

Employability of Physical Education Graduates: Basis for Skills and Competency Alignment

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Abstract:- This study aimed to determine the employment status of Physical Education graduates in 2020. The data were gathered six months after graduation from PE students. The study participants were from different municipalities within Bukidnon. However, some graduates were unable to respond due to internet connectivity. The data were collected through a survey questionnaire using the Google form sent via messenger and Facebook account email accounts of the participants.

Results show that 50% of the participants of the study were males and another 50% were females. 95.5% of the PE graduates were employed right after graduation. However, their employer varied between public and private entities. 63.6% were employed in government services. The nature of their job was directly related to a teaching position, in which 81.8 % were hired as a teacher and the rest were related to a teaching position. Regarding job tenure, 31.8% were already permanent, 13.6% were casual, and 56.5% were temporary.

Although permanent status is less than temporary status considering that 95.5% of the graduates were employed, the aim of the college to train PE graduates is still valuable. Therefore, there is still a need to conduct another study on the results that there were a lot of graduates who are temporary as to job tenure. Employability cannot guarantee a high percentage of job tenure. Perhaps other factors might affect the percentage of job status in government services or the private sector.

Keywords:- *Employability, Physical Education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Employability is among the highlighted issues in higher education institutions that have something to do with the country's unstable economic status. The employability of graduates is a frequent and significant indicator of the college Office Performance Commitment Review (OPCR). The consequences brought about by the employability of the graduates on the performance of the college is a very significant factor pointing to financial implications.

Tracing employability among physical education students and other major fields of specialization is a continuous process since it is an objective way of examining the alignment between the curriculum offered among HEIs and the need of the community to augment economic gains. It serves as a never-ending talk during educational forums, such as the presentation and assessment of college performance.

This initiative would somehow require graduates and HEIs to adopt new sets of skills, competencies, and techniques to be at par with global requirements. The employability of graduates is also an indicator that determines the alignment of the courses offered among HEIs and the educational ranking that would boost clientele satisfaction ((Teichler, 2009).

A quite number of studies had been conducted already on employability, to mention a few from Rad et al., 2020; Jayasingha and Suraweera, 2020; Chowdhury, 2019; Chen, 2017; Nazron et al., 2017; Fitriyanto and Pardjono, 2017; Yulia and Yuzhuo, 2017; Gowsalya and Kumar, 2015; Sumanasiri et al., 2015; Ahmed and Crossman, 2014; Dotong, 2014; Shah and Srivastava, 2014; Cai, 2013; Weligamage, 2009; Chisty et al., 2007). However, since it has been mentioned that it is a continuous process, there is always a need to investigate or explore employability, especially during the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic is also a concrete and undeniable reason for deferring efforts to strengthen graduate students' employability.

As observed, the significant issues on employability focus on the following questions: What are the skills and other competencies among the graduates that made them employed in the different agencies, which is an advantage against other applicants? Another question is, are the skills and other competencies practiced during instruction sessions that respond to the employment requirements of the agencies? A vast number of graduates are observed every year as a product of HEIs.

However, the certainty as to employment was never determined because of several circumstances which are deterring factors of employability. This study on the employability of the physical education graduates sought to determine the skills and competencies among employed graduates which made them in place of job tenure.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The study on the employability of physical education students was based on the concept of Ambepitiya (2016) at two management education institutes in Sri Lanka, who observed that academic knowledge and soft, practical, and technical skill development are the major factors that prepare a graduate ready for employment. Although academic knowledge is an important factor, it is not the sole requirement one can offer for the effective employability of graduates (Jayasingha and Suraweera, 2020). However, this study considered six pre-selected factors of graduate employability in the Bangladeshi job scenario. Those six factors are academic performance (AP), technical skills (TS), communication skills (CS), personality (PE), leadership & motivational skills (LMS); and teamwork & problem-solving skills (TPSS).

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Determine the employment profile of the Physical Education graduates
- Determine the job tenure of the PE graduates as to a public or private entity

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study on the employability of PE graduate students used a descriptive research method using frequency and percentage. Quantitative data were collected and analyzed using a survey questionnaire in Google Forms. The link to the Google form was sent through the email address and messenger of the PE graduate students with the assistance of their respective advisers from the ASAM initiatives of the college dean.

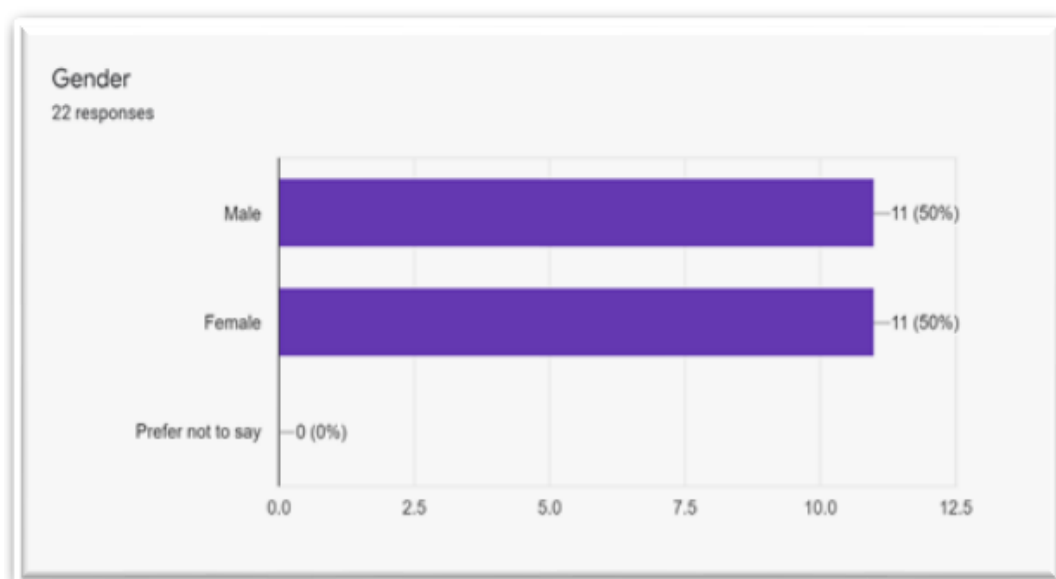
The study was conducted voluntarily by 81.48% of the graduates in the academic year 2020. Data privacy matters were communicated to the participants, as well as the purposes of conducting the study, as reflected in the Google form. The data collection was conducted six months after graduation in August 2020. 50% of their population was male and the other half was female.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

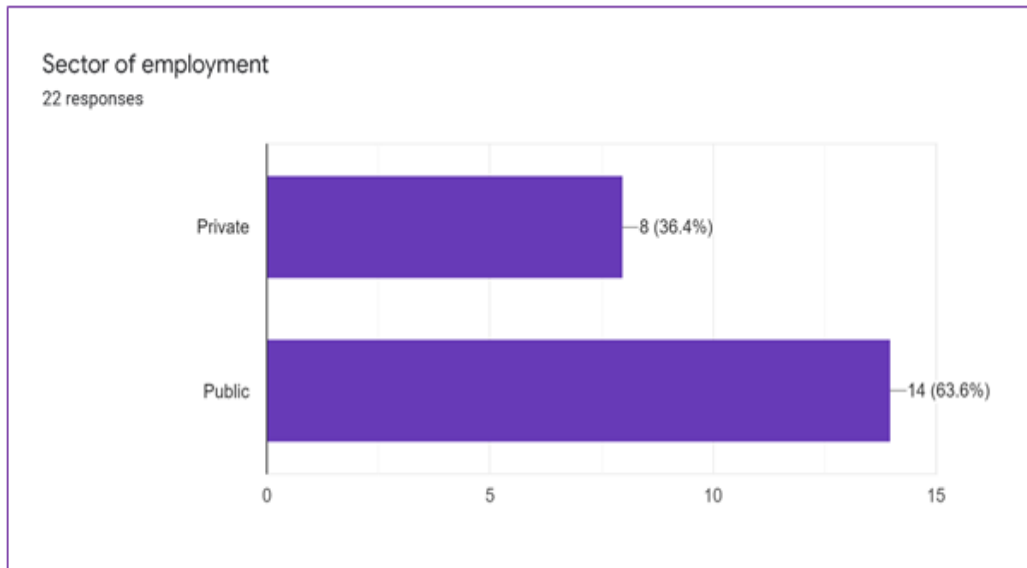
Merging knowledge, technical skills, and teamwork skills will somehow be associated with the employability of a graduate student from the tertiary level (Guilbert et al.,2016). Acquired knowledge and skills will result in meeting requirements and demands in the labor market (Tholen,2014). Employability matters the most in the case of HEIs. This has financial implications for universities that aim to be at par with other countries.

In the academic year 2020, 100% of the Physical Education Students who graduated from the course were identified as target respondents of the study. However,81.48% of graduates were purposively identified who responded to the tracing of graduate tools through Google Forms. The graduates were trained in various areas of learning, which would enhance their varied intelligence, as claimed by Gardner (1970) on the theory of multiple intelligences. The knowledge and skills of the PE graduates were honed as different subjects every year were tackled by the faculty of the College of Education.

Among the study participants, 50% were male and the other 50% were female. This gathered data would somehow mean that each PE graduate was given an equal opportunity to participate in the study. Regardless of the preference of the participants, each participant was given the chance to be included in the bulk of the data collected.



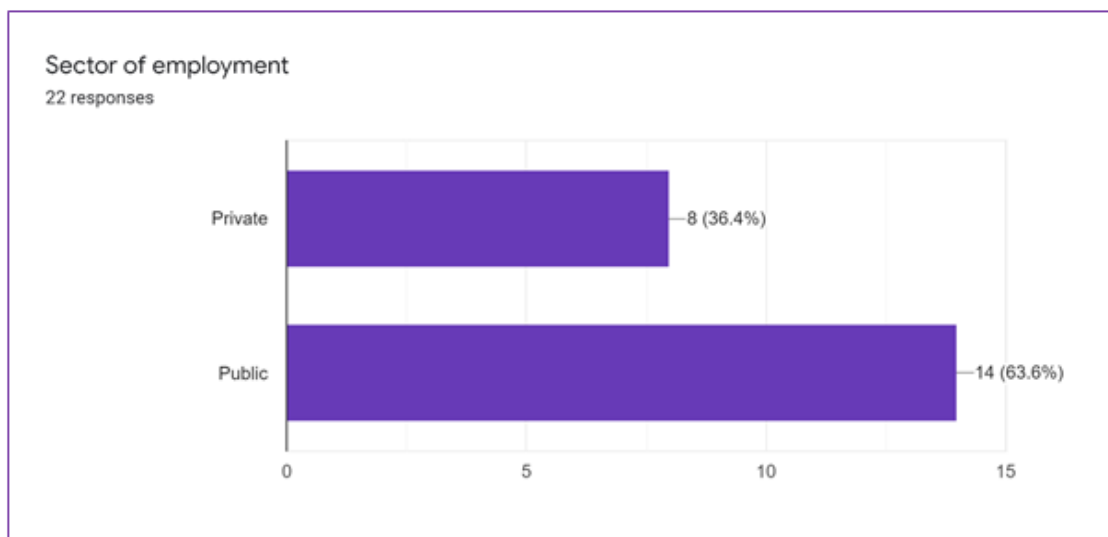
Bar Graph 1-Gender of the Physical Education graduate students as participants of the study.



Bar Graph 2-Employment status of the PE graduate students

As presented in bar graph 2, 95.5% were employed in government services, and 4.5 % were considered self-employed. The data collected would somehow mean that perhaps these PE graduate students were accepted for the job most probably because they met the requirement as an applicant. The graduates of this academic year may be able to acquire the internal and external factors necessary for the job (Guilbert et al., 2016). The internal factors referred to in this study are those that have something to do with the knowledge and skills possessed by applicants that could fill

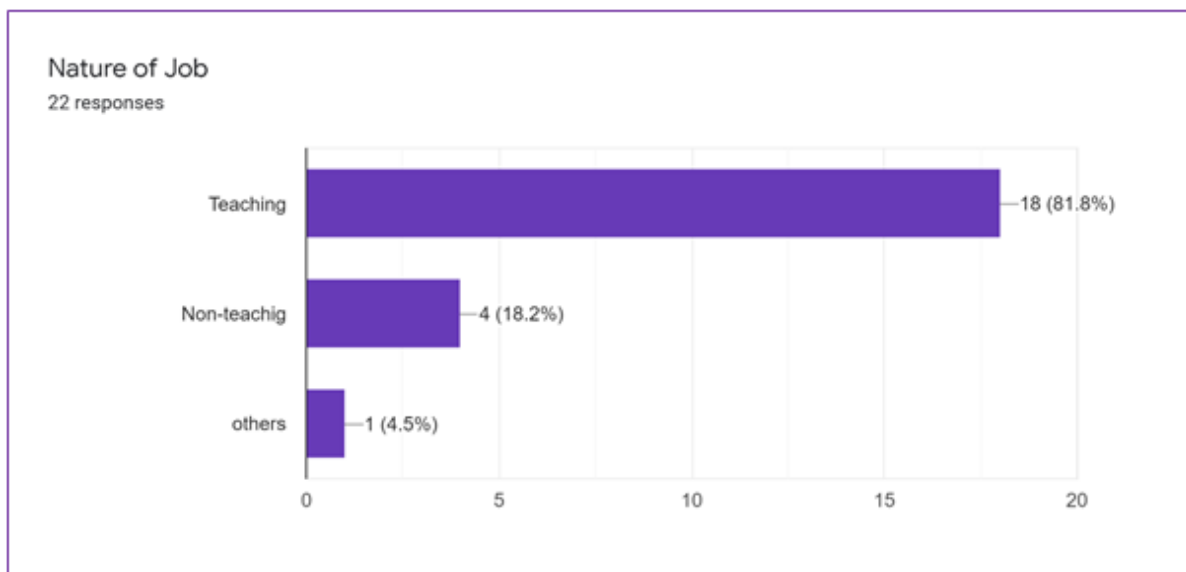
in the need for specialization. However, previous authors (Salingay, 2014) Pabiona, (2016); Silvestre, (2019) have claimed that there is a need to strengthen the acquired knowledge and skills of PE teachers in the field. The alignment of the learned skills and knowledge of teachers in the field was already resolved because of the various tracer studies conducted by HEIs. The constant follow-up and tracing of graduates in HEIs would provide concrete data on how the problems encountered related to employability can be addressed.



Bar-graph-3 The sector of employment of the PE graduates

As shown in the bar graph, 63.6% of PE graduates were employed in public service. These empirical data would somehow mean that the demand for PE teachers in the field is of great significance. These data are the result of what has transpired in Section 19 of Article XIV of the Philippine Constitution on the promotion of Physical Education and encouraging sports programs in all educational institutions. Perhaps this mandate provided an advantage for PE graduates compared to other major fields

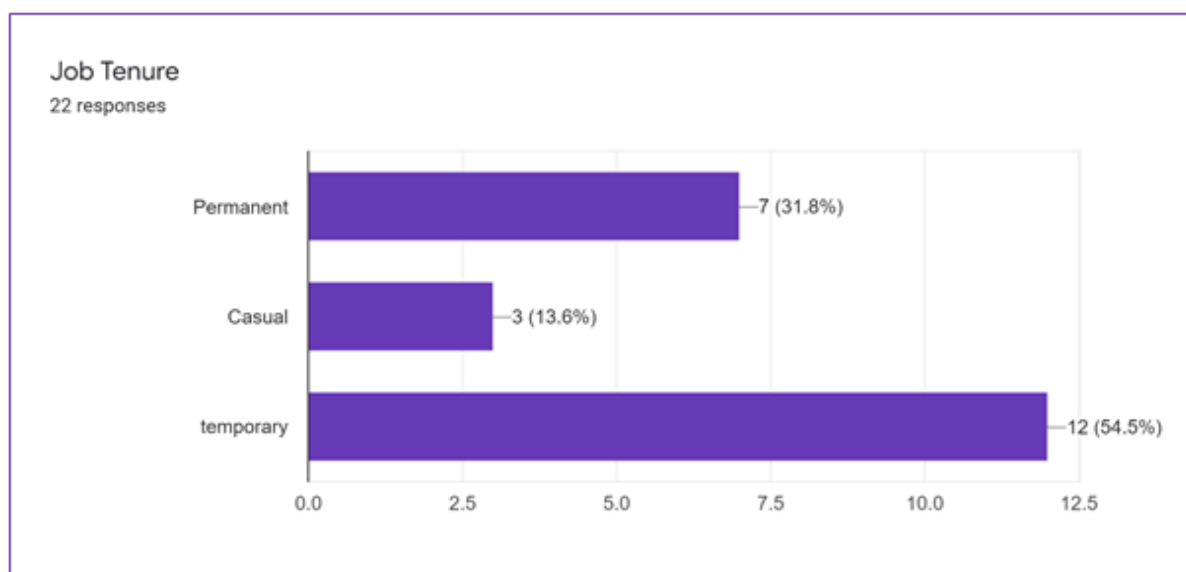
of specialization. The need to admit PE graduates to school increases more during a pandemic when the health of the students is at risk. PE graduates may be able to achieve and apply the compilation of a series of skills and abilities that they are expected to become. Graduate employability can generally be defined as the compilation of a series of skills and abilities that a graduate can obtain to achieve a desirable job and succeed in their career (Chen 2017; Tomlinson 2012).



Bar graph-4. The nature of jobs among PE graduates

The training of PE graduates from the first-year curriculum until the fourth-year curriculum in the different areas prepared them to face the dynamic nature of work. As shown in the bar graph, 81.8% of the PE graduates were employed as teachers. The quality of graduates probably meets the demand in the labor market. The PE graduate teaching skills revealed in these data would somehow

support the idea that there are specific skills set by employers to hire a fresh graduate (Weligamage and Siengthai, 2003). As emphasized by Liyanage et al. (2016), graduates' expertise in the field of specialization is the primary concern of employers, specifically those of public institutions.



Bar graph-5 The job tenure among PE graduates

The ultimate goal of a graduate student, above all, in applying for work in public service is to be employed permanently to actualize the knowledge and skills learned in school. However, due to the huge number of graduates with a minimal number of teachers to be hired, there is very close competition among the applicants. In the case of PE graduates, 31.8% were employed permanently. The temporary position was 56.5%, while the casual position did not need to worry because a law was promulgated to defend their job tenure, especially if they reached 10 years of

service. When PE graduates possess task-relevant skills, employers expect that the applicant can generate high creative performance in the field. This could be a valid reason for a secured job tenure among the newly hired graduates from the different HEIs (Amabile, T.M et.al, 2016)

In summary, the data show that there is a reliable advantage to being a PE graduate student. Employment status, employment sector, and most importantly, the job

tenure of PE students are consonant when the quality of education, training, and acquired skills by graduates are of quality.

VI. SALIENT FINDINGS

Graduate employability requires a concrete set of skills and knowledge to enhance the quality of graduates employed in recognized educational institutions that could provide greater opportunities for teachers. (Finch et al., 2013). As a result, 95.5% of the 2020 PE graduates were employed after graduation. 63.3% were employed in public service, and 81.8% were employed as teachers. As for the job tenure of the PE graduates, 31.8% occupied a permanent position in the government service, 13.6% were casually waiting for a permanent position depending on the budget and allocation of the institution, and 56.5% of the graduates were temporary. Although the permanent status is lesser than the temporary status considering that 95.5% of the graduates were employed still the aim of the college to train the PE graduates is still valuable. Therefore, there is still a need to conduct another study on the results that there were a lot of graduates who are temporary as to job tenure. The percentage of employability cannot guarantee a high percentage of job tenure. Perhaps other factors might affect the percentage of job status may it be in the government service or private sectors.

VII. CONCLUSION

Physical Education students were skilled in their major field of specialization since most of them were employed immediately after graduation. PE students are ready to serve the public, even beyond the major field of specialization. The physical education graduates were equipped with the necessary knowledge of the demand for DepEd as the catch basin for graduates from the HEIs. Their knowledge aligned with the competencies imposed by the Department of Education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The faculty's teaching practices may be improved to sustain a high rate of employability. To achieve 100% employability, the school may also scout possible partner agencies for jobs available in the community. The government will also create a linkage abroad so that graduates from HEIs can be accepted abroad.

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