

Tracer Study of the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) Graduates from 2008-2012

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Abstract - This study was done in order to find out whether there are also mismatch, underemployment and promotion issues among graduates in Masters in business program of the university. More specifically, it determined the employment status of the graduate after pursuing MBA program in Lyceum University from 2008 – 2012, which include the university customized MBA program. It also determined the school-related and work-related factors that affect the graduate's employability and promotion and further assess the extent by which work values and skills provided by LPU contribute to the graduate's employability and promotion. Descriptive research design was used to trace graduate's employability and employment status of Master in Business Administration in Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas. Results showed that 96 percent of the Masters in Business Administration graduates from 2008-2012 are gainfully employed locally with regular status and are holding professional and managerial positions. The MBA course has contributed to the graduate's professional advancement. Communication, human and technical skills and the values of Love of God, honesty, love for truth and perseverance and hardwork are very relevant to their job. The professional subjects, curriculum and instruction gained from LPU –MBA are likewise found very relevant to their respective work.

Keywords: Business Administration, Employment, Graduates

I. INTRODUCTION

Recognizing the reality in today's academic world, the role of higher education institutions can not only be limited to impart knowledge, but also to contribute to maintain a competitive economy and most important of all, to secure the dream of graduates to get jobs and become socially recognized and successful in their respective field of endeavors. On the other hand, one of the major factors for underemployment and the difficulty in finding jobs is the inability of graduates to meet the necessary skills and competencies required by the industry.

According to the National Statistics Office, the unemployment rate in April 2012 is at 6.9 percent or 2.803 million while the underemployment rate is at 19.3 percent (7.312 million). In its April 2012 Labor Force Survey, the NSO revealed that more than half or 51.7 percent of the unemployed were in the age group of 15-24. Of this number, 32.8 percent are high school graduates, 13.8 percent are college undergraduates, and 21.0 percent are college graduates. With this data on hand, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has been closely working with industry stakeholders to address the job mismatch. Industry representatives are being

involved in the development of curricula and standards, on-the-job-training programs, apprenticeships, faculty immersion, assessment-based talent development and other activities.

In a bid to address this growing job mismatch in the country, CHED, in collaboration with the universities all over the Philippines mandated to conduct Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) to determine the employability of graduates based on their respective disciplines. Through the study, CHED hopes to assess the issues concerning employability and the relevance of higher education programs vis-a-vis expectations of the employers. It will use the results of the study to monitor the quality of programs offered in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); provide incentives to institutions; prioritize or de-prioritize courses; determine the basis for allocating scholarships; and investigate whether 21st century skills are properly and adequately taught to college students.

It is in this context that this study was done in order to find out whether there are also mismatch, underemployment and promotion issues among graduates in Masters in business program of the university.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

This study aimed to trace the graduates of the Masters in Business Administration Program from 2008-2012 of Lyceum of the Philippines. More specifically, the study aimed to describe the profile of MBA graduates of their employment status after earning the Masters in Business Administration program from 2008-2012; determine the school-related and work skills-related factors that affect the graduate's employability and promotion and assess the extent by which work values and skills provided by LPU contribute to the graduates employability and promotion.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Master of Business Administration is a program meant for those students who are preparing themselves with the skills and competency in the functional area as business and business law, accounting and finance, marketing and management, strategic decision making process and other matters pertaining to business and societal issues. As any graduate education of uncertain claimed that graduate school represents the apex of the entire educational system, a graduate program requires a great deal of works in acquiring specialized skills to earn the degree Master in Business Administration.

The graduate educational program of Lyceum of the Philippines University in Batangas started in 1983. As a commitment of the Laurel family to provide Batanguenos competitive professional, it continuously grow from its regular offering of 2 semesters every year to a Trisemester program

which started in 2010. At present, the LPU graduate school commits to prersure academic excellence in advanced studies design to develop competent and professional in business, public education sectors in the service of God and Country. As a center for advancement of learning, LPU graduate school endeavors to provide leadership, management competence and professional growth among its graduate as well as enhance their humanitiic universal values that will make them integral Filipino leaders and managers of public and private organization and enterprise.

The program objectives of MBA in Lyceum University in Batangas aims their graduates to be competent leaders, manager industry and academic practitioners who posses the required professional skills in leadership and management of business enterprice.

Masters in Business Administration program provided by several universities in Manila also aims to mold globally competitive, socially responsible leaders of national and regional businesses. In De la Salle University their program uses practitioner-oriented approach designed to give students management education that is in tune with the needs of companies and the realties of business. Their program aims to develop capable and socially responsible managers for modern Philippine entrepreneurs. The University of Santo Tomas (UST) on the other hand, had an MBA program committed to intellectual expertise, scholarly research, and spirit of community involvement. Their business program of UST envisions to produce managers, updated with their knowledge and skills in order to gain an understanding of the universal factors that influence success of business and to develop lifelong skills to address the management issues of tomorrow.

Magnaye (2008) in her study on the status of MBA program noted that all graduate schools in Batangas City complied with the standards of the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) and that all university are ready to face challenges of the global and economic forces, It is in this research, that Magnaye stongly recommended the need to strictly hire faculty in the graduate level. There is also a need to have a frame work in the actual business practice through realistic business case in the conduct of research, field tips in business subjects and plant tours.

The importance on the perception between employers and undergraduates on employability skills (Chung-Khain Wye and Yet-Mee Lim, 2009) shows result that such qualities as stress tolerance and emotional intelligence are perceived to have been moderately developed by graduates . Furthermore, such qualities as integrity and honesty, responsibility, positive attitude toward work, and punctuality also reported as employability skills for graduates to be employed.

Martinez (2001) from Cabanatuan City , revealed that their graduates are employed in jobs that are in line with their course, their programs were rated good, their area of instruction, school facilities and equipments. It was further recommended that there is a need to update their curriculum in order to meet the changing needs of the industry. The graduate tracer study of the MBA from 1997 – 2007 conducted by (Garcia & Menez, 2008) propose an enhancement in the

graduate school program, further concluded that majority of MBA graduates in LPU were promoted after finishing their degree, students in this program strongly agree that subject as Human Behavior in Organization, and Organization and Management were very useful subjects in their respective place of works.

IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive research design was used to trace graduate employability and employment status of Master in Business Administration in Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas.

There is a total of 24 graduates from 2008 – 2012 out of this number, 4 of them belong to the Customized MBA Curriculum Fast Truck Program and others under the regular curriculum 2 years. The researchers got 100% of the Customized MBA Curriculum and 18% out of 20 which is 80% of the total population under the regular program.

The questionnaire of this research was taken from the LPU Research Center where items were based on CHED mandates of tracing university graduates. There were modifications done by the researchers to suit the present study being undertaken.

Personnal distribution was done thru the help of friends and colleagues. Other respondents were traced through email and facebook accounts. Much that the researcher would like to trace the 100% graduates, however; the four (4) or 20% can no longer be located as they already migrated in the US, Abu Dhabi, and Nigeria.

Data was collected, analyzed and interpreted using frequency and weighted mean.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Year Graduated
N=24

Year of Graduation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
AY 2008 – 2009	4	16.7
AY 2009 - 2010	10	41.7
AY 2010 - 2011	7	29.2
AY 2011 - 2012	3	12.5

Instrument

The main instrument to be used in the study will be descriptive survey questionnaire. The questionnaire is the official tracer study questionnaire issued by the University Research Center patterned from the tracers study questionnaire of the Commission on Higher Education.

Procedures

Names, addresses and contact numbers of the graduates from 2008-2012 were obtained from the Office of the Alumni and Career Services of LPU. The researcher administered the entire questionnaire thru electronic networking sites.

Data Analysis

The data were classified, tabulated and coded for analysis. The following statistical tools were employed as frequency percentage, Ranking and weighted mean.

A scale of 1 to 4 will be used with 1 is the lowest and 4 is the highest. The responses will be given equivalent weights and corresponding verbal description as follows:

Weight	Scale Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.50-4.00	Very Much/Very Relevant
3	2.50-3.49	Much/Relevant
2	1.50-2.49	Slightly Much/Fairly Relevant
1	1.00-1.49	Not Much/Not Relevant

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Demographic MBA Graduate’s Profile

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Civil Status		
Single	11	45.8
Married	13	54.17
Sex		
Male	6	25
Female	18	75
Location of Residence		
City	16	66.7
Municipality	8	33.3
Honors or Awards Received		
Magna Cum Laude		
Cum Laude	1	4.2
With Academic Distinction	4	16.7
Not Applicable	19	79.2
Reasons for Pursuing Advance Studies		
Promotion	2	8.3
Professional Development	22	91.7
No answer		

Table 1 presents the MBA graduates profile variables. There is almost an equal number of single and married MBA graduates. Most of them are female with 18 out of 24 residing in Batangas City. Some of them receive academic distinction award, (4) Cum-laude (1) and other claimed they received loyalty award for they finished their undergraduate in Lyceum University.

In an interview, most of them pursue advance studies for professional development rather than promotion. Although they admit they might be promoted, they disclosed that earning Master’s degree is more of a personal accomplishment. However, in an educational setting, it is not always an avenue for possible position since vacancy for a higher position depends upon not solely on educational qualification but also on performance and attitude.

Employment Status

Table 3 below presents the employment status of the MBA graduates. According to the MBA students, they search their

job as walk in applicants, some are recommended by friends or colleagues, while others get their job thru information from friends and one(1) thru their school job fair. It show that a Master Degree holder, there is a big opportunity for you to be employed even by yourself alone. Although you are a walk-in-applicant, MBA respondent are confident that they will hired since must companies public or private prefer Master degree holder for must organizations believed that they are already competent in the field of leadership and management.

Table 3. Employment Status of MBA Graduates
N = 24

Job Search	F	%
Advertisement		
Walk-in Application	15	1.6
Recommendation	6	25
Information from friends	2	8.3
School’s job placement	1	4.2
Family business		
Job Fair or Public Employment Service (
Place of Work		
Local	22	91.7
Abroad	2	8.3
Present Employment Status		
a. Gainfully employed (regular or full is related to field of specialization)	23	96
b. Self-employed (working for oneself maybe from one’s own profession or business; not working for another firm and drawing a salary)	-	-
c. Underemployed (part-time job; job is not related to field of specialization)	1	4
Nature of Employment		
Professionals	2	5
Clerks	7	29.1
Hotels and Restaurant	2	8.3
Education	13	54.2

Majority of the respondents who are locally employed (22), are gainfully employed (23) and their job is related to their field of specialization. However there is still one contractual from the respondent. When interviewed, he mentioned that he just took up his Master degree after his 20 years of service to a university. He already retired and being rehired as a contractual employee. Regardless of his age and status in his work, he claimed earning Master degree is a self-fulfillment. Since most of the employed MBA is deployed in a private, educational, institution they took the program as part of their educational benefits, and consider their enrolment a profitable personal venture.

As to nature of present employment, there are two (2) respondents working in Hotel and Restaurant in Singapore, seven (7) are office clerks in a private organization, two (2) are professional managers of a private organization and thirteen

(13) are in a private education settings. In as far as previous tracer study in concerned, there is a remarkable change of graduates of 2009 – 2012, as there is none of them who belong to work not related and jobless compared to graduates of 1997 – 2007 which posted 3 undergraduate, 2 self employed and 1 unemployed, (Garcia & Menez, 2008).

This result is an implication that MBA graduates of Lyceum University from 2009 – 2012, even in a fast-track or Customized Curriculum are employed, there is no issue of mismatch and underemployment.

Table 4 below presents the job level position of graduates before and after earning MBA degree, and their reasons for changing their job.

Table 4. Job Level Position and Reasons for changing job

Job Level before taking MBA	F	%
Rank or Clerical	7	29.7
Professional, Technical or Supervisor	15	62.5
Manager or Executive Self-Employed	2	8.3
Job Level after taking MBA	F	%
Rank or Clerical	3	12.5
Professional, Technical or Supervisor	18	75
Manager or Executive Self-Employed	3	12.5
Reasons for changing Job	F	%
Salaries and benefits	8	33.3
Career challenge	8	33.3
Related to special skills	6	25
Proximity to residence	3	12.5

Respondents, before finishing their Master in Business Administration posted 15 who belong to professional technical and supervisor, 7 Rank or Clerical, and 2 Manager or Executive. After finishing their MBA program there is one (1) promoted to manager or Executive while 4 from clerical was promoted to supervisor or professional group.

This data is very noteworthy that there is an avenue for promotion when earning MBA degree. Through some are not promoted, it maybe attributed that positions specifically in an educational setting depends on the need of the university and the vacancy of the position fitting qualification of the regular member’s employees. In the case of two (2) respondents who are in Singapore, they disclosed that Master degree is not a guarantee of promotion in this country. It is more of their dedication and commitment to their work, for Singapore is a country where the Supreme power is in the Ministry of Employment (MOM) regardless of performance or degree but more so of your nationality

As to reasons for changing the job, MBA graduates believed it is due to career challenge, salaries and benefits, related to their skills, not on proximity to residences. S ch reasons is an attitude of a more matured individuals who wants to learn and explore job opportunities as a challenge even salary also entails job position. Graduates of Master’s degree

believed that their skills acquired is counted as contributory to their efficiency and effectiveness in performing their new task.

Relevance of School Related, Work Skills and Work Related Values to Graduates Employment

Table 5 presents the school related factors and skills relevant to graduates employability. According to the respondents, curriculum and instruction (4.5) and professional subject (4.2) were very relevant.

Since curriculum and professional subjects taken were found to be very relevant among MBA graduates, such result is an avenue of continues improvement in gaining and retaining the graduates. The stiff competition is a perspective for the organization to use this result to prioritize avenues needed by the graduates.

Table 5. School Related relevant to Graduate Employability

School Related	WM	VI	Rank
Curriculum and Instruction	4.5	VR	1
Professional Subject	4.2	VR	2
Research Subject	3.25	R	3
Community Extension	3.20	R	4
Composite Mean	2.93	Relevant	
Skills Competencies relevant to Graduate	Frequency		
Communication skills	17		
Human relations skills	16		
Entrepreneurship skills	5		
Information technology skills	6		
Problem-solving skills	8		
Critical thinking skills	11		

Table 6

Work Values Contributed to the Job Placement of the Graduate

Work-Related Values	WM	VI	Rank
1. Love for God	3.4	Much	1
2. Honesty and love for truth	3.28	Much	3
3. Punctuality	3.02	Much	16
4. Obedience to superior	3.06	Much	14
5. Perseverance and hard work	3.3	Much	.2
6. Creativity and innovativeness	3.09	Much	11
7. Courage	3.03	Much	15
8. Professional Integrity	3.26	Much	4
9. Love for co-workers and others	3.08	Much	12
10. Unity	3.10	Much	10
11. Fairness and Justice	3.25	Much	5
12. Leadership	3.19	Much	7
13. Tolerance	3.17	Much	8
14. Efficiency	3.07	Much	13
15. Supportiveness	3.15	Much	9
16. Nationalism	3.20	Much	6
Composite Mean	Much		

In an interview among Masters’ students, subjects offered parallel with the practical application of the work is what makes their curriculum responsive to their needs. This is a

manifestation that the atmosphere of LPU in an Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) has been cascaded to the students' level.

Graduates claimed that though they found Research very interesting subject, it needs time, devotion and skills to understand it seriously. They admitted to spend only very limited time and effort to community extension of the University due to weekend full-time commitment to their subjects and weekdays to their respective jobs.

On the other hand, the skills or competencies found very useful by MBA graduates in their job are communication and human relations skills.

Human relations skills acquired by the MBA graduates maybe rooted from the caring and individualized attention given by this university to graduate school students. Such includes approachability and accessibility of the graduates to various needs to the office of the graduate schools and that of other office as service providers in the university. These kind of relationship is emphatic behavior worthy to be emulated and most of the graduates admit very useful as they effectively and efficiently perform their task.

It is very interesting that results on work related values perceived to be relevant to the graduates focused on Love for God (3.4), perseverance and hard work (3.3) honesty and love for truth (3.28). This is an implication that the "Pro deo Et Patria" – Veritas et Fortitudo have been embraced by graduate level students in Lyceum University. As they hold importance on those great values to their work, promotion is ahead of them.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most Masters in Business Administration graduates of 2008-2012 are gainfully employed locally with regular status and are holding professional and managerial positions. The MBA course has contributed to the graduate's professional advancement.

Communication, human and technical skills and the values of Love of God, honesty, love for truth and perseverance and hardwork are very relevant to their job. The professional subjects, curriculum and instruction gained from LPU –MBA are likewise found very relevant to their respective work.

It is recommended that the LPU Graduate school may continuously benchmark with other universities to ensure the competitiveness of its curriculum. The Office of research and linkages may do tie-ups either locally or internationally with industrial establishments for collaboration and partnerships. The Human resource office of private organizations may review their policies on promotion for a clearer career pathing of their employees. Future researchers may do follow study on employer's assessment of LPU- MBA graduates on their performance as managers or leaders in their respective field.

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