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Employment status and attainment of program educational objectives among bachelor of science in business administration major marketing management graduates of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology from 2018-2023

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Abstract

This study investigated the employment status and attainment of program educational objectives among BSBA Marketing Management graduates from the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) for 2018 to 2023. Using a descriptive quantitative research design, the study included all 898 graduates from the specified period. Data collection was conducted through a Google Form survey. The study employed a four-point Likert scale to assess the graduates' perceived attainment of educational objectives, allowing for a detailed analysis of their alignment with career outcomes. Findings indicated that most graduates perceived their educational objectives as highly attained, indicating that the program effectively prepared students for professional roles in marketing management. The analysis also revealed trends in employment status, with a significant proportion of graduates securing employment in roles directly related to their field of study. This outcome underscored the relevance and impact of the program on graduates' career paths. The results of this study provided valuable insights for educators and administrators in refining the BSBA Marketing Management program to better align with industry demands and graduate aspirations. The findings also highlighted the importance of continuous program evaluation to ensure that educational objectives were met and that graduates were adequately prepared for the evolving job market.

Keywords: BSBA Marketing Management; Employment status; Graduate outcomes; Program educational objectives

1. Introduction

The transition from higher education to the workforce is a crucial phase for graduates, particularly those who have completed a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) with a major in Marketing Management at the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST). This transition is increasingly scrutinized through the lens of employability, defined as an individual's ability to secure and maintain employment. Employability has become a central focus in higher education, driven by the need to ensure that graduates are well-equipped to meet the demands of a dynamic labor market [1]. Educational institutions are now expected to go beyond the mere provision of academic knowledge, ensuring that students acquire the skills and competencies necessary for successful employment.

The educational objectives of business administration programs are designed with this end in mind, aiming to prepare students to excel in their chosen fields. For Marketing Management graduates, these objectives typically include the ability to apply marketing theories in practical settings, develop strategic marketing plans, and manage marketing projects effectively. The achievement of these objectives is often measured through career advancement, job performance, and professional growth. Employment status is critical to assessing whether graduates can meet these

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educational goals. Factors such as job stability, relevance of the position to the field of study, and opportunities for career advancement significantly influence how effectively graduates can apply the skills and knowledge acquired during their studies.

Employability is a multifaceted construct encompassing a range of skills, knowledge, and attributes that enhance an individual's ability to find and retain work. Employability has been described as a combination of factors that enable individuals to navigate the labor market successfully, including personal attributes, skills, and adaptability to changing market demands [2]. The concept of employability has evolved to recognize the growing importance of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities [3]. These skills are increasingly seen as essential for graduates to thrive in the modern workplace, where employers expect technical proficiency and the ability to collaborate and adapt to new challenges.

The shift in focus towards employability has prompted higher education institutions to reassess their curricula and teaching methodologies. The emphasis on employability challenges traditional notions of higher education, which have historically prioritized academic knowledge over practical skills [4]. This paradigm shift has led to calls for integrating employability skills into academic programs, ensuring graduates are well-prepared for the workforce. The importance of employability extends beyond individual career success, with significant economic development and social stability implications. The employability agenda has gained prominence in higher education policy, with institutions increasingly held accountable for the career outcomes of their graduates [5]. This accountability is particularly relevant in the Philippines, where higher education is critical in addressing unemployment and underemployment among young people [6].

Tracer studies have emerged as an effective tool for assessing graduate employability in recent years. These studies systematically track alumni career paths, providing valuable insights into their employment status, job satisfaction, and the relevance of their education to their current roles [7]. For example, a tracer study conducted at a Philippine university found that a significant proportion of graduates were employed in fields related to their degrees, indicating the effectiveness of the program in preparing students for the job market [8].

Skills development is a critical factor influencing the employability of graduates. Employers increasingly seek candidates with diverse skill sets, including technical and soft skills [9]. For Marketing Management graduates, technical skills such as proficiency in marketing tools and data analysis are essential. Still, soft skills like communication, adaptability, and problem-solving are also highly valued as they contribute to effective teamwork and organizational success [10]. Moreover, a strong work ethic and a commitment to continuous learning are crucial for graduates aiming to enhance their employability [11]. As the labor market evolves, graduates must be prepared to adapt to new challenges and opportunities, making lifelong learning a key component of employability.

Despite the emphasis on employability, many graduates need help transitioning from academia to the workforce. Economic conditions, industry demand, and personal circumstances can all impact employment outcomes [12]. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges, increasing competition for available positions and higher unemployment rates among recent graduates [13]. Additionally, studies have shown a mismatch between the skills acquired during academic training and those required by employers [14]. This skills gap highlights the need for educational institutions to continuously evaluate and adapt their curricula to meet the changing needs of the labor market [15].

This study explored the employment status and attainment of program educational objectives among BSBA Marketing Management graduates from NEUST from 2018 to 2023. By analyzing the employment outcomes of these graduates, the research seeks to identify gaps in the educational curriculum and propose recommendations for enhancing employability. As the labor market continues to evolve, it is imperative for universities to adapt their curricula and support services to meet the changing needs of employers and the aspirations of students.

2. Material and methods

This research employed a descriptive quantitative research design to describe the employment status and the achievement of program educational objectives among BSBA Marketing Management graduates from Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) for 2018 to 2023. This approach was chosen for its effectiveness in quantifying data and providing a clear picture of patterns and trends across a large sample. By focusing on measurable data, this methodology objectively assesses how graduates have met their educational objectives and how employment status influences these outcomes.

The study included all 898 graduates within the specified timeframe as participants, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the target population. Data collection was conducted using a survey instrument through Google Forms, which facilitated the efficient gathering of responses from a broad range of participants [16]. This method also ensured that the data collection process was streamlined and accessible, enabling graduates to provide feedback conveniently. The data collection period spanned from January to May 2024, allowing ample time for participants to complete the survey and ensuring the collection of a vigorous dataset.

Table 1 Distribution of respondents

| Batch | Total Number of Graduates |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 2023 | 34 |
| 2022 | 99 |
| 2021 | 34 |
| 2020 | 114 |
| 2019 | 217 |
| 2018 | 400 |
| Total | 898 |

A four-point Likert scale was employed to assess the perceived level of attainment of program educational objectives. This scale provided respondents with a range of options to express their level of agreement with various statements related to the program's objectives. Using the Likert scale facilitated a nuanced understanding of graduates' perceptions. It allowed for a detailed analysis of how well the educational goals were achieved about their employment status. Table 2 presents the rating scale to interpret the responses of the graduates.

Table 2 Scale of the survey questionnaire for the perceived level of attainment of program educational objectives among BSBA graduates

| Range | Verbal Description | Descriptor |
|-------------|----------------------|---|
| 3.25 - 4.00 | Very Highly Attained | Graduates consistently demonstrate mastery and application of the program's educational objectives in their professional careers. |
| 2.50 - 3.24 | Highly Attained | Graduates frequently apply the program's educational objectives effectively in their work. |
| 1.75 - 2.49 | Lowly Attained | Graduates occasionally meet the program's educational objectives in their professional roles. |
| 1.00 - 1.74 | Not Attained | Graduates rarely or do not achieve the program's educational objectives in their careers. |

3. Results and discussion

Table 3 provides the employment status of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Marketing Management graduates. The table categorizes graduates into three primary status groups: employed, self-employed, and unemployed.

Table 3 Profile of graduates based on their present status

| Batch | Total Number of Graduates | Total Number of Employed | % | Self employed | % | Unemployed | % | Total |
|-------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------|---------------|-------|------------|------|-------|
| 2023 | 34 | 31 | 91.18 | 2 | 5.88 | 1 | 2.90 | 100 |
| 2022 | 99 | 83 | 83.84 | 10 | 10.10 | 6 | 6.10 | 100 |
| 2021 | 34 | 29 | 85.29 | 3 | 8.82 | 2 | 5.90 | 100 |
| 2020 | 114 | 93 | 81.58 | 16 | 14.04 | 5 | 4.40 | 100 |
| 2019 | 217 | 186 | 85.71 | 23 | 10.60 | 8 | 3.70 | 100 |
| 2018 | 400 | 312 | 78.00 | 70 | 17.50 | 18 | 4.50 | 100 |

In the 2023 batch, out of 34 graduates, 31 were employed, resulting in a high employment rate of 91.18%. This indicates that most of the 2023 graduates successfully found employment shortly after graduation. The percentage of self-employed graduates stands at 5.88%, showing that a small portion of the employed graduates chose to start their ventures or work independently. Furthermore, only 2.90% of the graduates were unemployed, reflecting a robust job market for this cohort and efficient support mechanisms in place for transitioning into the workforce.

The 2022 batch consisted of 99 graduates, with 83 of them employed, leading to an employment rate of 83.84%. This group has a self-employment rate of 10.10%, which suggests that some graduates opted for entrepreneurial paths or freelance work. The unemployment rate for this batch was 6.10%, indicating that a few graduates faced challenges securing employment. Despite this, a majority were employed, demonstrating a generally favorable employment situation with a notable inclination towards self-employment among this group.

For the 2021 batch, comprising 34 graduates, 29 were employed, yielding an employment rate of 85.29%. The self-employment rate within this group was 8.82%, indicating that some graduates chose to pursue self-employment opportunities. The unemployment rate was 5.90%, suggesting that a small number of graduates could not find work. While most graduates found employment, a modest percentage turned to self-employment as an alternative, possibly due to specific market conditions or personal career choices.

In 2020, out of 114 graduates, 93 secured employment, which equates to an employment rate of 81.58%. The self-employment rate was relatively high at 14.04%, reflecting that many graduates opted for independent work or entrepreneurial ventures in response to a challenging job market. The unemployment rate for this batch was 4.40%, indicating that a relatively small number of graduates were without work. The higher rate of self-employment could be attributed to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, influencing graduates to seek alternative career paths.

The 2019 batch had 217 graduates, 186 of them employed, resulting in an employment rate of 85.71%. This group also had a self-employment rate of 10.60%, suggesting that some graduates pursued self-employment opportunities. The unemployment rate was 3.70%, showing that only a small fraction of graduates were unemployed. The data indicates that while most graduates found employment, there was a moderate inclination towards self-employment, reflecting varying job market conditions and individual career preferences.

For the 2018 batch of 400 graduates, 312 were employed, leading to an employment rate of 78.00%. This batch had the highest self-employment rate of 17.50%, indicating that many graduates chose to work independently or start their businesses. The unemployment rate was 4.50%, showing that a small percentage of graduates were unemployed. The high rate of self-employment, combined with the moderate unemployment rate, suggests that this batch faced specific challenges or opportunities in the job market, potentially influencing their career choices.

The employment trends observed across the various graduating batches from 2018 to 2023 highlight a positive trajectory in job placement and entrepreneurial pursuits among graduates. The data illustrates a favorable employment landscape, with most graduates successfully navigating their career journeys through traditional employment or entrepreneurial ventures, reinforcing the value of adaptability and innovation in today's ever-evolving job market.

Table 4 Profile of graduates based on present employment agency

| Batch | Total Number of Employed | Private | % | Public | % | Total |
|-------|--------------------------|---------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| 2023 | 31 | 29 | 93.55 | 2 | 6.45 | 100 |
| 2022 | 83 | 79 | 95.18 | 4 | 4.82 | 100 |
| 2021 | 29 | 24 | 82.76 | 5 | 17.24 | 100 |
| 2020 | 93 | 66 | 70.97 | 27 | 29.03 | 100 |
| 2019 | 186 | 150 | 80.65 | 36 | 19.35 | 100 |
| 2018 | 312 | 288 | 92.31 | 24 | 7.69 | 100 |

In the 2023 batch, out of the 31 employed graduates, a significant majority, 93.55%, are working in the private sector. This indicates a strong preference or trend for graduates to seek employment within private organizations rather than public institutions. Only 6.45% of the employed graduates are in public sector roles. The high percentage in the private sector suggests that the graduates may have found more opportunities or preferable conditions within private companies.

For the 2022 batch, of the 83 employed graduates, 95.18% are employed in the private sector, while just 4.82% are in public sector positions. This trend shows a pronounced preference for private-sector employment among this group. The very low percentage in public roles indicates that graduates from this batch predominantly sought or found opportunities within private companies, possibly due to a more favorable job market or better alignment with career aspirations in the private sector.

In the 2021 batch, which includes 29 employed graduates, 82.76% are in private sector positions, while 17.24% are in the public sector. This higher proportion in the public sector compared to other years reflects a different trend, with a notable fraction of graduates opting for public employment opportunities. This could indicate that public sector roles were more accessible or appealing to this group, potentially due to stability, benefits, or specific career goals aligned with public service.

For the 2020 batch, comprising 93 employed graduates, 70.97% work in the private sector, while 29.03% are employed in the public sector. This batch shows a significant proportion of graduates in public sector roles, which might reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job market. The high percentage in the public sector could indicate an increased availability of public sector jobs or a shift in preference due to economic uncertainties affecting private sector opportunities.

In the 2019 batch, out of 186 employed graduates, 80.65% are in the private sector, and 19.35% are in public sector roles. This distribution reflects a strong inclination towards private sector employment, with a smaller yet notable percentage in public positions. The balance between private and public sector roles suggests diverse opportunities and preferences among graduates in this batch, indicating a relatively stable job market with options in both sectors.

The 2018 batch of 312 employed graduates shows that 92.31% are in private sector jobs, while 7.69% are in public sector positions. This data indicates a clear preference for private-sector employment among the majority of this batch. The high percentage in the private sector suggests that graduates from this batch were largely inclined towards or found more opportunities within private organizations, which could indicate the job market conditions at that time.

The consistent preference for private sector employment across the years could be attributed to various factors, such as the availability of opportunities, perceived better working conditions, or alignment with personal career goals. However, it is important to note that public sector employment, although lower in percentage, still plays a significant role in providing career opportunities for graduates, particularly in times of economic uncertainty or when private sector jobs may be less accessible.

Table 5 Profile of graduates based on their present employment status

| Batch | Total Number of Employed | Permanent | % | Contractual | % | Total |
|-------|--------------------------|-----------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|
| 2023 | 31 | 8 | 25.81 | 23 | 74.19 | 100 |
| 2022 | 83 | 33 | 39.76 | 50 | 60.24 | 100 |
| 2021 | 29 | 20 | 68.97 | 9 | 31.03 | 100 |
| 2020 | 93 | 62 | 66.67 | 31 | 33.33 | 100 |
| 2019 | 186 | 124 | 66.67 | 62 | 33.33 | 100 |
| 2018 | 312 | 277 | 88.78 | 35 | 11.22 | 100 |

Table 5 provides an overview of the employment status of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Marketing Management graduates from Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) by presenting the proportions of permanent versus contractual positions across various graduation years. This breakdown highlights how job stability and contract types have varied for graduates over time, reflecting broader trends in the employment market.

In the 2023 batch, out of the 31 employed graduates, 25.81% are in permanent positions, while a substantial 60.24% hold contractual roles. This high percentage of contractual employment indicates that a significant portion of this batch has secured temporary or fixed-term positions. This trend might suggest a job market with fewer permanent roles or a preference for flexible or short-term contracts among graduates.

For the 2022 batch, of the 83 employed graduates, 39.76% are in permanent positions, and 57.83% are employed on a contractual basis. This distribution shows a relatively balanced employment status, with a considerable portion of graduates in permanent roles and a significant percentage in contractual positions. The mix of permanent and contractual employment could reflect a diverse job market with varied opportunities, allowing graduates to secure stable and temporary roles.

In the 2021 batch, which includes 29 employed graduates, 68.97% are in permanent positions, and 31.03% are in contractual roles. This higher proportion of permanent employment suggests that this batch found more stable job opportunities than in other years. The lower percentage of contractual positions indicates that graduates in this batch may have had better access to long-term employment contracts or preferred stability in their job roles.

For the 2020 batch, comprising 93 employed graduates, 66.67% are in permanent positions, while 33.33% hold contractual roles. This data reveals that the majority are in permanent roles, reflecting a relatively stable employment environment for this batch. The lower percentage of contractual employment might indicate that graduates in this batch had more access to long-term job opportunities or that the job market favored permanent contracts.

In the 2019 batch, out of 186 employed graduates, 66.67% are in permanent positions, and 33.33% are in contractual roles. The higher percentage of permanent employment suggests that this batch had access to many long-term job opportunities.

The 2018 batch, with 312 employed graduates, shows that 88.78% are in permanent positions, and only 11.22% are in contractual roles. This high percentage of permanent employment indicates a strong preference or availability of long-term job opportunities for this batch of graduates.

The fluctuating percentages of permanent versus contractual positions across the graduating classes highlight the evolving dynamics of the job market, emphasizing the need for ongoing support and adaptation from educational institutions to better prepare graduates for the realities they will face in their professional journeys.

Table 6 Profile of graduates based on present position

| Batch | Total Number of Employed | Rank and file | % |
|-------|--------------------------|---------------|-------|
| 2023 | 31 | 2 | 6.45 |
| 2022 | 83 | 4 | 4.82 |
| 2021 | 29 | 5 | 17.24 |
| 2020 | 93 | 27 | 29.03 |
| 2019 | 186 | 36 | 19.35 |
| 2018 | 312 | 24 | 7.69 |

The data from Table 6 shows that a notable proportion of graduates are currently holding rank-and-file positions, indicating that they are not yet in managerial roles. For the 2023 batch, 6.45% of the 31 employed graduates are in rank-and-file positions. In the 2022 batch, 4.82% of the 83 employed graduates hold rank-and-file positions. The 2021 batch shows that 17.24% of the 29 employed graduates are in the entry-level positions. This is a higher percentage than other batches, suggesting that a significant portion of this batch still occupies roles considered entry-level or operational. This trend highlights that many in this batch have yet to move into managerial or more senior positions, reflecting a typical career progression where early employment is often in foundational roles before advancing to higher levels.

Table 7 Graduates who pursue higher education

| Batch | Total Number of Graduates | Frequency | % |
|-------|---------------------------|-----------|-------|
| 2023 | 34 | 3 | 8.82 |
| 2022 | 99 | 2 | 2.02 |
| 2021 | 34 | 4 | 11.76 |
| 2020 | 114 | 8 | 7.02 |
| 2019 | 217 | 5 | 2.30 |
| 2018 | 400 | 8 | 2.00 |

The data from Table 7 reveals that a relatively small percentage of graduates across all batches pursued higher education. For instance, in the 2023 batch, only 8.82% of graduates chose to continue their studies. Similarly, the 2022 batch shows an even lower percentage, with only 2.02% of graduates pursuing further education. In the 2021 batch, 11.76% of graduates pursued higher education, a slightly higher percentage compared to other years but still reflects a minority. The trend across all batches underscores that the majority of graduates preferred to enter the job market or focus on their careers rather than continuing their education.

The decision to enter the workforce immediately after graduation reflects the readiness and confidence of these graduates to apply their skills and knowledge in real-world business environments. Their ability to secure employment without needing further academic qualifications demonstrates the strength and relevance of their undergraduate education in preparing them for the job market.

Furthermore, the graduates who did choose to pursue further education, though a small percentage, represent a group of individuals dedicated to continuous learning and professional development. These graduates will likely contribute significantly to their fields by bringing advanced knowledge and expertise to their roles. Their pursuit of higher education is a strategic choice to enhance their career prospects and position themselves for future leadership roles.

Table 8 Perceived level of attainment of program educational objectives among BSBA graduates

| Program Educational Objectives | Weighted Mean | Verbal Description |
|---|---------------|----------------------|
| Apply the basic concepts, principles and theories that underlie each of the functional areas of business such as entrepreneurship, marketing, accounting, finance, human resources management, production and operations management, information technology, and strategic management to business situations. | 3.55 | Very Highly Attained |
| Engage in life-long learning activities such as graduate studies and/or professional services and training | 2.98 | Highly Attained |
| Demonstrate corporate citizenship and social responsibility | 3.46 | Very Highly Attained |
| Exercise high moral and ethical standards | 3.68 | Very Highly Attained |
| Grand Mean | 3.41 | Very Highly Attained |

Legend: 3.25-4.00 – Very Highly Attained; 2.5-3.24 – Highly Attained; 1.75-2.49 – Lowly Attained; 1.00-1.74 – Not Attained

Table 8 summarizes the perceived level of attainment of program educational objectives among Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) graduates from Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST). The table presents the weighted mean scores for each educational objective, along with their corresponding verbal interpretations, offering insights into how well the graduates perceive the program's goals to have been met.

The highest attainment score is for the objective of exercising high moral and ethical standards, with a weighted mean of 3.68, categorized as "Very Highly Attained." This high score reflects that graduates perceive the program's emphasis on ethics and morality as exceptionally effective. This result suggests that the curriculum has successfully instilled strong ethical values in graduates, which are crucial for their professional conduct and decision-making in the business world.

Another objective with a high score is demonstrating corporate citizenship and social responsibility, which received a weighted mean of 3.46 and is also rated as "Very Highly Attained." This indicates that graduates feel well-prepared to engage in responsible business practices and contribute positively to society. The strong performance in this area suggests that the program has effectively integrated principles of corporate social responsibility into its coursework, aligning with current expectations for ethical and community-oriented business practices.

The objective of applying basic concepts, principles, and theories across various functional areas of business received a weighted mean of 3.55, categorized as "Very Highly Attained." This score reflects a robust perception among graduates of their ability to apply foundational business knowledge to real-world situations. The high rating indicates that the program has successfully equipped graduates with a comprehensive understanding of core business functions, which is essential for their professional success.

On the other hand, the objective related to engaging in life-long learning activities, such as graduate studies and professional development, has a weighted mean of 2.98, interpreted as "Highly Attained." Although this score is lower than the other objectives, it still indicates a positive perception of the program's role in encouraging continuous learning. This suggests that while graduates recognize the value of ongoing education and training, there may be room for improvement in how the program fosters and supports these activities.

The grand mean score of 3.41, categorized as "Very Highly Attained," reflects a strong overall perception of the program's effectiveness in meeting its educational objectives. The high attainment levels across most objectives demonstrate that the BSBA program at NEUST successfully prepares graduates with essential business skills and ethical standards. However, the slightly lower score in life-long learning suggests an area for potential enhancement to better support graduates in their continued professional and academic development.

4. Conclusion

The employment trends of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) graduates from NEUST reveal a strong job market presence, with a significant majority of graduates securing employment shortly after graduation. Over the years, the employment rates have consistently been high, with a notable percentage of graduates also opting for

self-employment. These findings indicate that the program effectively prepares students for immediate entry into the workforce, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in various professional roles.

Despite the preference for private sector employment, as indicated by the high percentages of graduates working in private organizations, there is also a consistent, albeit smaller, presence of graduates in public sector roles. This balance between sectors suggests that the graduates are versatile and adaptable, capable of thriving in diverse work environments. Additionally, the significant proportion of graduates holding permanent positions reflects a stable job market and the program's ability to prepare students for long-term career opportunities.

The data also highlights a lower percentage of graduates pursuing higher education, with most opting to enter the workforce directly. However, those who continue their studies represent a dedicated group focused on continuous learning and professional development. As reflected in the program educational objectives, the positive outcomes underscore its effectiveness in fostering ethical standards, corporate responsibility, and a solid understanding of business fundamentals among its graduates.

To further enhance the program's effectiveness, it is recommended that NEUST emphasize promoting and supporting lifelong learning activities among its graduates. While the program already achieves high marks in several key areas, increasing the opportunities and encouragement for graduates to pursue further education or professional development could help maintain their competitiveness in the ever-evolving job market.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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