

## Research Article

### TRACER STUDY OF THE MASTER IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA) GRADUATES AT A LEADING UNIVERSITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

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#### ABSTRACT

**Aims:** The study examined the activities of Master in Business Administration (MBA) graduates after they finished the course specifically in entrepreneurial pursuit, pursuing further studies, and employment status. **Study design:** A descriptive research design was used to trace the graduate's employability and employment status of a Master in Business Administration at a leading University. **Results:** The results showed that more females than males finished the program. In the region of origin, there were more graduates from region 10 and few from the CARAGA region. Most of the graduates resided in Cagayan de Oro City and only a few were from the provinces. Most of them continued with their current work and more were undergone for further studies. More of those who pursued entrepreneurial ventures had gross monthly income of Php25,000 and above. Of those who pursued further studies, the majority of them took up a Doctoral Degree. The study concluded that most MBA graduates were in the services sector, some in manufacturing, and a few were working in the agricultural sector. **Conclusion:** Based on the survey, the leading common values practiced by the MBA graduates which were helpful in their endeavors were endurance, honesty, resourcefulness, and teamwork.

**Keywords:** Tracer study, master in business administration, graduates, curriculum, employee, business venture, further studies, Philippines.

#### INTRODUCTION

The graduates claimed that their knowledge, academic-acquired skills, and competencies contributed greatly to their job performance and they also possess the skills and competencies necessary to succeed in this competitive world Ramirez *et al.*, (2014). There are many criticisms of the generic MBA degree, one being that administration can be taught in schools and universities, while management must be learned through practice in the workplace. Many critical studies have been performed in the United States and the United Kingdom, but as far as can be determined, none has been undertaken and published in Thailand (Barnes, 2015). In addition, the quality of the next generation of business leaders is likely to be heavily influenced by how business schools respond to the host of dramatic changes emerging in the Higher Education sector, worldwide (Ly, Vickers, and Fernandez, 2015).

For the past decade, the outside world has undergone so many changes while the academic world has settled into a rut. Employers have likewise observed that many graduates were lacking in the necessary skills and did not have the right attitudes and skills needed in today's work environment (Choudary and Ponnuru, 2015). On the other hand, although communication skills have consistently emerged as the most important employability skills, deficiencies in written and oral skills have been lamented. Problems with integrity, teamwork, problem-solving, literacy, numeracy, critical analysis skills, planning, organizing, and self-management have also been revealed (Monteleone, 2015).

It is therefore crucial for the institution specifically the Business and Management to keep up with the trends of the outside world since the school is one of the major sources of human resources. This Tracer

Study not only tracks the MBA graduates of Business and Management on what activities they pursued after graduation but also attempts to identify the issues that can be inferred from the findings of the research. It also checks whether it has succeeded in developing the entrepreneurial skills of its students and determines the effectiveness of the teaching design used by the teacher in providing the students with the necessary knowledge and skills to compete effectively in the fast-paced world of work.

The Master of Business Administration (MBA or M.B.A.) is a master's degree in business administration, which attracts people from a wide range of academic disciplines. The MBA designation originated in the United States emerging from the late 19th century as the country industrialized and companies sought out scientific approaches to management. The core courses of the MBA program are designed to introduce students to the various areas of business such as accounting, finance, marketing, human resources, operations management, etc. Accreditation bodies exist specifically for MBA programs to ensure consistency and quality of graduate business education. Business schools in many countries offer MBA programs tailored to full-time, part-time, executive, and distance-learning students (Meñez, 2014).

In the Philippines, schools or universities are offering MBA programs such as De La Salle University, University of the Philippines, Asian Institute of Management, Ateneo Graduate School of Business, University of Santo Tomas, University of the East, University of Manila, University of San Carlos, University of San Agustin, and Xavier University – Ateneo de Cagayan (Encio *et al.*, 2015).

The MBA Program of Business and Management encouraged participative learning and used a variety of interactive learning methodologies. Programs were designed for students to learn the latest management concepts, techniques, and tools, but more importantly, developed skills and attitudes of listening and

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understanding others, holistic thinking, collective decision making, leading by example, communicating, negotiating, and being sensitive to societal concerns. MBA provides exceptional individuals with a supportive environment in which they can develop their skills and aptitudes, helping them to reach their professional goals and serve the interests of Mindanao and the different regions of the country. The curriculum is necessarily interdisciplinary, integrating as it consists of elements from engineering, economics, social psychology, and management fields. It is structured in such a way as to include the integrated components of the school-required courses, electives or focus courses, and project or research study.

These issues, together with the graduates' learning experiences, can then be used as take-off points in evaluating and assessing the kind of education that the school provides, as well as the necessary improvements to be done by school administration and the Graduate School professors in ensuring the continuous accountability of the quality of educational products.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Demographic Profile

Determining the demographic profile of postgraduates is crucial for schools, especially in the context of evolving educational landscapes and diverse student populations. By understanding the demographic composition of postgraduate students, schools can tailor their programs and support services to meet specific needs effectively. This included considerations such as sex, region of origin, and location of residence. Such insights enable schools to design targeted recruitment strategies, develop inclusive learning environments, allocate resources efficiently, and offer relevant academic and career support services. Moreover, a nuanced understanding of the demographic profile aids in fostering a sense of belonging and community among postgraduates, thereby enhancing retention rates and overall student satisfaction. Therefore, conducting a thorough demographic analysis is fundamental for schools to adapt and thrive in an increasingly dynamic educational landscape.

### Entrepreneurial Venture

An entrepreneurial venture focused on a new business undertaking or initiative launched by MBA graduates, typically to create value, generate profit, or address a specific need or opportunity in the market. Entrepreneurial ventures can range from small-scale startups to large-scale enterprises and may involve developing and commercializing innovative products or services, establishing new business models, or entering untapped markets.

Determining the entrepreneurial ventures of postgraduates holds significant importance for schools as it provides invaluable insights into the effectiveness of their educational programs in fostering innovation and enterprise. By tracking the entrepreneurial activities of postgraduates, schools can gauge the practical applicability and impact of their curriculum, teaching methodologies, and experiential learning opportunities (Encio *et al.*, 2016). Understanding the types of ventures initiated by postgraduates, whether startups, social enterprises, or intrapreneurial initiatives, allows schools to tailor their programs to support aspiring entrepreneurs better. Moreover, knowledge of postgraduate entrepreneurial endeavors enables schools to establish meaningful partnerships with industry, investors, and government agencies, thereby enhancing networking opportunities and securing resources to promote entrepreneurship education further. Consequently, staying abreast of postgraduate entrepreneurial ventures not only validates the efficacy of educational

offerings but also positions schools as key contributors to economic development and innovation ecosystems (Meñez, 2014).

Further Studies. Further studies of postgraduates refer to additional educational pursuits undertaken by MBA graduates who have already completed a postgraduate degree, such as a master's or doctoral program. These further studies could include enrolling in another degree program, pursuing specialized certifications or training courses, or engaging in continuing education opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills in a particular field or profession (Gupta & Bennett, 2014). Determining the further studies pursued by postgraduates is dominant for schools as it provides critical insights into the outcomes and impact of their educational programs on students' academic and professional trajectories. By tracking postgraduates' pursuit of advanced degrees, certifications, or specialized training, schools can assess the effectiveness of their curriculum, faculty mentorship, and career development support in preparing students for continued academic success and career advancement. Understanding the fields of study or research areas chosen by postgraduates for further education enables schools to identify emerging trends, align program offerings with evolving industry demands, and enhance curriculum relevance (Gupta & Turek, 2015). Moreover, knowledge of postgraduates' continued education pathways facilitates strategic planning and accreditation processes, strengthens alumni relations, and enhances the school's reputation as a hub for lifelong learning and intellectual growth. Thus, monitoring postgraduate studies serves as a vital tool for schools to evaluate and continuously improve their educational offerings.

### Continued with the Current Work

Continued with their current work of postgraduate centers on the scenario where MBA graduates who have completed their postgraduate studies opt to remain in their current employment positions or engage in professional roles related to their field of study. Instead of pursuing further education or transitioning to a different career path, these postgraduates choose to apply the knowledge, skills, and expertise gained from their academic training in their current job roles or within a similar professional context.

Determining whether postgraduates continue with their current work after completing their studies is of principal importance for schools as it offers valuable insights into the relevance and applicability of their educational programs to the professional landscape. By tracking postgraduates' employment continuity, schools can assess the alignment between their curriculum, skills development initiatives, and industry demands (Meñez, 2014). Understanding whether postgraduates can apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in their current roles helps schools evaluate the effectiveness of their educational offerings in preparing students for real-world challenges. Moreover, knowledge of postgraduates' career trajectories enables schools to tailor career counseling services, foster industry partnerships, and refine curriculum content to better meet the evolving needs of employers (Mugwisi and Hikwa, 2015). Additionally, insights into postgraduates' continued employment contribute to alumni engagement efforts and enhance the school's reputation as a provider of career-relevant education. Thus, monitoring postgraduates' continuation in their current work serves as a vital tool for schools to assess and enhance the impact of their educational programs.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used the descriptive method and survey to gather primary data and information. The time, faculty, and programs included in the evaluation focused only on 2005 up to 2012 records. The

respondents of the research were MBA graduates for the past 8 years (2005-2012) and had 72 respondents as the sample size. The descriptive method is crucial in a tracer study of MBA graduates as it enables the comprehensive collection and analysis of detailed information regarding graduates' employment status, career progression, and further educational pursuits. This method identifies patterns and trends, providing valuable insights for academic institutions to evaluate and improve their programs. Additionally, it aids in benchmarking performance, supporting evidence-based decision-making, and enhancing alumni engagement, ultimately ensuring the program's relevance and quality in meeting market demands (Meñez, 2014).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This tracer study has been one of the most important research activities in MBA. It focused on updating the alumni directory and gathering certain information required for the improvement of the MBA curriculum, teaching, research, extension, and networking. A tracer study of MBA graduates is vital for both the school and employers as it provides a thorough understanding of graduates' career trajectories, skills application, and industry success. For schools, the insights gained help in evaluating and enhancing curriculum effectiveness, aligning educational offerings with market needs, and improving student support services. For employers, the study highlights the quality of graduates, their readiness for the workforce, and areas where additional training might be needed, enabling more targeted recruitment and development strategies. This mutual feedback loop enhances the relevance of educational programs and ensures that graduates are well-prepared to meet industry demands.

### Profile of the MBA Graduates

The sex classification in this study comprises two categories: male and female. Analysis of the data revealed a higher representation of females (52.78%) compared to males (47.22%). It's crucial to recognize that this distribution may not accurately reflect the overall sex demographics of the population. Instead, it highlights a specific trend among participants in the MBA program at the of Business and Management between 2005 and 2012. During this period, there was a notable prevalence of female MBA graduates, indicating a significant sex disparity within the program's participant cohort.

*Region of Origin.* Notably, Region 10 emerges as the most prominent, representing 94.44 percent of the respondent graduates, while CARAGA Region follows with 5.56 percent representation. Interestingly, no graduate respondents were hailing from regions 1 to 9, as well as other notable regions such as NCR, CAR, and ARMM. This distribution highlights a clear concentration of MBA students from region 10, with minimal representation from other regions, indicating a prominent regional disparity among the program participants. *Location of Residence.* Topping the list is the city, with 83.33 percent representation, followed by the municipality at 16.67 percent among respondent graduates. These findings highlighted a predominant concentration of MBA graduates originating from urban areas, particularly cities, with comparatively fewer graduates hailing from municipalities and provinces.

### Activities that were Pursued after Graduation

The activities pursued by MBA graduates' post-graduation included self-employment or entrepreneurial ventures, further studies, and continuation of their current employment. As depicted in Table 1, a significant majority of graduates, representing 72.22 percent, opted to

continue with their current employment after completing the Master in Business Administration (MBA) program. Following this, 18.06 percent of MBA respondents chose to pursue further studies, while 9.72 percent engaged in self-employment or entrepreneurial pursuits. These findings suggest that the majority of MBA graduates from the Business and Management expressed satisfaction with their existing employment opportunities, showing less inclination towards entrepreneurial ventures or further academic pursuits and building the students to avail job opportunities prevailing (Mathew, 2019).

**Table 1 Distribution of MBA Respondents by Activities Pursued after Graduation**

| Activities After Graduation            | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|--|-----------|------------|------|
| Continued with Current Work            | 52        | 72.22      | 1    |
| Further Studies                        | 13        | 18.06      | 2    |
| Self-employed/Entrepreneurial pursuits | 7         | 9.72       | 3    |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>72</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

### Pursued Entrepreneurial ventures after MBA According to Sector

Table 2 outlines the distribution of respondent graduates categorized by sector or industry. Leading the rankings is the services sector, representing 57.14 percent of MBA respondents, followed by manufacturing at 28.57 percent. Agriculture follows in third place, with 14.29 percent of respondents. These results indicated a higher proportion of MBA graduates involved in the services sector compared to manufacturing and agriculture (Amofah *et al.*, 2020). The results of a tracer study are highly significant for both the university and these sectors. For the university, these results validate the relevance and effectiveness of their MBA program in preparing graduates for key economic sectors, enabling targeted curriculum enhancements to better serve industry needs. For industries, manufacturing, and agriculture, these findings provide insights into the talent pipeline, helping them understand the strengths and potential gaps in the skills of new hires, thereby informing recruitment and training strategies. This alignment ensures that the university can continue to produce graduates who meet the evolving demands of these critical sectors.

**Table 2 Distribution of MBA Respondents by Sector/Industry**

| Activities After Graduation            | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|--|-----------|------------|------|
| Continued with Current Work            | 52        | 72.22      | 1    |
| Further Studies                        | 13        | 18.06      | 2    |
| Self-employed/Entrepreneurial pursuits | 7         | 9.72       | 3    |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>72</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

### Estimated Average Gross Monthly Earnings in Pursuing Entrepreneurial Ventures

Table 3 displays the distribution of respondent graduates categorized by their estimated current gross monthly income in pesos, particularly those engaged in entrepreneurial ventures. Topping the rankings is the gross monthly income bracket of Php25,000 and above, representing 57.14 percent of respondent graduates. Following this was the income bracket of Php20,000 to less than Php25,000. In third place was the income bracket of Php15,000 to less than Php20,000, comprising 14.29 percent of respondent graduates. These results highlight that a majority of MBA graduates pursuing entrepreneurial ventures reported monthly incomes of P25,000 and above (Li, 2015).

The results are significant for both the school and the graduates. For the school, these income data validate the MBA program's effectiveness in enhancing graduates' earning potential, demonstrating a strong return on investment that can be leveraged for marketing and attracting future students. For the graduates, the high-income levels reflect the program's impact on their career advancement and financial success, reinforcing the value of their education and enhancing their professional and personal satisfaction.

**Table 3 Distribution of MBA Respondents According to Estimated Gross Monthly Earnings in Pursuing Entrepreneurial Ventures (in Pesos)**

| Gross Monthly Income            | Frequency | Percent    | Rank |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Below 5,000 to less than 15,000 | 0         | -          |      |
| 15,000 to less than 20,000      | 1         | 14.29      | 3    |
| 20,000 to less than 25,000      | 2         | 28.57      | 2    |
| 25,000 and above                | 4         | 57.14      | 1    |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>7</b>  | <b>100</b> |      |

**Core programs in MBA which were more useful in entrepreneurial ventures**

Table 4 shows the core programs of MBA that helped most in entrepreneurial pursuits. First in the rank was Development of Entrepreneur with 42.86 percent followed by Financial Management with 28.57 percent. Marketing Management and Computer Methods for Managers occupied third in the rank with 14.28 percent among the core programs of MBA (Aithal, 2015). The results are crucial for both the school and employers. For the school, these preferences underscore the demand for entrepreneurial and financial skills, guiding curriculum development to focus on these core areas, thus enhancing program relevance and appeal. For employers, understanding these educational priorities helps in identifying the key competencies of MBA graduates, allowing them to tailor job roles and professional development opportunities that align with the graduates' strengths and aspirations, ultimately fostering a more skilled and satisfied workforce.

**Table 4 Distribution of Respondents by Core Courses in MBA Program which were more Useful in Entrepreneurial Ventures**

| MBA Core Courses              | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Development of Entrepreneur   | 3         | 42.86      | 1    |
| Financial Management          | 2         | 28.57      | 2    |
| Marketing Management          | 1         | 14.28      | 3    |
| Computer Methods for Managers | 1         | 14.28      | 3    |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>7</b>  | <b>100</b> |      |

**Field of Studies Pursued by MBA Graduates**

Table 5 shows the distribution of respondent graduates by field of study. The MBA graduates of Business and Management after graduation took up a Doctor in Business Management (DBM) represented by 69.23 percent followed by a Doctor in Management (DM) with 15.39 percent of the respondents and only a few took up a Doctor of Philosophy and other doctoral programs.

The high percentage of MBA graduates pursuing a Doctor in Business Management (DBM) suggests a strong demand for advanced specialization in business academia, indicating a potential opportunity for the university to expand its doctoral programs in this area. Additionally, the significant proportion opting for a Doctor in

Management (DM) highlights the importance of offering diverse doctoral pathways tailored to the evolving needs of business professionals (Doe and Smith, 2023).

**Table 5 Distribution of MBA Respondents by Field of Studies**

| Field of Studies | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| DBM              | 9         | 69.23      | 1    |
| DM               | 2         | 15.39      | 2    |
| PhD              | 1         | 7.69       | 3    |
| Others           | 2         | 7.69       |      |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>13</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

**Reasons for Pursuing an Advanced Studies**

Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of reason for pursuing advanced studies. First in rank was promotion with 53.85 percent followed by Professional Development with 30.77 percent of the respondent graduates. Third in rank were other reasons with 15.38 percent of the MBA respondents. Results indicated that more of the MBA graduates continued their advanced studies for the reason of promotion to obtain a higher salary. (Macalalad, 2016). The results are significant for both the university and employers. For the university, these priorities highlight the effectiveness of the MBA program in facilitating career advancement, and informing curriculum enhancements that further support students' professional growth and promotional opportunities. For employers, understanding that promotion and professional development are key motivators for MBA graduates aids in crafting retention strategies and professional growth pathways that align with graduates' career goals, ensuring a motivated and skilled workforce that is invested in their roles and the organization's success.

**Table 6 Distribution of MBA Respondents by What Made or Reason in Pursuing Advanced Studies**

| Reasons for Pursuing Advanced Studies | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| For promotion                         | 7         | 53.85      | 1    |
| For professional development          | 4         | 30.77      | 2    |
| Others                                | 2         | 15.38      | 3    |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>13</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

The curriculum in the MBA program was relevant to the advancement of doctoral studies. All of the MBA respondent graduates answered Yes (100%) and nobody answered No.

**Core Courses in the MBA program which were very useful in advanced Studies**

Table 7 shows the distribution of respondent graduates by core courses in the MBA program which were useful in further studies. First in the rank was Financial Management with 30.77 percent followed by Management Accounting with 23.08 percent of the respondent graduates. Third in the rank was Quantitative Analysis for Business Decisions having 15.39 percent. Data revealed that more of the MBA graduates favored the Financial Management subject and less in other subjects (Meñez, 2014). The results are crucial for both the university and employers. For the university, these preferences underscore the importance of strengthening these key areas within the MBA curriculum to align with student interests and industry demands, thereby enhancing the program's relevance and attractiveness. For employers, understanding that graduates value financial and quantitative skills help in identifying and recruiting

candidates with the competencies essential for effective financial decision-making and strategic business management, ensuring that their workforce is equipped to meet complex business challenges.

**Table 7 Distribution of Respondents by Core Courses in MBA Program which were useful in Further Studies**

| MBA Core Courses                             | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|--|-----------|------------|------|
| Financial Management                         | 4         | 30.77      | 1    |
| Management Accounting                        | 3         | 23.08      | 2    |
| Quantitative Analysis for Business Decisions | 2         | 15.39      | 3    |
| Development of Entrepreneur                  | 1         | 7.69       |      |
| Macro-Micro Economics                        | 1         | 7.69       |      |
| Marketing Research/Management Studies        | 1         | 7.69       |      |
| Production Management                        | 1         | 7.69       |      |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>13</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

**Actively Performing the Job The current job level position**

Table 8 shows the distribution of respondent graduates by current job level position. First in rank was the Staff or Rank and file represented by 57.69 percent followed by Supervisor with 23.08 percent of the respondent graduates. Third in the rank was Manager with 11.54 percent followed by Assistant Manager with 7.69 percent of the respondents (Teehankee, 2018). The results are significant for both the university and employers. For the university, these outcomes indicate the initial career paths of their graduates, emphasizing the need to equip students with skills that facilitate career progression from entry-level roles to higher managerial positions. This can inform curriculum adjustments to better support leadership development and career advancement. For employers, these insights highlight the potential of MBA graduates at various organizational levels, allowing them to tailor training and development programs to effectively leverage this talent pool, fostering internal growth and succession planning within their companies.

**Table 8 Distribution of Respondents by Current Job Level Position**

| Job Level Position     | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Staff or rank and file | 30        | 57.69      | 1    |
| Supervisor             | 12        | 23.08      | 2    |
| Manager                | 6         | 11.54      | 3    |
| Assistant Manager      | 4         | 7.69       |      |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>52</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

The results pointed out that only a few of the MBA graduates of Business and Management were assigned as Managers and Assistant managers of the different firms.

**Sector or Industry**

Table 9 shows the distribution of the MBA respondent graduates by sector. First in rank was services with 57.69 percent followed by manufacturing with 30.77 percent of the respondent graduates. The researchers focused only on the three leading sectors in this research. Data showed that more of the MBA graduates went to services and only a few of them engaged in Agriculture after they finished the course. The results are important for both the university and employers. For the university, these findings highlight the strong alignment of their MBA program with the demands of these key

sectors, suggesting areas for curriculum focus and potential partnerships to enhance practical training and job placement opportunities. For employers, particularly in the services and manufacturing industries, understanding the distribution of MBA talent enables them to tailor recruitment strategies and leverage the specific skills and knowledge these graduates bring, ensuring that their workforce is well-equipped to drive innovation and operational efficiency in these critical economic areas.

**Table 9 Distribution of MBA Respondents by Sector**

| Sector        | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|---------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Services      | 30        | 57.69      | 1    |
| Manufacturing | 16        | 30.77      | 2    |
| Agriculture   | 6         | 11.54      | 3    |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>52</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

**The Current Gross Monthly Earnings as Employee**

Table 10 shows the distribution of respondent graduates by gross monthly earnings (in pesos) as employees. First in rank was 15,000 to less than 20,000 with 50 percent followed by 20,000 to less than 25,000 having 23.08 percent of the graduate respondents. Third in the rank was 10,000 to less than 15,000 with 15.38 percent followed by 25,000 and above having 11.54 percent. Data depicted that few of the MBA graduates receiving a gross monthly income of 25,000 and above (Macalalad, 2016).

**Table 10 Distribution of Respondents by Gross Monthly Earnings as Employee (in Pesos)**

| Gross Monthly Income       | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Below 5,000                | -         | -          |      |
| 5,000 to less than 10,000  | -         | -          |      |
| 10,000 to less than 15,000 | 8         | 15.38      | 3    |
| 15,000 to less than 20,000 | 26        | 50         | 1    |
| 20,000 to less than 25,000 | 12        | 23.08      | 2    |
| 25,000 and above           | 6         | 11.54      |      |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>52</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

**Core Courses in the MBA Program which were very useful in the Current Job**

Table 11 depicts the distribution of respondents by Core Courses in the MBA Program which were very useful in the current job. First in the rank was Quantitative Analysis for Business Decisions with 38.46 percent followed by Financial Management having 28.85 percent of the respondent graduates. Third in the rank was Management Accounting with 19.23 percent. The least on the data were Marketing research and Production Management (Cummins et al., 2015).The results hold significant implications for both universities and employers. For the university, these preferences highlight the importance of emphasizing quantitative skills and financial acumen within the MBA curriculum, ensuring graduates are equipped with critical analytical abilities essential for decision-making in complex business environments. This data informs curriculum design and updates, ensuring relevance and alignment with industry needs. For employers, understanding these educational priorities helps in targeting recruitment efforts and designing job roles that capitalize on the strengths of MBA graduates, enhancing organizational effectiveness and strategic decision-making capabilities across various sectors.

**Table 11 Distribution of MBA Respondents by Core Courses in MBA Program which were Very Useful in the Current Job**

| MBA Core Courses                             | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|--|-----------|------------|------|
| Quantitative Analysis for Business Decisions | 20        | 38.46      | 1    |
| Financial Management                         | 15        | 28.85      | 2    |
| Management Accounting                        | 10        | 19.23      | 3    |
| Macro-Micro Economics                        | 5         | 9.62       |      |
| Marketing Research/Management Studies        | 1         | 1.92       |      |
| Production Management                        | 1         | 1.92       |      |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>52</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

The Business and Management equips the MBA Graduates with the necessary skills and traits or values needed in today's work environment in accordance with the university mission statement

**Educational Attainment Before Taking MBA Program**

As shown in Table 12 a large percentage (37.50%) was from Bachelor of Science in Accountancy which ranked first in the course category. Second is a Bachelor of Science in Business Management with 27.78 percent followed by a Bachelor of Science in Management Accounting with 13.89 percent of the respondents. Other undergraduate courses had only of few percentages which emphasized that the majority of the MBA graduates of Business and Management were inclined to the business courses. They are crucial for both universities and employers. For the university, these findings provide insights into the academic backgrounds of their MBA graduates, guiding program admissions and curriculum development to build upon existing knowledge and skills. This allows for tailored educational experiences that meet the diverse needs of students transitioning from various undergraduate disciplines into advanced business studies. For employers, understanding the educational backgrounds of MBA graduates helps in assessing their preparedness and suitability for roles requiring specific foundational knowledge in accounting, business management, or management accounting. This information aids in targeted recruitment strategies and facilitates better alignment of job roles with the expertise and qualifications of MBA hires, ultimately enhancing organizational performance and growth.

**Table 12 Distribution of Respondents by Educational Attainment before Taking MBA at the University**

| Course       | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|--------------|-----------|------------|------|
| BSAc         | 27        | 37.50      | 1    |
| BSBM         | 20        | 27.78      | 2    |
| BS ManAc     | 10        | 13.89      | 3    |
| BSIM         | 8         | 11.10      |      |
| AB           | 3         | 4.17       |      |
| BSCE         | 1         | 1.39       |      |
| BS ComSci    | 1         | 1.39       |      |
| BSPT         | 1         | 1.39       |      |
| BS Psych     | 1         | 1.39       |      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>72</b> |            |      |

**Professional Exams Passed by the MBA Graduates**

Table 13 shows the distribution of the respondent MBA graduates by professional examinations they took and passed before, during, and

after taking the MBA program at the leading University. First in rank is the civil service examination with 55.56 percent followed by the CPA Board Exam with 34.72 percent of the respondent graduates. Third is the Engineering Board Exam with 5.56 percent followed by the PT Board Exam with 4.16 percent of the respondent graduates. Results illustrated that more of the MBA graduates passed the Civil Service Examination.

**Table 13 Distribution of Respondents by Professional Examination Taken and Passed**

| Professional Examination | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Civil Service            | 40        | 55.56      | 1    |
| CPA Board Exam           | 25        | 34.72      | 2    |
| Engineering Board Exam,  | 4         | 5.56       | 3    |
| PT Board Exam.           | 3         | 4.16       |      |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>72</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

**Professional Skills of the MBA Graduates**

Table 14 shows the distribution of respondent graduates by professional skills. First in the rank was computer skills with 34.38 percent followed by financial skills with 28.13 percent of the respondent graduates. Third was organizational skills with 15.62 percent followed by thinking and learning skills with 12.50 percent of the respondents' graduates. Results indicated that majority of the MBA graduates inclined on computer skills and financial skills and less on other skills (Encio *et al.*, 2016). The results are significant for both universities and employers. For the university, these findings highlight the importance of integrating practical computer and financial skill development into the MBA curriculum to meet industry demands and enhance graduates' competitiveness in the job market. This data informs educational strategies aimed at equipping students with essential technical and organizational competencies, ensuring they are well-prepared for diverse roles in today's digital and financial-driven business environments. For employers, understanding these skill preferences helps tailor job descriptions and training programs to match the strengths of MBA graduates, fostering a workforce that excels in critical areas such as technology utilization, financial analysis, and effective organizational management. This alignment ultimately enhances organizational efficiency and innovation while promoting continuous learning and professional development among employees.

**Table 14 Distribution of Respondents by Professional Skills**

| Professional Skills | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Computer            | 25        | 34.38      | 1    |
| Financial           | 20        | 28.13      | 2    |
| Organizational      | 12        | 15.62      | 3    |
| Thinking/Learning   | 9         | 12.50      |      |
| Language            | 4         | 6.25       |      |
| Writing             | 2         | 3.12       |      |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>72</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

**Traits or Values Developed by MBA Program that helped most in Business Ventures**

Table 15 shows the traits or values developed by the MBA Program that helped most in business ventures. First in the rank was endurance with 42.85 percent followed by honesty with 28.57 percent of the respondent graduates. Third in the category was resourcefulness and service with both having 14.29 percent. The

results hold significant implications for both universities and employers. For the university, these findings underscore the importance of fostering and emphasizing key personal and professional attributes within the MBA program that contribute to graduates' success in demanding roles. This includes cultivating endurance and honesty, which are crucial for navigating challenges and maintaining integrity in diverse business environments. Incorporating these values into curriculum and leadership development initiatives helps prepare students to meet ethical and operational standards expected by employers. For employers, understanding these attributes informs recruitment and talent management strategies, ensuring alignment with organizational values and culture. It enables the identification of candidates who possess the resilience, integrity, resourcefulness, and service orientation necessary to contribute positively to the workplace and uphold the organization's reputation and goals. This mutual understanding supports the development of strong partnerships between universities and employers, fostering a skilled and principled workforce capable of driving sustainable growth and success.

**Table 15 Distribution of Respondents by Traits or Values Developed by MBA Program that Helped Most in Business Venture**

| Values or Traits | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Endurance        | 3         | 42.85      | 1    |
| Honesty          | 2         | 28.57      | 2    |
| Resourcefulness  | 1         | 14.29      | 3    |
| Service          | 1         | 14.29      |      |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>7</b>  | <b>100</b> |      |

Table 16 shows the traits or values developed by the MBA Program that helped in performing further studies. First in the rank was endurance with 30.77 percent followed by teamwork with 23.08 percent of the respondent graduates. Third in the category was resourcefulness with 15.30 percent. Data showed that more of the MBA graduates had Endurance and Teamwork values in performing their post-graduate studies.

**Table 16 Distribution of Respondents by Traits or Values Developed by MBA Program that Helped Most in Performing Further Studies**

| Values or Traits | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Endurance        | 4         | 30.77      | 1    |
| Teamwork         | 3         | 23.08      | 2    |
| Resourcefulness  | 2         | 15.38      | 3    |
| Honesty          | 2         | 15.30      |      |
| Discipline       | 1         | 7.69       |      |
| Will to succeed  | 1         | 7.69       |      |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>13</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

Table 17 shows the traits or values developed by the MBA Program that help most in performing the current job. First in the rank was Teamwork with 26.92 percent followed by Endurance with 23.08 percent of the respondent graduates. Third in the rank was Honesty with 19.23 percent followed by Discipline with 15.38 percent of the respondent graduates. Data showed that teamwork and endurance were the leading values that helped the MBA graduates perform their current jobs. The results are crucial for both universities and employers. For the university, these findings underscore the importance of nurturing interpersonal and personal attributes within the MBA curriculum that are vital for effective teamwork and professional conduct. This includes cultivating skills in collaboration,

resilience, honesty, and discipline, which are essential for fostering a collaborative and ethical business environment. Incorporating these values into education and leadership development programs helps prepare students to excel in team-based projects and navigate complex organizational challenges. For employers, understanding these preferences informs recruitment strategies and talent development initiatives aimed at identifying candidates who possess the interpersonal and personal qualities necessary for successful teamwork, leadership, and ethical decision-making. This alignment ensures that graduates are well-equipped to contribute positively to organizational success and uphold professional standards in diverse business contexts.

**Table 17 Distribution of Respondents by Traits or Values Developed by MBA Program that Helped Most in Performing the Current Job**

| Values or Traits | Frequency | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------|-----------|------------|------|
| Teamwork         | 14        | 26.92      | 1    |
| Endurance        | 12        | 23.08      | 2    |
| Honesty          | 10        | 19.23      | 3    |
| Discipline       | 8         | 15.38      |      |
| Resourcefulness  | 6         | 11.54      |      |
| Will to succeed  | 2         | 3.85       |      |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>52</b> | <b>100</b> |      |

## CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there were more females than males who finished an MBA in Business and Management. In the region of origin, there were more MBA graduates from region 10, few from CARAGA region, and none from regions 1 to 9, 11, and 12. In terms of location of residence, more of the MBA graduates resided in Cagayan de Oro City, and only a few were from the municipalities or provinces. It was due to the distance that some students decided not to take an MBA at this university.

The majority of the MBA graduates continued their current jobs. Some pursued further studies, and only a few engaged in entrepreneurial activities. Of those who continued their current jobs, the majority of them were staff or rank and file, some were supervisors, and a few were assigned to managerial positions of the different businesses, industries, and government agencies in the country and abroad. For those who pursued further studies, the majority of them took and finished a degree of Doctor in Business Management, and only a few of them took and finished other post-graduate programs offered by the different universities in the country. The results implied that the curriculum of the MBA concentrated on areas of being employees and fewer subjects focused on entrepreneurial endeavors.

The majority of the MBA graduates were in the services sector, some in manufacturing, and a few were working in the agricultural sector. For those who were working, their main reason in pursuing further studies was promotion. Another reason was personal development. The MBA graduates were very good in computer skills, and financial skills, and were satisfactory in other skills. The majority of the MBA graduates were receiving Php15,000 and above and a few of them were receiving less than Php25,000 in their earnings per month after they finished the course. The majority of them passed the civil service eligibility and CPA board examination while taking the MBA program and some of them passed the licensure exams after they finished the course.

The study concluded that the leading common values practiced by MBA graduates that were most helpful in their endeavors were endurance, honesty, resourcefulness, and teamwork. Most of them showed the values of endurance and honesty. It might be inferred that MBA graduates of Business and Management might have these values because of the influence of the university's mission statement which highlights commitment and conscience. Such values were strongly espoused and practiced by the members of the University community.

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