Employability and Occupational Alignment of College of Arts and Sciences Graduates of Samar State University

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Abstract: Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to demonstrate the employability and labor market relevance of their graduates. This study assessed the employability, occupational relevance, and early career outcomes of graduates from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) of Samar State University, covering cohorts from 2018 to 2021. Using a descriptive quantitative research design, data were collected from 485 graduates of the BS Information Technology, BS Information System, BS Psychology, and BS Statistics programs through a structured survey adapted from the Commission on Higher Education Graduate Tracer Study. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation were employed to analyze employment status, duration of job search, occupational distribution based on the Philippine Standard Occupational Classification, industry sector placement, initial earnings, and reasons for unemployment. Results indicated generally favorable employability outcomes, particularly among BS Statistics and BS Information Technology graduates, although variations across programs and cohorts were observed. While many graduates were employed in highly relevant professional and technical occupations, instances of occupational mismatch and underemployment persisted, especially among BS Information System graduates. Initial earnings were largely modest, reflecting entry-level employment and regional labor market conditions. Unemployment was primarily attributed to limited job opportunities, lack of work experience, and personal circumstances. The findings underscore the need for continuous curriculum enhancement, strengthened academe–industry linkages, and improved career development services to support effective school-to-work transitions and sustained graduate employability.

1. Introduction

In the contemporary knowledge-driven economy, higher education institutions are increasingly held accountable for the employability and labor market outcomes of their graduates. As academic programs aim to produce professionals equipped with relevant and transferable competencies, there is a growing demand for empirical evidence linking educational outcomes to workforce performance (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2017; International Labour Organization [ILO], 2023). Graduate employability assessments and human resource inventories provide systematic mechanisms for evaluating this alignment by tracking alumni employment status, occupational relevance, and career trajectories.

Graduate employability refers to the capacity of individuals to secure, sustain, and progress in employment while contributing meaningfully to the workforce (Yorke, 2006). Beyond academic knowledge, employability encompasses practical skills, soft skills, adaptability, and responsiveness to changing labor market demands (ILO, 2023). International frameworks emphasize the importance of bridging higher education and employment through responsive curricula, experiential learning, and industry partnerships (UNESCO, 2012). In the Philippine context, CHED institutionalizes graduate tracer studies as a quality assurance mechanism to assess employment outcomes, job relevance, income levels, and skill utilization, thereby informing curriculum review and institutional planning (CHED, 2017).

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) of Samar State University (SSU) offers multidisciplinary programs that support the university's mandate for public service and nation-building. These include the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology, Information System, Psychology, and Statistics. While BSIT and BSIS programs emphasize computing, systems development, and digital innovation, BS Psychology focuses on behavioral sciences and human services, and BS Statistics develops competencies in data analytics, research design, and quantitative modeling. Despite ongoing curriculum enhancement and accreditation efforts, systematic assessment remains necessary to determine how effectively these programs prepare graduates for labor market demands.

Previous studies indicate strong employment prospects for IT- and data-oriented graduates, driven by digital transformation and analytics-driven decision-making (Asian Development Bank, 2020; World Bank, 2020). However, employment outcomes for psychology and multidisciplinary graduates are more variable, with reported cases of underemployment and occupational mismatch due to licensure requirements, limited local opportunities, or skills–job misalignment (Orbeta & Esguerra, 2016). While graduate tracer studies are widely conducted in Philippine higher education, many focus on aggregate employment indicators and offer limited program-specific insights, particularly for multidisciplinary colleges such as CAS.

This study addresses these gaps by conducting a comprehensive, program-specific employability assessment and human resource inventory of CAS graduates of Samar State University. By examining employment status, occupational relevance, industry placement, earnings, and unemployment factors, the study provides empirical evidence to inform curriculum enhancement, career development initiatives, and institutional workforce development strategies.

2. Objectives

To assess the employability, occupational relevance, and early career outcomes of graduates of the College of Arts and Sciences of Samar State University as a basis for curriculum enhancement and graduate support interventions.

It addresses the following specific objectives:

1. to determine the employment status, employability rate, and duration of job search of CAS graduates.

2. to examine the occupational distribution and relevance of graduates'

employment to their degree programs using the Philippine Standard Occupational Classification (PSOC);

3. to analyze the the industry sector placement and initial earnings of employed graduates across CAS programs, and

4. to identify the reasons for unemployment among CAS graduates who were not employed at the time of the survey.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A descriptive quantitative research design is utilized to assess the employability status and skill alignment of graduates from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) at Samar State University (SSU). The study seeks to determine graduates' current employment status, calculate the employability rate, evaluate the relevance of their current occupations to their undergraduate degrees, identify essential workplace skills, and examine the challenges encountered in securing employment.

3.2 Respondents of the Study

The study included 485 graduates from the 2018 to 2021 cohorts, representing the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT), Bachelor of Science in Information System (BSIS), Bachelor of Science in Psychology (BSPsych), and Bachelor of Science in Statistics (BSStat) programs. Graduates were selected using purposive sampling, targeting individuals with current contact information available through the university's alumni and registrar offices.

3.3 Research Instrument

A hybrid instrument comprising two components was employed in this study. The initial component was adapted from the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) Graduate Tracer Survey (GTS) to collect data on employment status, job relevance, income level, and job satisfaction. Additional items addressed professional development needs and challenges faced during the job-seeking process. Both components underwent expert review and validation, followed by pilot testing to ensure clarity, reliability, and alignment with the research objectives.

3.4 Data Collection Method

The researchers coordinated with the university's Alumni Relations and Placement Services Office and the Registrar to obtain the list of graduates. The validated survey questionnaire was distributed via Facebook Messenger group chats and completed via Google Forms. Follow-up reminders were sent to maximize response rates.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean. The employability rate was calculated using the following formula:

$$\textit{Employability Rate} = (\textit{Number of Employed Graduates} \div \textit{Total Number of Respondents}) \times 100.$$

A cross-tabulation method was used to determine the frequency and distribution of graduates across job sectors. Occupations

were subsequently analyzed and classified into five relevance levels: Highly Relevant, Moderately Relevant, Indirectly Relevant, Less Relevant, and Not Relevant. This classification was based on the degree of alignment between job functions and the core competencies developed in the SSU CAS programs. The approach yielded insights into employment trends, job-role fit, and the extent of underemployment or job mismatch among graduates.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

All ethical research standards were rigorously upheld. Participants received information regarding the study's objectives, and informed consent was obtained. Participation was voluntary, and all data were maintained in strict confidence and utilized exclusively for academic and institutional development purposes.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Employment Status, Employability Rate, and Duration of Job Search

Table 1 presents the employment outcomes of College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) graduates vary across programs and graduating batches.

The results indicate generally favorable employability, with notable program- and cohort-level differences. Among the four programs, BS Statistics graduates posted the highest overall employability rate (85.96%), followed by BS Information Technology (79.94%), BS Information System (70.75%), and BS Psychology (63.79%). These findings suggest stronger labor market absorption for quantitatively and technologically oriented programs, consistent with current demand for analytical and digital competencies. the table as your reader knows how to read it. Instead get the meat of the table and elaborate on the meaning. Use literature evidences to back-up your discussions.

Across batches, earlier cohorts generally exhibited higher employability rates than more recent graduates. For instance, 2018 graduates consistently recorded Very Good to Excellent employability levels across all programs, while 2019 and 2020 cohorts—particularly in BS Psychology and BS Information System—showed lower employability rates, falling within the *Needs Improvement* category. This decline may reflect external labor market disruptions and heightened employment competition during these years. In contrast, 2021 graduates demonstrated a recovery trend, especially in BS Information Technology, which achieved a Very Good employability rate of 88.24%.

Table 2 further contextualizes employability by examining the duration before landing the first job. More than half of the graduates (50.93%) secured employment within one month after graduation, indicating strong immediate employability. However, a substantial proportion (37.94%) required one to less than two years to obtain employment, suggesting possible job mismatches, limited local opportunities, or the need for additional qualifications. Smaller percentages experienced prolonged job search durations of two years or more, highlighting persistent barriers faced by a subset of graduates.

Table 1. Employment Status and Employability Rate

Batch	Respondents	Employed	Employability Rate %	Interpretation	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
BS Psychology						
2018	30	26	86.67	**VG**	4	13.33
2019	35	20	57.14	**NI**	15	42.86
2020	25	10	40.00	**NI**	15	60.00
2021	26	18	69.23	**F**	8	30.77
Total	**116**	**74**	**63.79**		**42**	**36.21**
BS Information Technology						
2018	120	100	83.33	**VG**	20	16.67
2019	155	125	80.65	**VG**	30	19.35
2020	50	32	64.00	**F**	18	36.00
2021	34	30	88.24	**VG**	4	11.76
Total	**359**	**287**	**79.94**		**72**	**20.06**
BS Information System						
2018	52	47	90.38	**E**	5	9.62
2019	32	15	46.88	**NI**	17	53.13
2020	18	10	55.56	**NI**	8	44.44
2021	4	3	75.00	**G**	1	25.00
Total	**106**	**75**	**70.75**		**31**	**29.25**
BS Statistics						
2018	31	28	90.32	**E**	3	9.68
2019	18	13	72.22	**G**	5	27.78
2020	8	8	100.00	**E**	0	0.00
2021	-	-	-	**-**	-	-
Total	**57**	**49**	**85.96**		**8**	**14.04**

Legend: 90-100% – Excellent (E) (Almost all Graduates are employed)
80-89% – Very Good (VG) (Most Graduates are employed)
70-79% – Good (G) (Reasonable Employment Rate)
60-69% – Fair (F) (May need Program or Curriculum Review)
< 60% – Needs Improvement (NI) (Weak Labor Market alignment/Graduate Support)

Table 2. Duration Before Landing First Job

Duration Before Employment	Batch 2018	%	Batch 2019	%	Batch 2020	%	Batch 2021	%	Total	Total %
Less than a month	**86**	42.87	**98**	56.67	**34**	56.67	**29**	57.14	**247**	50.93
1 to 6 months	**2**	0.89	**14**	8.33	**3**	5.00	**-**	-	**19**	3.92
7 to 11 months	**2**	0.89	**-**	-	**-**		**-**	-	**2**	0.41
1 year to less than 2 years	**97**	48.21	**52**	30.00	**20**	33.33	**15**	28.57	**184**	37.94
2 years to less than 3 years	**14**	7.14	**9**	5.00	**3**	5.00	**7**	14.29	**33**	6.80
3 years to less than 4 years	**-**	-	**-**	-	**-**	-	**-**	-	**-**	-
Total	**201**	100.00	**173**	100.00	**60**	100.00	**51**	100.00	**485**	100.00

Legend:		
	Less than a month	*Indicates strong employability, likely due to in-demand degree, internships, or pre-graduation offers*
	1 to 6 months	*Common job search duration for fresh graduates; aligns with national average placement period*
	7 to 11 months	*Reflects moderate difficulty in securing employment; may relate to course relevance or regional job limitations*
	1 year to less than 2 years	*Suggests employment mismatch, weak labor demand, or need for additional qualifications*
	2 years to less than 3 years	*Indicates prolonged job hunting possibly due to economic factors, skills gap, or lack of experience*
	3 years to less than 4 years	*Implies significant barriers such as location issues, limited networks, or need for retraining*

The findings indicate that while CAS graduates generally demonstrate favorable employment outcomes, employability is uneven across programs and batches, and time-to-employment varies considerably. These patterns underscore the importance of strengthening career preparation, industry linkage, and targeted graduate support services, particularly for programs and cohorts exhibiting lower employability and longer job search durations.

4.2 Occupational Distribution and Relevance of CAS Graduates' Employment

Tables 3 and 4 present the occupational distribution of employed College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) graduates based on the Philippine Standard Occupational Classification (PSOC) (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 1992) and examine the relevance of these occupations to their respective degree programs. The findings indicate that a substantial proportion of CAS graduates are employed in professional, managerial, and technical occupations, suggesting positive alignment between academic preparation and labor market demands.

Table 3. Summary of Occupation of Graduates according to Phil. Standard Occupational Classification (PSOC, 1992) Batch 2018, Batch 2019, Batch 2020, Batch 2021 CAS Programs

Occupation	BS Psychology	BS Information Technology	BS Information System	BS Statistics	Total	%
Officials of Government and Special-Interest Organizations, Corporate Executives, Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors.	19	38	12	10	**79**	16.29
Professionals	22	70	32	11	**135**	27.84
Technicians and Associate Professionals	14	87	6	11	**118**	24.33
Clerks	7	30	6	6	**49**	10.10
Service workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers	10	41	14	8	**73**	15.05
Farmers, Forestry Workers and Fishermen	-	1	-	-	**1**	0.21
Trades and Related Workers	2	11	2	3	**18**	3.71
Plant and machine Operators and Assemblers	-	3	1	-	**4**	0.82
Laborers and Unskilled Workers	-	2	1	-	**3**	0.62
Special Occupation	-	-	-	-	**0**	-
Arms Forces	-	4	1	-	**5**	1.03
Total	74	287	12	10	**485**	100.00

Table 4. Occupational Relevance of Employment to the CAS Programs Batch 2018, Batch 2019, Batch 2020, Batch 2021 CAS Programs

Occupational Category	BS Psych Graduates Employed	%	BSIT Graduates Employed	%	BSIS Graduates Employed	%	BSStat Graduates Employed	%
Professionals	22	29.73 **HR**	87	30.31 **HR**	32	42.67 **HR**	10	20.41 **HR**
Officials of Government, Executives, Managers, Proprietors, Supervisors	19	25.68 **HR**	70	24.39 **HR**	12	16.00 **HR**	11	22.45 **HR**
Technicians and Associate Professionals	14	18.92 **HR**	38	13.24 **HR**	6	8.00 **HR**	11	22.45 **HR**
Clerks	7	9.46 **LR**	41	14.29 **LR**	6	8.00 **LR**	6	12.24 **LR**
Service Workers and Shop/Market Sales Workers	10	13.51 **LR**	30	10.45 **LR**	14	18.67 **LR**	8	16.33 **LR**
Trades and Related Workers	2	2.70 **NR**	11	3.83 **NR**	2	2.67 **NR**	3	6.12 **NR**
Armed Forces			4	1.39 **LR**	1	1.33 **LR**		
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers			3	1.05 **NR**	1	1.33 **NR**		
Laborers and Unskilled Workers					1	1.33 **NR**		
Total	**74**	100.00	**287**	100.00	**75**	100.00	**49**	100.00

Legend: HR – Highly Relevant to Program
LR – Less Relevant to Program
NR – Not Relevant to Program

As shown in Table 3, the largest share of graduates were employed as Professionals (27.84%), followed by Technicians and Associate Professionals (24.33%) and Officials of Government, Executives, Managers, Proprietors, and Supervisors (16.29%). These occupational groups are generally associated with higher skill requirements and greater utilization of discipline-specific competencies. BS Information Technology graduates were predominantly absorbed into professional and technical roles, reflecting strong demand for ICT-related skills. Similarly, BS Psychology and BS Statistics graduates were notably represented in professional and managerial positions, indicating the applicability of analytical, behavioral, and quantitative competencies across sectors.

Table 4 further refines these findings by assessing the occupational relevance of

graduates' employment to their degree programs. Results show that highly relevant (HR) occupations dominated across all programs, particularly in professional, managerial, and technical categories. BS Psychology graduates demonstrated high relevance in professional (29.73%), managerial (25.68%), and technical roles (18.92%), consistent with career pathways in psychology, education, health, and administrative services. BS Statistics graduates also exhibited strong alignment, with high relevance observed in professional and technical occupations, underscoring the demand for statistical and analytical expertise in finance, governance, and research-related fields. The Philippine Social Science Council's review of statistics education highlights that BS Statistics programs equip students with advanced data collection, analysis, modeling, and interpretation skills that are applicable across government, industry, and research institutions, reflecting the value of statistical competencies in practice (Barrios et al., 2025).

In contrast, a portion of graduates across programs were employed in less relevant (LR) and not relevant (NR) occupations, particularly in clerical, service, trade, and manual labor roles. While these positions contribute to employment absorption, they may indicate underemployment or skills mismatch, especially for graduates whose training is intended for professional or technical roles. This pattern was more evident among BS Information Technology and BS Information System graduates employed in clerical and service-related occupations.

The results suggest that while CAS programs effectively prepare graduates for relevant professional and technical employment, occupational mismatches persist for a subset of graduates. These findings highlight the need for strengthened career guidance, enhanced industry linkages, and ongoing curriculum refinement to ensure that graduates are not only employed but are also optimally placed in occupations aligned with their academic training. Research shows that comprehensive career development services — including skills mapping, internships, and targeted employer engagement — significantly improve graduates' transition to relevant occupations and reduce skill–job mismatches in the labor market (Yorke & Knight, 2006; UNESCO, 2012)

4.3 Industry Sector Placement and Initial Earnings of CAS Graduates

Table 5 presents the major lines of business of companies employing College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) graduates. The results indicate that graduates are absorbed across a broad range of industry sectors, reflecting the multidisciplinary nature of CAS programs. The Real Estate, Renting, and Business Activities sector emerged as a dominant employer across all programs, particularly for BS Information Technology (25.1%) and BS Information System (33.3%) graduates. This sector largely encompasses IT-BPO, administrative, and professional services, underscoring the strong demand for digital, technical, and administrative competencies (Information Technology and Business Process Association of the Philippines, 2021).

Wholesale and retail trade also accounted for a substantial proportion of employed graduates, especially among BS Psychology (23.0%) and BS Statistics (24.5%) graduates, suggesting opportunities in sales, customer relations, and operational roles. Employment in Public Administration and Defense was notable across programs,

highlighting the role of government institutions as significant absorbers of CAS graduates. BS Psychology graduates were more prominently represented in Education (13.5%) and Health and Social Work (10.8%), consistent with the discipline's orientation toward human services and social development, BS Psychology graduates were more prominently represented in Education (13.5%) and Health and Social Work (10.8%), consistent with the discipline's orientation toward human services and social development. This pattern aligns with tracer evidence from Philippine higher education institutions showing that psychology graduates are commonly employed in education, counseling, and community-oriented roles where competencies in human behavior, interpersonal skills, and psychosocial support are highly utilized (Bautista et al., 2025). Meanwhile, BS Statistics graduates showed relatively higher representation in Financial Intermediation (14.3%), reflecting the applicability of quantitative skills in finance and analytics-related fields. BS Statistics graduates showed relatively higher representation in Financial Intermediation (14.3%), reflecting the applicability of quantitative skills in finance and analytics-related fields, where data analysis, statistical modeling, and interpretation of complex data sets are essential for supporting strategic decision-making, risk assessment, and performance evaluation in financial institutions (Seek Hiring Advice, 2025).

Table 6 examines the initial gross monthly earnings of graduates in their first job after college. Overall, the findings reveal that a large proportion of graduates entered the labor market at low to below-average income levels, with 31.13% earning below ₱5,000 and 29.69% earning between ₱5,000 and less than ₱10,000. These income levels may reflect entry-level positions, regional wage structures, part-time employment, or informal work arrangements, particularly among recent cohorts.

Table 5. Major Line of Business of the Company Employed Batch 2018, Batch 2019, Batch 2020, Batch 2021 CAS Programs

Line of Business	BS Psych Graduates Employed	%	BSIT Graduates Employed	%	BSIS Graduates Employed	%	BS Stat Graduates Employed	%
Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles, Motorcycles and Personal and Household Goods	17	23	39	13.6	6	8	12	24.5
Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities	17	23	72	25.1	25	33.3	11	22.5
Education	10	13.5	13	4.5	2	2.7	2	4.1
Public Administration and Defense; Compulsory Social Security	11	15	40	14	15	20	8	16.3
Financial Intermediation	2	2.7	21	7.3	6	8	7	14.3
Health and Social Work	8	10.8	18	6.3	2	2.7	3	6.1
Transport, Storage and Communication	2	2.7	10	3.5	3	4	-	-
Manufacturing	1	1.3	13	4.5	5	6.7	-	-
Hotels and Restaurants	1	1.3	13	4.5	4	5.3	5	10.2
Construction	1	1.3	9	3.1	3	4	1	2.04
Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities	3	4.1	16	5.6	4	5.3	-	-
Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry	-	-	1	0.03	-	-	-	-
Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	1	1.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Entrepreneur / Self-Employed	-	-	22	8	-	-	-	-
Total	**74**	**100.0**	**287**	**100.0**	**75**	**100.0**	**49**	**100.0**

A smaller but notable proportion of graduates achieved moderate to high starting salaries, with 16.70% earning between ₱10,000 and less than ₱15,000 and 10.11% earning between ₱15,000 and less than ₱20,000. Only 6.60% of graduates earned ₱25,000 and above, suggesting that higher initial earnings are limited to specialized roles, high-demand sectors, or graduates with advanced skills and credentials. Variations across batches indicate that earlier cohorts tended to access higher income brackets more frequently than recent graduates, possibly due to longer job tenure

Table 6. Initial Gross Monthly Earnings of First Job after College

Monthly Income Range	Batch 2018	%	Batch 2019	%	Batch 2020	%	Batch 2021	%	Total	Total %
Below P 5,000.00	45	22.32	57	33.33	34	56.67	15	28.57	151	31.13
P 5,000.00 to less than P 10,000.00	43	21.43	52	30.00	20	33.33	29	57.14	144	29.69
P 10,000.00 to less than P 15,000.00	52	25.88	29	16.67	-	-	-	-	81	16.70
P 15,000.00 to less than P 20,000.00	29	14.29	20	11.67	-	-	-	-	49	10.11
P 20,000.00 to less than P 25,000.00	16	8.04	9	5.00	3	5.00	-	-	28	5.77
P 25,000.00 and above	16	8.04	6	3.33	3	5.00	7	14.29	32	6.60
Total	201	100.00	173	100.00	60	100.00	51	100.00	485	100.00

Legend:		
	Below ₱5,000.00	Very low earnings; often part-time or informal work
	₱5,000.00 to less than ₱10,000.00	Below average; may reflect regional or entry-level roles
	₱10,000.00 to less than ₱15,000.00	Common entry-level salary range in many industries
	₱15,000.00 to less than ₱20,000.00	Competitive starting salary in urban areas
	₱20,000.00 to less than ₱25,000.00	High starting salary; typically in skilled/professional roles
	₱25,000.00 and above	Exceptional starting pay; often in specialized fields or high-demand sectors

or more stable labor market conditions at the time of entry.

The study findings suggest that while CAS graduates are successfully integrated into diverse industry sectors, initial earnings remain modest for a majority of graduates, particularly at the point of labor market entry. These results highlight the importance of strengthening industry-aligned competencies, internship and apprenticeship opportunities, and career readiness programs to enhance graduates' access to higher-quality employment and competitive starting salaries.

4.4 Reasons for Unemployment Among CAS Graduates

Table 7 presents the reasons reported by College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) graduates who were not yet employed at the time of the survey. The findings indicate that unemployment among graduates is influenced by a combination of structural labor market constraints, individual readiness factors, and personal circumstances.

The most frequently cited reason for unemployment across all batches was "other reasons" (28.11%), suggesting the presence of diverse and context-specific factors not fully captured by the predefined categories. This may include delayed hiring processes, contractual limitations, geographic constraints, or pandemic-related disruptions, particularly affecting recent cohorts. The second most common reason was "no job opportunity" (19.61%), highlighting limited labor market absorption in certain fields or localities. This concern was especially pronounced among the 2018 and 2020 cohorts, indicating persistent gaps between graduate supply and available employment opportunities.

Table 7. Reasons for Not Yet Being Employed After Graduation (Unemployed)

Reason for Unemployment	Batch 2018	%	Batch 2019	%	Batch 2020	%	Batch 2021	%	Total	Total %
Advance or further study	**7**	21.87	**2**	2.99	**-**	-	**-**	-	**9**	5.88
Family concern and decided not to find a job	**5**	15.62	**4**	5.97	**13**	31.71	**-**	-	**22**	14.38
Health-related reason(s)	**1**	3.13	**3**	4.48	**4**	9.75	**-**	-	**8**	5.23
Lack of work experience	**5**	15.62	**13**	19.4	**8**	19.51	**3**	23.08	**29**	18.95
No job opportunity	**9**	28.13	**8**	11.94	**13**	31.71	**-**	-	**30**	19.61
Did not look for a job	**2**	6.25	**5**	7.46	**3**	7.32	**2**	15.38	**12**	7.84
Other reasons	**3**	9.38	**32**	47.76	**-**	-	**8**	61.54	**43**	28.11
Total	**32**	100.00	**67**	100.00	**41**	100.00	**13**	100.00	**153**	100.00

Lack of work experience (18.95%) also emerged as a major barrier to employment, reflecting the challenges faced by fresh graduates in meeting employer expectations. This finding underscores the importance of experiential learning, internships, and industry exposure during undergraduate studies. Additionally, family-related concerns (14.38%) accounted for a notable proportion of unemployment, particularly among the 2020 cohort, suggesting that personal and household responsibilities can significantly influence graduates' labor market participation.

Other reasons such as health-related concerns (5.23%), pursuit of further studies (5.88%), and decisions not to actively seek employment (7.84%) were reported by smaller segments of respondents. While these factors may reflect voluntary or transitional unemployment, they nonetheless contribute to overall employment outcomes.

The results indicate that graduate unemployment is not solely a function of employability deficits but is shaped by external labor market conditions, skills–experience gaps, and personal circumstances. These findings emphasize the need for targeted career guidance, strengthened school-to-work transition programs, and enhanced industry partnerships to address both demand- and supply-side barriers to graduate employment.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The analysis of employment status, employability rate, and job search duration reveals that most graduates of the College of Arts and Sciences at Samar State University are successfully integrated into the labor market, particularly those from the BS Statistics and BS Information Technology programs. Nevertheless, employability outcomes vary across academic programs and graduating cohorts, with some graduates experiencing prolonged job searches and delayed workforce entry. These patterns indicate that school-to-work transitions are inconsistent and influenced by program orientation, labor market conditions, and graduate preparedness. To address these challenges, the university should strengthen career preparation initiatives, expand internship and apprenticeship opportunities, and enhance job placement mechanisms to

promote timely and sustainable employment for all graduates.

Examination of occupational distribution and relevance demonstrates that a substantial proportion of graduates are employed in professional, managerial, and technical positions that closely correspond to their academic training, highlighting the curricular relevance of College of Arts and Sciences programs. However, the presence of graduates in less relevant or unrelated occupations suggests underemployment and skills mismatch, particularly among BS Information System and some BS Information Technology graduates. These findings emphasize the need for continuous curriculum review, improved alignment with industry standards, and strengthened collaboration between academia and industry to ensure that graduates are placed in roles that fully utilize their competencies.

Regarding industry sector placement, initial earnings, and factors contributing to unemployment, the findings indicate that CAS graduates are employed across a range of sectors, although many start their careers in low or below-average income brackets. Unemployment is primarily attributed to limited job opportunities, insufficient work experience, and personal circumstances, rather than solely to employability deficits. These results highlight the importance of strengthening experiential learning, encouraging attainment of industry-recognized certifications, and increasing employment opportunities in regional and rural areas. Maintaining a comprehensive graduate tracer system is also recommended to monitor employment outcomes, inform evidence-based curriculum improvements, and support adaptive workforce development strategies.

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