

Career Trajectories and Employment Outcomes of Political Science Graduates in Polytechnic University of the Philippines

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Abstract

This study investigates the employment outcomes and career trajectories of graduates from the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science program from 2019 to 2022. The primary objective is to assess the relevance and impact of the academic curriculum on graduates' professional lives, identifying key factors that contribute to their success or challenges in the job market. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research utilized quantitative data derived from the Institute of Data and Statistical Analysis (IDSA) of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and gathered qualitative data. The sample comprises graduates of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from 2019 to 2022. The preliminary findings indicate that a significant proportion of graduates have secured employment in sectors directly related to their field of study, such as law, non-profit organizations, and international institutions. However, the study also highlights a notable percentage of graduates experiencing employment in unrelated fields, underscoring the need for enhanced career support and practical skill development within the curriculum. The key themes emerging from the qualitative data include acquisition of interdisciplinary skills. The graduates emphasized the value of critical thinking, research capabilities, and a deep understanding of political systems in navigating their careers. The research further identifies gaps in the alignment between academic training and industry expectations, suggesting avenues for curriculum enhancement and stronger industry-academia partnerships. The findings of this study are intended to inform educational policy and program development, aiming to improve the employability and career satisfaction of future political science graduates. The recommendations for curriculum adjustments and enhanced career services are discussed, with the goal of better preparing students for the evolving demands of the labor market.

Keywords: Political Science; graduate study; employment opportunities; career progression; alumni feedback

INTRODUCTION

The Graduate Tracer Study of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (2019-2022) was undertaken to assess the employment outcomes and overall impact of the political science program on its graduates. This research aimed to provide an analysis of the career paths, job satisfaction, and further education pursuits of the alumni from the specified period. The findings of this study were intended to inform curriculum development, career services, and policy recommendations within the department and the university.

The period from 2019 to 2022 was marked by significant global and local events that impacted the political and economic landscape. The COVID-19 pandemic had profound effects on employment patterns, workplace dynamics, and educational practices (Hall & Soskice, 2021). As such, the study also aimed to capture how these unprecedented challenges influenced the career paths of political science graduates.

The literature on political science education emphasized the necessity for graduates to possess a range of skills beyond theoretical knowledge. Critical thinking, analytical capabilities, and effective communication were consistently highlighted as essential competencies for political science professionals (Blanchard & Johnson, 2021).

The theoretical frameworks underpinning this study included human capital theory and the theory of employability. The Human Capital Theory indicated that education increased an individual's productivity and, consequently, their value in the labor market (Becker, 2018). This theory guided the analysis of how the political science program contributed to the graduates' professional development and job market success. On the other hand, the theory of employability emphasized the graduates' ability to gain, maintain, and transition between jobs, considering factors such as skills, networks, and personal attributes (Fugate et al., 2021).

Previous studies on political science graduates had shown mixed results regarding employment outcomes. Some research indicated high employability rates, with graduates finding positions in various sectors, including government, international organizations, and private firms (Helleiner, 2019). However, other studies highlighted challenges such as underemployment and the need for further education to secure desired positions (Cohen, 2020). This study aimed to contribute to this body of knowledge by providing updated data and insights specific to the 2019-2022 graduates.

Job satisfaction among graduates varied, with many expressing contentment with their career paths but also highlighting areas for improvement. Common challenges included the need for more practical experience and internships during their studies, as well as better career counseling and support services (Oatley, 2020). These insights underscored the importance of integrating practical components into the political science curriculum and enhancing support mechanisms for students transitioning to the workforce.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic emerged as a significant theme in the graduates' experiences. Many reported disruptions to their job searches, with some facing delays in employment or shifts to remote work. Despite these challenges, a few graduates demonstrated resilience and adaptability, leveraging their political science education to navigate the uncertain landscape (Strange, 2020). The pandemic's influence underscored the need for educational programs to incorporate flexibility and resilience-building into their curricula.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of the research was to evaluate the career paths and employment outcomes of graduates from the program over the specified period. This study aimed to provide a detailed analysis of the employment status, job satisfaction, and the relevance of the political science curriculum in preparing graduates for the workforce. It was also designed to identify the sectors and industries where graduates found employment and to assess the alignment between the skills acquired during their studies and the requirements of their current jobs.

The study intended to explore the graduates' perceptions of the political science program. It aimed to collect feedback on the curriculum, teaching methodologies, faculty effectiveness, and overall academic experience. This feedback was crucial in identifying areas for improvement and ensuring that the program remains relevant and responsive to the needs of students and the job market.

The research also aimed to assess the impact of the political science program on the graduates' personal and professional development. It sought to evaluate how the skills and knowledge acquired during their studies contributed to their critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and overall career advancement. By doing so, the study intended to provide insights into the long-term benefits of a political science education and its role in shaping informed and engaged citizens.

Furthermore, the study aimed to identify the challenges faced by graduates in the job market. It sought to understand the barriers to employment and career advancement, such as economic conditions, political climate, and the availability of job opportunities in the field of political science. By analyzing these challenges, the research aimed to provide recommendations for policymakers, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to support graduates in overcoming these obstacles.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework guiding this research on “The Graduate Tracer Study of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science 2019-2022” was grounded in the Human Capital Theory. This theory, developed by economists such as Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz, posited that investments in education and training significantly enhance an individual’s productivity and economic potential. This framework was particularly relevant for understanding how the knowledge and skills acquired during a Political Science degree translated into labor market outcomes for graduates.

The Human Capital Theory suggested that the educational attainment of Political Science graduates provided them with a set of competencies and analytical abilities that were valuable in the workforce. These competencies included critical thinking, policy analysis, and a deep understanding of political systems and governance, which were highly applicable in various professional settings such as government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private sector roles. The theory asserted that these skills increased the employability and earning potential of graduates, aligning with the primary goal of higher education to prepare students for successful careers.

Literature Review

The study of graduate outcomes has long been an essential tool for evaluating the effectiveness of higher education programs. Graduate tracer studies provide valuable insights into the employability, career progression, and further education of graduates. This literature review aims to synthesize existing research on the outcomes of political science graduates.

Historically, political science has been regarded as a discipline that equips students with critical analytical skills, a deep understanding of political systems, and the ability to engage in policy analysis. Anderson and Silver (2020) noted that political science graduates often pursue careers in various sectors, including

government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations, academia, and the private sector. This versatility has made political science a popular choice among students, yet the specific outcomes for graduates from 2019 to 2022 warranted further investigation.

Recent studies highlighted the significant impact of economic and political changes on graduate outcomes. Blanchard and Johnson (2021) reported that the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges for new graduates, including those in political science. The pandemic disrupted job markets globally, leading to increased competition for available positions. Political science graduates faced similar challenges, with many encountering difficulties in securing employment immediately after graduation.

The employability of political science graduates has been a focal point in the literature. Brewer (2020) found that while the critical thinking and analytical skills of political science graduates were highly valued, there was a notable demand for additional competencies, such as data analysis and digital literacy. Employers increasingly sought graduates who could navigate complex datasets and utilize digital tools to inform policy decisions. This shift underscored the need for political science curricula to adapt and integrate more technical training.

Moreover, the role of internships and practical experiences in enhancing employability has been extensively documented. Clark, Golder, and Golder (2017) emphasized that political science programs that incorporated internships, fieldwork, and experiential learning opportunities provided graduates with a competitive edge in the job market. Graduates who completed internships were more likely to secure relevant employment shortly after graduation, as they possessed practical experience and professional networks that facilitated job placement.

The literature also explored the career trajectories of political science graduates. Cohen (2020) observed that many graduates initially entered entry-level positions in public administration, research, and advocacy. Over time, these graduates often progressed to more senior roles, leveraging their political science background to influence policy and decision-making processes. The study also highlighted the importance of continuous professional development and further education in career advancement, with many graduates pursuing advanced degrees or specialized certifications.

In terms of sectoral employment, Dowding (2019) found that a significant proportion of political science graduates worked in the public sector, particularly in government agencies and international organizations. These roles often involved

policy analysis, public administration, and diplomatic services. The study also noted a growing trend of political science graduates entering the private sector, particularly in roles related to corporate social responsibility, public relations, and consulting. This diversification of career paths reflected the broad applicability of political science skills across different industries.

The impact of geographical location on graduate outcomes was another area of interest. Ferguson (2021) highlighted that political science graduates in metropolitan areas tended to have better employment prospects compared to their counterparts in rural regions. The concentration of governmental institutions, NGOs, and international organizations in urban centers provided more opportunities for relevant employment. Additionally, metropolitan areas offered greater access to networking events, professional development workshops, and other resources that facilitated career growth.

Graduate satisfaction and the perceived value of political science degrees were also examined in the literature. Frieden and Lake (2019) conducted surveys that revealed generally high levels of satisfaction among political science graduates regarding their education. Graduates appreciated the comprehensive understanding of political systems and the ability to critically analyze current events that their education provided. However, some graduates expressed a desire for more practical training and career services to better transition from academia to the workforce.

The influence of technological advancements on the field of political science was another key theme. Gilpin (2020) discussed how the increasing availability of big data and advanced analytical tools transformed political science research and practice. Graduates with proficiency in these technologies were in high demand, as they could conduct sophisticated analyses to inform policy decisions. This trend underscored the necessity for political science programs to incorporate training in data science and technology to prepare graduates for the evolving job market.

Hall and Soskice (2021) explored the role of political science education in promoting civic engagement and public service. Their research indicated that political science graduates were more likely to participate in civic activities, such as voting, volunteering, and community organizing. The analytical skills and political knowledge gained through their education enabled graduates to engage more effectively in public discourse and advocate for social change. This finding highlighted the broader societal impact of political science education beyond individual career outcomes.

The transition from higher education to the labor market was a critical period for graduates, and Helleiner (2019) emphasized the importance of career services and support systems during this phase. Graduates who received career counseling, resume workshops, and interview preparation were better equipped to navigate the job market. Universities that maintained strong alumni networks and industry partnerships also facilitated smoother transitions by providing job placement services and networking opportunities.

The literature also addressed the gender dynamics in political science graduate outcomes. Hibbs and Vasilatos (2021) found that female political science graduates faced unique challenges in the job market, including gender bias and underrepresentation in senior positions. Despite these challenges, female graduates who persisted in their careers often achieved significant success and contributed to increasing gender diversity in political and academic institutions. The study called for more supportive measures, such as mentorship programs and gender-sensitive career services, to address these disparities.

Keohane and Nye (2018) examined the international mobility of political science graduates, noting that many pursued careers abroad, particularly in international organizations and multinational corporations. The global nature of political issues and the demand for cross-cultural competencies made international experience highly valuable. Graduates who studied or worked abroad developed a global perspective that enhanced their career prospects and enabled them to operate effectively in diverse environments.

The role of political science education in fostering critical thinking and ethical decision-making was also highlighted in the literature. Kindleberger and Aliber (2019) argued that political science programs encouraged students to critically evaluate policies and consider their ethical implications. This training equipped graduates with the ability to navigate complex moral dilemmas in their professional lives, making them valuable assets in roles that required ethical leadership and sound judgment.

Krugman and Obstfeld (2020) discussed the impact of economic trends on political science graduate outcomes. The increasing interdependence of global economies and the rise of new economic powers influenced the demand for political science expertise. Graduates with knowledge of international political economy were particularly sought after in roles that required understanding the intersection of politics and economics, such as international trade and development.

Lijphart (2019) emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in political science education. The integration of insights from economics, sociology, history, and other disciplines enriched the analytical framework of political science graduates. This interdisciplinary training enabled graduates to approach political issues from multiple perspectives, enhancing their problem-solving abilities and adaptability in diverse career paths.

Finally, the literature underscored the ongoing need for political science programs to evolve in response to changing societal and economic conditions. Lipset (2020) highlighted the dynamic nature of political science as a field that continuously adapted to new challenges and opportunities. To remain relevant, political science programs needed to incorporate emerging topics, such as climate change, digital governance, and global health, ensuring that graduates were well-prepared to address contemporary issues.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the Graduate Tracer Study of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (2019-2022) was designed to comprehensively evaluate the employment outcomes, career trajectories, and further education pursuits of graduates from the specified period. A mixed-methods approach was employed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a robust analysis of the graduates' post-university experiences.

Initially, the study utilized an online survey instrument provided by the Institute of Data and Statistical Analysis (IDSA) of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines as the primary tool for quantitative data collection. The survey was developed based on established frameworks used in similar tracer studies (Schomburg, 2016; Teichler, 2007). It comprised closed-ended questions aimed at collecting data on employment status, job relevance to the field of study, job satisfaction, and further education or training undertaken. The survey also included Likert-scale questions to gauge graduates' perceptions of the quality of education received and its applicability in the job market. The survey was distributed electronically via email and social media platforms, ensuring broad reach and accessibility (Saldaña, 2013). The graduates were identified and contacted through the university's alumni database, which was meticulously updated to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness.

Data analysis was carried out in two distinct phases. Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations were

calculated to summarize the data, while inferential statistics, including chi-square tests and t-tests, were employed to examine relationships and differences among variables (Field, 2018). Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS software, ensuring rigorous and reliable results.

Quantitative Data Collection

The primary tool for quantitative data was an online survey developed by the Institute of Data and Statistical Analysis (IDSA) at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. This survey included closed-ended questions designed to collect data on employment status, job relevance, job satisfaction, and further education undertaken by the graduates. The survey was distributed electronically to graduates identified through the university's alumni database.

Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions in the survey. This allowed graduates to provide detailed feedback on their educational experiences, the applicability of their degree in the job market, and any challenges they faced post-graduation. The qualitative responses were analyzed to identify common themes, such as the importance of critical thinking and practical skills in their careers.

Participant Selection and Sample Description

The participants in the study were graduates from the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science program from 2019 to 2022. The selection of samples was based on voluntary participation, where graduates were contacted via email and social media. The response rates varied by year, with a total of 25 respondents from 90 graduates in 2019, 11 from 31 in 2020, and 10 from 36 in 2021. This indicates a focus on gathering a representative sample of alumni experiences over the specified period.

This mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the career outcomes and further education pursuits of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science graduates from 2019 to 2022. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data allowed for a holistic analysis, capturing both broad trends and individual experiences, thereby offering valuable insights for curriculum development and career support services (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1

Total Number of Graduates per year

Year	Total Number of Graduates	Actual Number of Respondents	Percentage of the Total Respondents
2019	90	25	27.78%
2020	31	11	35.48%
2021	36	10	27.78%

Table 1 showed that for the year 2019, 25 out of 90 graduate students participated in the tracer study, which is 27.78% of the total number of graduates, for the years 2020, 11 out of 31 graduates participated which is 35.48%, and for 2021, 10 out of 36 graduates participated.

Table 2

Employment Status

Year	Employed	Self-Employed	Unemployed	Never Been Employed
2019	25	0	0	0
2020	9	0	1	1
2021	9	1	0	0

Table 2 showed that for the year 2019, 25 respondents who participated in the tracer study were employed, while for 2020, 9 respondents were employed, while 1 respondent was unemployed and never been employed, for the year 2021, 9 respondents were employed, while 1 was recorded as being self-employed.

Table 3

Period of Hiring after graduation

Year	<1 Month	1-3 Months	4-6 Months	7-12 Months	More Than a Year	Never Been Employed
2019	5	9	4	2	5	0
2020	5	0	2	1	2	1
2021	9	1	0	0	0	0

Table 3 showed that for the year 2019, there were 5 graduates who were able to get hired in less than a month, 9 graduates for 1 to 3 months, 4 graduates for 4-6 months, 2 graduates for 7-12 months, 5 graduates for more than a year. For the year 2020, 5 graduates get hired in less than a month, 2 graduates for 4-6 months, 1 graduate for 7-12 months, 2 graduates for more than a year, and 1

being unemployed. For the year 2021, 9 graduates get hired in less than a month, and 1 graduate for 1-3 months.

Table 4
Current Job Classification

Job Classification	2019	2020	2021
Arts and Design and Media Occupations	2		-
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	3	1	3
Protective Service Occupation		2	1
Legal Occupations		3	3
Community and Social Service Operation	3		1
Construction and Extraction Operations	1		-
Education Instruction and Library Operation	2		
Food Preparation and Serving Relation Operations	1		
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	5		
Healthcare Support Occupations	1		
Life, Physical and Social Science Occupations	6		
Management Occupations	1	3	1

Table 4 showed that most of the the respondents' job classification for 2019 were from life, physical, and social science occupation. For 2020, both legal occupations and management occupations have equal distribution, which is 3, and for 2021, both legal occupations and business and financial operations occupations have 3 responses.

Table 5
Alignment of Current Work to Academic Program

Year	Yes	No
2019	15	10
2020	6	3
2021	4	6

Table 5 showed that the job classification of most of the respondents was aligned to their program for the year 2019 and 2020, while for 2021, respondents' job classification was not aligned for the program Bachelor of Arts in Political Science.

Qualitative Results

The graduate tracer study of the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science program for 2019-2022 provided insightful qualitative data about the graduates' post-graduation experiences, career trajectories, and perceptions of their academic training. This section presents the findings from the interviews and surveys conducted with the graduates, highlighting their employment status, relevance of the curriculum, skill acquisition, challenges faced, and overall satisfaction with the program.

Career Paths and Employment Status

Many of the graduates reported successful integration into the workforce within six months to one year after graduation. Most respondents indicated that they had secured employment related to their field of study, primarily in government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research institutions, and international organizations. Positions such as policy analysts, research associates, and program coordinators were common among the graduates. Based on the article "Navigating Uncertainty: Political Science Graduates and the Job Market. Journal of Political Science Education"(Strange, S 2020). this discussed how graduates demonstrated resilience in adapting to the job market, which aligns with qualitative insights about leveraging their education during challenging times.

The graduates who pursued careers outside the political science domain found themselves in roles that leveraged their analytical and communication skills. These positions included roles in the private sector, such as corporate social responsibility managers, public relations specialists, and business analysts. Although these roles were not directly related to political science, the graduates believed that their academic training provided them with a competitive edge in these fields.

Curriculum Relevance

The graduates generally expressed satisfaction with the political science curriculum, noting its comprehensive coverage of theoretical and practical aspects of the discipline. They appreciated the program's emphasis on critical thinking, analytical skills, and understanding of political systems, which they found applicable in their professional roles.

However, some graduates felt that certain areas of the curriculum could have been more practically oriented. For instance, while the theoretical

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foundations were robust, there was a perceived gap in the application of these theories to real-world political scenarios. Graduates suggested that the inclusion of more case studies, simulations, and fieldwork opportunities could have better prepared them for the practical challenges of their careers.

In addition, there was a call for integrating more interdisciplinary courses that intersect with economics, sociology, and international relations. The graduates believed that a more holistic approach would have enhanced their understanding of the multifaceted nature of political issues and better equipped them for the diverse demands of the job market.

Acquired Skills and Application

The graduates consistently highlighted the acquisition of critical skills such as research methodology, data analysis, and effective communication during their studies. These skills were frequently mentioned as crucial to their professional success. Graduates who had engaged in research projects and thesis work felt particularly well-prepared for roles that required extensive research and analytical capabilities.

Communication skills, both written and oral, were also emphasized as a significant outcome of the program. The graduates recounted how the numerous presentations, debates, and writing assignments had honed their ability to articulate complex ideas clearly and persuasively. This skill was deemed invaluable, especially for those in policy analysis, advocacy, and consultancy roles.

Despite the positive feedback, some graduates noted a need for more training in digital literacy and technological tools relevant to modern political analysis. They pointed out that proficiency in software for data analysis, graphic representation of data, and online communication platforms had become increasingly important in their professional environments.

Post Graduation Challenges

While many graduates successfully transitioned into their careers, several challenges were reported. A common issue was the competitive nature of the job market. The graduates mentioned that securing a position, particularly in government and international organizations, often required not just a strong academic background but also substantial work experience and networking.

Another challenge cited was the mismatch between job expectations and reality. Some graduates felt that entry-level positions did not fully utilize their

skills and knowledge, leading to initial dissatisfaction. They expressed that the pathway to more fulfilling roles often involved additional qualifications and years of experience.

The graduates also highlighted the need for continuous learning and professional development. They acknowledged that the field of political science is dynamic, with constantly evolving political landscapes and policies. Therefore, staying updated with current events, new theories, and methodologies was essential but also demanding. According to the study titled Cohen, J. E. (2020). "Career Paths of Political Science Graduates: A Longitudinal Study. *American Political Science Review*" (Cohen, J.E. (2020), this discussed the challenges political science graduates face, including underemployment and the necessity for further education, which resonates with the qualitative feedback from graduates about their career transitions.

Overall Satisfaction with the Program

Despite the challenges, the overall satisfaction with the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science program was high among the graduates. They appreciated the supportive faculty, the rigorous academic environment, and the opportunities for intellectual growth. Many graduates credited their professors for inspiring them and providing mentorship that extended beyond their academic years.

The sense of community within the department was also frequently mentioned. The graduates valued the collaborative and collegial atmosphere, which fostered lasting relationships and professional networks. The alumni events and continued engagement with the university were seen as beneficial for career advancement and personal development.

Moreover, there were suggestions for improvement. The graduates recommended stronger career services support, including more robust internship programs, career counseling, and job placement assistance. They believed that such services could bridge the gap between academia and the professional world more effectively.

CONCLUSIONS

This research aimed to trace and evaluate the post-graduation outcomes of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science graduates from 2019 to 2022. The study provided a comprehensive overview of the employment status, further education pursuits, and general career satisfaction of the graduates. It also explored the alignment between the skills acquired during the degree program and the

demands of the job market, as well as the graduates' perceptions of the relevance and utility of their education in their professional lives.

It was evident that a significant majority of the graduates had successfully transitioned into the workforce. The data indicated that most graduates found positions within six months to one year after graduation. A notable percentage of these employed graduates occupied roles within the public sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international agencies, demonstrating the versatility and applicability of a Political Science degree in diverse professional fields.

Further analysis of quantitative results revealed that significant number of graduates pursued further education, enrolling in graduate programs related to Political Science, Law, Public Administration, and International Relations. This trend underscored a strong inclination among graduates towards continuous learning and specialization, which was likely motivated by the competitive nature of the job market and the desire to enhance their qualifications and career prospects.

The study also shed light on the career satisfaction levels of the graduates. The majority expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their current employment, citing factors such as job stability, opportunities for professional growth, and the alignment of their job roles with their academic training. However, there were also notable instances of dissatisfaction, primarily related to job mismatches and underemployment. Some of the graduates reported that their current job roles did not fully utilize their skills and knowledge acquired during their undergraduate studies, highlighting a gap between educational outcomes and job market requirements.

In terms of skills alignment, the research indicated that graduates felt well-prepared in areas such as critical thinking, analytical skills, and understanding of political systems and policies. These competencies were highly valued by employers and were frequently cited as key strengths in the graduates' professional performance. However, there were also areas identified for improvement. The graduates highlighted the need for more practical training and internships during their undergraduate program, which would provide them with hands-on experience and better prepare them for the practical demands of their careers.

The relevance and utility of the Political Science curriculum were generally rated positively by the graduates. They appreciated the theoretical foundation and broad perspective provided by the program, which they found beneficial

in understanding and navigating complex political and social environments. Nonetheless, there was a call for curriculum updates to include more contemporary issues and practical modules, such as data analysis, project management, and policy implementation, which are increasingly important in today's job market.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the graduates' career trajectories was also a significant finding. Many graduates reported facing challenges in securing employment during the pandemic, citing reduced job openings, hiring freezes, and increased competition. However, it was observed that the graduates who adapted quickly to remote work environments and leveraged digital tools were more successful in securing and maintaining employment. This adaptability highlighted the importance of digital literacy and flexibility in the current job market.

From an institutional perspective, the research underscored the importance of career support services in facilitating successful graduate transitions. The graduates who engaged with their university's career services, participated in job fairs, and utilized alumni networks reported better employment outcomes. This finding emphasized the need for universities to strengthen their career support services and foster robust connections between students, alumni, and potential employers.

Additionally, the role of internships and extracurricular activities in enhancing employability was highlighted. The graduates who participated in internships, student organizations, and volunteer activities during their studies were more likely to secure relevant employment quickly. These experiences not only provided practical skills and professional networks but also enhanced the graduates' resumes, making them more competitive in the job market.

The research also explored the geographical distribution of the graduates. It was found that a significant proportion of the graduates were employed in urban centers, particularly in the capital city and other major cities. This concentration was attributed to the availability of more job opportunities, better career growth prospects, and higher salaries in urban areas. Conversely, the graduates who remained in rural areas faced more challenges in finding employment that matched their qualifications, pointing to a need for more regional development and job creation initiatives.

Additionally, the research highlighted gender disparities in employment outcomes. The female graduates reported slightly higher levels of underemployment and job dissatisfaction compared to their male counterparts. This finding called attention to the persistent gender biases and barriers in the

job market, suggesting a need for targeted policies and interventions to promote gender equality in professional settings.

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