

A Tracer Study of the PhdEm Graduates of Saint Paul University Philippines (SPUP)

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Abstract

This tracer study aimed to obtain graduates' assessment of the graduate school program and the effect of obtaining the degree in their profession life. The research utilized the descriptive survey method, covered the population [38] of PhD-Educational Management graduates from the school year 2009-2010 to 2013-2014. Results reveal that majority of the participants are female, working in the public school, and teaching in the basic education level. Majority are promoted after 1 to 2 years of obtaining the degree and most are promoted from a teacher rank to administrative position, which brought increment to their salary scale. In addition, there is a 'very great extent' of attainment of the graduate schools' mission, vision, and goals in instruction and the objectives and outcomes of the PhD-Educational Management Program. Among the personal gains derived from pursuing the degree is their strong community engagement, promotion, deep sense of spirituality, compassionate care with others, self-confidence, higher self-esteem, resilience and confidence in dealing with personal problems. Further, the degree had enhanced the participants' knowledge and skills in their teaching and managerial functions.

Keywords: Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Management, graduate school, tracer study

Introduction

Education makes its special contribution to training an individual to bring about change in behavior, develop innate capacities, and leads toward a successful life (Qureshi ,2017). Education enhances one's awareness of all the knowledge that is available out there for them to learn, and that will help them to progress and develop further(Khan, 2017). Education provides the necessary tools and trainings to students to prepare them in meeting the demands of the workplace. With this, educational institutions have been introducing innovations in their curriculum, activities to enrich their learning experiences, conducive learning environment in school to ensure highly competitive graduates. Innovative programs are offered to ensure that graduates will acquire the desired attributes of the 21st-century workplace.

In the context of globalization and ASEAN integration, the improvement of quality of education is of prime importance and relevance. If education were to respond to the global and local phenomena to ensure individual success and society's progress, it must have a strong stand for reform and change. It must continue to pursue innovations, new dimensions, new ways of thinking, and doing things. It must keep abreast of the changes to be relevant to the times and to cope with the challenges of the future.

A rational approach to responding to these challenges is for educational institutions to continually pursue and evaluate programs intended to make the curricula relevant and functional. Every school program is designed with certain goals. The evaluation would serve as a very useful tool to determine whether such a program is achieving stated goals and to decide on changes or innovations for program enhancement.

The reputation of any educational institution depends upon its good product, its graduates. Ultimately, the alumni are seen as the factor that brings encouragement, strength, and expansion to institutions' reputations and progress (Faize, Ahmed, and Jabeen, 2015).

The alumni are considered as the best evidence of a program's effectiveness in terms of employment and positions held. Moreover, they are a good source of feedback regarding the program's relevance in the current labor market.

Graduate tracer studies are one form of empirical research that can appropriately provide valuable information for evaluating the results of the education and training of a specific institution of higher education (Woya, 2019). This is a reliable tool for universities to determine the quality, the extent of functionality of the services they deliver to their graduates. It can collect essential information concerning the employment profile of graduates, their experiences in schools, the first and current jobs of graduates, and the relevance of their educational background and skills required in their careers. Tracer studies collect data on the employment situation of recent graduates to obtain indicators for their professional performance (Teichler, 1998). Graduate tracer study can also collect data on the relevance of the curriculum and graduates' level of satisfaction with their academic preparation.

They provide a sound basis for intentional improvement of both contents (curricula and related activities) and delivery of their educational services such as teaching and learning. They can, therefore, be used to contribute to causal explanations of the relevance and appropriateness of the study conditions, services, and programs provided by HEIs and the quality of the graduate product (Teichler 2011, Schomburg and Teichler 2011, Herrmann 2010). Tracer studies could also draw recommendations from the perspective of the graduates. Revelations from graduate tracer studies have the potential for policy and practice change that can shape both academics and development (Ulrich Teichler (2003) and OECD (1999). It enables universities to make informed and evidence-based decisions about improvements in quality education in higher education (Schomburg, 2011). Graduate tracer studies are to incorporate effective advances into institutional programs of HEIs by collecting and analyzing information on graduate's study experiences, professional and personal careers.

St. Paul University Philippines, one of the premier universities in the northern Philippines, has been offering quality Catholic Paulinian education from Basic Education to the Graduate School Level. The graduate school has been offering varied curricular program offerings in the Masteral and Doctoral levels. One of the course programs offered at this level is the PhD-Educational Management degree that provides professional training for teachers and school administrators to enhance their craft in teaching and management. With its quest to sustain the responsiveness of its curricular program offerings, the SPUP Graduate School Department aimed to conduct an assessment of its Ph.D. major Educational Management (PhD EM) Program to determine whether the program is bringing an appropriate response to the needs of the graduate school students. It is then the purpose of this study to conduct a follow-up of the Ph.D. EM graduates of SPUP in terms of their extent of productivity, to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of this program to the demands of the society it serves.

In this study, the productivity of the graduates is being assessed in an attempt to determine the relevance and effectiveness of the PhD major in Educational Management program of SPUP in the different fields of specialization.

Statement of the Problem

1. What is the profile of the participants in terms of the following:

1.1 Gender;

1.2 the organization currently working with; and

1.3 promotion details?

1.3.1 promotion status

1.3.3 waiting period prior to promotion

1.3.4 position

1.3.4 salary

2. What are the participants' community engagements after having obtained their PhD EM degree?

3. What is the participants' assessment on the extent to which the University through its Graduate School attains the following vision, mission, goals, and objectives?

4. What are the participants' perceptions of the contributions of having obtained the degree, Ph.D. EM to the enhancement of their personal life and professional life?

5. What are the participants' suggestions to further enhance the Ph.D. EM program and its implementation in terms of its relevance, quality, and responsiveness to the industry?

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study attempted to assess the productivity of the Ph.D. EM graduates of SPUP in terms of their promotion rate and status, degree of satisfaction of their pupils/students as well as their school heads, the graduates' degree of satisfaction concerning the changes that have occurred in their lives as a result of their attainment of the PhD degree, and their teaching/administrative competence.

Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive survey method was employed as it obtains information on graduates' personal and professional profile and assessment of their school experiences based upon interviews and surveys.

Participants of the Study

The study participants include 38 graduates of the PhD-Educational Management graduates for the last five school years, 2009-2010 and 2013-2014, who are presently employed in both public and private schools. A total of 38 teacher-respondents were taken. The distribution of respondents per school is found in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants of the Study

Academic Year	Frequency	Percentage
2019-2020	4	10.53
2018-2019	9	23.68
2017-2018	4	10.53
2016-2017	5	13.16
2015-2016	6	15.79
2014-2015	10	26.32
	38	100.00

Instrumentation

The instrument used in the student is a self-made questionnaire that integrates all needed information in a tracer study. The tool has four parts. Part I deals with graduate’s profile, Part II deals with the University Vision-Mission, Goals and Objectives, Ph.D. program outcomes and objectives, Part III and IV are open-ended questions to elicit information on the participants’ perception on the contribution of the degree in their personal and professional lives as well as their suggestions for further enhancement of the PhD-Educational Management program.

Data Gathering Procedure

The questionnaires were sent to the participants through google forms. Online interviews were conducted to substantiate further the data obtained from the survey forms. These data were organized and were subjected to statistical treatment.

Data Analysis

The following statistical tools were used in the treatment of the data:

The frequency count and percentage to present the profile of the graduates.

The weighted mean was used to determine the graduates’ assessment of the extent of attainment of the graduate schools’ vision, mission, goals, and objectives. The weighted means were further interpreted using the five-point Likert scale as follows:

Scale	Scale Range	Descriptive Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	Very Great Extent
4	3.40-4.19	Great Extent
3	2.60-3.39	Moderate Extent
2	1.80-2.59	Low Extent
1	1.00-1.79	Very Low Extent

Thematic analysis was used to organize the participants’ responses to the open-ended questions.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Participants

Table 1 show that the majority [63.9%] of the participants are female.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants When Grouped According to Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	13	36.1
Female	23	63.9
Total	36	100.0

Table 2 shows that the majority [86.11%] of the participants is teaching in a public agency, indicating that the largest cohort of PhD-Educational Management students are government employees. Of those government employees, 61.11% are teaching in the Basic Education Level, while 25.00% are in higher education level. The 13.89% of teachers in the private school comprise 11.11% of teachers in colleges and universities, while only 2.78% are in the basic education level. Also, the majority [63.89%] of the participants are teaching at the basic educational level, while 36.11% are at higher academic levels. The largest cohort of teachers in basic education and higher education are in government schools.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants When Grouped According to Organization Currently Working With

Agency	Level		Total
	Basic Education	Higher Education	
Public School	22[61.11%]	9[25.00%]	31[86.11%]
Private School	1[2.78%]	4[11.11%]	5[13.89%]
Total	23[63.89%]	13[36.11%]	36[100.00%]

Table 3 reveals that the majority [88.9%] of the participants are promoted in the current position after obtaining their Ph.D. degree, most [33.3%] of which are promoted after 3 or more years. Furthermore, the most [41.7] teachers were promoted from the teacher rank to administrative position while 36.1% are those who hold administrative position who are promoted to a higher- level administrative position. The data imply that obtaining a Ph.D. degree is an influential factor where the promotion of the participants to a higher rank is attributed. The ranking scheme for promotion offers a higher point for professional upgrading, especially for full-pledge Ph.D. graduates.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants When Grouped According to Promotion Details

Variables	Specifics	Frequency	Percent[%]
Promotion Status	Promoted	32	88.9
	Not Promoted	4	11.1
Waiting Period Before Promotion	After 3 years or longer	12	33.3
	After 2 years to less than 3 years	10	27.8
	After 1 year to less than 2 years	10	27.8
	After 1 year	4	11.1
Promoted Position	No Change in Position	3	8.3
	Higher Level Rank (Administrative Position)	13	36.1
	Teacher Rank to Administrative Position	15	41.7
	Higher Level Rank (Within Teacher Level Position)	5	13.9

Table 4 shows that the highest cohort of participants has salaries ranging from 41,000-45,999, followed by those with salaries ranging from 51,000-55,999. Also, the largest proportion of participants has salaries ranging from 46,000-50,999. After pursuing a Ph.D. degree, the participants obtained a salary increment as a result of promotion to a higher rank or position.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants When Grouped According to Salary Range

Salary Range (Php)	Salary Before Promotion		Current Salary	
	Frequency	Percent[%]	Frequency	Percent[%]
66,000.00 and above	2	5.6	2	2.8
61,000.00-65,999.00	2	5.6	2	5.6
56,000.00-60,000.00	8	22.2	5	5.6
51,000.00-55,999.00	9	25.0	10	13.9
46,000.00-50,999.00	2	5.6	7	27.8
41,000.00-45,999.00	10	27.8	5	19.4
36,000.00 – 40,999.00	3	8.3	4	13.9
31,000.00 - 35,999.00	2	5.6	1	11.1
Total	36	100.0	36	100.0

As shown in Table 5, the integration of the graduate schools' mission, vision, and goals in instruction yielded positive results since the participants assess its attainment to a 'very great extent'. The teaching-learning tasks reflects these said school characteristics.

Table 5. Participants’ Assessment of the Extent of Attainment of the Graduate Schools’ Mission, Vision, and Goals Indicators

Indicators	Mean	DI
<i>Mission</i> : SPUP has formed competent servant leaders and responsible citizens of their communities, country, and the world.	4.94	Very Great Extent
<i>Vision</i> : Motivated by the gospel and guided by the teachings of the Church, SPUP has helped uplift the quality of life and to effect social transformation through:		
1. quality research and creative work;	5.00	Very Great Extent
2. servant leadership; and	5.00	Very Great Extent
<i>Category Mean</i>	4.85	Very Great Extent
<i>Graduate School Goals</i> : Philippines, through its Graduate School has:	St. Paul University	
1. produced outstanding Christian leaders and positive role models for the enrichment, transmission, and preservation of Filipino cultural heritage and the environment;	4.75	Very Great Extent
2. upgraded the graduate students’ competencies in their respective fields of specialization for global competitiveness;	4.72	Very Great Extent
3. engaged in effective inquiry and contributed to the continued improvement of services and management of programs, offices, and organizations;	4.72	Very Great Extent
4. stimulated and maintained productive and functional research in all fields of endeavor that will improve educational theory and practice in the different aspects of education;	4.19	Great Extent
5. enhanced competence in teaching, leadership and governance, supervision and management, health care and practice, information and communications technology, business administration, humanities, and social sciences;	4.11	Great Extent
6. fostered students’ profound spirituality anchored on the Gospel values;	4.39	Very Great Extent
7. promoted students’ sound relationship with God, self, others, and the environment with compassion, respect, dignity, and empathy	4.53	Very Great Extent
Overall Mean	4.49	Very Great Extent

Table 6 whows that the specific objectives of the SPUP graduate school are consistently assessed to have been achieved to a ‘Very Great Extent’. These objectives are specially integrated into all aspects of graduate school instruction.

Table 6. Participants’ Assessment of the Extent of Attainment of the Graduate Schools Objectives

Graduate School Objectives The graduates of the SPUP Graduate School are able to:	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. manifest outstanding servant Christian leadership to help improve the quality of life in society and the workplace;	4.83	Very Great Extent
enhance their competencies to respond to the needs of the various communities they serve locally and globally;	4.81	Very Great Extent
2. engage in relevant and scholarly research that will contribute to the continued improvement of processes, services, practices in all fields of endeavor, and management of programs, offices, and organizations;	4.42	Very Great Extent
3. apply knowledge, skills, and values in leadership and governance, supervision and administration, health care practice and management, information and communications technology, business administration, humanities, and social sciences for the effective and efficient delivery of services;	4.42	Very Great Extent
4. serve as positive role models for the enrichment, transmission, and preservation of cultural heritage, and sustainable national and global development;	4.75	Very Great Extent
5. exhibit a sound relationship with God, self, others, and the environment with compassion, respect, dignity, and empathy; and	4.81	Very Great Extent
6. manifest the Paulinian Core Values in the society and the workplace	4.83	Very Great Extent
Category Mean	4.69	Very Great Extent

Table 7 shows that the program educational objectives of the Ph.D. Educational Management Program are attained to a ‘very great extent’. The instructional activities of the Ph.D. Educational Management Program is carefully crafted to integrated these specific program objectives, thus, contributing significantly to the ‘very great extent’ of alignment of the said program objectives.

Table 7. Participants' Assessment of the Extent of Attainment of the PHD-Educational Management Program Educational Objectives

Program Educational Objectives	Mean	DI
Students of the degree, Doctor of Philosophy in Education, major in Educational Management are expected to:	4.03	Great Extent
demonstrate competence and expert level of theoretical knowledge to undertake advanced independent research in educational administration and management;	3.97	Great Extent
pursue academic excellence through a structured system of studies in philosophy, management, and research;	4.11	Great Extent
generate and sustain a high degree of professionalism and consistent diligence in all phases of human resource development, specifically in the art of conjugating theory into practice and of converting knowledge into acceptable norms of conduct and deportment, as evidenced by internal efficiency;	4.58	Very Great Extent
maintain the respect and trust of the community through manifestations of high morale, a proper sense of values, and commitment to the profession; and	4.67	Very Great Extent
manifest Christian leadership skills for the preservation of sound family life, Filipino cultural heritage and the environment.	4.18	Great Extent
Overall Mean	4.26	Very Great Extent

Table 8 shows that the participants' assessed the attainment of the outcomes of the PhD-Educational Management Program to a 'very great extent'. This result means that the graduates demonstrate these learning outcomes as they deal with varied groups of people in the society and workplace.

Table 8. Participants' Assessment of the Extent of Attainment of the Outcomes of the PhD-Educational Management Program

Graduates of the degree Ph.D. in Educational Management can:	Mean	DI
1. demonstrate a comprehensive and profound understanding of the complex and coherent body of knowledge that is at the forefront of educational management;	4.75	Very Great Extent
2. exhibit the ability to make informed judgments on complex issues in educational management and in dealing with and solving problems in innovative ways;	4.69	Very Great Extent
3. conduct advanced research and other forms of scholarly work that meet the standards of refereed journal publication;	4.11	Great Extent
4. interpret/evaluate new contributions to knowledge and communicate evaluation results effectively to varied audiences;	4.72	Very Great Extent
5. manifest leadership skills by implementing research projects and utilizing research findings for the generation of new knowledge and new programs and systems related to educational management, program planning, sound decision making, and continual improvement, and for the upliftment of local, national, and global communities;	3.94	Great Extent
6. manifest sound relationships with God, others, and the environment with compassion, respect, integrity, and empathy; and	4.56	Very Great Extent
7. observe the Paulinian Core Values in society and the workplace.	4.69	Very Great Extent
Category Mean	4.50	Very Great Extent

Table 9 shows that the relevance, quality of program offerings, and responsiveness of the curriculum of the PhD-Educational Management program to industry requirements is very high. The curricular program offerings are reviewed annually by content experts, thus explain the very high rating.

Table 9. Participants' Assessment of the Extent of Attainment of the Outcomes of the PhD-Educational Management Program's Relevance, Quality and Responsiveness

Constructs	Mean	DI
1. relevance	4.75	Very High
2. quality of program offering, and	4.64	Very High
3. responsiveness of the curriculum to industry requirements	4.72	Very High
Category Mean	4.70	Very High

Participants' Community Engagements after Having Obtained their Ph.D. EM Degree

After pursuing their Ph.D. educational management degree, the participants have been actively engaged in their community activities, particularly in their active participation in the following initiatives of the barangay: symposia on health and wellness, education, peace, and security; and green and clean program. Participants get involve and initiate socio-civic activities like fund-raising and giving of relief goods. Most [37%] of the participants are engaged in public services such as counselors for couples and youths who are faced with problems. The participants also assist in the barangay drives for backyard gardening, environmental stewardship, community projects, anti-drug campaign, maintenance of peace, and order. Further, the participants are also engaged in religious activities to nurture spirituality in the community. In service to the community, the participants serve and inspire fellow constituents, obey rules and regulations, and a good role model as a change agent.

Participants' Perception of the Contributions of the Degree, Ph.D. EM to the Enhancement of Their Personal Life and Professional Life

Personal Gains

The Ph.D. degree obtained facilitated the promotion of the participants, helped improved their relationship with colleagues and administrators, gave them better perspectives in life, and helped them become Christ-centered. The degree helped them gain their deep sense of spirituality, compassionate care with others, self-confidence, higher self-esteem, more resilience and confidence in dealing with personal problems. The degree has endowed them with high ethical values as a public servant, a deep sense of duty as a leader, promote and protect the public interest.

Professional Gains

The Ph.D. degree obtained enhanced the participants' knowledge and skills in their teaching and managerial functions. They claim that they received adequate information about the teaching profession, protocols and fundamentals of a public servant, specialized knowledge for career advancement, in-depth understanding of the profession, and educational management. Through the degree, they gained their trust and confidence in public speaking, they were made to become a competent leader, boosted their leadership and governance skills, and enhanced their global competitiveness. They also learned how to deal effectively with stakeholders and understand broader aspects of school governance. With the degree, they were tapped as chairman of committee trainings, facilitator in group discussions and workshops, and collaborators with internal and external stakeholders. Also, their degree enhanced their decision-making skills, helped them inspire others, made them more professional in words and actions, endowed in them good management and organization skills. The fact that graduates achieve self-actualization when they transit from study to work indicates the relevance of university programs to self and the job market.

Participants' Suggestions for the Enhancement of the Ph.D. EM Program and its Implementation

Among the suggestions offered by the participants to enhance the PhDEM program were as follows:

1. Practice on students' orientation on the Ph.D. EM program goals and objectives and curriculum should be sustained;
2. Mechanisms must be considered to avoid class schedule disruptions;
3. Investing for Advanced Information Technology must be considered to meet the high demand for technology for instruction;
4. Expand and strengthen community service as an opportunity to learn;
5. Address intrinsic & extrinsic service factors leading to high graduation rates;
6. Blended learning must be sustained to meet the needs of local and international students; and
7. Sustain the practice of requiring research-based projects.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are derived:

The PhD-educational Management Program of the School of Education of SPUP has contributed to the enhancement of the teachers' teaching competence in terms of their effectiveness in inculcating knowledge, skills, and values to the pupils/students; their teaching strategies/techniques, and their efficiency in the performance of other school responsibilities. The teachers' completion of the degree has brought about changes in their lives regarding increased self-confidence, prestige and esteem from the community, fellow workers and pupils/students, self-fulfillment, job satisfaction, salaries, and promotion. All these factors are, therefore, contributory to the increased level of productivity of these graduates.

Recommendations

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

- The school administration should seriously consider the formulation of a more objective system of the performance evaluation and evaluation for ranking and promotion.
- The teachers should be encouraged to continue to upgrade their academic qualifications and update themselves to increase their level of confidence in coping with the challenges of the rapidly changing world of work.
- A training needs assessment should be conducted by schools to serve as basis for the formulation of a more comprehensive faculty development program.
- A further study should be conducted on the effectiveness of the MST program in each of the different fields of specialization.

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