

Tracking the Employment and Employability Characteristics of the Graduates of the College of Teacher Education

Marvin S. Daguplo¹, Pritzel Lee G. Capili²,
April Rose C. Estrella³, Abegail L. Bano⁴
College of Teacher Education, Southern Leyte State University, Philippines
¹daguplosdv@yahoo.com, ²leeguasa1972@gmail.com

Asia Pacific Journal of
Multidisciplinary Research
Vol. 7 No.2, Part III, 67-74
May 2019
P-ISSN 2350-7756
E-ISSN 2350-8442
www.apjmr.com
CHED Recognized Journal
ASEAN Citation Index

Date Received: October 4, 2018; Date Revised: May 10, 2019

Abstract - Education is the basic response to challenges of the socio-economic status of a nation. The higher education, particularly, is tasked to develop human resources that will become a productive and relevantly employed member of the society. One of the important metrics in the implementation of the quality and relevant education is the realization of the graduates of the program in attaining their professional goals. Anchored on the concept that tracking system is a vital basis of information to determine the status of graduates of academic programs, this descriptive study aims at specifying the profile of the graduates of a Teacher Education Institution in their current employment and earned employability skills. Through the use of an institutionally crafted instrument adapted from the Commission on Higher Education, a total of 178 graduates from 2009 to 2017 identified via criterion-referenced purposive sampling positively responded to the survey instrument. Analysis revealed that the strategies employed for employment show that advertisement, referrals, and personal connections were the major approach employed by education graduates for employment. This study also unveils two major criteria when applying for a job: (i) Compensation, Opportunity for Development, and Proximity Criterion, and (ii) Time Flexibility and Socio-cultural Criterion. This study concludes that the learning and skills developed in the university were relevant to the present job of the graduates. The curriculum enhanced their problem-solving and research skills, as well as, their communication and information skills. This made them satisfied in their current employment.

Keywords: Tracking graduates, education graduates, teacher education, employment criteria, alumni.

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education has long been considered as one of the nation's active and humane machinery to counter poverty and pushes socio-economic upliftment. It develops and cultivate the nation's manpower for national development and to instill and foster the appropriate and relevant, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to enable each individual to become a productive and relevantly employed member of the society. Investments in education would be considered "wasted" if graduates do not move into the significant social roles that enable them to economically support the government [1].

Executive Order # 83, series of 2012 establishes the Philippine Qualifications Framework, which mandates agency responsibilities like DepEd, CHED, TESDA, PRC, and DOLE to examine, evaluate, and recommend learning standards in basic education, technical skills development, and higher education and in the alignment of licensure examination [2]. One of the

important metrics to both assess and improve training programs is the graduates' achievement and realization of their respective career goals and plans [3]. The International Labor Organization [4] Thesaurus defines a tracking investigation as an evaluation and assessment tool where the "impact on target groups is traced back to specific elements of a project or program so that effective and ineffective project components may be defined." Further, Schomburg [5] shares that graduate survey results are important for "analysis of the relationship between higher education and work." Moreover, Millington [6] states that "they provide quantitative structural data on employment and career, the character of work and related competencies, and information on the professional orientation, and experiences of their graduates."

Additionally, data collected from tracking the graduates of various programs of higher education institutions can be a very significant measure of the

quality of higher education. It is mandated in the Philippine Higher Education System through the Commission on Higher Education that all HEIs needs to develop a system to track the socio-economic status of their graduates. This was also emphasized during program evaluation as one of the required documents by any higher education accrediting bodies such as the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACUP), Inc, in the case of State Universities and Colleges. Through tracers' study, the university will be able to make a thorough review of the relevance of their program offering, the responsiveness of the curriculum offered, conduct comparative and longitudinal studies, and perform relevant and viable actions in partnership with other stakeholders for curriculum development and other emerging reforms.

As a developing country, the Philippines faces economic and socio-political challenges caused basically by high unemployment and underemployment rates of the graduates of the institutions of higher learning. There is a high disparity between the continually increasing population and job creation. Higher Education Institutions are producing more and more graduates from various disciplines such as law, education, social works, medicine and health services just to name a few. These graduates, however, are still nowhere to find in the list of employed personnel in many industries, agencies, and institutions – private or public – in the Philippines despite receiving their diplomas.

The unemployment rate in the Philippines was last reported at 7.00 percent in July of 2012, 21% of which are college graduates. Historically, from 1995 until 2012, Philippines unemployment rate averaged 9.0 percent reaching an all-time high of 13.9 percent in April of 2002 and a record low of 6.3 percent in October of 2007. The unemployment rate can be defined as the number of people actively looking for a job as a percentage of the labor force [7].

While logical, artistic, ethical, and other necessary characteristics of graduates are indeed hard to measure, tracking definite attributes among graduates is a viable and effective key measure of school effectiveness. It offers tangible and substantial proof that will facilitate internal and external evaluators to gauge a school's most important product--its graduates--in important ways. Tracking graduates will help us replace our current subjective evidence--"because our graduates and their parents tell us we have succeeded"--with the "hard data" external evaluators are increasingly

demanding. This calls all colleges and universities in the country to develop a system of collecting "hard data" as evidence to ward off intrusive thrusts from the state.

This paper presents the relevant results of the tracer study on the education graduates of Southern Leyte State University-College of Teacher Education. It attempts to define the employment profile of the graduates as a feedback mechanism to assess the relevance of the education curriculum. Preliminary data would also be the basis for developing a tracking system for all graduates of program offering in SLSU-College of Teacher Education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research attempts to define the employment profile of the graduates as a feedback mechanism to assess the relevance of the education curriculum of Southern Leyte State University-College of Teacher Education. Specifically, this research aimed to determine the employment profile of the education graduates in terms of program graduated, sex and highest educational attainment; job seeking strategies; employment characteristics, and; curriculum impact to present job

Framework of the Study

This study is grounded on the concept of Garcia (2003) as cited by Gines [2] pointing out that tracer studies are the significant and viable basis of facts and information on the socio-economic status of graduates in the academic programs of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

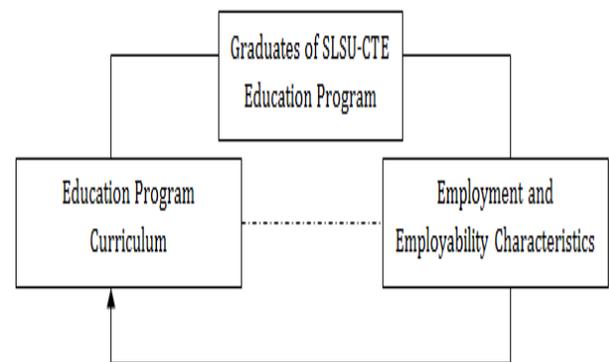


Fig. 1. Framework of the Study

METHODS

This study employed descriptive-survey design. It is a design that aims to focus on the present condition [8]. The current investigation justifies the use as it aims to specify the profile of the graduates in terms of current employment and employability skills.

Through the use of an institutionally crafted instrument adapted from CHED, a total of 178 graduates from 2009 to 2017 identified via criterion-referenced purposive sampling positively responded to the survey instrument. Data were collected through an online survey which resulted in just 15% response of the total number of graduates. Thus, sampling is considered one of the limitations of the study since the participation of graduates is beyond the control of the researcher.

Data retrieved were organized and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data were presented in both tabular and graphical method.

This study used frequency, rank, mean and standard deviation as statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Profile of the Education Graduates in terms of Program Graduated, Sex, and Highest Educational Attainment

Program / Sex	Highest Educational Attainment									
	Bachelor		With Master's Units		Masters		With Doctoral Units		Doctorate	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
BEED										
Female	2	78	3	78	8	10	1	50	1	10
	8	%	5	%	0	0%	1	%	0	0%
Male	8	22	1	22	0	0%	1	50	0	0%
		%	0	%				%		
All	3	10	4	10	8	10	2	10	1	10
	6	%	5	%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
BSED										
Female	3	68	6	76	4	50	2	50	0	0%
	8	%	7	%	4	50	2	50	0	0%
Male	1	32	2	24	4	50	2	50	1	10
	8	%	1	%	4	50	2	50	1	10
All	5	10	8	10	8	10	4	10	1	10
	6	%	8	%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Descriptive analysis revealed that there are more BSED graduate-respondents. Moreover, it is very

evident that these graduates are pursuing advanced studies. In fact, more than half of these graduate-respondents had already units in Masters' Degree. On a closer look, it was also observed that female dominates in number among BEED and BSED graduates in SLSU – CTE. These female respondents, more particularly among BEED graduates, have completed their advanced studies.

According to Masters in Education: Advancing the skills of educators [9], in today's world, is simply isn't enough to just earn a bachelor's degree and expect to make a real difference in the lives of your students. Teachers who earn their advanced degrees show a deep level of understanding and commitment to the profession, allowing them to modify curriculum goals, adjust teaching methods, and enter leadership positions to enact the system-wide changes in education they wish to see.

Analysis of the strategies employed for employment shows that advertisement of various jobs was the major approach employed by education graduates. Posts and advertisement vacancy, printed or online, were the sources of information for employment among graduates in SLSU-CTE. Related to advertisements are the use of verbal communications, referrals, and personal connections. For those who are courageous enough, approaching the employer is the direct strategy they used for employment.

Job fairs, professorial help, placement office in the university, and OJT programs were secondary choices for strategic employment. The use of connections, linkages and program coordinators in the university were considered factors that are directly and indirectly influential in the employment search among graduates. From these findings, the university career placement and coaching program is a very significant contribution to the graduates' technique in searching for a relevant and gainful job. Left alone, graduates would rely only on their learned skill which might not be enough in facing the real world of employment.

Proactive career management requires that all employees be perpetual learners to promote career growth and success. High levels of learning support are required to develop not only micro-level skills that extend beyond those necessary for a particular job but also macro level skills such as adaptability and learning how to learn, (Hall, 2000). as cited by Parker, Polly, et al [10].

Undeniably, a graduate in-search for a job set criteria for choosing an employee. This study unveils two major criteria when applying for a job: (i)

Compensation, Opportunity for Development, and Proximity Criterion, and (ii) Time Flexibility and Socio-cultural Criterion.

Table 2. Job-Seeking Strategies Employed by the Graduates

Job-Seeking Strategies Employed	Response		Rank
	f	%	
Applied for an advertised vacancy	114	45.8%	1
Received referrals from personal connections/contacts (e.g. parents, relatives, friends)	70	28.1%	2
Contacted employers to inquire about vacancies	63	25.3%	3
Approached by an employer	59	23.7%	4
Applied through contacts established during my undergraduate years	32	12.9%	5
Attended job fairs	16	6.4%	6
Applied self-strategic approach.	13	5.2%	7
Enlisted the help of the university staff and/or my professors	8	3.2%	8
Advertised/posted my professional skills on job-search sites	7	2.8%	9
Enlisted the help of the career/placement office of my college/university	4	1.6%	10
Joined my family's company or business	3	1.2%	11
Continued my OJT position after graduation	2	0.8%	12.5
Continued my job as a working student	2	0.8%	12.5
Started my own business	0	0.0%	14

Criterion 1 a human resource related factor. These include salary and benefits, the opportunity for career advancement, relatedness to skills and degree, and proximity to residence. This response reflects the defining value of security in searching for a job. Graduates of Education in SLSU – CTE, possibly because of training and experience, chose to prioritize economic and career security.

The 2nd criterion is more concentrated on the social aspect of the working environment including more specifically the time element of the job. This aspect defines how social relations including tolerance to

religious practices strengthen multi-cultural understanding of the working environment.

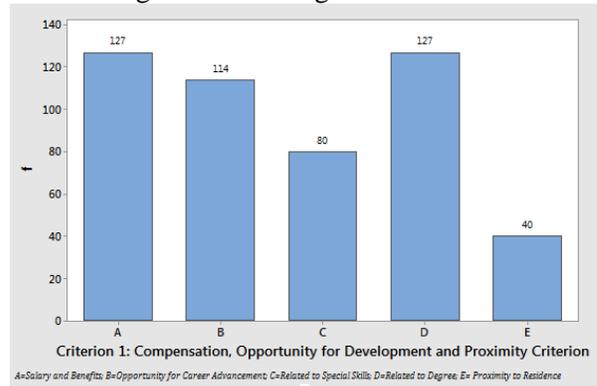


Figure 2. Criterion for Applying for a Job

Education graduates are likely to land on a job which is related to their field. Most of them are full-time teachers and very much satisfied with their current job. The learning and skills developed in the university were relevant to their present job. Based on the results, graduates who were very much satisfied tend to stay in their job.

A welcoming, socially comfortable, and professionally managed social structure working environment is undeniably an important component for a productive, diligent and contented organization. It is not only beneficial to the employees' wellbeing and satisfaction at work, but organizations and institutions will benefit the recompense of having an engaged and dedicated workforce [11].

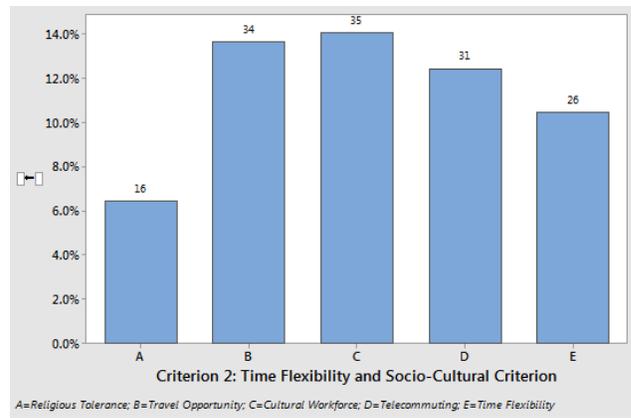


Figure 3. Second criterion when applying for a Job

Table 3 presents the relevance of the curriculum is measured not only in the way it influenced the development of the graduates' knowledge, skills, and attitude. It is more convincing if it has a significant influence on the graduates being employed, sustained

in the working environment, and even more, excel and create a positive impact on the environment where the graduate is employed.

Table 3. Employment Characteristics of Education Graduates

Employment Status	Job Relevance	Degree of Job Satisfaction					
		Little Satisfied		Much Satisfied		Very Much Satisfied	
		Intention to Stay		Intention to Stay		Intention to Stay	
		No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Full Time	NR	0	0	1	4	1	1
	R	2	3	9	84	1	108
	All	2	3	10	88	2	109
Never Been	NR	2	0	0	3	0	0
	R	0	0	0	0	0	0
	All	2	0	0	3	0	0
Part-Time	NR	0	0	0	0	0	0
	R	0	1	0	12	2	9
	All	0	1	0	12	2	9
Previously Employed	NR	1	0	0	1	0	0
	R	0	0	0	3	0	1
	All	1	0	0	4	0	1

R-Relevant; NR-Not Relevant

Czarnecki [12] states that “a positive attitude and good habits of the employees are invariably the reason behind the performance of great companies. Successful

organizations realize that it is the negative attitudes and wrong habits of the employees are mostly the reasons behind the failures and not lack of knowledge or skills.”

Table 4 shows the current investigation of how curriculum influenced the graduates of the education program of SLSU-CTE reflects a very rewarding realization. Graduates of education program in the College of Teacher Education were grateful enough for the curriculum they took had a very high impact on the development of their knowledge, skills, and attitude. In a more specific manner, the curriculum enhanced their problem-solving and research skills, as well as, their communication and information skills. This translation of the curriculum to an observable attitude of the graduates shows that the teacher education program of SLSU is responsive in developing quality educators.

Looking closely at the result, one could say that these graduates really translated their skills to their job. Education graduates revealed that the teacher education curriculum adapted and implemented by SLSU-CTE is very relevant in their current job. The knowledge, skills, and team spirit they acquired in the teacher education training were very useful and applicable in completing their job. In a quality standard, this reflects how SLSU-CTE prepared and equipped their graduates to face the world outside academe by providing them with industry- and research-based curriculum.

Table 4. Curriculum Impact to Personal KSA and Relevance to Present Job

Particulars	Impact to Personal KSA			Relevance to Present Job		
	Descriptive Response			Descriptive Response		
	Mean	StDev	Description	Mean	StDev	Description
• Enhanced academic knowledge	4.68	0.52	Very High	4.70	0.61	Very Relevant
• Improved problem-solving skills	4.43	0.67	Very High	4.58	0.59	Very Relevant
• Improved research skills	4.20	0.82	Very High	4.39	0.75	Very Relevant
• Improved learning efficiency	4.55	0.58	Very High	4.67	0.53	Very Relevant
• Improved communication skills	4.55	0.61	Very High	4.70	0.53	Very Relevant
• Improved information technology skills	4.42	0.67	Very High	4.56	0.64	Very Relevant
• Enhanced team spirit	4.53	0.63	Very High	4.62	0.60	Very Relevant
OVER-ALL MEAN	4.48	0.64	Very High	4.60	0.61	Very Relevant

According to Laurie, Nonoyama-Tarumi, & Mckeown [13], two principles characterize the challenge to define quality in education: the first identifies learners' cognitive development as the major explicit objective of all education systems. Accordingly, the success with which systems achieve this is one indicator of their quality. The second emphasizes education's role in promoting values and attitudes of responsible citizenship and in nurturing creative and emotional development.

UNESCO (2004) has also specified what is called as the collective criterion in the treatise of defining quality education. This included 'respect for individual rights, improved equity of access and of learning outcomes, and increased relevance [13].

Looking individually on the parameters that composed the teacher education program, the graduate-respondents were consistent in their response that the curriculum is relevant and responsive to the need of the industry. Courses offered, academic and non-academic activities, teaching-learning environment, teacher-student relationship, and professional requirements were all considered as strength of the teacher education program.

Table 5. Parameters of the Institutional Program

Particulars	Descriptive response		Description
	Mean	StDev	
Range of courses offered	4.06	0.85	Strength
Number of optional subjects	3.96	0.93	Strength
Relevance of the program to your professional requirements	4.48	0.74	Strength
Extracurricular activities	4.11	0.90	Strength
Problem solving	4.19	0.75	Strength
Inter-disciplinary learning	4.32	0.81	Strength
Work placement/attachment	4.27	0.79	Strength
Teaching/Learning environment	4.47	0.74	Strength
Quality of delivery	4.34	0.75	Strength
Teacher Student Relationship	4.45	0.78	Strength
Library/Lab etc.	3.88	0.94	Strength

Note: if Mean Score < 3.00, the parameter is considered weak to the institutional program.

Table 5 shows that it cannot be denied that these parameters are significant factors contributing to the development of leaders in the academe not only in the province but also in the national and international arena.

The curriculum is generally considered as the complete course path that will enable students to attain the goals and general objectives of education. It empowers all students and motivates them towards lifelong learning. It is indeed very important for an educational institution to have a balanced and well-designed curriculum for all the programs it offers. In doing so, the institution shall have a more stable system in undertaking its goals and mission so as to make its curricular programs efficient and effective to its major concern – the students [14].

A closer look will again lead us to the awareness that the program provides very good teaching and learning environment (M=4.47, stdev=0.74) which leads to a very strong teacher and student relationship (M=4.45, stdev=0.78) and quality of instructional delivery (M=4.34, stdev=0.75). Moreover, the relevance of the program offering (M=4.48, stdev=0.74) provides a wider opportunity for relevant problem solving (M=4.19, stdev=0.75) and interdisciplinary learning (M=4.32, stdev=0.81). These parameters were assessed as the strength that the current program possessed and is the reason why the college education curriculum is still relevant, responsive and significant in providing the required knowledge, skills and attitudes that the graduates need to succeed in the workforce.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Advertisement, referral and direct inquiry from offices are the major modes of employment adopted by the graduates of teacher education. This would tell the society that graduates of teacher education institutions are honed to be independent and self-reliant when searching for a job. They brought with them the confidence they earned after years of learning how to be responsible for their own future when they will be in the field. Such self-accountability is one of the core values that the Southern Leyte State University embeds to their graduates. Such values would make them known as a reliable and responsible employee of the department or industry or institution that hired them.

Continual Professional Development makes the graduate more competitive in their respective profession either as full time or part-time teachers. The desire for continued learning is what these graduates possess in mind and in the heart. Such attitude

manifests the strong theoretical foundation that learning is a lifetime endeavor. Being in advance studies do not just mean promotion but more on being abreast on the current issues and trends of their discipline. It is also the opportunity of engaging research activities that will lead to innovations of more effective teaching-learning strategies that they can use and introduce in their fields. In such a way, education will be more dynamic than being a static profession. Once appreciated, more and more will be pursuing advanced studies that will strengthen the multiplicity and dynamism of the educational system in the field.

The human resource and development, and the social aspect of the working environment are considered as the leading reasons and considerations when applying for a Job. Compensation and opportunity for development explain why a graduate looks for a job. This will provide the graduate with a new level of satisfaction. From being satisfied as a graduate, they will be more satisfied when their role in society is felt significantly. This can only be achieved when employed. However, they always consider compensation and opportunity for development as an important area of choosing where to be employed. The reward system is always of consideration. Aside from this, equally important is the working environment. As a social being, one looks for an environment where social conditions provide safety and comfort. This will not just make them more satisfied in their job, this will also make them committed to staying in the job.

The curriculum is still relevant and provides a very high impact on the knowledge, skills, habits of the mind, attitudes, and values of the graduates. This means that the existing teacher education curriculum produces graduates that are globally competitive. The relevance of the curriculum provides a valid evaluation to continue offering the programs, to sustain best practices, to improve existing student-support programs, and to strengthen weaknesses encountered in its implementation.

It is recommended to create a strong university-industry/Institution-community linkage to assist graduates in their search for a regular teaching position in the community making them more relevant in the greater academic community.

The university should provide CPD programs and projects to sustain the learning desire of the graduates and to keep them abreast of the current issues of their respective disciplines.

University-Institution/industry-Community linkage must include in their agreement the creation and

provision of equitable compensation and a comfortable working environment to graduates so that they can be effective and productive in their teaching career.

The university must strengthen the best practice of evaluating and re-evaluating the teacher education curriculum to be more responsive and relevant to the current demands of time.

REFERENCES

- [1] de Ocampo, M., Bagano, AJ., & Tan, AL. (2012). Culture of Entrepreneurship versus Employment. 2012 Fifth Taiwan-Philippines Academic Conference: Digital Humanities and Cultural Studies
- [2] Gines, A. C. (2014). Tracer study of PNU graduates. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*,4(3), 81-98.
- [3] Michelle Romanick, Kwan Ng, George Lee, Matthew Herbert, and Barry S. Coller (2015). The Rockefeller University Graduate Tracking Survey System. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/4de1/da1a3806dc38fb3a87786c7dd732453e1f04.pdf>
- [4] ILO (2006), Youth Employment Networks –The Global Challenge, International Labour Organization, available at www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/yen/network/youthpart.htm (accessed 15 May 2012).
- [5] Schomberg (2003). Tracer Study | bronx marben ruizAcademia.eduwww.academia.edu/26763457/Tracer_Study
- [6] Millington, C. (2001) The use of tracer study for enhancing relevance and marketability in online and distance education. Retrieved July 30, 2013 from http://wikieducator.org/images/e/e1/PID_424.pdf
- [7] Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics, Highlights of the July 2012 Labor Force Survey, LABSTAT Update Vol. 16 No. 27.
- [8] Zulueta,etal.,(2006). <https://plus.google.com/+ZubairSadiqkasuri/posts/f5GAkj4eebt>
- [9] Masters in Education | Advancing the skills of educators. (2012) retrieved September 19, 2018 from <http://www.masterseducation.com/personal-benefits-of-earning-a-masters-in-education/>
- [10] Parker, Polly, et al. "Peer Coaching: A Relational Process for Accelerating Career Learning." *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, vol. 7, no. 4, 2008, pp. 487–503.JSTOR, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/27759152. Retrieved September 20, 2018.
- [11] Price, D., (2015). Is it important to have a social environment at work? <http://smallbusiness.co.uk/is-it-important-to-have-a-social-environment-at-work-2493316/> retrieved September 21, 2018.

- [12] Czarnecki, H., (2013). Knowledge, Attitude, Skills&Habitsfrom<http://virtual.auburnworks.org/profiles/blogs/kash-knowledge-attitude-skills-habits> retrieved September 22, 2018.
- [13] Laurie,R., Nonoyama-Tarumi, Y., Mckeown, R., (2016). Contributions of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to Quality Education: A Synthesis of Research from<https://doi.org/10.1177/0973408216661442> retrieved September 22, 2018
- [14] Hagos, LC, & Dejarne EG., (2008). Enhancing Curriculum in Philippine Schools in ResponsetoGlobalCommunityChallengesfrom<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1020&context=ce ducom> retrieved September 22, 2018.

COPYRIGHTS

Copyright of this article is retained by the author/s, with first publication rights granted to APJMR. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4>).