67.28
Undetermined	63	8.92
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>100</b>

About 9% of those traced are categorized under *undetermined* for these are the BSE graduates who went overseas as domestic helpers, or English teachers in Hongkong, Korea, Thailand, Japan, Greece, China or as missionary worker in Cambodia.

For those who were employed after graduation but categorized as undetermined, shows that BSE graduates are indeed employable. It shows they are aggressive in searching for jobs and have a strong will to be productive. It also points that there are jobs available for those who are decided. Further, it shows that with a course in education, one can find employment in other helping and service –oriented careers.

### Levels Taught by the BSE Graduates

This study was also interested to know what levels the BSE graduates teach. Table 5 shows the findings.

**Table 5.** Levels taught by BSE graduates

LEVELS	f	%
Pre-school	6	0.95
Elementary	23	3.66
Secondary	541	86.00
Tertiary	15	2.38
Graduate School	1	0.16
Undetermined	43	6.84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>100</b>

The data shows that a great percentage of the BSE graduates are teaching in the secondary level which is most appropriate for their pre-service training. The traced graduates teach in the varied fields of specialization like Filipino, English, Mathematics, Physics, PEHMA,



Values Education, Biology and Social Studies. This points that they are practicing their profession as they were trained to do.

Almost 7% are also teaching however, the level they teach can not be determined. They are usually the tutors for foreign students mostly Koreans. The Korean students are either elementary, high school or college students in Korea who came to Baguio to learn the English language. It should be made clear that those who tutor these Korean nationals are not necessarily graduates with specialization in English. This implies that the BSE graduates are capable of teaching English as tutors.

On the other hand, the remaining 7% who teach are either in the pre-school, elementary, or college. Only one is teaching in the graduate school level. For those who teach in the pre-school and elementary, these graduates were hired by their employers after some screening measures and a demonstration teaching. It implies that the graduates are flexible to teach even in the lower levels.

For those who are teaching in the college level, they teach the basic courses like basic Mathematics, Physics, Communication Arts in English or Filipino. These are also the graduates who are almost finished or have finished their master's degrees hence they are qualified to teach in the tertiary level. For those who graduated in their master's degree, they are teaching the major courses like PEHMA, Physics, Languages.

The findings imply that the BSU College of Teacher Education has made a name in the community and in the region as to the competencies and qualities of its graduates. It also shows the flexibility of graduates in teaching.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Majority of the graduates are gainfully employed practicing their teaching profession. The employment absorption rate of BSE graduates is reassuring and encouraging. This indicates that the BSU-CTE is market-driven. The caliber and quality of BSE graduates are in demand. On the other hand, other graduates are underemployed and some are self-employed. This reflects that they are able to apply acquired entrepreneurial skills and competencies learned in college judiciously by engaging in income generating projects geared towards self-reliance and resource management. Finally, some have remained unemployed for unknown reasons. It is inferred that these group of graduates have pursued the calling for volunteer work or have opted to pursue higher and advanced professional studies or chose to pursue religious or single-blessed life vocations.

2. From among those who have been employed, majority of them have chose to serve in public high schools than in the private institutions. This is reflective of the CTE goal. The CTE-BSE graduates are sale-able. They are **committed to serve** in public high schools.
3. Among those graduates who are successfully employed, majority are practicing their profession; the rest are into non-teaching jobs. This condition reflects the adaptability of BSE Graduates to the world of work. Furthermore, it shows that they are not selective; they are rather enterprising without sacrificing the essence of their profession. After- all they have been prepared to care, touch, and empower lives in what ever workplace they are in.
4. CTE-BSE Graduates are versatile. They are globally competent. Their present employment status reveals that it is congruent to what they have been prepared (BSE) for in terms of levels (Secondary level) entered into.

In recognition of their competence in the English language, some of the graduates are absorbed preferentially in some undetermined careers in teaching presumably as tutors of English Language to Koreans, Chinese etc., tutors in tutorial/remedial institutions, some are absorbed in the primary or tertiary level in recognition of their enrichment training and advanced educational qualifications as the case maybe.

Apparently, the abovementioned characteristics of the graduates is indicative of the attainment of the objective of the College among others that is, to provide quality education which emphasizes the development of relevant professional, pedagogical and technical knowledge, skills, competencies and values for good citizenship and the society in general.

5. Graduates are quality tested products. They are assured employment or absorbed on the basis of passing the LET among others. Their brand as graduates of BSU-CTE program enhanced their chances of being hired.

Based from the findings and conclusions the following are hereby recommended:

1. For the BSU-CTE to target a zero-unemployment rate for its graduates. An aggressive market-driven and career oriented curriculum



- should be crafted or introduced to increase employment of its graduates. Further, students have to be trained to be more resilient and capable for entrepreneurship and self-management.
2. To enhance the curriculum in order that it can respond to the mandated qualifications and standards of the education profession. Anent to this, the training along information and technology courses have to be given great emphasis.
  3. For the BSU Placement Office to establish partnership with public and private schools in coordination with Department of Education (Dep-Ed) as potential employers of BSU BSE graduates.
  4. For the CTE administration, faculty and students to be persistent in their efforts towards a very high success rate in the for Licensure Examination. Related to this, a more stringent admission and retention policies have to be adopted and strictly implemented.
  5. For the BSE curriculum to be more responsive to learners of diverse background. The curriculum need to be enriched with courses related to teaching strategies and techniques

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