

Tracking The Career Path of BS Entrepreneurship From 2021-2023 of Sorsogon State University (Sorsu), Sorsogon City Campus: A Tracer Study

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Abstract— This tracing study Tracking the career paths and entrepreneurial endeavors of BS Entrepreneurship from 2021-2023 of Sorsogon State University (Sorsu), Sorsogon City Campus, exploring factors influencing their professional success and entrepreneurial ventures. A qualitative-descriptive survey method, documentary analysis, survey questionnaire, and unstructured interview has been utilized to gather data on graduates' profile, level of competencies and their skills acquisition along, entrepreneurial management, and operating own business and common challenges and obstacles encountered in their career journey. Out of 243 graduates, 81.1 % are employed, 18.1% are unemployed and 0.8 % categorically have never been employed. Further, the 213 employed graduates, 45.1% are Regular permanent; 34.3% are Contractual, and 9.9% are self-employed; 8% are Temporary; and the remaining are casuals. This emphasizes that graduates who are first time job seekers are being absorb by the companies, shows a positive feedback of their performances. The study concludes that the BS Entrepreneurship program effectively equips graduates with essentials entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and attitude. The increasing number of graduates who are employed and self-employed that are aligned with industry needs and trends concludes that the program fosters competency that enhances graduate's employability and entrepreneurial success. Hence the program should continuously enhance industry partnerships to strengthen its collaboration with entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs for internships, mentorship and job opportunities in local and national. Further, develop business incubators to support graduate ventures.

Keywords— BS Entrepreneurship graduates, competency, employability, survey, tracking.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of Sorsogon State University's offerings is the Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship, a four-year course borne out of the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) firm resolution not to leave entrepreneurship to chance or luck. While it is known that many have achieved success, became successful entrepreneurs without the benefit of formal education, the same could also be said with the rate of its failure. This CHED felt the need to rectify. Thus, the creation of BS Entrepreneurship program (CHED Memorandum Order No. 18, s.2017, Art. IV, Section 5) that will help aspiring entrepreneurs acquire the skills, values and attitudes that will increase graduates' chances of succeeding (Art. IV, Sec 5.2). BS Entrep is designed to provide an understanding on venturing in small businesses and at the same inculcate among students the entrepreneurial zeal that will pave the way to a vibrant economy in the hands of Filipinos. The

program also aims to harness laudable qualities such leadership, social awareness and concern and a sound moral fiber. Indeed, an entrepreneurship degree offers a well-rounded education in business skills and management competencies that will serve you well no matter where life takes you (<https://www.gcu.edu/blog/business-management/what-can-do-entrepreneurship-degree>). Suffice to say, students in the bachelor of entrepreneurship program gain knowledge of business planning, financing, marketing, management, information technology and consulting, in short, they are trained to start and manage their own businesses (<https://business.uic.edu/undergraduate-programs/undergraduate-degrees/bachelor-science-entrepreneurship/>).

To further strengthen the program, ensure its viability and take into consideration the progress of its

graduates, the said CMO sets the “program goals for BS Entrepreneurship graduate within 2 to 5 years’, to wit:

“After completion of all academic requirements of the program, graduates of BS Entrepreneurship should be able to set up a business, manage and operate a business and assume managerial position in the field of business development, corporate planning and other related positions in the corporate or public organizations or non-government organizations where entrepreneurial competencies are required” (CMO No. 8, s. 2017, Art. IV, Section 5.3).

“They should also be able to pursue other careers appropriate to a BS Entrepreneurship graduate such as Entrepreneurs, Business Development or Corporate Planning Development Staff/Assistant, Marketing Staff/Assistant” (CMO No. 8, s. 2017, Art. IV, Section 5.4).

Now, the BS Entrepreneurship as a program offering of the SorSU is in its 5th year run and has produced one hundred forty-one (141) graduates as of 2022 (Registrar’s record, 2023). And having been granted university hood last May 28, 2021, SorSU, in line with its VMGO, has reaffirmed its commitment to produce not only competent but qualified graduates that can hold their stead in both local and global arena. And with such commitment, keeping track of its graduates, if they have indeed lived up to the CMO’s standard, have likewise become very crucial. Afterall, an academic institution’s greatest legacy is the quality of education it implements, concretized not so much by the number of its graduates but the outcome of its application in real life. Hence, the need for a graduate tracer study.

Generally, a graduate tracer study is a very useful and “powerful tool that can provide valuable information for evaluating the whereabouts and performance of the said graduates in the workplace” (Cuadra, Aure & Gonzaga, 2019). It is a very important and practical device in assessing the relationship between tertiary education and that of the world of professional work of which Woya (2019), elucidates that the “adequate knowledge on employment outcomes of training

graduates could assist in formulating policy towards combating some of the social problems such as unemployment” or even underemployment.

Specifically, undergoing a graduate tracer study is a great way of validating the relevance of what has been taught in college and its adaptability in the workforce. As Benavides and Dondonilla (2018) put it, it is a “means of evaluating the SSC’s program thrust from providing a quality and relevant education to ensure that the graduates actually make use of their training delivered to them in the college”.

Ultimately, undertaking this study would provide the University the much-needed data base that would be an aide to further improve its instructional system; by conceptualizing this study ahead of time and anticipating AACUP’s requirement to have a graduate tracer study, it lessens the burden of having to comply with all the findings all at once and finally, the study will serve as a concrete example of an effort from a Pamantasang May Puso to bring back to its fold these graduates in the form of directory instead of simply allowing them to remain mere statistics.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized qualitative-descriptive survey method. And it used documentary analysis, survey questionnaire, and unstructured interview.

The respondents are the graduates of the BS Entrepreneurship program from 2021-2023. At least 50% of the graduates of the two batches will be the target respondents of the study. Graduates’ addresses and contact numbers will be taken from the Registrar’s Office. It used the combination of purposive and snowball sampling methods. For convenience sampling, it utilized social media such as Facebook, messenger, Instagram and other possible apps available. For snowball sampling, those who were reached through social media have been asked to recommend other graduates to be respondents.

The questionnaire used is adopted from the CHED GSV (Graduate Survey Questionnaire) to trace the career path of the graduates. It is composed of two sections: 1) the profile of the respondents; and 2) the

career status of the respondents. Data gathering has been done mostly through google form, however if respondents will opt to a paper and pen questionnaire, it has been also made available. Data was analyzed to evaluate the relevance and adequacy of the BS Entrep program curriculum in preparing graduates for their career paths.

Varied statistical tools has been used for in-depth, valid, and reliable analysis and interpretation of the data of the relevance and adequacy of the BS Entrep program curriculum in preparing graduates for their career paths. Frequency count, mean, percentage has been used to describe the profile and profitability of respondents and the areas needing improvement among graduates and curriculum. While mean is used to trace the career path of the graduates. The Likert's Five Point Scale will also be utilized.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gender

The study yielded 243 respondents, 69% are females; (23%) are males and (7.8%) members of LGBTQ+ . The predominance of female graduates (69%) suggests that the BS Entrepreneurship program has become increasingly attractive to women. This trend reflects the growing participation of women in entrepreneurship and business education in the Philippines. The presence of LGBTQ+ graduates also indicates that the program promotes inclusivity and equal educational opportunities regardless of gender identity.

Respondents Civil Status

Among these respondents, 95.5 % are single and the miniscule that's left is equally distributed and identified as married; married but not living with spouse; separated/divorced; unmarried single parent; and widow/widower, clearly showing a dichotomy in respondents.

This finding complements the high employment rate since younger graduates often have fewer family obligations, allowing them to accept various employment opportunities or relocate when necessary.

Location of Residence

Asked about the location of their residences, 54.3% signified living in the city and 54% in the municipality. This finding explains why most graduates are employed locally rather than abroad. Since many reside within Sorsogon and nearby municipalities, employment opportunities remain centered within the province.

Year Graduated

Of the 243 respondents, 39.1% are 2022 graduates; 38.7 % are 2023 graduates; 21% are graduates of 2021 and the rest are graduating this AY. The relatively balanced representation of graduates from 2021 to 2023 indicates that the tracer study successfully captured multiple graduating cohorts. The larger participation of recent graduates also ensures that employment outcomes accurately reflect current labor market conditions. Because recent graduates tend to respond more actively to tracer surveys, the findings provide timely evidence regarding curriculum relevance.

Honor/award received

Out of these 243 respondents, 71.8% acknowledge not having received any honors/awards; 14.8 % own up to receiving academic distinction, say they are cum laude awardees; profess inclusion to the President/Dean Lists; are dean listers; and magna cum laude. Such categorization, however, shows that honors/awards received is not a measurement to get a better job.

Although most graduates did not receive academic honors, the study still reported a high employment rate. This indicates that employers value practical competencies, communication skills, adaptability, and work attitude alongside academic achievement.

The findings imply that entrepreneurial education develops competencies beyond classroom performance, allowing graduates without academic distinctions to remain competitive in the industry.

Professional examination (s) passed

Of the 243 respondents, most or 71.6 % divulge that they have not passed any professional examinations

yet 14% or 34 of them have taken and passed the Professional Civil Service Career Examination; 3 or 1.2% are Licensure Examinations for Teachers passers; 1 or 0.4% acquired an NC II; 1 each for Local Treasury eligibility; Insurance Commission Licensure examinations, AFPSAT, 1 with CSC eligibility because of Latin honors and 1 awaiting LET result.

When asked with the question, ‘what made you pursue advance studies?’, 72 or 54.5% out of 132 respondents answered “for professional development”; 15 or 11.4% said, “for promotion”; 1 or 0.8% for various reasons which include for more credentials, for employment, etc. However, 11 or 8.3% did not signify an answer; 7 or 5.3% answered none and 2 or 1.5% answered “not applicable. It can be deduced here that graduates no longer rest on their laurels but pursue higher degree of education and or additional skills to be competitive in their fields.

Of the 243 responses to the question, “Are you employed?”, 81.1 % answered yes; 18.1% responded no and the remaining 0.8 % categorically said they have never been employed.

Foremost to the 69 responses as to why they are not yet employed, is 1. they are advancing or taking further studies (17.4%); followed by 2. family concern which garnered 15.9%; 3. lack of experience (13%); no job opportunity (5.8 %); and health related reasons (2.9%). Reasons like im employed (2.9%); not applicable (2.9%) and “none” 92.9%) also made the list. End of contract, incomplete, requirements, building my own business, running the family business, etc., have 1.4% or 1 respectively. While 11 or 15.9% did not give an answer. The pattern pictured here shows that graduates of the program pursue graduate studies for professional development as it is much needed to get a better job.

Present employment status

The 213 responses presented the following figures where their present employment statuses are concerned. To wit;

Regular permanent 45.1 %; Contractual 34.3%; self-employed 9.9%; Temporary 8%; and the remaining are casuals.

This implies that graduates who are first time job seekers are being absorb by the companies. This shows a positive feedback of their performances.

Present occupation

This question merited 199 responses that yield a diverse line of work demonstrating minimal significance in relation to their undergraduate course; Farmers, Forestry workers and Fishermen (27.1%); Clerks (20.1%); Service workers and shop and market... (19.1%); Government Officials and --- (14.1 %); Professionals (8.5%). A small percentage is claimed by trades and related workers while the rest is divided between Technicians and Associate Professionals and Plant and Machine Operators.

The focus of the 187 responses to this question is towards agriculture, hunting and forestry (18.7%); wholesale and retail Trade, Repair. (17.1%); Mining and quarrying (11.2%); Manufacturing (8.6); (8%); Construction (7%).

Graduates work across diverse occupations, demonstrating the versatility of entrepreneurship education. However, the relatively high percentage employed outside entrepreneurship-related professions suggests that entrepreneurial competencies are transferable across multiple industries. This finding supports the earlier observation that many graduates are employed but not necessarily in entrepreneurship-specific careers.

Employment across agriculture, retail, manufacturing, mining, and construction indicates that entrepreneurial competencies are applicable across various economic sectors.

However, relatively few graduates are operating their own businesses, suggesting that financial limitations, market risks, or insufficient startup capital may discourage entrepreneurial ventures. This implies that the university should strengthen business incubation,

startup financing assistance, and partnerships with government entrepreneurship programs.

Place of work

This particular question earned 212 responses with 99.1% answering local and the little that is left answering abroad.

Out of the 210 responses, 63.3% answered yes and 36.7% answered no, indicating that newly graduated respondents are more eager to answer the survey and be counted.

Of the 214 responses, 91 categorically answered they accepted the job because of salaries and benefits; 71 said its career challenge; 37 revealed that they accepted the job as they are related to special skill and 26 because of the work place proximity to their residences and 2 said they accepted the job because their contract to their previous employers have just ended. Some 10 respondents gave the following reasons; health issues, seeking healthy environment, work experience, managing family business, first job was just seasonal, etc. however, there are 5 responses of non-applicable and 5 who did not answer.

Salary and benefits were the primary reasons for accepting employment, followed by career challenge and alignment with special skills. This indicates that graduates balance financial security with opportunities for professional growth.

The importance placed on career challenge also reflects the entrepreneurial mindset of seeking continuous learning and advancement.

Although many graduates accepted jobs for financial reasons, the majority still work in positions related to their educational preparation, indicating that economic and professional motivations jointly influence employment decisions.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The BSEntrepreneurship program effectively equips graduates with essentials entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and attitude. The increasing number of

graduates who are employed and self-employed that are aligned with industry needs and trends concludes that the program fosters competency that enhances graduate's employability and entrepreneurial success.

Hence the program should continuously enhance industry partnerships to strengthen its collaboration with entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs for internships, mentorship and job opportunities in local and national. Further, develop business incubators to support graduate ventures. Overall, the results affirm the relevance and effectiveness of the BS Entrepreneurship curriculum while identifying opportunities to further strengthen entrepreneurial venture creation and long-term career success.

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