

# **Bicol College Ed. D. and Ph. D. Graduates from 2012-2021: A Tracer Study**

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## **ABSTRACT**

A school tracer study is a research method used to track the progress and outcomes of a school's graduates over time. In addition, school tracer studies can help to identify trends and patterns in education and employment outcomes across different countries and regions, allowing for cross-country comparisons and the identification of best practices. A tracer study on the Master of Science Graduates in Disaster Risk Management of the Central Bicol State University of Agriculture determined the employability of the Master of Science in Disaster Risk Management (MSDRM) graduates to provide input to curriculum innovation. The majority of the tracer studies reviewed were from the undergraduate and master's levels. This tracer study on graduates of the doctoral programs, EdD and PhD of Bicol College Inc. is a novel undertaking. The descriptive–quantitative research design was used employing the saturated sampling technique. A database of these graduates was established, and it was found that lifelong learning and service to the community are very relevant among doctoral degree graduates. Open career for postdoctoral studies is a challenge to them. Results showed that the majority of the respondents are females, with ages ranging from 40-60 years old. It took them 3-5 years to complete the degree, enroll in the degree program for professional growth and mostly be promoted after completion. Ten

respondents obtained recognition and awards at the local, regional, national, and international level. One graduate even passed the Career Executive Service Written Examination, a qualification for directorship. It is concluded that the highest degree attained by an individual contributes to educational, socio-economic, and community development which leads to local and global recognition.

**Keywords** — Education, doctoral graduates, tracer study, descriptive-quantitative, Bicol College, Philippines

## INTRODUCTION

From a global perspective, as cited by World Bank (2018), school tracer studies are becoming increasingly important as more and more emphasis is placed on the role of education in preparing individuals for the workforce and life in general. According to UNESCO (2019), such studies can provide valuable information for policymakers, educators, and employers, helping them to better understand the effectiveness of different educational programs and identify areas for improvement. School tracer studies can help to identify trends and patterns in education and employment outcomes across different countries and regions, allowing for cross-country comparisons and the identification of best practices. Overall, school tracer studies provide a powerful tool for understanding the long-term impact of education on individuals and society as a whole, and they are likely to become increasingly important in the years ahead as the world continues to place a greater emphasis on education and workforce development.

In some ASEAN countries, tracer studies were also conducted. According to Latif and Bahroom (2010) of Open University Malaysia (OUM), the quality of a university can be determined by the evaluation made by its graduates. It also stated that more than three-quarters of the graduates embrace lifelong learning, as indicated by their willingness to attend additional training after graduation.

In another study in Indonesia by Heryanda (2018) from Ganesha University of Education, results showed that the graduates were quite satisfied with the learning experience during the course in the Management Department. The graduates (stakeholders) were satisfied with the ability of management department graduates. It was just the aspect of English language skills that was still considered less.

In Cambodia, Vong's (2012) study had an overall result of 86.4% of graduates have found gainful employment after graduation for 12 months, and the remainder is either in graduate school or still looking for acceptable work. According to the respondents, 45.3% intended to pursue further graduate

education at the RUPP (Royal University of Phnom Penh). In conclusion, the study finds that more MA labor-market-relevant programs should be established.

In Laos, a study by Sisavath (2020) of the National University of Laos, employment opportunities and challenges facing Lao graduates who studied abroad in China and returned home after graduation found that possessing a foreign degree alone was not sufficient to attain jobs unless it was complemented with foreign language fluency and employability skills such as communication skills and learning skills. The study also found that returning graduates tended to experience job mismatch and reverse culture shock in their career development.

A study conducted in Brunei Darussalam by Ebil et al. (2017) entitled “Brunei TVET Transformation: The Development of the Institute of Brunei Technical Education’s two Key Surveys,” on the transformation and modernization of Technical and Vocational education and training (TVET), which implemented six key changes and the shift from output-based performance measures to outcome-based measures. Outcome-based measures are preferred even if it requires a more sophisticated method of data collection. The two main outcome measures are the employability of graduates and employer satisfaction.

In the Philippines, the 4th Philippine Graduate Tracer Survey (GTS) report covers graduates from AY 2009-2011. 11,547 graduates were surveyed, representing 32.7% of the total sample. This GTS round piloted several study design improvements and administrative arrangements aimed at capacitating the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Several challenges affected the response rate, but it is still a successful demonstration of the desired GTS implementation setup for succeeding rounds, as found by Tutor et al. (2020).

A tracer study on the Master of Science Graduates in Disaster Risk Management of Central Bicol State University of Agriculture, Rabacal (2021) determined the employability of the Master of Science in Disaster Risk Management (MSDRM) graduates. A descriptive research design was utilized to describe the demographic profile, skills/competency learned, and suggestions to improve the program and provide input to curriculum innovation.

The majority of the tracer studies reviewed were from the undergraduate and master’s levels. This tracer study on graduates of the doctoral programs of Bicol College Inc. on the graduates of two doctoral programs, Ed. D and Ph.D. is a novel undertaking to establish a database of the doctoral graduates of the college for the last ten years (2012-2021). The research utilized the descriptive-quantitative design using a saturated sampling of 90 graduates- 57 from Ed. D and 33 from Ph.D. Due to the non-response of other graduates, only data from 28 respondents are included.

## FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of the study is based on McLeod (2007) Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the highest of which is self-actualization, the Outcome theory of Paul Duignan (2011), the theory of Change by Kurt Lewin (1951), and Leadership theory of Warren Bennis (1959), Father of leadership theory. According to him, "leadership is the result of the lifelong process of self-discovery. Leaders are made; they are not born."

McLeod (2007) Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory of motivation that states that five categories of human needs dictate an individual's behavior. Those needs are physiological, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and the highest self-actualization needs. This motivated the graduates of the doctoral programs of Bicol College.

Duignan's (2011) Outcomes-Focused Visual Strategic Planning is an applied implementation of outcomes theory. It is based on building a visual strategic plan and then using it for prioritization, performance management, and assessing organizational impact. An outcome is a state or condition that does not currently exist but must be in place for your initiative to work. It may represent a change in people, organizations, or places. Outcomes are the building blocks of the Theory of Change. In the doctoral programs, the expected outcome is: to produce highly trained and globally oriented scholars, researchers, and managers for both the government and private institutions capable of becoming productive members of society, imbued with the highest ideals in environmental, social, and spiritual values (CMO 15, 2019).

Lewin's (1951) Change theory describes that an individual and groups of individuals are influenced by obstacles that counter the driving forces, and there are also driving forces that influence the positive changes. Different interventions are needed in order to set the direction for positive changes to take place and improve the performance of the agency or organization.

Bennis' (2014) theory on leadership believed that leaders are formed via "crucible moments": formative events, critical struggles, or serious challenges that force people to learn, grow and think differently about themselves. According to him, there are five elements that characterize a leader: vision, passion, self-knowledge, integrity, and risk-taking. These traits will enable a leader to lead his group to attain the expected outcomes desired. Further, it is said that these traits are not inborn; they learn them as they experience their lives, mix with peers and work with experts in different fields. These are basic traits that a leader needs to serve as his guide as he manages an organization.

The paradigm shows that the different theories are interconnected as they contribute to the formulation of the researcher’s theory.

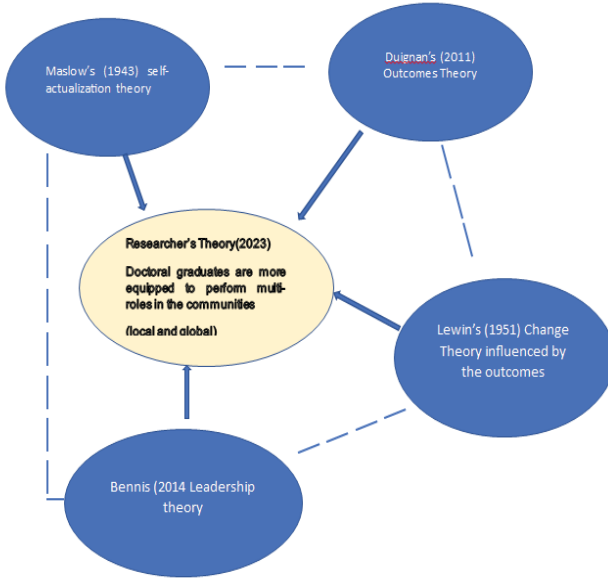


Figure 1 - Theoretical Paradigm

Figure 1. Theoretical Paradigm

The conceptual framework is based on Stufflebeam’s (1960) model of Context, Input, Process, and Product (output) (CIPP) curriculum evaluation. This CIPP evaluation model is a very popular method for evaluating the quality of programs and projects. It includes functional elements such as the input, processes, product, or output. Another element added is the outcome. The outcome is a further result of the output that is expected in terms of contributions to knowledge, the impact of a project, and expected behavioral change. This model was used for decision-making towards education improvement, especially graduate education. Program evaluation is important to assess the effectiveness of outcomes and decision-making policies in terms of their relevance and responsiveness to current trends and development.

**Context.** In this study, the context is the graduate programs that are Level 8 in the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) (EO 23, 2012 and RA 10968

“An Act Institutionalizing the Philippine Qualifications Framework or the PQF Law.) The graduate programs offered by Bicol College Inc. are the master’s and the doctoral programs. The master’s program is the requirement to be admitted to doctoral programs.

**Input.** This refers to the 53 graduates of the Ed. D. program and 37 graduates of the Ph. D. program, which totaled 90 alumni who are the respondents of the study. Their personal and professional profile, activities involved after completion of the degree, seminars attended, awards received, and postdoctoral studies completed.

**Process.** This refers to the research processes undertaken to derive the product or output and outcome. It includes data gathering through documentary analysis of the records of the graduates in the registrar’s office; review of related literature and studies, preparation and validation of the questionnaire; data gathering based on the answers in the questionnaire; data analysis, interpretation and discussion and formulation of the conclusions and recommendations.

**Product (Output).** The product is the database of the personal and professional profiles of doctoral graduates from 2012 - 2021. Another output is the new theory derived by the researcher.

**Outcome.** This refers to the activities involved by the graduates in their workplace and the socio-economic, civic, and economic contributions to their communities (local and global). Another outcome is the possible opening of doctoral programs for Business and Criminology. Possibly, a new program in AB Psychology and the revival of the AB in Legal Education. In the doctoral programs, the expected outcome is: to produce highly trained and globally oriented scholars, researchers, and managers for both the government and private institutions who are capable of becoming productive members of society, imbued with the highest ideals in environmental, social, and spiritual values, CHED Memorandum Order No. 15 (2019).

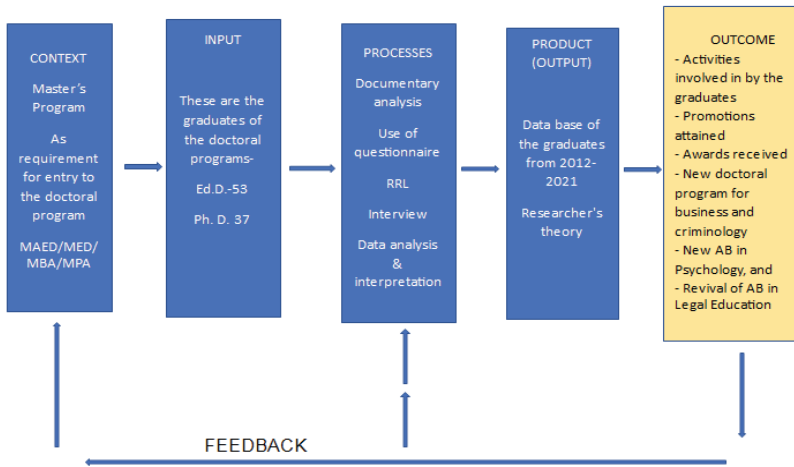


Figure 2. Conceptual Paradigm

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are to (1) establish a database of the doctoral graduates of the college for the last ten years; (2) create a pool of experts to serve as members of the Advisory Board and consultants in the different program offerings and future programs to be offered especially along curriculum and personnel requirements; (3) serve as employment providers for the school's graduates to maximize the utilization of human capital and (4) act as a catalyst of change along the social, educational, moral and economic development of the respective communities-local, national and international.

## METHODOLOGY

The study utilized the descriptive-quantitative design utilizing the saturated sampling method. The total respondents were the graduates for the ten-year period, which is 90:57 from the Ed. D. and 33 from the Ph.D. Programs.

Data gathered were from documentary analysis of records from the Registrar's office. A questionnaire was provided to the respondents for them to answer. This questionnaire was validated by three experts, the Research director, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and a senior faculty of the doctoral programs.

The questionnaire was sent both in soft and hard copies. The softcopy was in Google form. The respondents were informed that the data they provided in the questionnaire would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Only 28 respondents were able to return the questionnaires. The low turnout was due to the change in their assignment, change in contact number, unavailability of information about them, and one passed away. The percentage, ranking, and frequency count were used in the statistical treatment of the data.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Conducting a tracer study of a school's graduates is very important, especially in determining the acceptability of the school in the community. More enrolment means programs offered are relevant, have low tuition fees, highly qualified and dedicated faculty members, employability of its graduates, high passing percentage in bar and licensure examinations, number of accredited programs, and a culture of research in the school. This tracer study on the graduates of the doctoral programs offered in the school for the last ten years, from 2012 - 2021, is very timely, especially since the school will be celebrating its 82nd foundation anniversary.

This study was conducted due to the dearth of research on tracer studies among doctoral graduates, as revealed in the review of related studies. The majority of the tracer studies were on the undergraduate level of different programs. Listed below are the findings of the study conducted:

On the profile of the respondents, the majority of the graduates of both programs are females. The age ranged from 40 - 60 years old. This shows a mix of students - the young and the old in years, the young in terms of teaching experience, and those with more years of teaching experience. This is an indication of the strong motivation of graduate students to pursue the highest level of their careers in the teaching profession.

The number of years completing the degree ranged from 3-5 years. This shows that the students have different paces in the completion of their degrees. This is due to tight schedules, financial constraints, and other family concerns.

The majority of the reasons for enrolling in the doctoral program are for professional growth and development purposes. This shows the call for professionalism among the teachers.

On the status before enrollment in the doctoral program, during and after completion of the degree, the following were their positions in the respective workplace:



Before enrollment- Teacher 1, Teacher 3, Waterwork supervisor, Professor 1, Dean, and Academic Training Director.

During their schooling, some were promoted to managerial positions, Head Teacher 3, School Head, Professor 6, Headteacher 1, and Education Program Supervisor at the division level.

After completion of the degree, they were promoted to Assistant Department Head, Professor III, College Department Head, Head Teacher III, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Education Program Supervisor at the Regional level, and Head of HR department at the Dep-Ed national office, Dean College of Midwifery, Professor 6, Department Head, Senior High School Coordinator, Professor III, and Assistant Superintendent.

Based on the interview, some were not promoted due to the non-availability of vacant items. On the invitation to enroll in the program/ college, the number ranged from 2-10. In terms of the number of BC alumni applying to their agency, only a few answered yes. In terms of seminars attended, the majority have attended at the regional, national, and international levels based on their specialization. On the graduates' invitation to enroll in the program/ college, the average number is five.

Figure 3 shows the activities engaged in by the graduates. Rank 1 is teaching, followed by administrative and panel members in research defenses and conducting research, respectively. Some for consultancy, research advising, research presentation, and community service. Five (5) graduates are engaged in book writing. This is evidence of the outcomes of their completion of the doctoral degree.

Of the seminars attended, the majority have continuously attended seminars, webinars, fora and colloquia both local and international.

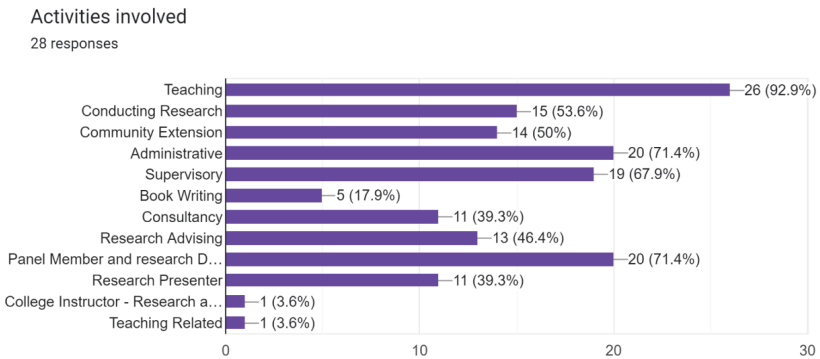


Figure 3. Activities Engaged in by the Graduates

The majority of the doctoral graduates employed BC graduates from their baccalaureate courses in their agencies. The reason for employing them is their specialization.

As catalysts of change along social, educational, moral, and economic development of the respective communities-local, national and international, some of the graduates were awarded recognition. There are four respondents who obtained awards. One obtained more than six awards in education at the international level after his completion of the degree, while another one obtained two awards for medicine at the national level. The rest received awards at the regional and local levels.

## Awards

**International.** International Award for Outstanding Research Management and Innovation in Basic Education 2021; International Award for Outstanding Educator in Research 2021; Outstanding School Administrator, Lumina Awards 2020; Outstanding in Community Engagement, Lumina Awards 2021; Silver, Most Inclusive Educational Programme in Asia 2019, 3rd Princess Maha Chakri Award 2022.

**National.** Outstanding UNESCO Club Educator of the Philippines; National Dangal ng Bayan Awardee 2020; Country Winner, SEAMEO Special Education Innovation Award 2022; Outstanding School Paper Adviser of the Philippines 2006; 2018 PMA Dr. Jose Rizal Award as outstanding Physician in Leadership and Community Service; The Outstanding Filipino Physician in 2022.

**Regional.** CSC Pag-asa Winner 2019 and Superintendent's Award.

**Local.** Most Outstanding Alumnus in the Field of Education 2017; Outstanding Alumnus of Bicol College 2016; Outstanding Alumni of BC; Outstanding School principal of Albay 2014; Most Outstanding Secondary School Paper Adviser of Bicol 2005; Outstanding School Paper Adviser of Legazpi 2003-2005; Outstanding Teacher of Legazpi (2002); Exemplar Award in Research; Nominated in PRAISE and Brigada Eskwela; Outstanding Teacher of Albay 2012; Outstanding School Head 2019, School Leader Excellence Award 2021; Outstanding Educator 2022; Outstanding Government Employee from the CSC; Excellence Award for two consecutive years from PGA Exemplary Award; Outstanding Alumna 2022 of Bicol University.

**The graduates indicated their Comments and suggestions as follows, (1)** The school can have a database of all its alumni, (2) Thank you/thank you BC,

(3) Continue this tracer program to know more about the status and whereabouts of the BC graduates, (4) Grateful to God for HE had guided me then to pursue a journey of higher studies in academic institutions (BC and UST) and ably finished them all with honors, (5) Continue your good service, (6) Proud BC Alumni, (7) BC has been instrumental in my personal and professional growth, (8) Thank you BC for being part of my professional development.

## CONCLUSION

It is, therefore, significant for company administrators to have a Continuous Personal Development Plan for their employees, both teaching and non-teaching, to make them perform effectively and efficiently in their roles and responsibilities and keep them highly motivated and retained in the institution. Since there is a dearth of studies on graduates of Master's and Doctoral degrees, this study can serve as a basis for the different activities involved by the graduates in academic, social, entrepreneurial, civic, and religious undertakings.

## TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The result of the study could be translated through a journal article for international publication, social media, newsletters, and other media for information dissemination and revisiting the institution's internal policies. In addition, both the external and internal stakeholders can make use of these research findings for more comprehensive academic and administrative policies. Intervention Programs can be enhanced to increase the interest of internal stakeholders and other professionals toward further studies. Finally, it can be shared with the present and future enrollees to realize the importance of attaining higher degrees in their profession.

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