

**JOSE MARIA COLLEGE TRACER STUDY
OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
GRADUATES**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine employment discrepancies, underemployment, and promotional opportunities among Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) graduates. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study evaluates the employability and employment status of graduates in line with guidelines provided by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for conducting tracer studies. Survey questionnaires were distributed among a cohort of 110 graduates, achieving a response rate from 59 participants, predominantly females. Findings indicate that 69.5% of the respondents, who graduated between 2010 and 2016 with a major in Financial Management, are gainfully employed in regular positions primarily as accounting clerks, administrative and accounting staff, bank tellers, and order placers. Furthermore, 59.32% of the respondents expressed high satisfaction with their current employment. Skills fostered during their education, such as the ability to work independently or collaboratively and under pressure, were deemed highly beneficial and relevant to their professional roles. Notably, while 93.22% of the

graduates expressed a desire to pursue further studies, various constraints hindered their ability to do so.

Keywords: *graduates, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program, employability, Commission on Higher Education, tracer study*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid pace of global business and technological advancements presents a significant challenge for academic institutions striving to produce graduates who can compete on a global scale. Jose Maria College, despite its relatively short history of 11 years in educational service, recognizes the importance of this challenge. Particularly, its Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) program, with a major in Financial Management, seeks to address these demands through rigorous academic training. The effectiveness and relevance of this program are assessed primarily through graduate tracer studies, which are essential tools for measuring the impact of educational programs on the career trajectories of alumni.

Graduate tracer studies are systematic inquiries that track the employment status and career progress of an institution's alumni. These studies not only provide feedback on the applicability of academic services in the professional world but also gauge the adequacy of the education provided in meeting the requirements of the employment market (Schomburg, 2003). Notably, various institutions such as Rizal Technical University and

Polytechnic University of the Philippines have implemented these studies to refine their curricula and enhance program delivery, underscoring the value of such feedback in curriculum development (Pia, Marunding & Salvador, 2014).

The importance of tracer studies extends beyond curriculum enhancement; they are also pivotal in determining how well institutions prepare graduates for the complexities of the workplace, as supported by Guzman and de Acosta (2008). These studies offer a strategic assessment of educational outcomes and institutional effectiveness in fostering necessary competencies.

The primary aim of this study is to trace the post-graduation outcomes of alumni from Jose Maria College's BSBA program in Financial Management who graduated between 2010 and 2016. Objectives include examining current employment statuses, utilization of core competencies acquired during their studies, rates of employment, and other pertinent outcomes. This data will not only evaluate the quality of education provided but also facilitate ongoing engagement with alumni, supporting professional development and contributing to continuous program improvement.

Statement of the Problem

The overall objective of the study was to gather relevant information from JMC's BSBA graduates and their suitability for the job market. Specifically, the study seeks to find answers to the following questions.

1. What is the general profile of the respondents in terms of:
 1. Age;

2. Sex; and
3. Civil Status
2. What is the educational attainment of the respondents in terms of:
 1. Possession of other Tertiary Level of Qualification;
 2. Currently undertaking further study;
 3. Upgrade their qualification in the future;
 4. Plan of pursuing further studies;
 5. Program of Jose Maria College that they attended;
 6. Rating of the program of Jose Maria College
3. What is the employment profile of the respondents status in terms of:
 1. Present employment status;
 2. Job search;
 3. Current job satisfaction;
 4. Relevance of the program of the study at JMC to their present job.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Education extends beyond traditional academic boundaries, influencing our actions, shaping opinions, and providing perspectives on life's broader lessons. It plays a critical role not only in individual development but also in societal and economic advancement. According to Van Buren (2003), effective education transcends the confines of the classroom, integrating a diverse array of cultural, social, financial, and physical resources to prepare individuals for complex societal roles. This holistic approach to education is essential in fostering

well-rounded individuals who are equipped to contribute positively to their communities and the economy.

Jose Maria College aspires to be a world-class educational institution recognized not just in the Philippines but across the Asia-Pacific region. Established in 2006, its Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Financial Management program is designed to uphold this vision by delivering educational excellence and producing graduates who are capable and ethical contributors to the business world (Jose Maria College Handbook, 2015). The program aims to develop competencies that align with the demands of a global economic environment, ensuring that graduates are prepared for diverse challenges in the business sector.

The transformative power of education is further emphasized by Abu Bakar et al. (2009), who assert that through education, individuals acquire knowledge and skills vital for national development and economic competence. Education fosters ethical integrity and democratic values, contributing to the creation of a dynamic and unified society. This perspective underscores the importance of educational programs in shaping the capabilities and moral compass of future professionals.

The field of finance, characterized by intense competition at the entry-level, exemplifies the need for rigorous and comprehensive educational preparation. The aspirations of young professionals to advance in lucrative business sectors underscore the importance of a solid educational foundation provided by degrees like the BSBA. This program equips students not only with technical skills but also with a robust ethical framework necessary for making significant contributions to the

business world and achieving personal career goals. Thus, the integration of these theoretical perspectives is crucial in evaluating the effectiveness of the BSBA program at Jose Maria College through a tracer study, assessing its alignment with graduate success and market demands.

Conceptual Framework

The research paradigm consists of four independent variables namely: academic performance, instructional quality, College of Business Education curriculum and overall rating of the College of Business Education course. These are the factors that are assumed to be related with the graduates' employment potential, the dependent variable of the dependent variable of the study. Figure 1 shows the hypothesized relationships of the variables.

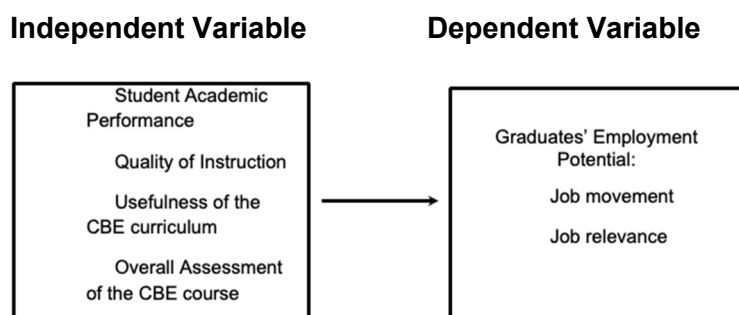


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researchers used a descriptive research design in conducting the study as it defines the study methodically and precisely, also the most accurate design to describe the views of the graduates of Business Administration Department.

Procedures

The researchers sent a letter to the Dean of College of Business Education of Jose Maria College stating the researcher's intention to conduct a tracer study of the graduates in the Business Administration Department. Afterwards, a letter of permission signed by the Dean of College of Business Education was sent to the school registrar to get the data of the graduates.

After the formal request was granted, the researcher associates the 110 graduates of Business Administration Department to administer the survey forms as well as to facilitate in gathering data. Personal distribution was done thru the help of friends and colleagues. Other respondents were traced through email and Facebook accounts. After the data gathered and organized, the results were analyzed and interpreted using frequency and weighted mean to describe the present employment status of the graduates and the subjects they considered most applicable to their employment.

A scale of 1 to 5 will be used with 1 as the lowest and 5 as the highest. The responses will be given

equivalent weights and corresponding verbal description as follows

Weight	Scale Range	Verbal Interpretation
5	4.50-5.00	Very High
4	3.50-4.49	High
3	2.50-3.49	Average
2	1.50-2.49	Low
1	1.00-1.49	Very Low

Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is a survey questionnaire; it is the most precise tool in conducting a descriptive research design. The questionnaire consists of four (4) parts. The first part is the demographic profile of the respondents, second part is their educational background while the third part is the further studies that they have taken or they are currently taking. Lastly, the fourth part pertains to the questions about current employment of the respondents. There were modifications done by the researchers to suit the present study being undertaken.

RESULTS

The discussions were arranged in the following subheads: the general profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, and civil status; educational background

of the respondents: possession of other tertiary level of qualification, currently undertaking further study, upgrade their qualification in the future, plan of pursuing further studies, program of Jose Maria College that they attended, rating of the program of Jose Maria College; employment profile of the respondents in terms of present employment, job search, job satisfaction and relevance of the program of JMC to their present job.

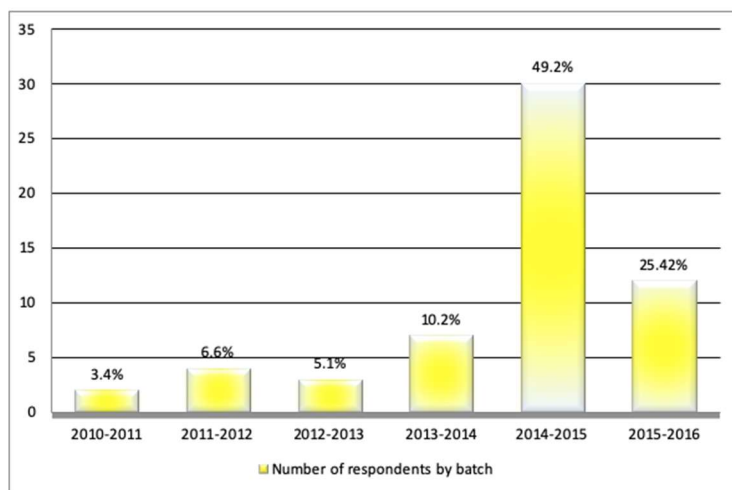


Figure 2. Number of respondents by batch

A total of 59 BSBA graduates responded to the survey out of the projected 110 graduates from year 2010-2016. The respondents represent 53.6% of the total target population of graduates. The graph above shows that the highest graduates produced of Jose Maria College was

during the school year 2014-2015, while the lowest set of graduates was on the year 2010-2011.

General profile of the Respondents

The data below shows the information about the respondents in terms of age, sex and civil status.

Table 1.1. Profile of Respondents as to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21	1	1.69%
22	14	23.73%
23	14	23.73%
24	8	13.55%
25	7	11.86%
26	7	11.86%
27	1	1.69%
28	3	5.08%
29	3	5.08%
34	1	1.69%
Total	59	100%

Table 1.1 conveys the age of the respondents at the time this study was conducted. It shows that there was only one (1.69%) respondent who aged 21, while respondents who age 22 and 23 have an equal number of respondents (23.73%). There were 8 (13.55%) respondents who age 24. Both respondents who age 25 and 26 are equal in number (11.86%), while there was only one (1.69%) who aged 27, ages 28 and 29 both have the same number of respondents (5.08%), and lastly, only one respondent ages 34 (1.69%). Therefore, highest numbers of respondents are aging from 22 to 23 years old.

Table 1.2. Distribution of the respondents as to Sex

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	19	32.20%
Female	40	68%
Total	59	100%

Table 1.2 above shows the distribution of respondents in terms of gender. It shows that 40 or 68% of the respondents are female in compare to male respondents which is 32.20% or 19 only. It presented that there is a higher number of female who responded to the questionnaire than those of male.

Table 1.3. Distribution of the respondents as to their Civil Status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	51	86.4%
Married	8	13.6%
Total	59	100%

Table 1.3 shows that majority of the graduates from 2010 to 2016 are still single (86.4%) while the remaining of them are married (13.6%).

Educational background of the respondents

This data reveals whether the respondents possessed other tertiary level of qualification, currently undertaking further studies or plans of upgrading their qualification in the future and the like.

Table 2.1. Distribution of the respondents as to their possession of other Tertiary Level of Qualification

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	1	1.69%
No	58	98.3%
Total	59	100%

Table 2.1 shows that 1.69% or only one (1) respondent possessed other tertiary-level qualification in NCII Massage while the remaining 98.3% or fifty-eight (58) of them do not possess other tertiary-level of qualification.

Table 2.2. Distribution of the respondents as to currently undertaking further study

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	0	0%
No	59	100%
Total	59	100%

Table 2.2 give details that all respondents (100%) are not undertaking further studies as of this moment due to some restrictions especially to those who are working full time, conflicts in time, schedule and financial matters.

Table 2.3 Distribution of the respondents as to upgrading their qualification in the future

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	11.86%
No	52	88.13%
Total	59	100%

Table 2.3 reflects that 11.86% of the respondents are intending to upgrade their qualification while the remaining 88.13% of them do not intend to upgrade their qualification in the future since majority of the respondents are already satisfied with their present jobs.

Table 2.4. Distribution of the respondents as to their plan of pursuing further studies.

Table 2.4 indicates that majority of the respondents are planning to pursue further studies in Masters (93.22%), some of them plan to proceed in PhD (3.38%) while the remaining respondents did not answer whether to pursue further studies or not (3.38%).

Table 2.5. Distribution of the respondents as to the program of Jose Maria College that they attended

JMC Program	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
No. of units taken per semester	5.00	Very High
Teaching Quality	5.00	Very High
Inter-disciplinary learning	5.00	Very High
Range of subjects offered	4.49	High
Cost	4.18	High
Facilities	4.12	High
Research Capacity	4.11	High
Industry Linkages	4.08	High
Labor market relevance/adaptability	3.24	Average

Table 2.5 shows that according to the respondents, the number of units taken per semester, teaching quality and inter-disciplinary learning ranked first with the verbal interpretation of very high with weighted mean of 5.00. While range of subjects offered, cost,

facilities, research capacity and industry linkages all have the same verbal interpretation as high. And lastly, the labor market relevance/adaptability which ranked as the lowest that had 3.24 as weighted mean and verbally interpreted as average. This asserts that number of units taken per semester, teaching quality and inter-disciplinary learning were best executed by the school, however; labor market relevance was not focused by the program.

Table 2.6. Distribution of the Respondents as to their rating of the program of Jose Maria College

Program of the study of JMC	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Team work/Team orientation	4.22	High
Ability to work independently	4.18	High
Ability to work under pressure	4.16	High
Decision-making	4.15	High
Initiative / Risk taking	4.10	High
Creativity/Creative thinking	4.06	High
Leadership skills	4.06	High
Negotiating skills	4.06	High
Computer skills	4.06	High
Communication skills/Interpersonal skills	4.00	High
Organizational skills	4.00	High
Writing Skills	3.38	Average
Entrepreneurship skills	3.38	Average
Time Management	3.35	Average
Technical Knowledge	3.34	Average
Job Specific skills	3.31	Average
Problem Solving	3.26	Average

Table 2.6 shows how the respondents rate the contribution of the program in Jose Maria College. Earning a college degree is all about opening up opportunities in life. It is a preparation for both intellectual and social skills, thus, making these programs a main tool in a students' readiness in facing the real world. Most of the respondents answered that team work/team orientation program in Jose Maria College has a high

contribution to them together with the ability to work independently and ability to work under pressure. This means that these programs had helped them a lot in doing their job; either by group or individually. Most especially, they are trained to work even under so much pressure making them productive and responsible employees. Meanwhile, technical knowledge, job specific skills and problem solving only resulted as average. In accordance with the respondents' answers, the school was not able to emphasize these things to them. This means that those programs with high verbal interpretation greatly helped the graduates with their job now while those programs with average interpretation do not contribute them that much.

Employment Profile of Respondents

The table below shows the present employment, job search, job satisfaction and relevance of the program of Jose Maria College to the present job of the respondents.

Table 3.1. Distribution of the respondents as to their Present Employment Status

Present Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Working Full time	41	69.5%
Working Contractual Basis	5	8.47%
Not Working and Looking for a Job	8	13.55%
Self-employed	4	6.78%
Not Working	1	1.69%
Total	59	100%

Table 3.1 presents that out of the total number of respondents who graduated in 2010 to 2016, 69.5% are currently working full time while 8.47% works on a contractual basis. On the other hand, 13.55% of the graduate students are not working but currently looking for a job, 6.78% are self-employed while there's only 1 or 1.69% of the respondents who does not have a work and is not willing to find one. Majority of the respondents are working full time.

Table 3.2. Distribution of the respondents according to their Job Search

Job Search	Frequency	Percentage
Referral	18	30.51%
Internet	11	18.64%
Internal Promotion	11	18.64%
Vacancy Notice	9	15.25%
Job Fair	4	6.78%
Newspaper Advertisement	3	5.08%
Recommendation	3	5.08%
Total	59	100%

Table 3.2 shows how the respondents came to know about their current job. 30.51% answered that they acquired job through referrals, while 18.64% of them said that they were hired through internal promotion as admin staff, sales representatives, admin assistant, accounting clerks and order placer, another 18.64% respondents said that they came to know about their job through internet, followed by 15.25% graduates who got a job through vacancy notice and 6.78% got hired on a job fair. In addition, the smallest number of respondents found a job through recommendations (5.08%) and newspaper

advertisement (5.08%). Hence, high number of respondents acquired their current employment through referrals, internal promotions and internet.

Table 3.3. Distribution of the respondents' current Job Satisfaction

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Much	35	59.32%
Much	14	23.73%
A Little	5	8.47%
Not at all	5	8.47%
Total	59	100%

Table 3.3 shows that out of 59 graduates from school year 2010 to 2016, 59.32% said that they were very much satisfied with their current job as bank tellers, admin staff, accounting clerks and sales representatives. While 23.73% of the respondents are much satisfied with their job and the remaining respondents with the percentage of 8.47% said that they were a little satisfied along with the respondents who answered they were not satisfied with their jobs at all, the respondents who answered these are often self-employed. However, majority of them said that they are very much satisfied with their current job.

Table 3.4. Distribution of the respondents as to the relevance of the program of JMC to their present job

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Much	17	28.8%
Much	19	32.2%
A Little	10	16.9%
Not at all	13	22.03%
Total	59	100%

Table 3.4 presents the relevance of their finished course in JMC to their current job. Out of 100% total number of respondents, 32.2% of them said that the program in Jose Maria College is much related to their present jobs whereas only 28.8% of them said that the course they finished in JMC is very much relevant to their current jobs, followed by 22.03% of respondents who answered that the program they graduated is not relevant to their present employment at all; however, 16.9% thinks that programs in JMC is a little bit relevant to their present jobs. Overall, higher number of respondents answered that their current job is much relevant to the degree they finished in JMC.

DISCUSSION

Most Bachelor of Science Business Administration graduates of 2010 to 2016 are employed locally with regular status. The Bachelor of Science in Business Administration course has contributed to the graduate's professional advancement.

The study explores the employability of the BSBA graduates as well as how the employers assessed their

competency based on the curriculum of the program and student outcomes. All of the surveyed BSBA graduates are presently employed locally during the data gathering. The Bachelor of Science Business Administration program gives them better opportunity to get new jobs, to be in a regular or permanent status and be considered for a job promotion.

CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that out of 110 graduates from year 2010 to 2016, only 59 graduate students or 53.6% responded to the questionnaires given to them. The study shows that most of the respondents were females, only few males who responded in the study. The researchers also determined that all of the respondents did not take further studies; however, majority of them want to pursue further studies in Masters and PhD but were obstructed due to some constraints like conflict in schedule, time and financial problems. It also shows that there is a weakness in the problem-solving program; however, team work and ability to work independently is strength to the graduates.

Furthermore, majority of the respondents are employed and 69.5% of them are currently working full time. In addition, 59.32% or most of them answered that they were very much satisfied with their present job.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. Conduct more tracer studies on the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Financial Management graduates to evaluate feedbacks from the alumni for the betterment and efficiency of the institution and the program.
2. The program must implement more problem solving activities to the students to enhance their problem solving skills which is very necessary in preparing them for the real and corporate world, such as giving them frequent activities on how to solve accounting problems analyzing financial statements since they are finance students and will soon enter institutions which demands knowledge in finance and accounting.
3. The students must be exposed to labor market relevance/adaptability like giving them the opportunity to visit different establishments and analyze the needs of the market with regards to the labor qualifications and demands. Since it is the only program of Jose Maria College which got the lowest result; more exposure to labor market means more understanding about business and business-related matters in which they can also explore the ever-changing needs of the labor market and academic inputs that could fulfill these needs.
4. The institution as well as the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Financial Management program should keep in touch with alumni more often, such as conducting constant alumni gatherings and reunions. So the institution and the program will know their whereabouts and current employment status, thus, making them

aware if the program has helped them after their graduation and make possible actions and improvements for the new set of students.

5. This study will help to other researcher undergoing tracer study. They may be guided on what other variables to consider examining the changes in the career pattern of the graduates in order to provide a basis of evaluation of the BSBA program.

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