

## **EMPLOYABILITY OF 2015 to 2018 GRADUATES OF NEUST SAN LEONARDO OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose** — *This research aimed to determine the employment status of NEUST Off-Campus Program San Leonardo Nueva Ecija graduates from 2015 to 2018 which also identifies the degree of contribution of skills and work-related values to the job placement of the 335 graduate respondents.*

**Design/methodology/approach** — *Descriptive type of research was utilized in this research. Out of 500 questionnaires administered, 335 graduates returned answered questionnaires representing the three Colleges: Education, Management and Business Technology and Information and Communications Technology, and Associate in Hotel and Restaurant Management.*

**Findings** — *Findings show that there is 86 percent of the graduates are gainfully employed locally with regular or permanent status who landed a job within 1 to 6 months. Likewise, the academic-acquired skills and competencies of the graduates are relevant to their chosen occupations.*

**Practical implications** — *NEUST Off-Campus Program-San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija produces marketable and appropriately trained graduates with the majority landing in course-related jobs within a short period after graduation.*

**Originality/value** — *The graduates possess the skills and competencies necessary to succeed in this competitive world. However, expansion of tie-ups with private business entities is made to at least maintain the high employability level of the graduates.*

**Keywords** — *Employability, Tracer Study, Graduates, Off-Campus.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Empowerment in terms of socioeconomic, political, and technical progress relies heavily on education. The economy of a country is fueled by the collective wisdom and expertise of its citizens. External investment, technological advancements, and globalization are all driving changes in the skillsets required. As the world around us evolves, people need to learn new skills in order to remain productive and earn a living. Colleges and universities need to consider this when developing their curriculums for their student's educational needs. A tracer research-based approach to course program quality assurance can have a significant impact on the long-term professional development of students who have already completed their studies. While many higher education institutions provide instruction to a range of clients, most of them forget about them when they graduate and leave the institution's surroundings without a way of contacting them any longer.

The majority of students, naturally, place a high value on their potential to find work after graduation and in the years to come. To help students enhance their employability skills and increase their ability to communicate with them, the campus has recently expanded its range of higher education courses to include a wide range of subjects. These abilities, once learned, must be practiced throughout one's career, not only during job searches and interviews but also in personal development plans and in making the most of work experience possibilities. There is no doubt that a student's ability to study and grow throughout his or her life is increased by the university. Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology Off-Campus Program-San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija is an Educational institution that responds to the fast-changing demands of industries to competitive individuals. The demand prompted the institution to offer courses BS in Business Administration, Bachelor of

Elementary Education, Bachelor of Secondary Education, and BS in Information Technology.

This tracer aims to determine the employment status of the graduates and how far they have gone particularly in their achievements. This research also aimed to delivered achievements. This research aims to deliver on how graduates were in faring in their chosen field and further check on how effective the structure of the curriculum. The findings may be prime to the importance of the colleges they may be able to gain relevant knowledge to update their records of the graduates while at the same time they can assess the performance of their graduates. This tracer study will also to provide new ideas to the alumni with regards to their employability readiness; this will help the teachers to update the standards who will take active participation in the globally competitive world for service and international development of the university. This tracer study has the following specific objectives:

1. Describe the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1. Year graduated; and
  - 1.2. Degree.
2. Determine the employment status of the respondents in terms of:
  - 2.1. Employment after graduation;
  - 2.2. Current employment;
  - 2.3. Location;
  - 2.4. Present designation; and
  - 2.5. Years of being employed.
3. Determine the reasons of the respondents who are not employed.
4. Determine the problems encountered by the employed respondents in terms of Job Performance.

***Importance of job creation.***

Jobs in the private sector not only offer the labor force employment options and the purchasing power they receive as remuneration for their contribution to the product, but they are also responsible for creating the so-called multiplier effect through their employment. For example, the development of a new manufacturing plant will help bring about the usage of indigenous raw resources in the country, which in turn will contribute to the government's ability to fulfill its obligation to the people it strives to serve through taxes they pay. Labor force aggregate purchasing power helps to stimulate the economy by raising production as they are all consumers, resulting in more efficient use of the country's resources when there is a high incidence of employment, but not full employment. With more people working, there is less time for crimes and criminality since more people are putting their time to good use. All of these benefits should be made clear to workers, who are entitled to a portion of them. If only for their own sakes, they have a moral obligation to ensure that businesses continue to operate, even if the owners of the business are not involved. Whenever a business closes or reduces its operations, it has a direct impact on workers and the economy. The knowledge gleaned from tracer studies can also be used to alter educational programs so that they better reflect the needs of the workforce and academics. Surveys have certain drawbacks, such as the difficulty of locating graduates and allowing them to fill out surveys. Graduates may not always be able to identify the link between their studies and their professional lives, and research findings are significant only if they can be used to implement tangible reforms by planners. However, the primary goal of this work was to investigate the employment situation of the graduates and discover how many of them had found their first job following graduation. It was necessary for the researchers

to look at the graduates' important characteristics and judge whether or not these profiles had met their expectations so that whatever outcomes they could account for would be a useful forum for curriculum improvement and institutional advancement.

### ***Graduate Employability***

New graduates need more than academic knowledge in today's tough economy; they need skills that will help them land a job. As a result, colleges and universities must adapt to these shifts. Academia has been historically associated with the formation of moral and intellectual virtues and as a hub of civilization. They have become more utilitarian, with a concentration on professional training, as a result of rapid economic growth. Priority is to guarantee that education and training are responsive to the demands of the economy's varied sectors. Furthermore, the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education is spearheading an effort to perform GTS among chosen HEIs in order to acquire data that would reveal if HEIs are producing graduates that fit the needs of industry and society. Furthermore, through the GTS, higher education institutions (HEIs) would be able to better connect their efforts with the industry's personnel demands (CHED CMO numbers 38, 2006, 11, 1999). Graduates will be more productive, efficient, and knowledgeable in their current jobs as a result of their undergraduate specialization knowledge, skills, and competencies. Employees are considered to be regular employees if they are engaged to perform activities that are necessary or desirable in the employee's usual business or trade; except where the employment has been fixed for a specific project or undertaking, and the completion or termination of which has been determined at the same time of engagement, the employee is not considered to be regular. More than a majority of

graduates have found work in their chosen field, however, those who didn't get hired cited the following reasons for their lack of success: busy as stay-at-home moms, while some continue their education.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### ***Research Design***

This research used the descriptive research method to analyze and described the employability of 2015 to 2018 graduates of NESUT San Leonardo Off-Campus. The descriptive research method focuses on describing the nature of a demographic segment. The main emphasis of descriptive research is to describe the nature of the demographics under study instead of concentrating on the "why" (Voxco, 2021).

### ***Research Locale***

This research was conducted in San Leonardo Nueva Ecija. This municipality is where the 2015 to 2018 graduates studied their Bachelor's Degree, and the majority of the respondents lived.

### ***Respondents of the Research***

The respondents of this research were the 335 participative graduates of San Leonardo Off-campus under the different programs such as Bachelor of Secondary Education, Bachelor of Elementary Education, Associate in HRM, Bachelor of Information Technology, and Bachelor of Business Administration. The list of respondents was furnished by the head of the Registrar of the said University.

### ***Sample and Sampling Procedure***

Total enumeration was utilized to collect data in this investigation. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) defined total

enumeration as examining every unit, individual, or thing in a population. Additionally, it is referred to as complete enumeration, which simply implies a complete count. The researchers chose this sampling technique because the total number of respondents was sufficient to obtain accurate data and information.

### **Data Collection**

The researchers collected secondary data and relevant information from the Internet. The questionnaire was guided by the related studies and underwent reviews from competent individuals for validation. The comments and suggestions were incorporated into the instrument.

The reliability coefficient of the instrument has a good internal consistency with a .880 result. The validity of the research instrument was established by presenting the developed research instrument for the expert's comments who together rated the instrument with a 4.80 weighted mean with a verbal interpretation of "very good."

The researchers inform the respondents about the significance of their participation in the research. Some terminologies were clarified with the respondents to answer the questionnaire with full awareness about their critical roles.

Before the distribution, the researchers asked permission from the heads of the travel agency associations through a request letter duly signed by the researchers. After the distribution, the answered questionnaires were retrieved, and the data were tallied for interpretation.

### **Data Analysis**

The data gathered in the area was encoded, tallied, and evaluated. These were treated using statistical tools such as Percentage, Frequency Distribution,

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the findings obtained from the primary instrument used in this research. The responses were organized, quantified, and interpreted using different statistical tools. The presentation observed the sequence of the specific problems formulated for the research.

**1. Profile of the respondents**

***Table 1. Profile of the respondents as to their Year Graduated***

<b>Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
2015	63	19
2016	86	26
2017	89	27
2018	97	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 shows that the recent graduates are easy to trace because the majority of them are working locally. On the other hand, those respondents who graduated from 2016-to 2015 are difficult to trace because some of them are working abroad. According to the respondents, they find the opportunity outside the country.

***Table 2. Profile of the respondents as to their Course***



<b>Degree Major</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
BSBA	120	36
BEED	35	10
BSE	37	11
BSIT	110	33
Associate in HRM	33	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the result of table 2, the majority of the respondents are BSBA graduates because this course has been the priority course of those undecided when they entered college. Aside from the BSBA, the BSIT graduates were easily traced since there are many opportunities available for them in the province and other near provinces. According to the respondents, these 2 programs have provided them easy access to different companies.

## **2. Employment Status of the Graduates**

Table 3 below shows that the majority of the respondents are employed during the conduct of this research. It shows that these graduates immediately looked for career opportunities since they need to provide for their families. According to the respondents, it's about time for them to provide for their parents and their families.

**Table 3. Employment Status of the Graduates in terms of their employment after graduation.**

<b>Present Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
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		(%)
Employed	289	86
Not Employed	35	10
Self Employed	11	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4. Employment Status of the Graduates in terms of their Current Employment**

Current Employment	Frequency	Percentage
Academic Institutions	50	15
Beverages Institutions	2	1
Fast Food Industry	4	1
Financial Institutions	92	27
Marketing Agency	7	2
Merchandise Business Institutions	65	19
Motorcycle Institutions	69	21
Self-employed	11	3
Not Employed	35	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 shows the current employment of the respondents most of them (27%) are currently employed in different well-known financial institutions in Producers Savings Banks, CLI Financial Inc., Radio Wealth finance, Kasapi Lending, Advance Lending Corp, CebuanaLhuillher, RCBC, Phil. Prudential Life Insurance Company, Philippine Prudential Life, GM Bank of Luzon, BDO, Unibank Inc., China Bank Corp., BPI, Bank of Makati, Advance Micro financing, Rural Bank Inc., and other financial

institutions, (21%) are currently employed in the different well known motorcycles institutions in Wheeltek Motorcycle Corp., Royce Motorcycle Trade Corp, Motortrade, Transcycle Motor, Mitsubishi freeway Motor Sales Corp and Racal Motorcycles Corp (19%) are employed from different merchandise business institutions in Advect Marketing, Generic Drugstore, Fresh N' Famous, MMPI, MacNet Line, PLDT, ABENSON, Duty Free Philippines, Tip Corp., SaveMore, (15%) are employed in academic institutions both public and private elementary and high school (2%) are employed from different Marketing Agency in Lakewood Marketing, FMN Industrial Corp, Nappco, Accenture and others, and the remaining (3%) are currently employed in the Fast Food Industry in Jollibee Foods Corp., and Pizza Hut foods Corp., Beverages Institutions in Pepsi Cola Prod. Phil. Inc, and Royal Crown and self-employed. This shows that the graduates are very flexible in different institutions/industries.

***Table 5. Employment Status of the Graduates in terms of their Location***

<b>EMPLOYMENT ADDRESS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Metro Manila	89	27
Nueva Ecija	152	45
Pampanga	36	11
Others	12	4
Not Employed	35	10
Self-Employed	11	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 shows the address of the respondents' current employees, most of them are employed inside the province Nueva Ecija (45%), some are employed in the Metro Manila (27%) (11%) are employed in the near province Pampanga and (4%) are employed abroad. This is expected because most of the respondents are fresh graduates and they can easily find a job if they start in their own province (10%) were not employed and 3% were self-employed. According to the respondents, they want to earn more experience in their hometown and province so that if they want to go abroad or to urbanized cities, they are more prepared and competent.

Table 6 below shows the respondents' current position. Of 335 respondents there are 26 different kinds of positions in different banks or institutions. Most of the respondents are employed as **Teachers (17%)** they are licensed professional teachers employed in both public and private academic institutions. **Admin Staff (9%)** they are employing to assist or administer the customer. **Treasury Staff (7%)** are employed in the monetary transaction are well organized by them. **Sales Representatives (6%)** are the ones who represent the product or company services to the customer. **IT Technician (4%)** they are the ones who maintain the computer information system in the company. **Marketing Assistants (4%)** are employed to Support the marketing manager, they will be at the heart of driving marketing campaigns for a product or service. An important cog in the marketing wheel, they will be expected to be involved at all levels, including drafting press releases, updating clients, and organizing promotional events. **Marketing Staff (4%)** are employed to perform marketing programs of the company. **Sales Specialists (4%)** are in charge of establishing sales objectives and handle all sales activities to fulfill these objectives. Their main responsibilities include preparing promotional materials, handling sales, and coordinating and supervising sales staff in performing the daily task. **Sales Agent (4%)** they are employed basic pay and commission basis their duties is to assist the

clients and closed sales for products or services. **Senior Legal Clerk** (4%) is the one who administered the employee in different areas they are employed in the office or bank to keep records and accounts and to undertake other routine administrative duties. **Teller** (3%) is the employee of a bank or similar institution whose job includes the responsibilities of helping the bank customer with their banking needs, such as depositing a check or making a withdrawal. Most bank tellers are located behind a counter or desk at the bank and communicate with the customer across the barrier. Some banks have implemented a driver-through system where tellers can help the customers with their banking needs without the customer having to leave their car.

**Table 6. Employment Status of the Graduates in terms of their Current Designation**

<b>Current Designation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Admin Staff	30	9
Assistant Manager	3	1
Branch Manager	9	3
Branch Secretary	6	2
Bookkeeper	8	2
Cashier	8	2
College Instructor	4	1
Crew Leader	2	1
HR Assistant	3	1
IT Technician	15	4
Loans Clerk	4	1
Mktg. Assistant	15	4
Mktg. Specialist	3	1

Marketing Staff	14	4
OFW	4	1
Programmer	3	1
Sales Agent	12	4
Sales Representative/Coordinator	21	6
Sales Specialist	13	4
Service advisor	2	1
Senior Legal Clerk	12	4
Supervisor	5	1
Teacher	56	17
Teller	10	3
Treasury Staff	22	7
Waiter	5	1
Self-Employed	11	3
Not Employed	35	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

**Branch Managers** (3%) are responsible for controlling or administering all or part of a company or similar organization. **Bookkeepers** (2%) are the ones who systematically record the company's financial transactions. **The cashier** (2%) is the one who deals directly with the customers in a monetary transaction. **Branch Secretary** (2%) secretaries can have a range of duties depending on their workplace, but in general, they are in charge of keeping offices running smoothly by performing a mix of administrative and low-level management tasks. **Supervisor** (1%), **Waiter** (1%), **College Instructor** (1%), **Loans Clerk** (1%), **OFW** (1%) **Assistant Manager** (1%), **HR Assistant** (1%), **Marketing Specialist** (1%), **Programmer** (1%), **Crew Leader** (1%) and Service Advisor (1%).

It shows that the skills they have obtained from their courses are helpful to make them flexible in different job assignments.

*Vol. 29, No. 3 December 2021*

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**Table 7. Employment Status of the Graduates in terms of their Years of being Employed**

<b>Years being employed</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
3 to 4 years	23	7
2 to 3 years	45	13
1 year to 2 years	89	27
6 months to 1 year	100	30
Less than six months	32	10
Self Employed	11	3
Not Employed	35	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 7 shows the number of months/years occupying the respondent's current position. Most of the respondents are employed for about 6 months to 1 year, (27%) 1 year to 2 years employed, (13%) 2 to 3 years employed, (10%) less than six months employed, and (7%) 3 to 4 years employed this result is expected because most of the respondents are from fresh graduates of batch 2018, and most of them are employed on their first job.

3. Determine the reasons of the unemployed respondents.

**Table 8. Reasons of Unemployment**

<b>Reasons of Unemployment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Waiting for the call back of new employer	5	14

Just resigned from the previous company	12	34
Take a role in the family	10	29
Preparing some documents for Abroad	5	14
Pursue studying	3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

According to Table 8, the majority of respondents during the course of this research had just resigned from their former work. According to respondents, they are looking for a more environmentally friendly Pasteur. Others have taken on parental responsibilities and begun their own families. On the other side, other respondents were awaiting a call from a prospective employer. According to respondents, once they receive the call, they will seize the opportunity promptly.

- 4. Determine the problems encountered by the employed respondents in terms of Job Performance.

**Table 9. Problems encountered in terms of Job Performance**

<b>Problems encountered in terms of Job Performance</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Limited knowledge in using Microsoft office and other applications	80	28
Difficulty in adapting new environment	25	9
Job Mismatched	40	14



Culture shocked	18	6
Low Salary	16	5
Limited training	110	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 9 reveals that the vast majority of those polled had only little training. Their bachelor' degree education does not adequately prepare them for the demands of the world of work. According to several of the respondents, they were unable to receive the necessary instruction while in college. A lack of familiarity with Microsoft Office and other apps was ranked as the second most common issue by respondents. Computer applications that are actually used in a workplace should have been discussed more thoroughly, according to respondents. They also have issues with communication and social connections, which can only be rectified via personal contacts and life experiences during their employment period.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This tracer study was conducted to determine the current employment status of the graduates and how far they have gone particularly in their achievement. This research also aims to deliver on how graduate was faring in their chosen field and further checked on how effective the structure of the curriculum of the colleges. The research was composed of 335 respondents. The two-part questionnaire was used for gathering data from graduates. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency count and percentage. A greater percentage of the respondents work along their field of specialization while others are working not related to their completed course. Salaries, benefits, and career challenges are some of the reasons for changing their job. They were

looking for other companies where they can apply their knowledge and skills which will give them competitive compensation and benefits.

In line with the above discussion, the researchers recommended continuously practicing the high standards of instruction that the school has been provided. This can be done by providing faculty members with the most current information that can assist them to adapt their teaching methods to the needs of their students.

Another recommendation is to reevaluate the university's curriculum, methods, and other tactics in light of the industry's lack of requirements. Increasing students' exposure to a variety of training to better prepare them to take advantage of emerging market trends and opportunities. This research can serve as a starting point for curriculum building and syllabus revisions based on the most recent needs of various business, IT, and education sectors.

Finally, it is suggested that a new tracer study be carried out on the results of graduates' performances as observed by employers. Identifying which fundamental subjects should be reworked as part of the curriculum improvement can help.

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