
A TRACER STUDY OF BCU SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

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ABSTRACT

Since the major educational reform, the Philippines has now produced a couple of graduates but not much study has been conducted regarding their current status relative to the curriculum exit points. This study aims to address that gap. The study aims to profile the first batch of graduates of BCU Senior High School and determine their current status. A researcher-developed questionnaire was sent via Facebook messenger to the batch of 2018 graduates. Of the 314 graduates, 139 responded to the questionnaire which is 44.27% of the total population. The data gathered is subjected to graph and tabular form, ranking, and literature review for independent variables as statistical instruments. The findings of the study showed that the profile of the respondents is varied according to their gender, age upon graduation, and strand. And, most of them proceeded to colleges or universities after graduation from BCU Senior High. Based on the findings, the conclusions were drawn, that the respondents of this have an acceptable response rate of graduates dominated by females whereas ABM graduates have the highest respondents. The majority of the first batch of BCU-SHS graduates was of the right age in their education level had they not stopped studying from Junior High to Senior High. Furthermore, the majority of the BCU-SHS Batch 2018 graduates regarded pursuing higher education after graduation as an avenue to further improve their skills acquired in senior high school. And, only a small percentage of the graduates take on employment and entrepreneurial activities. There was also a small percentage who were layabout or with little/ no work because of financial-related matters, and other reasons. This implies that the majority of the SHS graduates still prefer having a degree course before applying for a job or putting up their own business.

Keywords: Senior High School, Graduates, Higher Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Layabout.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is often referred to as the great equalizer: It can open the door to jobs, resources, and skills that a family needs to not just survive, but thrive. Access to high-quality primary education and supporting child well-being is a globally-recognized solution to the cycle of poverty (Geovetti, 2020).

By declaring that education is a right of every Filipino, the 1987 Philippine Constitution made sure that government education policies and programs have been primarily geared toward providing access to education for all. However, despite the high regard we have for education, the World Education News and Reviews bluntly claim that we are facing a decline in educational standards during the first decade of the 21st century. The impact of education on the welfare of Filipinos is declining gradually that the 2009 EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2008) identified the Philippines to be among the countries with decreased net enrollment rates from 1999 to 2006 and with the greatest number of out-of-school children (more than 500,000). Another report from World Education News and Reviews states that the country's youth literacy rates fell from 96.6 percent in 1990 to 95.1 in 2003, making the Philippines the only country in Southeast Asia with declining youth literacy rates.

To address these shortcomings, the Philippine government initiated structural changes in the basic education system. The unprecedented change in the system was set in motion in 2016 when the new administration made educational reforms one of its top priorities. The current system at the time has a 10-year basic education cycle with 6 years of elementary and 4 years of high school. With the passing of RA 10533 "The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013", the educational system has transitioned to the K to 12 program which adds 2 more years of high school. However, K to 12 isn't simply a matter of adding two more years of school; it is a larger process of reforming the education sector as a whole aiming to ensure the continuity of the reform into the next generation. Philippine Star reported that in 2016, data from the Department of Education (DepEd) showed 1.3 million or 90 % of over 1.4 million students who completed Junior High School enrolled in Grade 11. In March

2018, despite the concerns of many critics towards the K-12 program, the number of students who graduated from senior high school reached over 1.2 million. Education Secretary Leonor Briones noted that the outcomes of the senior high school program have exceeded expectations and this was large because of the heavy support coming from the government.

K to 12 program comprises Kindergarten, 6 years of elementary education, 4 years of junior high school, and 2 years of Senior High School. This program aims to give students sufficient time to master skills and acquire basic competencies to be competitive on a global scale. Students of the new system will be equipped with the skills required to be ready for employment, entrepreneurship, middle-level skills development, and higher education even if they intend to do so after graduation. The Senior High School Program allows students to go through a core curriculum and take specialized subjects under one of the four tracks: academic, technical-vocational, and livelihood (TVL), sports, or arts and design. The Philippine Business for Education listed three practical benefits of the K-12 program. First is the preparedness for tertiary learning: With the adaptation of the K to 12 scheme, students are expected to graduate at an age a bit older than past graduates. This is an advantage, according to DepEd, as graduates will be considered young adults. Hence, they will be more equipped to deal with a much higher level of learning as they enter college education. Second is the readiness to join the workforce: Unlike the old system, K to 12 does not compel each student to take college after completing Senior High School (SHS). This scheme empowers students to choose their own. They may not pursue college education especially if they have chosen a track other than the academic track. The good thing is SHS graduates will be equipped with skills (through electives) that will make them good at certain field(s). And, the third is the skill competency in the global job market: K to 12 system aims to improve Filipino students' mathematical, scientific, and linguistic competence. With the new curriculum, DepEd promised to offer higher quality education through tracks. Each track will give students enough time to master a field and enhance their skills. In the end, K to 12 graduates will become globally competitive and are set to obtain a spot in the stiff labor market.

With the addition of another two years before finishing high school, the students, as well as the parents, are now faced with the decision as to what educational investment or career plan to pursue. The Senior High School program is meant to produce graduates equipped not only for post-secondary education but also for work and entrepreneurship. In support of these, the Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education, Patricia Licuanan admitted during an interview in 2015 that not everyone should go to college. She said it is not necessary for a college diploma to land jobs. Another option is to take programs in the technical and vocational areas or the area of middle-level skills. This program is designed to provide student's knowledge and skills on the three possible exit points: higher education, employment, and entrepreneurship whichever is their desired path after graduation.

Before the implementation of the K to 12 program, there is a critical problem with the job skill mismatch in the country and the overflow of college graduates. A job-skills mismatch occurs when the level or type of skills of jobseekers does not match the level or type of skills required in the workplace. It is horizontal when the type of skills is not fit for the current job, although it generally matches the requirements of the job. There is a vertical mismatch when the level of skills is higher or lower than the level of skills required for a certain job. There is a geographical mismatch when the workers with types or levels of skills are based in a place different from those where such skills are needed. The International Labor Organization bluntly states that skills mismatch means that education and training are not providing the skills demanded in the labor market, or that the economy does not create jobs that correspond to the skills of individuals.

In 2017, DOLE's JobsFit 2022 Labor Market Information (LMI) Report showed that almost a million or 43.9 percent of the unemployed population nationwide have either reached or graduated from high school. The agency also noted that job seekers who are college undergraduates or graduates are less likely to get employed compared with job seekers with a lower level of educational attainment. Individuals with a higher level of education have higher reservation wages and the program or course that the college graduates completed may have also influenced the chance of finding employment. A report by Campos (2016) shows a job mismatch affecting the growth of automotive manufacturing, the electronics sector, and tourism. This job-skills mismatch occurs when education and training institutions technical skills that employers no longer demand or when the competencies of graduates do not meet the requirement of employers.

To address this problem, DepEd Order 25, series 2013, or The Career Guidance and Career Advocacy Program was institutionalized. This mandate the observance of a career guidance week for all high schools. This aims to help students have a clear idea of what career to pursue. A survey report conducted by the Asian Development Bank and The Department of Education in 2019 reports that career guidance programs in both public and private schools generally gave priority to helping students which SHS track to take, rather than providing information and financial aid options. Students reported receiving information that mainly focused on the types of occupations and training that matched their interests and skills (example, what they like, what they can do, what values they have) as well as data on which schools best aligned with their career choices and could provide quality education.

After the graduation of the first Senior High School students, how has the program fared so far? The Department of Education said that the Senior High School graduates are job-ready due to the work immersion program included in their curriculum. Based on DepEd Order (DO) no. 30, series 2017, or the Guidelines for Work Immersion, students have required a minimum of 80 hours of work immersion. The agency also pointed out that under the law, someone below 18 but older than 15 years old must spend a maximum of 40 hours per week and no more than 8 hours per day during work immersion.

Despite this confidence, in April 2018, JobStreet Philippines revealed a study that only 24 percent of employers in the country were willing to hire graduates of K to 12, citing that college degree holders remain a priority. The report also said 35 percent of employers did not want to hire K to 12 graduates because they are unqualified or have insufficient work experience. Another survey conducted by the Philippine Business for Education has revealed that three out of five companies are open to hiring K-12 graduates, while only one out of five are ready to do so. In light of the said reports, DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones said the agency will review the program after two years of its implementation.

In the study of Orbeta Jr. and Potestad (2020) regarding the employability of Senior High School Graduates, it is shown that only 20% of the graduates are in the labor force, and more than 70% are attending school. This indicates that the labor market is not a popular destination for the SHS graduates as they have expressed before graduation. Rivera and De Guzon (2017) reveal in their study the Role of Education in Encouraging Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship that education increases the wage-earning capacity of the youth. This increases the tendencies of the youth towards employment more than entrepreneurship. However, in the long run, as the wealth of the youth accumulates through income streams, then they might give high consideration to being self-employed than being employed.

With the first batch of Senior High School graduates coming out only in 2018, the literature on the result of the Senior High School program is still limited and the researchers aim to address this gap.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to profile BCU-SHS graduates Batch 2018 and to trace their current status, to check if the K to 12 program has met its purpose in addressing the need for producing lifelong learners.

Research Questions

This study is focused on tracing the current status of the BCU Senior High School Graduates Batch 2018.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

(1) What is the profile of the respondents as to:

- a. Gender; and
- b. Age upon graduation?

(2) What is the current status of the respondents after graduation in the BCU Senior High?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study finds support from the different theories and concepts which is very important to have a better understanding of the study.

According to the theory of Frank Parsons, occupational decision making occurs when people have achieved: (1) an accurate understanding of their traits, which includes aptitudes, interests, and personal abilities; (2) knowledge of jobs and the labor market; and (3) rational and objective judgment about the relationship between their traits, and the labor market. It formed the idea of matching careers to talents, skills, and

personality (Naim, 2021). Frank Parsons developed the talent-matching approach which was later developed into the Trait and Factor Theory of Occupational Choice. This theory assumes that people may be matched to an occupation that is a good fit. And so, it centers on the concept of matching (New Zealand Government, 2019).

Learning about the Trait and Factor Theory of Occupational Choice helps graduates plan their career paths. The theory states that people are attracted to potential careers through personality factors, vocational interests, and skill acquisition. These factors allow a comparison of traits to potential career paths (Sevigny, 2018).

Similarly, according to Vianen (2018), Person-Environment (P: E Fit) Theory is another career matching approach to career path. It assumes that people have an innate need to fit their environments and to seek out environments that match their characteristics. People strive to fit because they tend to prefer consistency and want to exert control over their lives and reduce uncertainties. They need to belong, want happiness and life satisfaction. And, according to Ramirez (2019), this theory also states that every person has a unique set of interests and skills: different jobs have different requirements for skills and personalities. If a person with identified interests and skills can find a job with requirements that fit those interests and needs his skills, then there would be a match between the individual and the occupation.

In addition, John L. Holland's theory is based on the notion that behavior is a function of personality and social environment. It also suggests that individuals enter environments because of their personalities and remain in those environments because of the reinforcements and satisfactions obtained through the interactions in that environment. In general, research testing the theory indicates that individuals tend to choose and enter college and occupational environments consistent with their personality types (Career Research, 2021).

Moreover, another theory to be considered in this study is the Engagement Theory which states that engagement is a key to effective work and learning. It occurs when people undertake tasks related to their competence, learn continuously, immerse themselves, and persist because of the value they attribute to the work. Engagement is very similar to intrinsic motivation (Mejia, 2017). Intrinsic motivation is the act of doing something without any obvious external rewards. People do it because it is enjoyable and interesting, rather than because of an outsider incentive or pressure to do it, such as reward or deadline (Legg, 2019). As applied in the study, it will be checked if the chosen career path of the BCU senior high school graduates is in line with their capabilities and interest.

Modes of Present Engagement

The Senior High School (SHS) component of the K-12 program is designed to cover three possible exits: (1) higher education or middle-level skills development, (2) employment, and (3) entrepreneurship. The employment and entrepreneurship exit justifies preparing SHS graduates for the labor market besides preparing them for higher education (Orbeta, 2020).

Higher Education or Middle-level Skills Development

Higher education is the last step in formal education. It follows the achievement of a high school diploma and generally involves the completion of a degree. It is within the confines of a college or university that awards degrees, and in some cases, certifications (William State University, 2019). On the other hand, all types of middle-level skills development were integrated under TESDA (Technical Education Skills and Development Authority). It deals with non-formal skills training and apprenticeship training programs with a maximum of two years (Woltjer, 2006).

According to ADB and DepEd (2019), about 85% of students are expected to go to college and to take courses in personal services, engineering and engineering trades, teacher training and education science, and health. And, students from private schools preferred professional college majors (health, engineering, business administration, law, and computing), while public school students preferred degrees related to teacher training and security services.

Employability

Employability is reflected in an individual's career adaptability which informs their (a) knowing the difference between what is appropriate and inappropriate training and, if the choice is available, (b) making an informed and meaningful decision and taking actions that benefit the individual. It is about individuals consciously deploying career adaptability to actively secure work that rewards them for their knowledge and skills that are in demand in a given context (Senate Select Committee, 2018). And so, the employability of individuals depends

on their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It is linked to career management skills or how individuals mobilize, present, and update their resources in the context of the job market (Romgens, 2019).

“K-12 curriculum was designed to ensure the employability of Filipino students after completing the senior high school curriculum or a college degree of any discipline”, Salazar said (Manila Times, 2014). This is because the program will well-equipped them with specific job-related skills even without finishing a college degree, thus, making them employable. The K-12 program was designed to produce globally competitive graduates and also to ensure the employability of Filipino students. Because of this program, some students are forced to work after graduating senior high school than proceeding to college. (Andales, n.d).

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship encompasses numerous activities carried out by individuals and organizations resulting in new business in either new or existing organizations ultimately yielding economic and social benefits in the form of economic growth and improved human welfare. The activities involve risk-taking, pro-activeness, and innovativeness. (Carlsson, 2012).

The Department of Education (DepEd) creates the entrepreneurship program for K to 12 learners to provide a viable option for Senior High School (SHS) graduates. Andaya stated that they believe that entrepreneurship changes the way we live and work. And a change in mindset will help make entrepreneurship a viable career option and a way to get ahead in life (Manila Bulletin, 2019).

Career Concepts

Work is central for people’s self-concepts and career success is important for individuals as well as for organizations. The concept of ‘Protean Career’ implies that a person strives towards a developmental progression and self-fulfillment which was introduced by Douglas T. Hall. It is defined as a career in which a person is (1) values-driven in the sense that the person’s internal values provide the guidance and measure of success for individual’s career; and (2) self-directed in personal career management – having the ability to be adaptive in terms of performance and learning demand. It has been characterized as involving a broader perspective, a developmental progression, and viewing a career as a calling and a way to self-fulfillment (Volmer, 2010). It implies that individuals are responsible to understand themselves and the natural progression of career and life itself (Angged, 2020).

The premise of the career concept is that everyone has a concept of career success that was programmed into his psyche from as early as childhood or at the beginning of his professional life. Each is unique, and no single career concept is right for everyone (Llewellyn, 2002).

The Linear Career Concept can be thought of as a career ladder with increasing power, status, and money. People who were motivated by this concept are based on increasing power and status. This is the conventional upward movement and they could be found climbing the corporate ladder and aspiring to be top executives. And so, this is perceived as the career path for senior managers and by most HR professionals as well.

The Transitory Career Concept is one in which a person moves every three to five years from one field or job to a very different or wholly unrelated field or job. They are motivated by the desire for variety and independence.

The Expert Career Concept is one involving lifelong commitment to some occupational field or specialty. Once the career choice has been made, the individual focuses on further developing and refining his or her knowledge and skills within that specialty.

And, the Spiral Career Concept is one in which a person makes periodic major moves across occupational areas, specialties, or disciplines. Ideally, these moves come every seven to ten years, a span that seems to permit individuals sufficient time to develop in-depth competence in many fields before moving on to new ones.

These theories and concepts were used as a basis throughout the research.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used the descriptive research design. A descriptive research design is a procedure in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population (Creswell, 2014). The

researchers chose the survey questionnaire to collect the data needed to answer the specific problems of this study. This method allows the researchers to collect data from the respondents.

Locale and Population of the Study

This study specifically focuses on the graduates of Baguio Central University Senior High School Batch 2018. The total population of this study was 314 graduates which were gathered from the school records. The distribution is shown in the table below:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

Strand	Number of Graduates	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Rank
ABM	82	50	60.98%	1
HUMSS	101	36	35.64%	3
STEM	88	38	43.18%	2
TVL	43	15	34.88%	4
TOTAL	314	139	44.27%	

Source: BCU-SHS Principal’s Office

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents and response rate by strand/ track of the BCU-SHS graduates Batch 2018. Out of 314 graduates, 44.27% responded to our questionnaire in a google form sent through Facebook messenger. ABM graduates have the highest respondents with 60.98%, followed by STEM with 43.18% then HUMSS with 35.64%. While TVL graduates have the lowest respondents of 34.88%.

According to Badiru (2016), tracer studies with as low as 30 to 40% response rates are often regarded as credible given that these surveys are often not interviewer-administered. And also, there is a high propensity not to trace the graduates after they leave the university. Therefore, the 44.27% response rate of this study is considered to be acceptable and reliable.

Data Collection

The researchers used a survey questionnaire to gather the data needed for this study. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions to gather information from the respondents (McLeod, 2018).

There were two parts of the questionnaire in this study of which, Part I is the profile of the respondents. And, Part II deals with the current status of the respondents after graduation from BCU Senior High School.

Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the questionnaire was presented for evaluation after it has been presented to the members of the panel. To establish its validity, the questionnaires were presented to 3 experts to attest to the content validity of the instrument.

Table 2: Validity of the questionnaire

Validity Indicators	A	B	C	Average
1	5	4	4	4.33
2	5	4	5	4.67
3	5	4	5	4.67
4	5	4	4	4.33
5	5	4	3	4.00
Average	5	4	4.2	4.40

The research tool has a validity of 4.4 which means that it is very highly valid. This implies that the research tool can significantly measure what it intends to measure.

Reliability testing was no longer implemented.

Data Gathering Procedure

Upon the approval of the research, the researchers seek permission to conduct the study from the President of Baguio Central University and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. They also asked for the permission of the university’s Senior High School principal.

A letter to the respondents was attached to the questionnaire ensuring the confidentiality of the respondents' responses. Due to the pandemic, the researchers administered the questionnaires by sending them to the respondents' Facebook messenger or other social media platforms. Upon retrieval of the questionnaire, data were grouped accordingly, the researchers tallied, assessed, and interpreted the data gathered. Throughout the process, the researchers observed confidentiality and honesty.

Treatment of Data

Data to be gathered in the study were presented in a series of tables, classified, and analyzed. Descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentage, and ranking were used to analyze the data that were taken from the respondents’ answers in the questionnaire.

For Part I of the questionnaire, which is the profile of the respondents, the statistical tools used were the frequency count and percentage.

For Part II of the questionnaire, which is the current status of the BCU Senior High School Graduates upon graduation, the statistical tools used were the frequency count, percentage, and ranking.

Ethical Considerations

The data collected during this study was kept confidential at all times. There was no information released about the respondents to the public. All data and electronic documents were saved in a password-protected folder which was made accessible only to the researchers. The researchers are teachers of Baguio Central University – Senior High School Department. Thus, it aims to trace the current status of its graduates Batch 2018, to check if the K to 12 program has met its purpose in addressing the need for producing lifelong learners. After the completion of the study, the results were shared with Baguio Central University, which could be the basis for guidelines to be made to enhance the program of the Senior High School. Rest assured that the researchers handled all data gathered in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. And, there was no compensation for respondents who participated in this study. Moreover, the data collected will be retained for study recordkeeping purposes. After one year, the researchers will delete the softcopy files stored on their laptops. And, the data disposal process will be recorded for audit purposes.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of the Respondents

Analysis of the Profile of the Respondents According to their Gender

Table 3 presents the profile of the respondents according to their gender. Out of 139 respondents, 67.63% were female and 32.37% were male. ABM has the highest number of female respondents with 32.37% which is because most of the students under this strand were female. And for the four strands, females indeed dominated the survey as compared to men. It could be inferred that females were more willing to respond online. This agrees with the study of Mulder (2019) which states that when comparing the willingness to participate by gender, women are somewhat more likely to participate in the survey than men.

Table 3: Profile of the Respondents According to their Gender

STRAND	GENDER		TOTAL
	Male	Female	
ABM	5 (3.60%)	45 (32.37%)	50 (35.97%)
HUMSS	16 (11.51%)	20 (14.39%)	36 (25.90%)
STEM	18 (12.95%)	20 (14.39%)	38 (27.34%)
TVL	6 (4.32%)	9 (6.47%)	15 (10.79%)
TOTAL	45 (32.37%)	94 (67.63%)	139 (100%)

Analysis of the Profile of the Respondents According to their Age upon Graduation

Table 4 presents the profile of the respondents according to their age upon graduation. Out of 139 respondents, most of them graduated at the age of 18 having the highest percentage of 67.63%, followed by the age of 19 with a percentage of 14.39%, and the age of 17 with a percentage of 7.19%. But then, some students graduated at the age of 20 to 23.

Table 4: Profile of the Respondents According to their Age upon Graduation

STRAND	AGE UPON GRADUATION							TOTAL
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
ABM	4 (2.88%)	32 (23.02%)	6 (4.32%)	5 (3.60%)	0 (0%)	2 (1.44%)	1 (0.72%)	50 (35.97%)
HUMSS	3 (2.16%)	23 (16.55%)	5 (3.60%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.72%)	2 (1.44%)	2 (1.44%)	36 (25.90%)
STEM	2 (1.44%)	31 (22.30%)	3 (2.16%)	1 (0.72%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.72%)	0 (0%)	38 (27.34%)
TVL	1 (0.72%)	8 (5.76%)	6 (4.32%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (10.79%)
TOTAL	10 (7.19%)	94 (67.63%)	20 (14.39%)	6 (4.32%)	1 (0.72%)	5 (3.60%)	3 (2.16%)	139 (100%)

Most of the respondents were found on the ages of adolescents, which is generally defined as puberty through age 18, and young adults, which are generally defined as 18 to 22 or 18 to 25 (Simpson, 2018). As stated by the Philippines Basic Education (2020), senior high school students in the Philippines are between 17 and 18 years of age. And so, it agrees with the statement of DepEd that SHS graduates will be considered young adults. Therefore, the first batch of BCU-SHS graduates was on track according to their age, which applies to the four strands. And, most of them proceeded to senior high just after their junior high graduation. Hence, they will be more equipped to deal with a much higher level of learning if they opted to enter college education.

Status of the Respondents after Graduation

Analysis of the Current Status after Graduation in the BCU Senior High

Table 5 presents the current status of the BCU Senior High Batch 2018 after graduation. Out of 139 respondents, the majority of the graduates proceeded to college/ university with 84.17%. There were only 7.91% who were employed followed by 4.32% who were layabout or with little/ no work, and 3.60% were with an established business.

Table 5: Current Status after Graduation in the BCU Senior High

Status	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Proceeded to College/ University	117	84.17%	1
Employed	11	7.91%	2
Layabout (with little/ no work)	6	4.32%	3
With Established Business	5	3.60%	4
TOTAL	139	100%	

Of the four possible exits identified after graduation from senior high school, the survey shows that most of the graduates have pursued higher education gaining a very high percentage compared to the other possible exits. Table 6 shows the chosen career path of these students. Some of the respondents have opted to enter the labor force as presented in Table 8 and few were layabout and with little/no work presented in Table 9. Also, only a handful of the graduates are entrepreneurs having the means and ability to establish their businesses.

In the research conducted by Orbeta and Potestad (2020) regarding the employability of senior high school who graduated from July 2018 to April 2020, only a small portion (a little over 20%) entered the labor force

while most of them (more than 70%) continue with their education. The study of Guzon and Rivera (2017) also revealed that youths aged 15 to 30 in the labor force who are employed, most (62.4%) of them work in short-term, seasonal, and casual employment, and only a handful (9.71%) are entrepreneurial.

With the high percentage of Senior High School graduates continuing with their education and few are entering the labor force and establishing their businesses, it is evident that Senior High School graduates prefer to pursue higher education after graduation rather than working.

Analysis of the Courses of the Graduates who Proceeded to College/ University

Table 6 shows the courses of the graduates who proceeded to college/ university. Out of 117 graduates who proceeded to college/ university, 94.02% enrolled in degree courses while only 5.98% enrolled in vocational courses.

Under the degree courses, education has the highest choice with 24.79% followed by business and accounting with 20.51% and engineering with 16.24%. While the lowest choice of degree courses was agriculture with 1.71% and information technology with 3.42%.

For the vocational courses, the graduates opted midwifery, hotel and tourism management (2 years), bread and pastry, health care service, and automotive.

Table 6: Courses of the Graduates who Proceeded to College/ University

Courses	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Engineering	19	16.24%	3
Information Technology	4	3.42%	7
Education	29	24.79%	1
Medicine/Nursing	9	7.69%	5.5
Agriculture	2	1.71%	9
Criminology	9	7.69%	5.5
Hotel and Restaurant Management	14	11.97%	4
Business and Accounting	24	20.51%	2
Midwifery	2	1.71%	9
Bread and Pastry NCII	1	0.85%	12
Health Care Service NCII	1	0.85%	12
Automotive	1	0.85%	12
Hotel and Tourism Management	2	1.71%	9
TOTAL	117	100%	

Despite the goal of the Senior High School program to provide more options to students aside from going to college after graduation, attaining higher education is still the preference. A very high percentage of 94.02 % are currently enrolled in universities and colleges with a degree course as opposed to a very small 5.98% who opted to enroll in vocational courses. Since the respondents are the first to receive the Senior High School Program, it is not surprising that they still see the need of completing a degree course to be employed.

As shown in Table 1, HUMSS graduates had the 2nd highest response rate but the Education course became the top choice of a college degree. It is easy to assume that most of the HUMSS graduates followed their proper course alignment. As opposed to ABM graduates who have the highest response rate but Business and Accounting courses fell behind Education courses. As for STEM having the 3rd highest response rate, its aligned course of Engineering (all majors included) became the top 3 choices of degree. Falling behind are Information and Technology and Agricultural courses.

These data also agree with the statement of ADB and DepEd in 2019 that students from private schools preferred professional college majors.

College/ University BCU Senior High Graduates Enrolled To

Table 7 shows the colleges/ universities BCU Senior High graduates enrolled to. The researchers took an interest in the percentage of graduates continuing to enroll in the higher education department of the said institution as this may be used for planning by the management of the school.

Table 7: College/ University BCU Senior High Graduates Enrolled To

College/ University	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Baguio Central University	24	20.51%	1
Benguet State University	22	18.80%	2
University of the Cordilleras	21	17.95%	3
University of Baguio	14	11.97%	5
Saint Louis University	13	11.11%	6
Cordillera Career Development College	2	1.71%	8
Kings College of the Philippines	5	4.27%	7
Other schools outside Baguio and Benguet	16	13.68%	4
TOTAL	117	100%	

Out of 117 who proceeded to college/ university, 20.51% enrolled in Baguio Central University while 79.49% enrolled in other universities. For those graduates who enrolled in other universities, most of them went to Benguet State University with 18.80% followed by the University of the Cordilleras with 17.95%, the University of Baguio with 11.97%, and Saint Louis University with 11.11%. And, some graduates enrolled in other schools located outside Baguio and Benguet with 13.68%.

The table shows that a high percentage of respondents proceeded to attend college at BCU which means that they have a strong loyalty to the institution. The second highest which is Benguet State University implies that the graduates preferred to attend college in a state university or government-owned university due to the free education policy for SUC's. A considerable percentage of the respondents chose to enroll in other private schools due to personal preference and for others, it is because it is closer to their provinces. It is also noteworthy to consider that despite BCU getting a high percentage of absorption rate, the combined total of respondents enrolling in other universities surpassed the number of respondents enrolling in BCU. This is a testament to how vast the options the respondents have when choosing a university or school to continue their education.

Analysis of the Graduates who are Employed

Table 8 shows the employer, employment status, and occupation of the graduates who are employed.

Out of 11 employed graduates, 72.7% has a private employer while 27.3% were under the government. For their employment status, most of them are full-time with 72.7% while 27.3% were part-time. It could be inferred that private establishments are more open to hiring senior high graduates for full-time jobs as compared to the government. As stated by Zoleta (2021), the minimum education required in the Philippine government depends on the position you are applying for, and some jobs do not require a college diploma. But then, mostly, civil service eligibility and tedious paper requirements were required.

Table 8: Employer, Employment Status, and Occupation of the Graduates who are Employed

Employer	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Private	8	72.7%	1
Government	3	27.3%	2
Abroad	0	0%	3
TOTAL	11	100%	
Employment Status			

Full-time	8	72.7%	1
Part-time	3	27.3%	2
TOTAL	11	100%	
Occupation			
English Online Tutor	1	9.1%	5.5
Dishwasher	1	9.1%	5.5
Saleslady	2	18.2%	2.5
Customer Service Representative	3	27.3%	1
Driver	1	9.1%	5.5
Cashier	2	18.2%	2.5
Promodizer	1	9.1%	5.5
TOTAL	11	100%	

The occupation of the employed graduates was customer service representative with 27.3% followed by saleslady and cashier having the same percentage of 18.2%. The others were employed as an English online tutor, dishwasher, and driver. These data show that most of the jobs entered by a senior high graduate would be in the BPO industry as a customer service representative, followed by blue-collar jobs. Since, one of the objectives of K to 12 is to master skills, especially English communication, and acquire basic competencies to be competitive on a global scale, then graduates could be competitive in the BPO industry. Last October 23, 2020, CNN announced that one of the leading BPO firms Alorica, which mostly serves American companies, eyes on hiring K-12 graduates having a competitive salary in support of the government's K to 12 program.

Analysis of the Graduates who are Layabout (with little/ no work)

Table 9 presents the reasons for the graduates who are layabout or with little/ no work. Out of 6 respondents, 50% were due to financial problems, while the others are because of health problems, lack of interest and they got pregnant.

Table 9: Reasons of the Graduates who are Layabout (with little/ no work)

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Financial Problem	3	50%	1
Health Problem	1	16.7%	3
Lack of Interest	1	16.7%	3
Others: Got Pregnant	1	16.7%	3
TOTAL	6	100%	

Based on these data, it shows that half of the respondents claimed that finance-related matters were the reason for not being enrolled in higher education. While the other half stated that their health problems, lack of interest, and being pregnant brought them into such status. In the Philippines, many high school graduates do not pursue tertiary education hindered by the high tuition fees in addition to miscellaneous expenses unlike their senior high wherein they have their voucher or subsidy from the government. As stated by De La Cruz (2015), only 40 percent of Filipino high school graduates have the financial capability to proceed to college. That is why some graduates pursue vocational courses through the help of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

Analysis of the Graduates with Established Business

Table 10 presents the types of business and type of ownership of the graduates with an established business.

Out of 5 graduates with an established business, 60% has a service type of business while 40% has a trading/ merchandising business. Most of them (80%) were sole proprietors while 20% went into a partnership type of ownership.

Table 10: Type of Business and Type of Ownership of the Graduates with Established Business

Type of Business	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Trading/ Merchandising	2	40%	2
Manufacturing	0	0%	3
Service	3	60%	1
TOTAL	5	100%	
Type of Ownership			
Sole Proprietorship	4	80%	1
Partnership	1	20%	2
TOTAL	5	100%	

Based on these data, the majority of the enterprising graduates own their business under the service type of business while the rest is with partners under the trading/ merchandising business. As stated by Padios and et.al (2021), this is expected for beginners to belong in the low-income class.

Cross Analysis of the Current Status of BCU-SHS Graduates with their Academic Strand

Table 11 presents the summary of the current status of BCU-SHS graduates with their academic strand.

Most of the BCU-SHS graduates proceeded to a college or university after their senior high graduation with a total percentage of 84.17%, wherein the ABM strand has the highest percentage of 27.34% followed by STEM (25.90%), HUMSS (23.02%), and TVL (7.91%). While out of 11, 36.36% of ABM and TVL student graduates were employed, followed by HUMSS (18.18%) and STEM (9.09%). For those who are layabout (little or no work), out of 6, 50% were ABM student graduates followed by HUMSS with 33.33% and STEM with 16.67%. And, for those who have established a business, out of 5, 100% were ABM student graduates.

In addition, for the ABM graduates, 76% proceeded to college or university, while 10% were with an established business, 8% were employed, and 6% were layabout. For the STEM graduates, 94.74% proceeded to college or university, while 2.63% each were employed and layabout. For the HUMSS graduates, 88.89% proceeded to college or university, while 5.56% each were employed and layabout. And, for the TVL graduates, 73.33% proceeded to college or university and 26.67% were employed.

Table 11: Summary of the Current Status of BCU-SHS Graduates with their Academic Strand

ACADEMIC STRAND		Current Status of BCU-SHS graduates				TOTAL
		Proceeded to College/ University	Employed	Layabout (with little/ no work)	With Established Business	
ABM	Count	38	4	3	5	50
	Expected Count	42.09	3.96	2.16	1.80	50
	% within Academic Strand	76%	8%	6%	10%	100%
	% within Current Status	32.48%	36.36%	50%	100%	35.97%
	% of Total	27.34%	2.88%	2.16%	3.60%	35.97%
STEM	Count	36	1	1	0	38
	Expected Count	31.96	3.01	1.64	1.37	38
	% within Academic Strand	94.74%	2.63%	2.63%	0%	100%
	% within Current Status	30.77%	9.09%	16.67%	0%	27.34%
	% of Total	25.90%	0.72%	0.72%	0%	27.34%
HUMSS	Count	32	2	2	0	36

	Expected Count	30.30	2.85	1.55	1.29	36
	% within Academic Strand	88.89%	5.56%	5.56%	0%	100%
	% within Current Status	27.35%	18.18%	33.33%	0%	25.90%
	% of Total	23.02%	1.44%	1.44%	0%	25.90%
TVL	Count	11	4	0	0	15
	Expected Count	12.63	1.19	0.65	0.54	15
	% within Academic Strand	73.33%	26.67%	0%	0%	100%
	% within Current Status	9.40%	36.36%	0%	0%	10.79%
	% of Total	7.91%	2.88%	0%	0%	10.79%
TOTAL	Count	117	11	6	5	139
	Expected Count	117	11	6	5	139
	% within Academic Strand	84.17%	7.91%	4.32%	3.60%	100%
	% within Current Status	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	% of Total	84.17%	7.91%	4.32%	3.60%	100%

Based on these data, even if the Department of Education added the Senior High School program to help students be ready in the workplace and be an entrepreneur, still the majority of the SHS graduates, whatever their strand is, pursue college. They still prefer having a degree course before applying for a job or putting up their own business. As stated by ADB and DepEd (2019), about 85% of students were expected to enter college and to take courses in personal services, engineering and engineering trades, teacher training, and education science, and health.

V. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the respondents of this study have an acceptable response rate of graduates dominated by females whereas ABM graduates have the highest respondents. And, the majority of the first batch of BCU-SHS graduates was of the right age in their education level had they not stopped studying from Junior High to Senior High. Moreover, the majority of the BCU-SHS Batch 2018 graduates regarded pursuing higher education after graduation as an avenue to further improve their skills acquired in senior high school. And, only a small percentage of the graduates take on employment and entrepreneurial activities. There was also a small percentage who were layabout or with little/ no work because of financial-related matters, and other reasons. This implies that the majority of SHS graduates still prefer having a degree course before applying for a job or putting up their own business. Hence, the senior high school teachers and advisers, in coordination with the guidance counselor and university physician, could conduct seminars, trainings, and workshops to enhance the students' preparedness physically, mentally, and emotionally. Furthermore, the senior high school principal could provide consultation hours and strategize class schedules according to the needs of the students.

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