

Correlates Of Employability of the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECED) Graduates of Cagayan State University – Andrews Campus, Philippines

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ABSTRACT:

This study was conducted to identify the personal, family, and academic characteristics of the BECED alumni of Cagayan State University Andrews Campus, to portray their employability status in terms of the nature of employment and waiting time to first job, and to analyze the existence of a significant relationship between their profile variables and employability. The study adopted a descriptive-correlational method to analyze the personal, family, and academic profile of 168 traced BECED graduates of Cagayan State University, their employability status in terms of nature of employment and waiting time to be in on the very first job, and the significant relationship between profile variables and employability. The results showed that most of the graduates were employed, with the largest group of graduates getting into teaching-related jobs, and a smaller group taking non-teaching positions. The median waiting time of the graduates to get the first job was 15 months. Furthermore, civil status, marital status of parents, occupation of father, mother's educational attainment, and college general weighted average (GWA) were the factors significantly related to waiting time to land on the first job. The paper suggests that the employability of BECED graduates is influenced not only by academic performance but also by certain personal and family factors.

Keywords: Graduate Employability, Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECED), Tracer Study, Waiting Time to First Job, Academic and Family Factors

Introduction

Higher education is an important player in the progress of any nation through the way it equips its graduates to meet not only the current needs of society but also the changes in the labor

market. A strong argument for this role of higher education is the Philippine Qualifications Framework established via Executive Order No. 83, s. 2012 which, among other things, serves as a reference for the harmonization of educational results with industry requirements and national

development objectives. Under this framework, higher education institutions are tasked not only to deliver quality teaching but to turn out graduates whose skills give them the ability to find good jobs.

Here, employability of graduates is the main standard of measuring the quality and relevance of higher education. It shows the degree to which academic programs equip students with necessary skills and competencies for their future careers and the extent to which educational institutions align themselves with labor market demands. Stroo et al. (2020) have mentioned that employability is possibly an indicator of the knowledge, skills, and competencies that learners have acquired. Employability indicators are also given consideration as major performance measures of higher education institutions in the Philippines with issues of curriculum, teaching, and student achievement being emphasized in particular (Cornillez Jr. et al, 2021).

Teacher education institutions are especially expected to ensure that their graduates possess the knowledge, skills, and professional attributes needed in contemporary educational settings. In line with CHED Memorandum Order No. 76, s. 2017, teacher education programs are tasked to develop competencies related to learner diversity, pedagogical content knowledge, assessment, communication, critical thinking, technology integration, and professional values. These competencies are essential to graduates' professional readiness and may influence their transition from graduation to employment.

Among teacher education programs, the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECEd) has gained increasing importance due to the growing recognition of early childhood education as a foundational stage of learning. As institutions continue to produce BECEd graduates, it becomes necessary to examine how these graduates fare after completing their degree. Their employment outcomes provide evidence of program responsiveness and may help institutions identify the factors associated with successful transition into the workforce.

Previous studies have examined graduate employability in terms of skills, employment outcomes, and workplace conditions (Almejas et al., 2017; Cornillez et al., 2021; Ulanday, 2021). In teacher education, employability has been associated with multiple factors such as academic preparation, qualifications, communication skills, technological competence, and practical teaching abilities (Caingcoy, 2021) further emphasized that examining the factors related to graduate employment can provide useful input for curricular improvement and institutional planning. Despite these studies, limited attention has been given to how graduates' personal, family, and academic characteristics relate to their employability outcomes, particularly the time it takes for them to obtain their first job.

At Cagayan State University Andrews Campus, the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education program is expected to produce graduates who can respond to the needs of schools and communities in the region and beyond. While tracer studies provide general information on graduate outcomes, there remains a need to examine employability more specifically by looking at the graduates' profile, their employment status, and their waiting time to land on their first job. Understanding these dimensions may offer evidence on the responsiveness of the program and on the factors associated with graduates' initial entry into employment.

Thus, this study was conducted to determine the personal, family, and academic profile of the BECEd graduates of Cagayan State University Andrews Campus, describe their employability status in terms of nature of employment and waiting time to land on the first job, and examine whether a significant relationship exists between their profile variables and employability.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component was used to determine the respondents' personal,

family, and academic profile, as well as their employability status in terms of nature of employment and waiting time to land on the first job. The correlational component was used to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the respondents' profile variables and their employability, particularly their waiting time to land on the first job. This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to describe existing conditions and examine associations among variables without inferring causality (Williams, 2007).

Study Respondents

The study aimed for graduates of the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) program, major in Preschool, which is currently called the BECED program. These graduates are from CSU-Andrews Campus from the academic years 2010 to 2023. Out of the total graduates, 168 or 54.7% of the graduates were traced and themselves took part in the study, hence, giving information about their profiles and employability. The class of 2018 had the highest percentage (83.33%) of graduates who were traced, whereas the lowest percentage was that of the class of 2023. Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents.

Table 1. Frequency and percent distribution of the traced graduates vis-a-vis actual graduates

School Year Graduated	Number of Actual Graduates	Number of Traced Graduates (n= 168)	Percent of Traced Graduates (100)
2010	13	8	61.53
2011	15	10	66.66
2012	13	6	46.15
2013	24	13	54.16
2014	24	18	79.16
2015	25	12	48.00
2016	43	23	53.49
2017	25	16	64.00
2018	24	20	83.33
2019	25	12	48.00
2022	34	11	32.35
2023	20	6	30.00
2024	22	13	55.52
Total	307	168	54.72

Research Instrument

The study utilized a survey questionnaire administered through Google Forms. The instrument was adapted from the official Tracer Study Questionnaire used by the University for graduate follow-up studies. It contained items that gathered data on the respondents' personal,

family, and academic profile, as well as their employment-related information, particularly the nature of employment and waiting time to land on the first job. To verify academic information, particularly the respondents' academic performance, the graduates were requested to submit a photo or scanned copy of their Official

Transcript of Records (OTR). This served as supporting documentation for the accuracy of the reported academic data, especially the general weighted average (GWA).

Data Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, authorization to conduct the research was sought from the proper university authorities. Once a green light was given, the questionnaire's link was shared to the graduates via available online communication means. The data gathering exercise spanned a month time, from October 2024 to November 2024.

Each respondent, prior answering the questions, was given an informed consent form incorporated in the first part of the Google Form. The consent form informed the respondents about the study's purpose, the voluntary aspect of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and the use of the gathered data exclusively for research purposes.

Only those who consented were given the opportunity to take the actual survey. Furthermore, respondents were sought permission to have their OTR as a supporting document for academic data verification.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, median, and standard deviation were utilized in the analysis of the personal, family, and academic profiles of the respondents and their employability. Employability, which is the average waiting time to get the first job, was determined using the mean. Data analysis was done with the help of JAMOV. Pearson's r and Chi-square tests were used to identify the relationships between the profile variables of the respondents and their employability that was measured through the waiting time of the respondents before the first job. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level.

Results and Discussion

Personal Profile of the Respondents

Table 2: Respondents' personal profile at the time of graduation

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Female	162	96.8
	Male	6	3.2
Age	20 years and below	63	37.5
	21 years	40	23.8
	22 years	30	17.9
	23 years	16	9.5
	24 years	7	4.2
	25 years and above	12	7.1
Civil Status	Married	56	33.3
	Single	105	62.5
	Others (Living- in, Separated)	7	4.2
Birth Order	First-born	41	24.4
	Middle-born	46	27.4

	Last-born	7	4.2
Religion	Catholic	123	73.2
	Non- Catholic	45	26.8

Table 2 shows that the vast majority of respondents are female (96.4%), with an average age of 22 years at graduation. Most were single (62.5%) and identified as Catholic (73.2%). In

terms of birth order, middle-born children represented the largest group (27.4%), followed closely by first-born children (24.4%).

Family Profile of the Respondents

Table 3: Respondents' family profile at the time of graduation

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Family Structure	Nuclear	131	78.0
	Extended	27	16.1
	Solo Parent	10	6.0
Parents' Marital Status	Living Together or Intact	128	76.2
	Separated	12	7.1
	Widowed	28	16.7
Father's Educational Attainment	None	5	3.0
	Primary	61	36.3
	Secondary	60	35.7
	Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary	14	8.3
	Bachelor's Degree	26	15.5
	Masteral Degree	2	1.2
Father's Occupation	Retired, Deceased, Unemployed	44	26.2
	Professionals	8	4.8
	Service and Sales	16	9.5
	Skilled (agricultural, etc.)	72	42.9
	Craft and Related	14	8.3
	Plan and Machine Operators	3	1.8
	Not Known	11	6.5
Mother's Educational Attainment	Primary	52	31.0
	Secondary	59	35.1
	Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary	15	8.9
	Bachelor	35	20.8
	Master	7	4.2

Mother's Occupation	Retired, Deceased, Unemployed	43	25.6
	Managers	2	1.2
	Professionals	11	6.5
	Clerical Support Workers	3	1.8
	Service and Sales	27	16.1
	Skilled (agricultural, etc.)	40	23.8
	Elementary Occupations (housewife)	5	3.0
	Not known	37	22.0

Family profile information of respondents is revealed by Table 3, which also exposes that the largest portion (78.0%) belong to the nuclear family, and most of the parents are the ones who are still together (76.2%). Based on the parental education, the fathers' dominant education level was primary education (36.3%),

whereas for mothers it was secondary education (35.1%). As for father's occupation, the majority (42.9%) were skilled workers, mostly in the agricultural sector. Speaking about mother's occupations, the largest group (25.6%) was that of "Retired, Deceased, Unemployed", with skilled workers (23.8%) next in line.

Academic Profile of the Respondents

Table 4. Respondents' academic profile at the time of graduation

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Academic Award	Did Not Receive	135	80.4
	Received One Academic Award	30	17.9
	Received More than one Academic Awards	3	1.8
Leadership in School Organization	More than One	22	13.1
	Only One	46	27.4
	None	100	59.5
College General Weighted Average (GWA)	Passing (75%- 79.99%)	4	2.4
	Fairly Satisfactory (80%- 84.99%)	40	23.8
	Satisfactory (85%- 89.99%)	93	55.4
	Very Satisfactory (90%- 94.99%)	31	18.5

Table 4 indicates that the majority of respondents (80.4%) did not receive any academic awards upon graduation. Furthermore, a majority (59.5%) did not hold leadership positions in any student-related organizations. Academically, the majority of graduates (55.4%) achieved a "Satisfactory" college Grade Weighted Average (GWA), ranging from 85% to 89.99%.

Employability of the Respondents

Table 5 shows that the majority (76.2%) of respondents secured teaching positions for their first job, while 31 respondents (18.5%) were employed in non-teaching roles. Only nine respondents (5.4%) were unemployed at the time of the study. This finding indicates that, in general, BECED graduates were well-qualified and ready to enter the workforce upon graduation. Additionally, those employed in

non-teaching roles found work in various sectors, including positions in Local Government Units and business establishments.

Meanwhile, those who pursued teaching careers secured positions in both private and public schools.

Table 5: Respondents' employability after graduation

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Nature of First Job	Teaching	128	76.2
	Non-teaching	31	18.5
	Unemployed	9	5.4
Waiting time Before Landing on First Job	6 months and below	45	26.8
	7- 12 months	36	21.4
	13- 18 months	16	9.5
	19- 24 months	19	11.3
	25- 30 months	4	2.4
	31- 36 months	15	8.9
	37- 42 months	3	1.8
	43- 48 months	5	3.0
	49 months and above	23	13.7

Regarding the job search duration, the largest group of respondents (26.8%) found employment within six months or less after graduation. This finding aligns with Collado & Espero (2023) study, which reported that teacher education graduates typically secure employment within two to five months after graduation. However, in the present study, the

Relationship between Respondents' Personal Profile and Employability

median waiting time before securing their first job was 15 months. This scenario can be attributed to the fact that BECED graduates generally secure employment after taking and passing the Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers, which is administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).

Table 6. Correlation between respondents' employability (waiting time before landing on the first job) and their personal profile

Variables	Computed Value	Probability Value
Sex	2.196	0.974
Age	39.706	0.483
Civil Status	136.3	0.000*
Birth Order	23.295	0.502
Religion	41.798	0.076

According to Table 6, marital status is one of the factors which significantly influence the

waiting time before getting the first job. More precisely, married respondents got jobs earlier than single ones.

Such a result may be due to the fact that married people usually have more financial commitments than singles, e.g. a spouse and family that they need to support. They may be driven by these needs to looking for and even

accepting job offers a lot faster than their single colleagues (McDonald, 2020). Also, married people may decide to take any job right away in order to make ends meet even if it's not the job of their dreams. In this case, their attitude is completely different from that of singles who can afford to be more relaxed and less desperate in their job search (Budig & Lim, 2016).

Relationship Between Respondents' Family Profile and Employability

Table 7. Correlation between graduates' employability (waiting time before landing on the first job) and their family profile

Variables	Computed Value	Probability Value
Family Structure	30.1	0.651
Parents' Marital Status	42.704	0.022*
Father's Educational Attainment	36.774	0.616
Father's Occupation	92.629	0.045*
Mother's Educational Attainment	88.045	0.039*
Mother's Occupation	56.337	0.462

Table 7 reveals that respondents' parents' marital status has a significant impact ($p = 0.022$) on the graduates' waiting time to get their first job. More precisely, those graduates whose parents are living together or have intact marriages get their first jobs earlier than their counterparts. According to Wang & Liu (2020), parental marital stability promotes improved psychological health, which is further linked to proactive behavior and resilience in the labor market. Therefore, graduates from intact families might have less stress and anxiety, which makes them more efficient in job-hunting activities (Vega, 2024).

Additionally, the father's occupation ($p = 0.045$) is positively related to employability. Graduates whose fathers work in the professional, service, and sales sectors tend to have shorter waiting times before landing their first job. Fathers in these sectors often possess broader social and

professional networks, which can provide job leads, referrals, and coaching opportunities for their children. Prior research has well-documented that networking significantly reduces the time required to find employment (Wanberg et al., 2020; Laguna et al., 2017).

Moreover, the respondents' mothers' educational attainment ($p = .039$) is significantly associated with employability. Particularly, graduates with mothers who have lower levels of educational attainment tend to secure jobs more quickly. This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that lower maternal education is often linked to a household culture emphasizing work over academic or professional aspirations (Davis-Kean et al., 2021; Davis-Kean et al., 2019), which may promote a mindset in children to enter the workforce as soon as possible.

Relationship between Respondents' Academic Profile and Employability

Table 8: Correlation between graduates' employability (waiting time before landing on the first job) and their academic profile

Variables	Computed Value	Probability Value
Academic Award	8.526	0.932
Leadership in School Organization	7.559	0.961
College GWA	51.592	0.047*

Table 8 shows that College GWA ($p = 0.047$) is correlated with the waiting time before landing the first job. This finding suggests that individuals with better academic performance tend to secure employment in a shorter period. This may be attributed to the fact that strong academic performance is often viewed as an indicator of an individual's readiness and preparedness for professional responsibilities (Mandia, 2020). Studies have shown that graduates with higher GWAs are more competitive in the job market because they are perceived as more capable and efficient, both in acquiring knowledge and applying it in professional settings (Zou et al., 2022).

Conclusion

The research indicated that majority of CSU BECED graduates were employed post-graduation. Most of them got teaching-related first jobs, while a smaller number of graduates got non-teaching jobs, and only a few were unemployed. Their waiting time for the first job was different for each one, with a middle or median value of the waiting time to be 15 months. What is more, the result reported that employability especially waiting time to the first job was highly related to the selected personal, family, and school-related variables like civil status, parents' marital status, father's occupation, mother's educational attainment, and college GWA. These findings indicate that besides academic preparation, the employability

of BECED graduates is also dependent on family and personal conditions.

Recommendations

In light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1) The CSU College of Teacher Education together with the Campus Guidance Office and the Alumni and Placement Office should emphasize the provision of career guidance, employment coaching and job placement support as strategies to assist BECED graduates in going through their transition to employment more effectively.
- 2) To help students academically perform better and college GWA was found to be a significant factor in one's time of landing a first job, the College of Teacher Education should upgrade the academic support system/activities which may include for example mentoring, monitoring and review interventions.
- 3) The College may also strengthen the networks with public and private schools, child development centers, and other similar establishments to create more jobs for graduates as well as help get the students into work more quickly, at the same time.
- 4) Future research can be conducted at other state universities and colleges that offer the BECED or related courses to provide additional data on graduate employability and to confirm the associations found in this study.

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