

# Employment Status of Graduates in Post Baccalaureate Degree in Business Administration of one Higher Education Institution in the Philippines

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**Abstract** - The study explores on the employability of the Master in Business Administration (MBA) graduates. Differences on the responses of the graduates were also tested in the impact of MBA program to their job performance when group according to employment data. Descriptive type of research method was utilized in the study. Results revealed that all of the surveyed MBA graduates or 100 percent are presently employed locally during the data gathering. The MBA degree program gives them better opportunity to get new jobs, to be in a regular or permanent status and be considered for a job promotion. Furthermore, salaries and benefits as well as career challenge are some of the common reasons of MBA graduates for staying in their current jobs. They see themselves in five years time in the company on how they could handle responsibilities and how far they could move up their positions in the organization. The group of respondents with rank or clerical position has significantly higher responses in terms of the impact of MBA program to their job performance compared to the group of graduates with professional/ technical/ supervisory and managerial/ executive positions. The impact of the MBA to job performance could not be considered as factor to describe the competency of the graduates in terms of curriculum and student outcomes. It is suggested that there is a need to strengthen the research activities of the graduates through the initiative of the university to conduct collaborative research studies with the industry where the MBA graduates are currently employed and make them as co-authors to maximize the utilization of their acquired knowledge and skills in addressing the needs and demands of their respective organizations.

**Keywords:** *employability, business administration, student outcomes, curriculum*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Learning is always a significant part of educational process that seeks to develop and strengthen the knowledge, skills and values of every learner. Academic institutions of higher learning are constantly generating graduates who are capable of applying technology and knowledge-based information to the nature and demands of their work environment [1], [2]. The purpose of any educational institution is to provide quality human resources acceptable to employers and society [3] - [6].

Graduate Schools provide an environment for professionals to take an advanced degree programs to intensify their chosen career paths. The Master in Business Administration (MBA) is among those professional degrees that prepare the student to enter the world of business and employability or professional advancement may therefore be a desired outcome [7]. MBA as one of the graduate degree programs of Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas (LPU-B) has Level III Accreditation from Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities – Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA) is making its way to develop future business leaders.

Any Quality Assurance mechanisms either locally or internationally recognized that is being utilized and adopted by the HEIs must reflect on the quality of their graduates which is one way of measuring the performance of an institution [8], [9], [10], [11], [12], [13]. The outcomes-based education implementation of the University must also reflect to the quality of its graduates [14] to develop a competitive posture in international market [15].

Tracking the employment status of MBA graduates would provide baseline information on how they obtained relevant job assignments. Employment means any type of work performed or services rendered in exchange for compensation under a contract of hire which create the employer and employee relations.

The concept of employability revolves around the skills and competences [16], [17]-[22] of the graduates towards their motivation to find a job related to social, economic and cultural determining factors and its diverse effects on work-related, personal, economic, health-related and unemployment effects [2], [23]. One of the factors that determine the effectiveness of an academic institution is through the employability of its graduates. Assessing the effectiveness is an important part of the process in quality management system to determine the areas need for further improvement [24], [25]. The quality of graduates is very much a function of quality instruction [26], [27] and facilities because these will help ensure that graduates are equipped with the knowledge, skills and values that will enable them to work in their respective field [28], [29], [30].

Meñez [31] stated that earning Master degree is a self-fulfillment based on interviews with some of the MBA graduates from her previous study. Since most of the employed MBA graduates were deployed in private educational institution, they took the program as part of their educational benefits, and consider their enrolment a profitable personal venture.

Therefore, this study aims to identify the Employment Status of the MBA graduates and the impact of MBA program after graduation in terms of job performance; to test the difference in the impact of MBA program after graduation when grouped according to employment data; to propose an action plan for the student development program of MBA.

Academic institutions like any other business enterprises cater to the requirements of the clients and stakeholders. A commitment of addressing the gap is an utmost concern of this study to make the curriculum relevant [40], [41] to the needs and demands of the industry and the customers for sustainable graduate degree program and economic development.

## **METHODS**

The study used a descriptive type of research method. In descriptive-survey method research, participants answered the questions administered

through questionnaires. After the participants answered the questions, researchers described the responses given.

This study focuses on the 71 MBA graduates of LPU-Batangas from 2013 to 2015. Total population of graduates served as the actual respondents. Out of 71 total populations of MBA graduates from 2013 to 2015, there are 61 or 85.9 percent of them responded to the questionnaire sent through email and social media using Google Forms as online platform.

A survey questionnaire was used in the study to gather pertinent data about the employment status and impact of MBA program to job performance. In order for the survey to be both reliable and valid, it is important that the questions are constructed properly [32]. The instrument used to determine the employment status of the MBA graduates was adapted from the Graduate Tracer Study prescribed by the Commission on Higher education while the impact of the MBA program to the job performance of the respondents was adapted in the Performance Appraisal for Non-Teaching Personnel of Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas based on leadership brand of 4Cs with the permission from the Director of Human Resource Development and Management. This was content-validated by the Program Dean of Business Administration, Assistant Vice-President for Academics and Research and one Language teacher.

Names and email addresses of the MBA graduates were be obtained from the Strategic Communications and Alumni Affairs Office. The respondents were informed regarding the purpose of the study. The data gathered were treated with strict confidentiality and solely used for the purpose of this study. Questionnaires for the graduates and employers were sent to them through Facebook and Electronic Mail from February 25 to April 30, 2016.

Weighted mean, frequency count and percentage were used to describe the employment status of the graduates and t-test and Analysis of Variance were used to test the differences between and among the variables respectively.

The given scale was used to interpret the result of the study: 3.51 – 4.00: Very High Impact (VHI); 2.51 – 3.50: High Impact (HI); 1.51 – 2.50: Moderate Impact (MI); 0.51 – 1.50: Low Impact (LI); 0.00 – 0.50: No Impact (NI)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Distribution of Surveyed Graduate-Respondents

Year	Employed	%
2013	22	100
2014	27	100
2015	12	100
Total	61	100
Location of Employment		
Local	61	100
Abroad	0	0

Table 1 presents the distribution of surveyed graduate-respondents in terms of year of graduation and location of employment. It is very evident that 100 percent of the surveyed MBA graduates from 2013 to 2015 were employed locally during the data gathering which is higher than the result of employment rating which is 96 percent from 2008-2012 based on the study of Menez [31] among MBA graduates of LPU-Batangas. The MBA graduates choose to stay in the country and fulfill their profession while living with the family. Master's degree is one of the requirements for most companies in order to promote the employees from their current position. It gives certain level of accomplishment for the employees to finish higher degree of education which means they can handle higher responsibilities and assignments in the organization. Findings of the study of Hay and Hodgkinson [33] revealed a diversity of meanings given to MBA career success, with success generally being expressed in much broader terms than conventional notions of fast track career advancement.

Table 2. Employment Status and Job Level Position Before and After MBA Graduation

Employment Status	Before		After	
	F	%	f	%
Regular/Permanent	44	72.1	55	90.2
Casual/Contractual	11	18.0	3	4.9
Self-Employed	3	4.9	3	4.9
Unemployed	3	4.9	0	0.0
Job Level Position				
Rank or Clerical	27.0	44.3	10.0	16.4
Professional, Technical or Supervisory	25.0	41.0	33.0	54.1
Managerial or Executive	9.0	14.8	18.0	29.5

Table 2 presents the employment status and job level position before and after MBA Graduation. There are 44 graduates or 72.1 percent having regular or permanent status and 11 or 18 percent with casual or contractual status before MBA graduation and the number of regular/permanent status increases to 55 or 90.2 percent and those graduates with casual/contractual status decreases to 3 or 4.9 percent after MBA graduation. There are also 3 or 4.9 percent having no employment before graduation and landed the job after MBA graduation. Meanwhile, the three (3) graduates who are self-employed before MBA graduation were still self-employed after they finished the degree program.

This signifies that MBA program might help those employees under contract to get better opportunity to have regular status and be employed again. Most of them were given the greater chance to move in the corporate ladder from rank or clerical to technical or supervisory until they achieve the managerial position. Knowledge and skills acquired from advanced studies are important aspects in job promotion as well as the attitude towards work and behavior in certain condition or situation in the organization. Mihail and Elefterie [34] noted that MBA studies have a positive effect on skills, employability and compensation and a much moderate effect on career advancement.

Number one requirement for teachers in the academic institutions is the completion of Master's degree before they can be considered for regularization aside from other conditions and policies of the company for this purpose. A growing number of employees and newly graduates must be fully equipped with knowledge and skills to be competitive in their respective field [35]. Attending advanced studies in business administration provides wider perspective on leadership and management towards the attainment corporate vision and mission. It keeps on giving up-to-date information on how to deal with problems and issues on a certain level or degree of responsibility.

Therefore, professionals are now seeking for advanced studies in the graduate school to enhance their knowledge and skills that can be of great help to effectively and efficiently perform their work assignments. They keep on believing that they need to wait the right time for them to be considered for the next promotion and one of their preparations is through taking advanced studies wherein their experience in the company will be supported by their educational background.

Table 3. Reason(s) for staying on the job

Reason(s) for staying on the job	f	%
Salaries and benefits	45	73.8
Career challenge	39	63.9
Related to special skill	24	39.3
Related to MBA	21	34.4
Proximity to residence	19	31.2
Peer influence	3	4.9
Family influence	9	14.8

\*Multiple Responses

Table 3 shows the reason(s) of the MBA graduates for staying on the job. Salaries and benefits (73.8 percent) served as the number one (1) with the most number of graduates answered as their reason for staying on the job followed by career challenge (63.9 %) and related to special skill (39.3%) while the least reasons are family (14.8 %) and peer (4.9%) influence. Celis et al. [29] also noted that salaries and benefits play a big role in staying or leaving the first job.

It is considered rewarding for a job with higher salaries and numerous benefits being given by the company to its employees. It serves as extrinsic motivating factor to stay the employees in the company especially if they have proper orientation and awareness on how they will be given opportunity for professional growth and on how they see themselves five (5) to ten (10) years as member of the organization. The career path they are currently heading to gives them a sort of confidence that they are still on the right track with the skills related to business administration and the attitude they possessed towards work.

It is worthy to note in Table 4 that 31 or 50.8 percent of the graduates answered that their present job is much related to business administration while 24 or 39.3 percent have very much related job and only 6 or 9.8 percent of them have slightly related jobs to business administration. Almost 90 percent of them have much to very much related jobs to business administration.

This signifies that they can really apply what they have learned from the graduate program as they go along with the business operations of their respective companies. The relevance of the job to educational qualification is always necessary to consider in the hiring process of the human resource management in order to avoid job mismatch to the skills of the employees. Expertise on the job assignment is an

essential element of productivity that gives huge contribution to the success of the business enterprise.

Table 4. Relevance of present Job to Business administration, Length of stay in the present Job and Estimated Percentage of Increase in Gross Monthly Earning After MBA Graduation

Relevance of Present Job to Business Administration	f	%
Very Much Related	24	39.3
Much Related	31	50.8
Related	-	-
Slightly Related	6	9.8
Not Related	-	-
Length of stay in the present Job		
6 months and below	7	11.5
7 to less than 1 year	-	-
1 year to less than 3 years	16	26.2
3 years to less than 5 years	9	14.8
5 years and above	29	47.5
Estimated Percentage of Increase in Gross Monthly Earning After MBA Graduation		
No increase yet	3	4.9
1% to 5%	9	14.8
6% to 10%	17	27.9
11% to 15%	6	9.8
more than 15%	26	42.6

Almost half of them or 47.5 percent stayed in their present job for more than 5 years and 26.2 percent of the graduates have length of service with 3 years to less than 5 years. The least group of graduates has stayed for less than 6 months (11.5%). It is not easy to establish respect and trust from other people in the company. It entails a lot of good work and requires great interpersonal skill to get along with all the people in the organization with diverse cultural background. Staying on one job for several years and studying the culture of the organization and being with them in solving current issues and challenges would give a clear picture on what role a person needs to portray in the company which is already beyond the weight of the salaries and benefits.

There are more than 15% increase in salary was received by the 26 or 42.6 percent of the MBA graduates while between 6 to 10 percent increase was given to 17 or 27.9 percent. Nine (9) or 14.8 percent of them received 1 to 5 percent increase and 6 or 9.8 percent received a salary increase between 11 to 15 percent. However, 3 or 4.9 percent of them still haven't received any increase yet. The given percentage of increased is based on the size and

capability of the company to provide with the employees. It does not necessarily mean by this result that those who received low percentage of increase are also those employees with low salary. There might be some cases even they received low percentage of increase they still get higher than those with high percentage of salary increase.

Table 5 presents the impact of MBA Program to the present job performance of the graduates. MBA program provides a high impact on the present job of the graduates that improves their performance in keeping orderly and up-to-date records and submits ahead of time accurate, reliable, complete and

presentable reports (3.05) and in applying sound reasoning and good judgment (3.00). Meñez [31] mentioned that “graduates of Master’s degree believed that their skill acquired is counted as contributory to their efficiency and effectiveness in performing their new task” (p.17).

Putting learning into practice is the way graduates explore the possibilities of making improvement in the old manner they do their tasks or assignments. Having given greater responsibilities in the department or in the organizations makes value to the knowledge and skills gained from the degree program in the graduate school.

Table 5. Impact of MBA Program to Present Job Performance

Competence	WM	VI	Rank
<b>MBA Program improves my job performance in...</b>			
1. providing accomplished volume of work that exceeds the expected output within the desired time frame	2.95	HI	3.5
2. performing tasks using appropriate application of technology with very little supervision	2.79	HI	5
3. applying sound reasoning and good judgment	3.00	HI	2
4. recommending new ideas, methods or improvisation to make the work better	2.95	HI	3.5
5. keeping orderly and up-to-date records and submits ahead of time accurate, reliable, complete and presentable reports	3.05	HI	1
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>HI</b>	
<b>Commitment</b>			
1. accepting willingly and performing leadership roles in various activities with an exceptional sense of duty and dependability	3.05	HI	1
2. providing necessary support, service and assistance for the welfare of the organization	2.84	HI	3
3. demonstrating passion for execution and sense of urgency in all tasks	2.68	HI	4
4. transcending personal needs when organizational concerns need to be attended to	2.63	HI	5
5. participating in making decisions and implementing the activities based on strategic plans.	3.00	HI	2
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>HI</b>	
<b>Caring</b>			
1. Fostering the sense of family in the workplace by helping co-employees with difficulty in completing some tasks	2.84	HI	5
2. Maintaining harmonious and friendly relations with superior, peers and subordinates through respecting their individual differences	3.16	HI	1.5
3. Showing marked interest and pride in the present job by completing tasks on time	3.05	HI	3.5
4. Promoting positive image of the department through serving customers effectively	3.16	HI	1.5
5. Demonstrating the significant values of the organization in achieving its vision and mission	3.05	HI	3.5
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.05</b>	<b>HI</b>	
<b>Credibility</b>			
1. becoming a model of leadership who adheres to the policies, rules and regulations of the organization	3.16	HI	4
2. practicing honesty, fairness and transparency in all my business transactions with the stakeholders	3.26	HI	2
3. protecting and preserving company’s property through careful and wise use of the resources	3.05	HI	5
4. demonstrating professionalism in dealing with colleagues	3.21	HI	3
5. setting oneself as an example of moral and ethical behavior to all stakeholders	3.32	HI	1
<b>Composite Mean</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>HI</b>	

They also apply business leadership and management concepts and principles that are suitable to their respective work environments. Knowing something about the issues and challenges of businesses in the Philippines and abroad provides greater view on how to offer solutions based on sound reasoning that would contribute in creating strategic plans of the company.

It also improves their performance in providing accomplished volume of work that exceeds the expected output within the desired time frame (2.95) and recommending new ideas, methods or improvisation to make the work better (2.95). However, performing tasks using appropriate application of technology with very little supervision (2.79) obtained the least score with high impact verbal interpretation. The computed mean score of 2.95 implies that the MBA program provides high impact on the job performance of the graduates in terms of competence. Mastery of the job assignments makes them work faster than the usual. In addition to that fact, further background and information in terms of managing the operations and leading techniques in financial and resource management serves as their guide to offer suggestions and some innovations on how to increase business performance. Meanwhile, technology-based approach to business is still work in progress among the organizations due to expensive acquisition of those devices, equipment and application software to improve productivity. Latest trends and updates in technology should not be the least priority of the business enterprises in order for their people to keep abreast of the information technology that is in demand and be updated every now and then.

MBA program provides a high impact on the present job of the graduates that improves their performance in accepting willingly and performing leadership roles in various activities with an exceptional sense of duty and dependability (3.05) and participating in making decisions and implementing the activities based on strategic plans (3.00). It also provides high impact in providing necessary support, service and assistance for the welfare of the organization (2.84) and demonstrating passion for execution and sense of urgency in all tasks (2.68). However, transcending personal needs when organizational concerns need to be attended to (2.63) obtained the least score with high impact verbal interpretation. The computed mean score of 2.84 implies that the MBA program provides high impact

on the job performance of the graduates in terms of commitment.

Maturity and professionalism are vital traits in the trade wherein very often, a systematic approach and a broader perspective are the results of experience in the field through possessing strong work ethics which is essential in achieving the goals of the organization [36]. Giving higher duties and responsibilities makes them feel more valued as part of the organization. MBA graduates are matured enough to recognize their accountabilities and the consequences that will occur once failure happens in the team. It helps build a community of people with sense of urgency, unity and commitment to the organization that every decision they make based on their plans, they ensure that everyone will support each other to correct the mistakes and learn the lessons from their experiences.

MBA program provides a high impact on the present job of the graduates that improves their performance in maintaining harmonious and friendly relations with superior, peers and subordinates through respecting their individual differences (3.16) and promoting positive image of the department through serving customers effectively (3.16). Communicating with different people also requires a higher level of understanding of people's nature and attitude [36], [37]. MBA program also provides high impact in showing marked interest and pride in the present job by completing tasks on time (3.05) and demonstrating the significant values of the organization in achieving its vision and mission (3.05). However, fostering the sense of family in the workplace by helping co-employees with difficulty in completing some tasks (2.84) obtained the least score with high impact verbal interpretation. The computed mean score of 3.05 implies that the MBA program provides high impact on the job performance of the graduates in terms of caring.

MBA program provides a high impact on the present job of the graduates that improves their performance in setting oneself as an example of moral and ethical behavior to all stakeholders (3.32) and practicing honesty, fairness and transparency in all my business transactions with the stakeholders (3.26). It also provides high impact in demonstrating professionalism in dealing with colleagues (3.21) and becoming a model of leadership who adheres to the policies, rules and regulations of the organization (3.16). A captivating and impressive personality is important for MBA graduates having a work profile where they have to interact with clients from different

nations and head different kinds of projects. A strong and impressive personality is a result of two important traits that include confidence in one's abilities and a superior choice. MBA graduates have to possess these two qualities to make a lasting impression (Nair, 2015). However, protecting and preserving company's property through careful and wise use of the resources (3.05) obtained the least score with high impact verbal interpretation. The computed mean score of 3.20 implies that the MBA program provides high impact on the job performance of the graduates in terms of credibility.

The study of Camuffo, Gerli, Borgo and Somià [38] revealed that the degree of competency development during the MBA programme enhances career advancement, and that some competencies, like planning, result orientation, networking, organizational awareness, system thinking and use of technology, do so particularly, which is consistent with literature on career competencies.

Table 6 reveals the difference in the impact of MBA program after graduation when grouped according to employment data. The leadership brand of the University in terms of competence, commitment, credibility and collaboration makes the MBA graduates of LPU-Batangas different from the graduates of other universities. At the same time, the implementation of outcomes-based education of the University also provides a teaching and learning experience more significant to the students [39]. The impact of MBA program to the graduates are measured using 4Cs in order to demonstrate its relevance to the outcomes of instruction, research and extension service of the University. The general findings reveal that the MBA program improves the way they perceive work as part of their personal and professional growth. It enhances their job performance and interest to serve better the customers and clients

of the company. They keep in mind the attainment of vision and mission of the organization is dependent on the consolidated performance and effort of every member of the institution.

The group of respondents with rank or clerical position has significantly higher responses in terms of the impact of MBA program to their job performance compared to the group of graduates with professional/ technical/ supervisory and managerial/ executive positions as denoted by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The MBA program gives them greater opportunity to enhance their job performance more effectively and efficiently although they are still on that position, they keep on applying what they have learned from the program to achieve their goal of promotion.

The group of graduates with three (3) to less than five (5) years length of stay in the jobs has significantly higher responses in terms of the impact of MBA program to their job performance compared to other groups as denoted by the computed p-values which are greater than the 0.05 level of significance. They were considered in the middle group.

The group of graduates with 1% to 5% of increase in salary has significantly higher responses in terms of the impact of MBA program to their job performance as to competence compared to other groups with 6 to 10% and 11 to 15% as denoted by the computed p-value of 0.042 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

### Proposed action plan

The proposed action plan focuses on the development of the students towards their job performance which needs to enhance the way MBA graduates utilized applicable information technology in their respective work places.

Table 6. Difference in the impact of MBA program after graduation when grouped according to employment data

Employment Data	Competence		Commitment		Caring		Credibility	
	f-value	p-value	f-value	p-value	f-value	p-value	f-value	p-value
Current Job Position	4.883	.011*	5.484	.007*	11.488	.000*	7.105	.002*
Job Relevance to Business Administration	2.569	.086	.749	.478	1.516	.229	.1064	.352
Length of stay in the present Job	7.167	.000*	6.082	.001*	9.468	.000*	5.305	.003*
Estimated Percentage of Increase in Gross Monthly	3.745	.042*	1.367	.263	.829	.484	.854	.471

\*significant at 0.05 (two-tailed)

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study explores on the employability of the MBA graduates as well as how the employers assessed their competency based on the curriculum of the degree program and students outcomes. All of the surveyed MBA graduates or 100 percent are presently employed locally during the data gathering. The MBA degree program gives them better opportunity to get new jobs, to be in a regular or permanent status and be considered for a job promotion. Furthermore, salaries and benefits as well as career challenge are some of the common reasons of MBA graduates for staying in their current jobs. They see themselves in five years time in the company on how they could handle responsibilities and how far they could move up in the organizational chart.

MBA graduates believed that the MBA program improves the way they perform their respective work assignments in relation to personal and professional growth. It enhances their job performance and interest to further commit their time and effort to better serve the customers. Furthermore, there is a significant difference in the impact of MBA program to their job performance when they are grouped according to position and length of stay in the job. The action plan for the MBA student development program was proposed in order to address the identified gaps in the knowledge and skill development among the graduate students.

Follow-up study may be conducted to determine the extent on how they contribute to the economic development in provincial, regional, national or international level. Continuous monitoring of MBA graduates is suggested to get some information from them in terms of MBA curriculum review and revision as well as their achievements as professionals. Sending them online newsletter about the Graduate School and the activities of the University may keep them informed and connected to their alma mater.

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