

Tracer Study of Public Administration Students

Glenn Velmonte JD, Ph.D

Associate Professor, Cebu City Philippines

Abstract: The Department of Public Governance which is a Department in the College of Arts and Sciences of Cebu Normal University, continually aspires to reach the highest level of accreditation among government school. Lately, it received the award of Level IV phase II of the accreditation, the Highest award in the country given to a University. As part of the continuous compliance with its present status, is the Tracer study of its graduates both in the undergraduate and Graduate Programs. Lastly, masculinity and femininity dimension deals with the prevailing values and priorities. In masculine cultures, achievement and accumulation of wealth is valued and strongly encouraged; while in feminine cultures, maintaining good interpersonal relationships is the priority.

This leads us to understand why men desire for money which can be found in some countries, in serving the government. A descriptive method of quantitative and qualitative research was used in the study. This seeks to describe the future status of those students who studies Public Administration. This method involves classifying and collecting of the data. Its main goal is to let students of Public Administration knows there status after taking up the degree. Top 3 choices are the Government Administrator, Lawyer and Executive Assistant and Community Worker and Human Resource Specialist. The first and last choices are both Clerical works, they ensures that an office runs smoothly and efficiently. It involves the day-to-day administrative tasks of an office, such as answering phones, scheduling appointments, sending faxes, and filing documents. The second is Lawyer and Executive Assistant they consult with clients and are more likely to go beyond the initial consultation and represent the client in courtroom proceedings.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This study will focus on the careers that a Public Administration students may have and the factors affecting those decisions and choices. But first, let us define what Public Administration is. According to University of North Carolina, School of Government; Public Administration is a field in which leaders serve communities to advance the common good and effect positive change. Public administration professionals are equipped with skills to manage at all levels of government (local, state, and federal) as well as nonprofit organizations. Skills employed across the field of public administration such as project management and program management are often transferred to the private sector. The Master of Public Administration prepares students to enter or advance their careers as they explore government and nonprofit decision-making and policy implementation. Students are tasked with becoming competent leaders through course work that involves high-level knowledge and understanding of human resource management, communication skills, budget/financial management, law, data analysis, and theory as it relates to the public sector. Students emerge with the mastery of various competencies to help plan, implement, and carry out a wide range of projects and initiatives in their current and future careers.

While the day-to-day responsibilities of public administrators can vary greatly depending on the type of organization they work for, the common thread among public administrators is most typically a deep commitment to serve their communities and contribute to their overall improvement. The term public service is used frequently in the field of public administration. It is this desire to serve the public good that calls people to become a public administrator. As a public administrator, you could pursue a career in government or nonprofit work in areas.

Significance of the Study

The result of the study would be beneficial to the following:

STUDENTS. This study may serve as a guide for the students on what are the professions that they can undertake in the future.

PROFESSORS. This study may give an idea for the professors on how to shape and prepare the students on their future working fields.

PARENTS. This study may help the parents to have an information and understanding about this courses. It can help them to encourage their children to take this following courses.

FUTURE RESEARCHERS. This research will serve as reference for the researchers who would plan to make any related study about the Career Preferences and Factors Influencing the Career Choice of Public Administration Students.

II. RELATED REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are studies similar to this exploration. Further exploration by other researchers reveal that youth who are motivated by intrinsic factors are driven by their interests in certain professions, and employments that are personally satisfying (Gokuladas, 2010; Kunnen, 2013). Therefore, intrinsic factors relate to decisions emanating from self, and the actions that follow are stimulated by interest, enjoyment, curiosity or pleasure and they include personality traits, job satisfaction, advancement in career, and learning experiences (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Kunnen, 2013; Nyamwange, 2016). Extrinsic factors revolve around external regulations and the benefits associated with certain occupations. Prestigious occupations, availability of jobs and well-paying employments have also been reported to motivate youth career decision-making. Consequently, extrinsically motivated youth may choose their career based on the fringe benefits associated with a particular profession such as financial remuneration, job security, job accessibility, and satisfaction. Interpersonal factors encompass the activities of agents of socialization in one's life and these include the influence of family members, educators, peers, and societal responsibilities (Gokuladas, 2010; Bossman, 2014; Wu et al., 2015). Beynon (1998), reported that Chinese-Canadian students' focus in selecting a career was to bring honor to the family. Students who are influenced by interpersonal factors highly value the opinions of family members and significant others; they therefore consult with and depend on these people and are willing to compromise their personal interest (Guan et al., 2015).

Studies have shown that cultural values have an impact on the factors that influence the career choices of youths (Mau, 2000; Caldera et al., 2003; Wambu et al., 2017; Hui and Lent, 2018; Tao et al., 2018). Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes one group of people from another (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede (1980) seminal work on culture dimensions identified four major cultural dimensions in his forty-country comparative research. The first dimension is known as individualism collectivism. In individualistic cultures, an individual is perceived as an independent entity. In collectivism cultures he/she is perceived as an interdependent entity. That decision-making in individualistic cultures are based on individuals' own wishes and desires, while in collectivism cultures, decisions are made jointly with the in-group (such as family, significant others and peers), and the primary objective is to optimize the group's benefit. The second dimension is power distance. In high power distant cultures, there is power inequality in society but its organizations exist and is accepted. The third dimension is uncertainty avoidance which denotes the extent to which uncertainty and ambiguity is tolerated in society. In high uncertainty avoidant cultures, it is less tolerated, whereas in low uncertainty avoidant cultures it is more tolerated.

Lastly, masculinity and femininity dimension deals with the prevailing values and priorities. In masculine cultures, achievement and accumulation of wealth is valued and strongly encouraged; while in feminine cultures, maintaining good interpersonal relationships is the priority.

This leads us to understand why men desire for money which can be found in some countries, in serving the government.

Ouano, Dela Torre, Japitan and Moneva (2019) observed that the students considerations about the institutions as most significant, followed by decision-making and interest, peer influence and future job opportunities. In their study, the students choose their course in college based on their perceive exits. Students choose their courses in relation to how productive a course is and if it is needed in the industry. High paying jobs too are also considered as a factor in choosing courses. On the contrary, students also have a misconception about the professions due to lack of information – it prevents from choosing them.

In another research, Pascual (2014) revealed that the availability of work after college is the first consideration of students in choosing a course in college. Most of the students prefer to take scientific related field courses, or the popular courses for Filipinos. The Brainard's Occupational Preference Inventory results showed that most of the student-respondents are suited to take professional courses. Students' preferred course is related to their BOPI result as well as to their father's occupation. Other factors such as mother's occupation, monthly family income, students' sibling position. However students' third year general average grades are not related to the students' preferred course in college to their BOPI results. BOPI results are significantly related to the students' elective course grades.

Students' career success can be best attained if proper guidance is given in choosing the right course in college, suited to students' personality, ability and intellect. Helping student choose the career that suits them can be done by integrating career plan with the curriculum so that students can make good decisions in what course to take in college. Collaborative effort of the school administrations, guidance counselor and parents should also be made to come-up with better career plan for every individual students.

Career Preferences

If you have obtained or are thinking of obtaining a degree in public administration, you are probably wondering how this degree can be applied in the workplace. The name itself can have some broad interpretations, which can be confusing for new degree-seekers or individuals that do not currently have experience working in the government. Public administration degree programs are designed to prepare students for careers working around public policy and its implementation in different areas. The most prominent application of this degree program is within civil service at the local, state, or government levels. The Public Administration field alone has a wide variety of career options from budget analysis and management to policy development and enforcement. Public administration specialists can also assist with political agendas or even managing large teams that focus on environmental policies, healthcare policies, or city/neighborhood planning.

On the business side of public administration, graduates even have the opportunity to apply their knowledge in management positions or specific sectors within an organization, such as marketing, human resources, training, or overseeing company functions for regulation adherence.

Work Opportunities

Now that you have been introduced to the field of public administration, you may be wondering what type of work settings you could expect to see as a professional in this area. The truth is – public administration specialists can be found in many different areas in common society. A lot of professionals that hold this degree work in government positions that are concerned with developing better policies for everyday life. Others may find a better fit in businesses or non-profit agencies that assist with providing services to the public. A lot of leaders within your current community may have an education in public administration, since this degree program is focused on the needs and programs present in society. The list below outlines a few of the work settings that are common for professionals in this field.

· **Business:** Upcoming professionals that have an interest in business may have the option to use a public administration degree to meet their desires. In public and non-profit agencies, professionals that have an education in public administration can assist in the development of helpful policies, management of teams of employees and potentially even become effective and reliable leaders. Having a strong background in sales and service could help you to land even more lucrative positions in the business field.

Local/City Services: Since public administration degree programs may be focused on providing great public services to society, graduates in this field may be a great fit for local and city services. This can include positions in housing, family wellness, healthcare and civil services. Since there is a wide array of potential career options for those that obtain a degree in public administration, there is a variety of areas within the city system that graduates could find a place.

Government of all Levels: Whether you work in agencies that specialize in social research and reform or healthcare, there are branches of the government that can be suitable for public administration graduates. It is necessary for the U.S. Government to provide services to the public that are concerned with the improvement of social services, better education programs and ample leadership for different political agendas. If you have an interest in government positions, this may be the route for you to take.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive method of quantitative and qualitative research was used in the study. This seeks to describe the future status of those students who studies Public Administration. This method involves classifying and collecting of the data. Its main goal is to let students of Public Administration knows there status after taking up the degree.

Research Respondents

The Public Administration students from first year which consists of 1 male and 24 females; second year which consists of 4 males and 19 females and lastly, third year which consists of 3 males and 11 females.

Data Gathering Instrument

Questionnaires composed of 3 or 5 items that are related to the study were made and is being handed to the respondents.

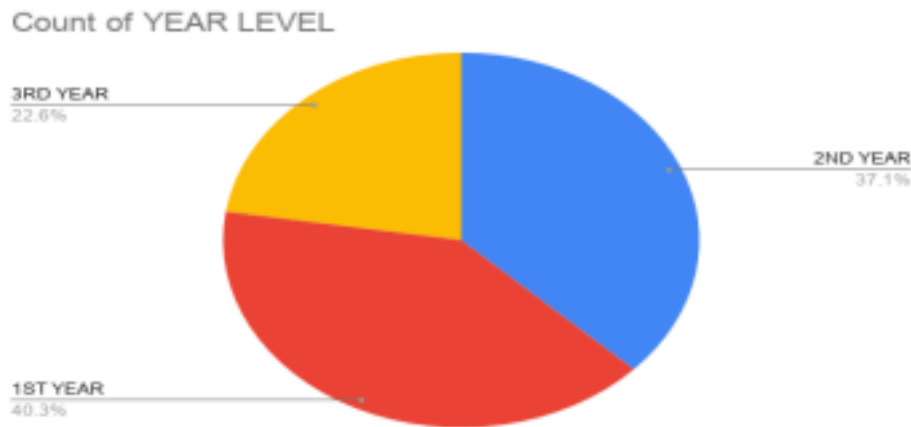
Data Gathering Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was secure by the researchers from the respondents and the subject teacher. The respondents selected are oriented to the purpose or goal of the study. They were given questionnaires from the Google form. The data were classified, tabulated and analyzed.

IV. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data using the information gathered.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents



Here are the results of the career choice that foresees for theme selves. Government Administrator - 44 (71%), Lawyer and Executive Assistant - 24 (40.3%). Community Worker and Human Resource Specialist - 24 (38.7%), Legal Secretary and Business Administrator - 22 (35.5%), Teacher - 20 (32.3%), Government Relation Manager - 19 (30.6%), Professor - 17 (27.4%), Management, Public Policy Analyst and Public Affairs Consultant - 12 (19.4%), Public Speaking Consultant - 11 (17.7%), Paralegal - 10 (16.1%), Police/Corrections Officer, Policy Advisor and Public Relations Consultant and Legislative Aid - 9 (14.5%), Urban Planner, Political Advisor, Marketing Specialist - 8 (12.9%), Foreign Service Officer, Immigration Officer, and Non-profit Administrator - 7 (11.3%), Real Estate Agent, Public Opinion Analyst and Event Coordinator - 6 (9.7%), Foreign Correspondent, and Librarian - 5 (8.1%), Fundraiser, Lobbyist, Politician, Public Policy Researcher, Researcher and Speech Writer, Journalist - 4 (6.5%), Statistician, Policy Researcher, and Investment Strategist - 3 (4.8%), Option Activist, Editor, Labor Relation Specialist, Mediator, Population Studies Analyst, Stockbroker and None of the Above - 2 (3.2%), Translator, Purchasing Agent/Buyer, Public Policy Historian, and Media Correspondent - 1 (1.6%).

Top 3 choices are the Government Administrator, Lawyer and Executive Assistant and Community Worker and Human Resource Specialist. The first and last choices are both Clerical works, they ensures that an office runs smoothly and efficiently. It involves the day-to-day administrative tasks of an office, such as answering phones, scheduling appointments, sending faxes, and filing documents. The second is Lawyer and Executive Assistant they consult with clients and are more likely to go beyond the initial consultation and represent the client in courtroom proceedings.

Financial Remuneration or Income Base

Financial Remuneration or Income Base on the survey conducted 28% of the students consider financial remuneration or income as the number one factor of the career they choose. Financial remuneration was identified as the most influential extrinsic factor in career choice decision. This is because, income was considered as an important component of life, particularly among youth who had a higher level of individualism (Agarwala, 2008; Wüst and Leko Šimić, 2017).

Job Security

Job security ranked third as a factor that influence career choice of BPA students. Unlike the private sector where companies can go out of business, the government never goes out of business. Agencies or offices may close or morph into new forms, but there will always be government jobs. Employees will always be needed to complete the government tasks.

Professional Prestige

Professional prestige was last as a deciding factor for students’ career decision making. Government jobs provide a combination of job security, quality health insurance and benefits that have become rare in private and nonprofit jobs.

Professional Development Opportunities

Professional development rank first with 42%. It is sad than when you are equipped with professional development skills, in the future you will feel more confident knowing that they have the skills needed to succeed in their line of work. If an employee lacks a particular skill, he or she may question their work. Students will also become better workers through professional development. By learning the right skills for their career, employees will be more productive and efficient, thus helping the business for which they work succeed. Finally, professional development can open the doors to new opportunities for students. If an employee is struggling to get promoted to a higher, more lucrative position, professional development may help him or her secure this promotion

Personal Interests

Personal interests in career decision-making appeared to be an important factor in the selection of a life career, it ranked second on the survey with 31%. Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa ascertained that about fifty per cent of youth career decisions are based on their personal interests (Bojuwoye and Mbanjwa, 2006), and Gokuladas maintained that students from urban areas are most likely to consider their personal interests before societal interests when making career decisions (Gokuladas, 2010). Career interests reflect stable preferences for certain work activities and work environments. When a career is aligned with one's interest, there may have more motivation to devote effort into developing relevant knowledge and skills, set higher career-related goals, and take actions to achieve those goals.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy was considered a vital intrinsic factor in the career decision-making process of students. It ranked third with 15% of the total respondent population. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment.

Outcome Expectations

Outcome Expectations ranked last as the factor that influence the career choice of BPA students.

Others: Self-Choice

One Respondent that it is just a choice for her self.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Chapter presents the summary of the study, finding, conclusions and recommendations on the findings.

Summary

This study was conducted to determine the Career Preferences and Factors Influencing the Career Choice of Public Administration Students. The result of the study revealed the Students in Cebu Normal University taking up Bachelor in Public Administration prefer clerical works and being in public offices.

Factors influencing their career choice are the following:

In terms of Extrinsic Factors, Financial Remuneration or Income is the number one which can influence the BPA students in choosing their career.

In terms of Intrinsic Factors, Professional Development of Opportunities is the number one which can influence the BPA students in choosing their career.

In terms of Interpersonal Factors, Social Responsibility is the number one which can influence the BPA students in choosing their career.

VI. Conclusion

1. Financial Remuneration or Income Base on the survey conducted 28% of the students consider financial remuneration or income as the number one factor of the career they choose. Financial remuneration was identified as the most influential extrinsic factor in career choice decision.

2. **Social Responsibilities.** The mentioned factor ranked 1st with 47%. Individuals believe they are accountable for fulfilling their civic duty, and their actions must benefit the whole.

3. Professional development rank first with 42%. It is sad that when you are equipped with professional development skills, in the future you will feel more confident knowing that they have the skills needed to succeed in their line of work. If an employee lacks a particular skill, he or she may question their work.

4. The three factors investigated in this study are pervasive in influencing the career decisions of the students.

5. Extrinsic factors included guaranteed employment opportunities, job security, high salaries, prestigious professions and future benefits.

6. Interpersonal factors are the activities of agents of socialization in one's life, such as parental support, family cohesion, status, peer influence as well as interaction with other social agents such as school counselors, teachers and other educators.

7. Intrinsic factors included personal interests, professional advancement, and personality traits.

Recommendation

1. Students must base their choice on what they believed they are capable of.

2. A lot of students (except BPA) must know the beauty of this degree program and the opportunities it offers.

3. Education at school can open ways for career decisions. Interventions designed to assist students in strengthening their academic self-efficacy, internal motivation, and goal setting strategies can foster improved career choice outcomes.

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