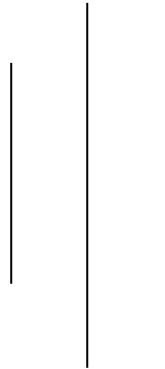


**TRACER STUDY OF GRADUATES FROM  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, POKHARA UNIVERSITY**

**(Academic Year: 2021 - 2022)**



**A Tracer Study Report**

Submitted to:

**School of Business**

Pokhara University

Submitted by:

**Tracer Study Team**

School of Business, Pokhara University, Nepal

16<sup>th</sup> June, 2024

Pokhara, Nepal

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**Tracer Study Team**

School of Business, Faculty of Management  
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**Date:** June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Quality in higher education is an important pre-requisite and indicator of national growth. In this regard, the government of Nepal has enacted and institutionalized policies and reforms in higher education institutions with the University Grants Commission, Nepal playing a vital role. Since its founding, the UGC Nepal has focused quality enhancement in higher education. A important indication of quality in higher education is personal and professional growth of the graduates. In this regard, the UGC has been pushing tracer studies of higher education institution's alumni.

The primary purpose of this tracing study is to find the current status of graduates who have graduated from MBA, BBA and BBA-BI programs in the academic year 2021 and 2022 and explore on their employment status, issues related to personal and professional development of the graduates, issues related to academic environment and student support facilities. It is also intended at examining the factors impacting the educational quality and aims to study academic achievement inequalities by gender, race, caste and program of the graduates.

The tracing study is based on data obtained from the MBA, BBA and BBA-BI alumni of School of Business. The survey tool utilized for data collection is the semi-structured questionnaire produced by the University Grant's Commission, Nepal. The overall sample size for the tracing study comprises of a total 205 graduates. The data gathering includes both online and field survey. During field survey most of the questionnaires were self-administered. The use of online and telephone survey was made for graduates employed or live in faraway regions. The data collected was examined using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The reliability of the data has been verified using internal consistency criteria.

The results of the investigation suggest that the job status of the traceable graduates is satisfactory. Most of the graduates are employed in public sector especially in financial services business. High number of graduates from bachelors' level are discovered to be seeking additional study. The unemployment rate for master's level graduate is lower comparable to bachelor level program. A considerable number of the graduates are

employed in officer and managerial level. However, few of the graduates are reported to be engaged in entrepreneurial activity through self-employment. The promotion and development of entrepreneurial skills and talents is judged to be low. Hence, the institution should emphasize on encouragement of self-employment in its alumni.

The programs of the school are found to be successful in supporting personal and professional growth of the alumni. Furthermore, the academic climate of the school is assessed to be satisfactory. The fundamental strengths of the school in sustaining educational quality are development of teacher student interaction, preservation of sound teaching learning environment and enhancement of academic quality. The master level program at the school is deemed to be relatively stronger in academic quality than bachelor level programs. The tracing study results suggest that the biggest problem of the educational quality of the school is lack of suitable level of student support facilities and amenities.

Hence, the school should focus on student support activities, development of extra-curricular activities, and providing facilities like sports, lab, canteen, parking, transportation etc. For institutional reform and academic quality enhancement, the school should also focus on designing innovative pedagogical approaches such as case studies, simulation, project work, seminars and workshops to boost the academic quality and competency of higher education institutions. Library resources and the infrastructural facilities are also the main aspects in increasing the academic quality; hence it is advised to the institutions to implement programs that support its development.

Primarily, the study proposes for the school to have updated curriculum revisions, and build more inclusive and market-oriented specialization courses in order to boost the employability of bachelor level programs. In order to further develop and design the qualitative education the school is suggested to use practical approaches in the pedagogy. The constant development on the quality of faculties by inculcating research skills and activities among the faculties is regarded vital to increase the educational quality. The School also needs to further develop the library resources and other infrastructural facilities and suggested to have major changes in the teaching pedagogies by involving new pedagogical approaches such as case studies, simulation,

project work, seminars and workshops to enhance the academic quality of MBA, BBA and BBA-BI. The requirement and struggle for making the academic atmosphere of the school free from political involvement is also recognized to be vital. The school has the chance to mobilize its alumni network for betterment of educational quality and support services to the students as well as to strengthen its outreach initiatives.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

At this recent modern period none can resist from the light of education and it is well considered that the education has essentially been the major worry in all aspects of the world, may it be the developed, developing and under-developing countries. The intellectual capability development in the human civilization and the necessity of formal knowledge needed to meet the transition in human civilization elevated the prominence of education. The significance of education in personal, professional, organizational and national progress and advancements cannot be overlooked. The global developments that we are exposed to have led towards increased significance in education and nations continuously strive for making their knowledge economy more competitive and reinforced to remain forever competitive. This action further has directed them to incorporate and envision educational developments that addresses not only the personal and conscious/cognitive development of an individual but also has shifted attention towards the development of qualitative education needed to create strong foundation of knowledge needed for nations development too (Gines, 2014).

The expanding global worries towards the growth of education and the altering developmental dynamisms have led to educational advancement in our country too. Our country Nepal, now not only considers the educational improvement and development as a major indicator for national development but also has engulfed the notion of multi-university system to produce qualified and competent intellectual capital and academic scholars which contributes for the establishments of efficient and effective development bases needed for the country. The founding of Trichandra College in 1918 A. D. is considered as the commencement of the age of higher education in Nepal. Tribhuvan University (TU) is the first national institution of higher education in Nepal. It was formed in 1959 A.D. Thereafter, the establishment of Mahendra Sanskrit University in 1985 and the notion of multi-university system in the country after the restoration of democracy in 1990 bloomed numerous other universities, namely, Kathmandu University, Pokhara University and Purbanchal University. Currently, thirteen universities including two provincial universities, and five medical academies are

providing higher education in Nepal (UGC, 2023). Universities consist different institutions, faculties and schools. Faculties offer several programs, and courses. The total number of students studying management courses in various universities and HEIs in Nepal is 257,346 which comprises 44.41 (UGC, 2023) percentage of total students in HEIs.

In configuration to the governments' purpose of imparting qualitative higher education required to generate competent and skillful capabilities needed for the nation's development, Pokhara University was established under the Pokhara University Act 1997 by the then government as an autonomous university. To meet the requirements of the expansion of higher education and committed to develop globally competent human resources through quality education, the University is situated in the serene and scenic location of Pokhara-Lekhnath Municipality, Dhungepatan, Kaski and offers various undergraduate and graduate and post-graduate programs of Science, Engineering, Management, Nursing and Humanities through its various constituent schools.

The university is and has been striving to place itself as one of the leading educational institution in the country through the application of progressive and contemporary teaching-learning methodologies, research and innovation and is oriented in producing market-oriented, responsible, productive and committed human resources. More than 37,645 students are pursuing higher education in four different faculties of the university that comprises of four separate constituent schools and 66 affiliated institutions under 64 different programs throughout the country. It has been partnering with more than 66 universities and institutions of international repute for teacher and student exchanges and also for the cooperative research projects. Being a young university, it is notably contributing to generate students with comprehensive knowledge and is developing novel courses to satisfy the requirement of competent human resources needed for the nations' development.

Similarly, the School of Business one of the major component institution of Pokhara University was formed in the year 1999 under the Faculty of Management Studies. The institution visualizes to establish itself as a leading business college driven to train today's youth as a creative and productive individual ready to deal with the expanding challenges of the competitive business environment both locally and internationally.

Located at Lekhnath, the school has been engaged in the academics of modern education system by incorporating new teaching pedagogies and techniques in order to concentrate and cope up with the dynamisms inside the business and meet the worldwide challenges and requirements. The School provides Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor of Business Administration in Banking and Insurance (BBA-BI) in the undergraduate and Master of Business Administration (MBA - Full time and Part Time) programs in management studies.

The purpose of the School of Business is to generate competent executives and managers for various fields needing high levels of expertise. Furthermore, it strives to offer management professionals with a worldwide view and success-oriented perspectives. Thus, the school has a strong emphasis towards the 'real' world of employment, reinforced by innovative teaching methods and international research capabilities based on academic excellence and practical commercial relevance. The exposure of highly-regarded business and management related courses in numerous management disciplines in connection with realistic business realities gives full comprehension of business practices and areas. Moreover, the School provides functional academic environment to stimulate and enhance creativity and interaction ability. The School is engaged in enhancing knowledge, managerial skills and expertise among the students by broadening their outlook through the cultivation of right knowledge and attitude aided by its academic vigor and rationalized curriculum concentrated at preparing individuals that are fit to address the global business dynamisms.

Thus, the School of Business with the aim to meet these aims and match it with the national goal of generating competent personnel supporting the economic growth, the School still needs more academic refinement and sharpening. The emphasis of the School in generating internationally competent individual originates from better knowledge of the academic and professional develops of the pupils and fundamentally such tracing studies in this aspect is extremely contributory. Considering our students as important consumers and as an ambassador of the Schools' success the experience, review and appraisals of students become crucial in building relevant courses and pedagogies as per the requirement of the pupils. It is incredibly vital because it not only improves the academic improvements but also assist in boosting required competences

among the kids and that is where the School was lacking and this kind of tracing studies serves to a huge extent for that goal.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of this tracing study is to find the current status of the students who have graduated from Masters and Bachelors level at the academic year 2021 and 2022 from the School of Business, Pokhara University. The study also comprises of the following specific objectives:

- i. To explore the current employment and further study status of MBA, BBA and BBA-BI graduates.
- ii. To explore the issues related quality and relevance of higher education.
- iii. To assess the educational quality status and its contribution to graduates personal and professional development.
- iv. To evaluate the differences in personal development and employment status of the graduates by gender, ethnicity, program type, and other socio-demographic characteristics.
- v. To identify key factors necessary for improvement of academic quality of School of Business.

## **1.3 Institutional Arrangements to Conduct the Study**

In order to proceed further with the task of tracing study a study team of 7 members of School of Business was formed by the director of the School of Management. Similarly, for the technological support and data processing the administration of School of Business provided technical service. Besides, that stationery supports for printing the questionnaire and other related tasks were also supported by the institution.

The administration also supported the team by providing the necessary preliminary informational details regarding the graduates taken for the study. They also provided the initial communication facilities. Funding assistance of the UGC has been supportive in managing and organizing the resources needed to conduct the study efficiently. Despite this a separate room was also provided by the School of Business to the team for the efficient operation of tracing study.

#### **1.4 Graduate Batch Taken for the Study**

Among all the graduates of the School of Business (SOB), Pokhara University, the study has considered and taken the MBA, BBA and BBA-BI graduates of academic year 2021 and 2022 batch only as per the requirement. Total 318 students have passed their respective level and only 205 transcript copies of graduated students have been collected. The study has incorporated the employment and educational details of the above-mentioned batch only.

#### **1.5 Tracer Study Methodology**

The study adopts descriptive and analytical research design. It describes current employment status of the graduates and other factors measuring academic quality and job relevancy of the academic programs conducted by School of Business. Furthermore, it aims to identify the factors influencing educational quality. This is a tracer study of the students who have graduated in MBA and BBA, and BBA-BI at the year 2021 and 2022 from the SOB. The final number of the traced graduate is 205 respondents.

##### **1.5.1 Data Collection Instrument**

The survey instrument used for the study was adapted from a semi-structured questionnaire developed and made available by the University Grant's Commission, Nepal (Annex-I). The questionnaire included both close-ended and open-ended question. It also comprised of 6-point Likert Scales on relevancy of the program and also in the major strengths and weaknesses of the institutional program. The questionnaire comprised of six sections namely; the personal information which included personal details, employment information comprising of employment status, further study details, suggestions and recommendations for the betterment of institution, contribution for betterment and finally contact address of graduates studying in the same year.

##### **1.5.2 Data Collection Procedure**

The data of the study has been collected through the self-administered structured questionnaire provided by the University Grant's Commission. The questionnaire was emailed to the students' official as well as personal email account right after the correspondence details of the graduates were made available to the team. The students were requested to fill-up the questionnaire and respond to the email. Then some of the

BBA graduates who were pursuing further study in PU were administered with the questionnaire face-to-face. Furthermore, referral of the students and guardian's, social media such as Facebook, Skype, Viber, Twitter has also been considered as a reliable medium to get the data in case of difficulty in having direct contact with students. Hence, combination of online survey, field survey and telephone interview were employed for data collection.

In the same manner, to cope with late responses or delayed responses from the graduates, initially a detail list of students' response was prepared and telephone interview was conducted among the students who had delayed responses or also with them who were generally out of the place and nation. To our utmost effort, we requested the employed graduates to submit the copy of appointment letters, but some refused to comply with it because of the organizational confidentiality. Despite different measures undertaken to trace out the graduates and increase response rate, the final sample comprised of 205 graduates from BBA, BBA-BI and MBA of academic year 2021 and 2022.

### **1.5.3 Data Processing and Analysis**

After the collection of all the filled-up questionnaires further data entry and processing was conducted. The data processing consisted of editing, coding, data entry and machine editing. Data entry has been carried out mainly using IBM SPSS-26 version software. The study has incorporated and utilized descriptive tools such as frequency, percentages, proportions, mean etc. for general descriptions of study variables. It also employs inferential tool independent samples t-test to examine differences among mean scores of key study variables by different respondent categories.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

The study is primarily based on quantitative research approach. This study has incorporated only the graduate batch of MBA, BBA and BBA-BI of the academic year 2021 and 2022 as per the requirement of University Grants' Commission. The study has mainly explored the dimensions of higher education as available through the questionnaire forwarded by the University Grant's Commission and thus the findings may not be reflective to the holistic or wide-array of the higher education in Nepal. The area of educational quality examined are delimited to academic environment, personal development, employability and student support facilities.



## CHAPTER II

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The chapter presents the data obtained from the tracer study questionnaire. Data presentation and analysis is done for employment status of the graduates, issues related to program quality and program's contribution to graduates professional and personal development. The chapter also presents status of educational quality, relevance of higher education and issues related to teaching learning and other facilities.

#### 2.1 Graduates' Characteristics

The table 2.1 illustrates the program-wise composition of students and the gender distribution of the students. The data from the traced graduates' profile for the academic years 2021 and 2022 highlights notable trends in both academic program distribution and gender distribution among the sample respondents. In 2021, the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program had 50 traced graduates, constituting 50.5% of the total, whereas in 2022, the number of traced BBA graduates decreased to 41, making up 38.7% of the total. The Bachelor of Business Administration in Banking and Insurance (BBA-BI) program saw a slight increase in traced graduates, from 15 (15.2%) in 2021 to 16 (15.1%) in 2022. Conversely, the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program experienced a significant rise in traced graduates, from 34 (34.3%) in 2021 to 49 (46.2%) in 2022.

**Table 2.1: Traced Graduates' Profile**

Academic Program			Gender		
Program	2021	2022	Gender	2021	2022
	Freq	Freq		Freq	Freq
	(%)	(%)		(%)	(%)
BBA	50 (50.5)	41 (38.7)	Male	41 (41.4)	50 (47.2)
BBA-BI	15 (15.2)	16 (15.1)	Female	58 (58.6)	56 (52.8)
MBA	34 (34.3)	49 (46.2)			
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>106</b>

Regarding gender distribution among the sample respondents, the data reveals that in 2021, male traced graduates numbered 41 (41.4%), while female traced graduates were 58 (58.6%). In 2022, the proportion of male traced graduates increased to 50 (47.2%), and female traced graduates slightly decreased to 56 (52.8%). Despite this shift, female traced graduates remained the majority in both years. This analysis indicates a growing interest in the MBA program and a steady but slight change in gender dynamics among the traced graduates.

The analysis of Table 2.2, which details the ethnicity and age-wise distribution of traced graduates from 2021 and 2022, reveals several key trends. Ethnically, traced Brahmin graduates saw an increase from 51 (51.5%) in 2021 to 60 (56.6%) in 2022. Chhetri graduates remained consistent in number, with 21 in both years, but their percentage decreased slightly from 21.2% to 19.8%. Indigenous graduates decreased from 23 (23.2%) in 2021 to 17 (16.0%) in 2022. Conversely, the number of Scheduled Caste graduates doubled from 4 (4.0%) in 2021 to 8 (7.5%) in 2022.

Age-wise, the distribution shows significant changes. The proportion of younger graduates aged 20 to 25 years increased notably from 16 (16.2%) in 2021 to 31 (29.2%) in 2022. Those in the 26 to 30 age group, while still the largest cohort, decreased from 71 (71.7%) in 2021 to 61 (57.5%) in 2022. Graduates aged 31 to 35 years increased from 8 (8.1%) to 13 (12.3%), whereas the 36 and above age group saw a decrease from 4 (4.0%) in 2021 to 1 (0.9%) in 2022. These shifts suggest a growing trend of younger individuals completing their studies, alongside an increase in slightly older graduates, particularly in the 31 to 35 age range.

**Table 2.2: Ethnicity and Age-wise Distribution of the Graduates**

Ethnic Distribution			Age-wise Distribution		
Program	2021	2022	Age Group	2021	2022
	Freq	Freq		Freq	Freq
	(%)	(%)		(%)	(%)
Brahmin	51 (51.5)	60 (56.6)	20 to 25	16 (16.2)	31 (29.2)
Chhetri	21 (21.2)	21 (19.8)	26 to 30	71 (71.7)	61 (57.5)
Indigenous	23 (23.2)	17 (16.0)	31 to 35	8 (8.1)	13 (12.3)
Scheduled Caste	4 (4.0)	8 (7.5)	36 and above	4 (4.0)	1 (0.9)
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>106</b>

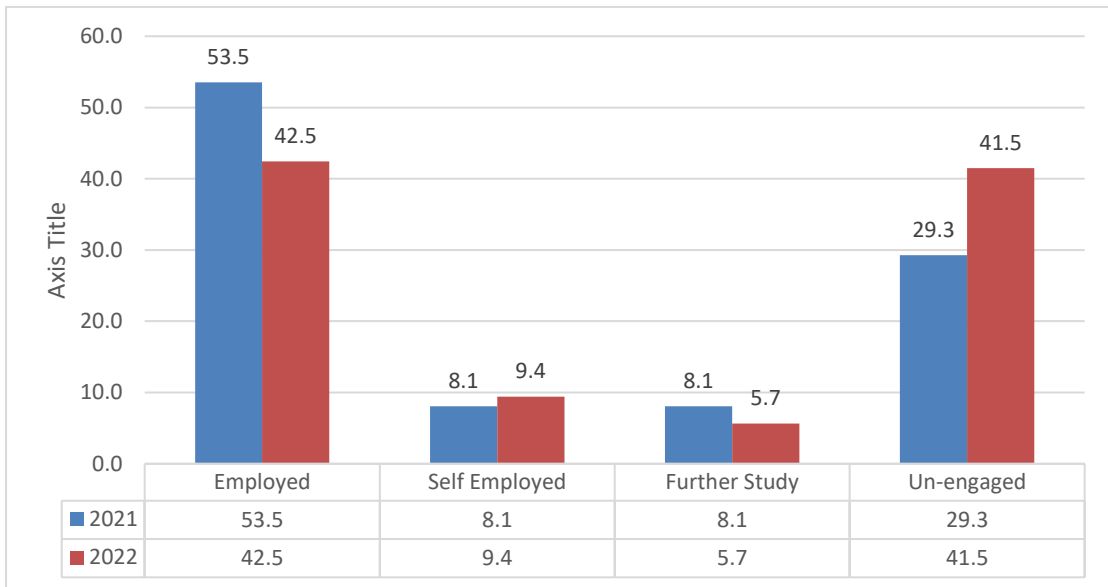
*Note. The values in parentheses are percentage figures*

## 2.2 Employment and Further Study Status of the Graduates

Figure 2.1 illustrates the employment status of traced graduates, categorizing them into those engaged in employment or further/higher studies, those who are self-employed or entrepreneurs, and those who are not engaged in any of these activities. A significant proportion of traced graduates, representing 62% of the total, are either employed or pursuing further/higher studies. This majority indicates that the education received has effectively prepared these graduates for the job market or motivated them to continue their academic pursuits to enhance their qualifications and career opportunities.

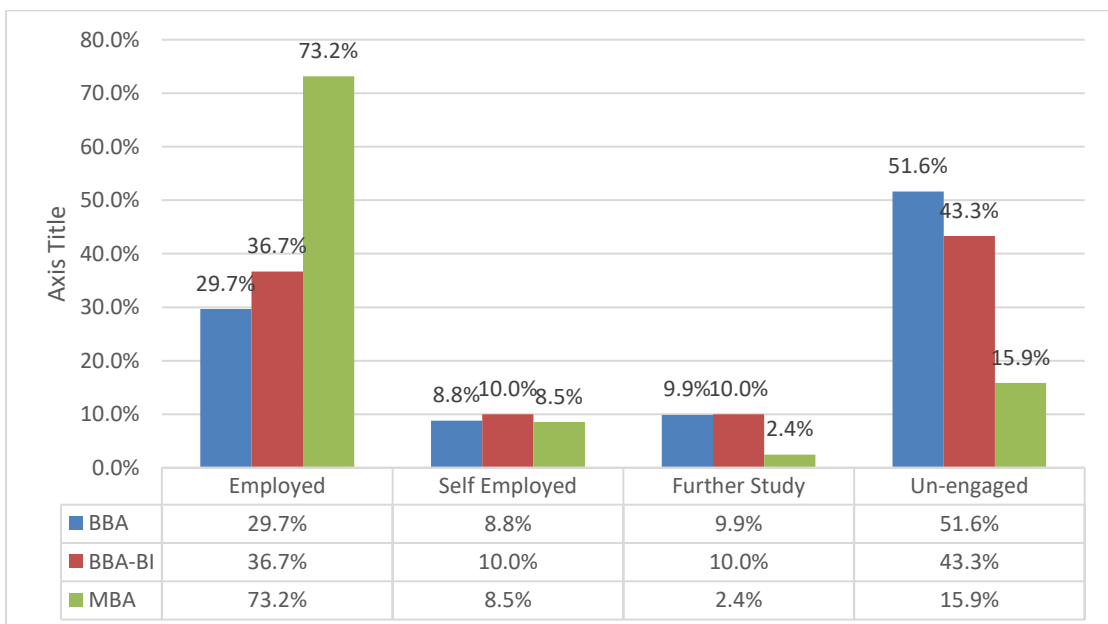
Additionally, small percentage (9.4%) of the traced graduates have ventured into self-employment or entrepreneurship. This substantial portion demonstrates a strong entrepreneurial inclination among the graduates, suggesting they are using their skills and education to create business opportunities and contribute to economic growth. However, there is a noteworthy segment, comprising 41% of the traced graduates, who are not engaged in employment, further studies, or self-employment. This group may be encountering obstacles such as unemployment, underemployment, or personal circumstances that hinder their participation in these activities.

**Figure 2.1: Current Employment Status of the Graduates**



In summary, Figure 2.1 indicates positive outcomes for the majority of traced graduates, with 62% securing employment or furthering their education, and around 9 percent embarking on entrepreneurial endeavors. Nonetheless, the 41 percent are not engaged in any productive activities highlight a need for additional support to help these individuals overcome their challenges and integrate into the workforce or educational institutions.

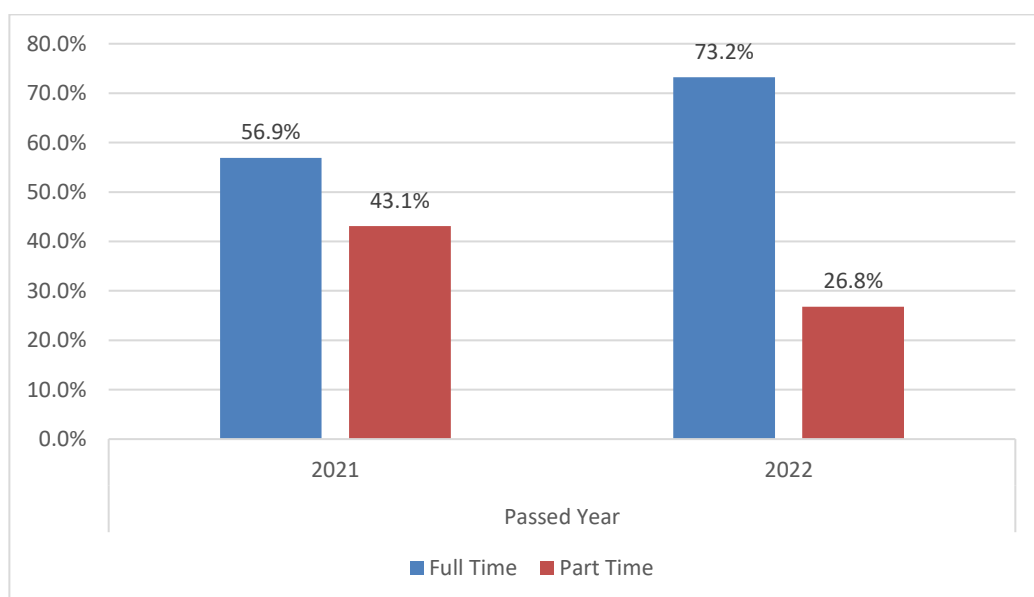
**Figure 2.2: Current Employment Status by Program**



The figure 2.2 exhibits the employment status of the graduates as per the programs they have attended. The result shows that 29.7 percent of the BBA graduates are employed, 9.9 percent are pursuing further study, 8.8 percent are self-employed and 51.6 percent are unemployed. In case of BBA-BI, 36.7 percent are found to be employed, 10 percent are pursuing further study, 10 percent are self-employed and 43.3 percent are unemployed. The employment status of BBA-BI is found to be higher as compared to BBA graduates. Similarly, the further study status of BBA-BI graduates is higher than that of BBA graduates. Regarding employment status of MBA graduates, a significant proportion 73.2 percent are employed, 8.5 percent are self-employed and only 15.9 percent are unemployed. The employment status of MBA graduates is found to be better than that of bachelor level graduates.

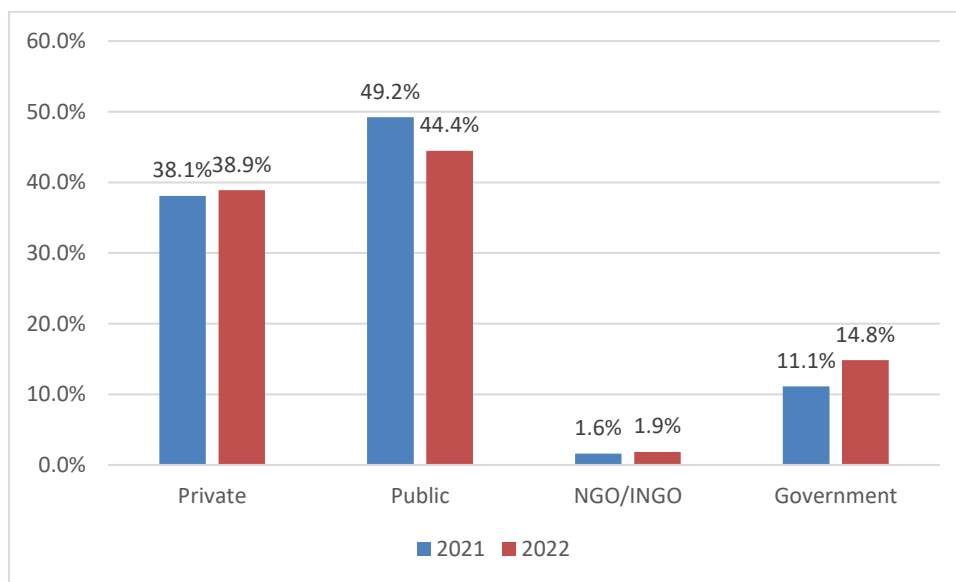
This status reveals that as the students pursue further higher level of education the rate of unemployment decreases. Thus, it can be inferred by the fact that as the students move from undergraduate studies to graduate studies the percentage composition of unemployment is declines. This reveals that high percentage of MBA graduates are found to be employed and were not increased interest towards further studies because of their engagement in jobs. But the undergraduate students of BBA and BBA-BI both were found having positive inclination towards higher studies. That means the prominence of higher study is stronger among the undergraduates than the graduates.

**Figure 2.3: Employment Type of Graduates (%)**



The above Figure 2.3 depicts the type of employment the graduates are involved in various employed organizations. It indicates that most of the employed graduates, i.e. 73.2 percent of the employed graduates are working on a full-time basis and only 26.8 percent work on a part time basis. Percentage of full-time employment has increased from 56.9 percent to 73.2 percent in year 2022. This reveals that most of our employed graduates occupy better employment type after they graduate.

**Figure 2.4: Type of Employer Organization (%)**



The Figure 2.4 included reveals the type of the organizations the employed graduates are working at. It portrays that majority are employed at the public organizations by having percentage composition of 49.2 percent, followed by 38.1 percent of the graduates employed at private sector, 11.1 percent of graduates being employed at government organizations and lastly NGO/INGOs account for remaining 1.6 percent. This implies that most of our graduates are absorbed and have preferences towards public and private organizations rather than government organizations and NGO/INGOs.

**Figure 2.5: Designation of Employed Graduates (%)**

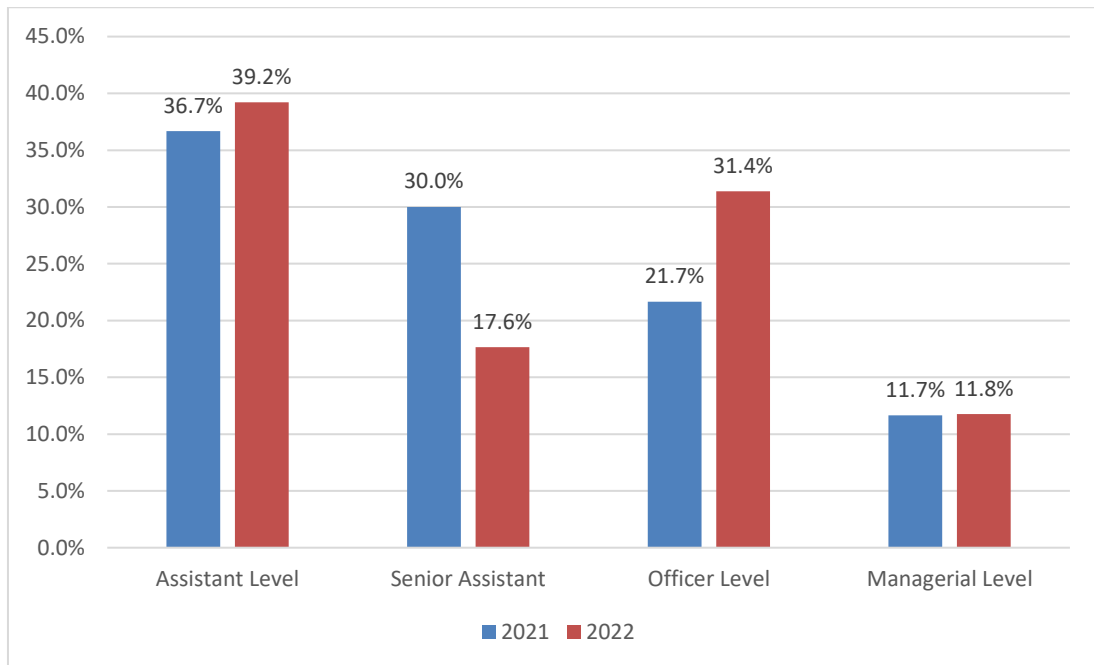
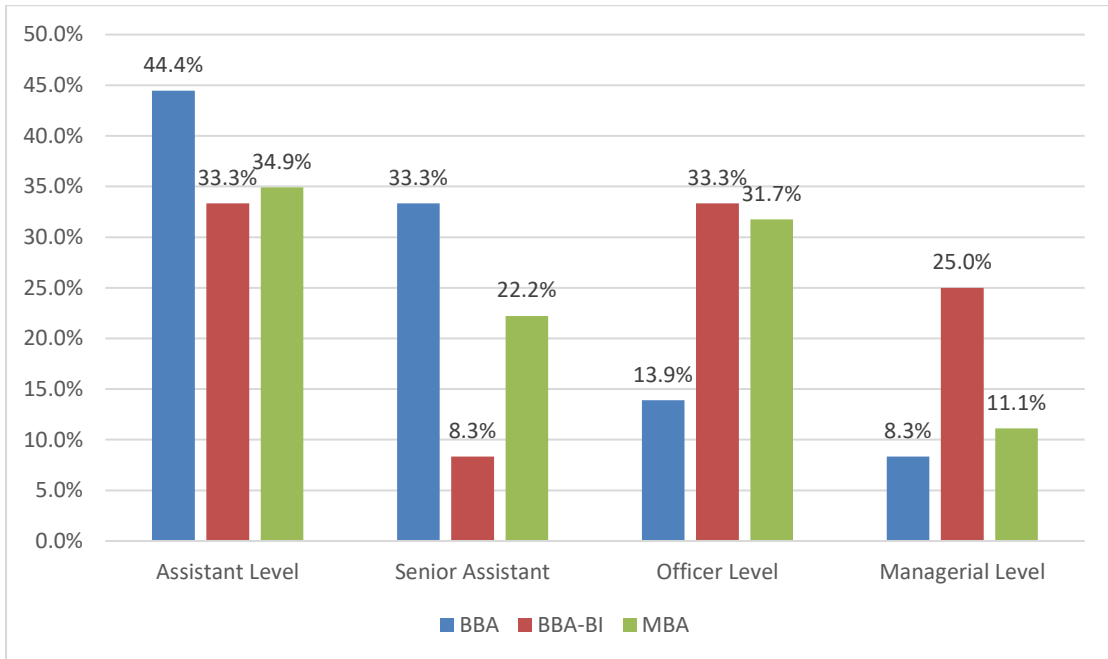


Figure 2.5 included reveals the level of employment of the graduates working in the organizations. It shows that majority of the employed graduates, i.e. 39.2 percent of them are working in the assistant level of the organization followed by 11.7 percent at the managerial level, 30 percent at senior assistant level and 21.7 percent at the senior assistant level. The figure reveals that there exists a smaller number of graduates working in the higher-level positions of the organizations. It means that the graduates getting employed are occupied and have placed themselves in the assistant and officer level inside the organizations.

**Figure 2.6: Designation by Program Type**



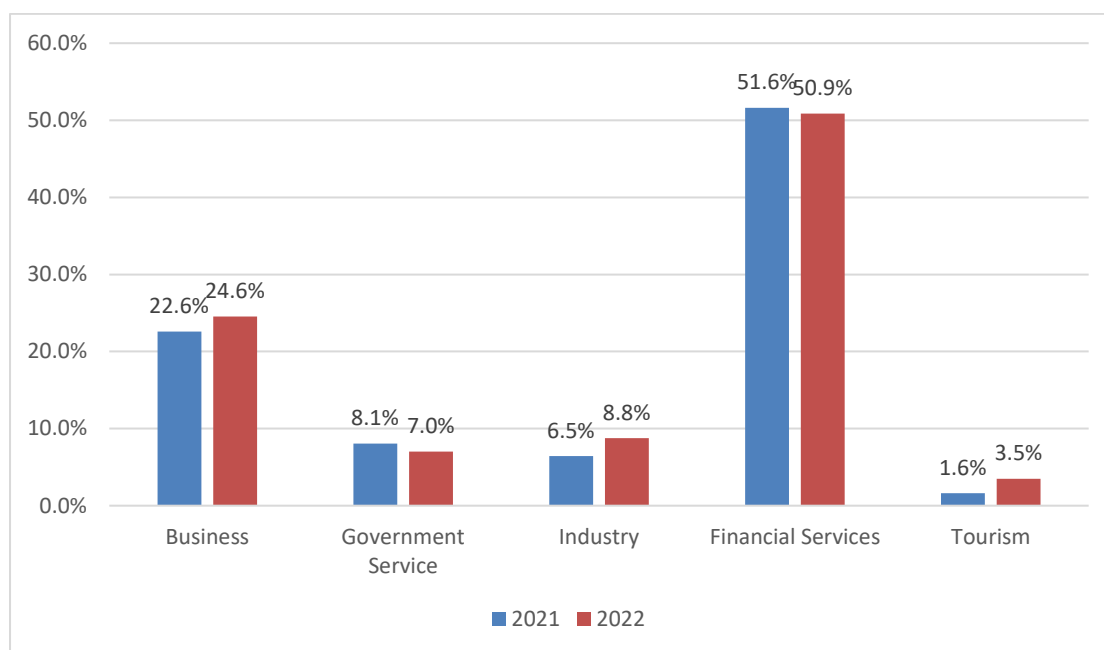
The figure 2.6 included above displays the level of employment of students as per the program they have attended in the institution. It is apparent by the figure that larger portion of bachelor level graduates with the representation of 77.7 percent have majorly been employed in the assistant level. The 33.3 percent of the bachelor graduates are working in the managerial level position. The percentage of the graduates working in mid-level position is low. Whereas, some master level graduates, with the percentage representation of 11.1 percent, are found to be working at the managerial level inside the organizations, 34.9 percent working in the assistant level, 22.2 percent getting employed in the senior assistant level and lastly the remaining 31.7 percent are working in the officer level. This implies that as the educational qualification upgrades among the graduates the level of employment they get in the organization also upgrades.

The Figure 2.7 presented below depicts the employment type of the graduates involved in working at several organizations. It is apparently clear through the figure that with the highest percentage representation of 50.9 percent most of our graduates are found to be absorbed by financial services and are working in the financial institutions like banks, finance companies and insurance. Secondly, business organizations with the representation of 24.6 percent employ most of our graduates and thirdly the 7 percent of our graduates are employed by the government sector. This means that the concentration of most of the graduates to work primarily is the financial services



organizations, followed by business organizations and government owned organization. Relatively, other sectors have less absorption of our graduates.

**Figure 2.7: Current Employment Sector of Graduates**



### 2.3 Quality and Relevance of Programs

Table 2.3 and Figure 2.8 is the presentation of the mean score evaluation of the scales used in assessing the job relevancy of the program the students have studied. It exhibits the major strengths and weakness of the programs. The aggregate mean score of 3.0 indicates that the programs offered by School of Business are of average quality. The highest score mean score of 3.81 for teacher student relationship reveals that it is the major strength of the school. Similarly, the school is also strong in relevancy of programs to graduates professional requirement, quality of education delivered and teaching learning environment. Other strong aspects of the school are work placement, problem solving ability, and library facility.

**Table 2.3: Mean Score Evaluation of Major Strengths and Weakness**

<b>Areas</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Aggregate</b>
Relevance of the Program to Professional Requirements	3.47	3.27	3.37
Extracurricular Activities	2.80	2.64	2.72
Problem Solving Ability	3.22	3.09	3.15
Work Placement/Internship	3.11	2.98	3.04
Teaching Learning Environment	3.49	3.35	3.42
Quality of Education Delivered	3.59	3.51	3.55
Teacher Student Relationship	3.74	3.81	3.78
Library Facility	3.41	3.38	3.40
Lab Facility	2.65	2.33	2.48
Sports Facility	2.59	2.31	2.43
Canteen	0.95	0.98	0.97
<b>Mean Score (Aggregate)</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>2.87</b>	<b>2.93</b>

The weakest aspect of educational quality at the School of Business is found to be canteen and sports facility as revealed by the mean score of 0.97 and 2.43 respectively. The other weakness perceived by the pass out graduates are lab facility, and extracurricular activities. Although, the school is perceived strong in academic part, it is weak in student support activities.

In general, the analysis depicts that majority of the items used to assess the strengths and weakness of the program is positively perceived, which implies that the programs offered and graduate and undergraduate level in the School of Business is relatively promoting the sound academic environment and excellences among the students. However, year-wise comparison reveals that the mean scores for most components have declined in year 2022 relative to year 2021 which is a major concern for the school.

**Figure 2.8: Mean Scores of Major Strengths and Weakness**

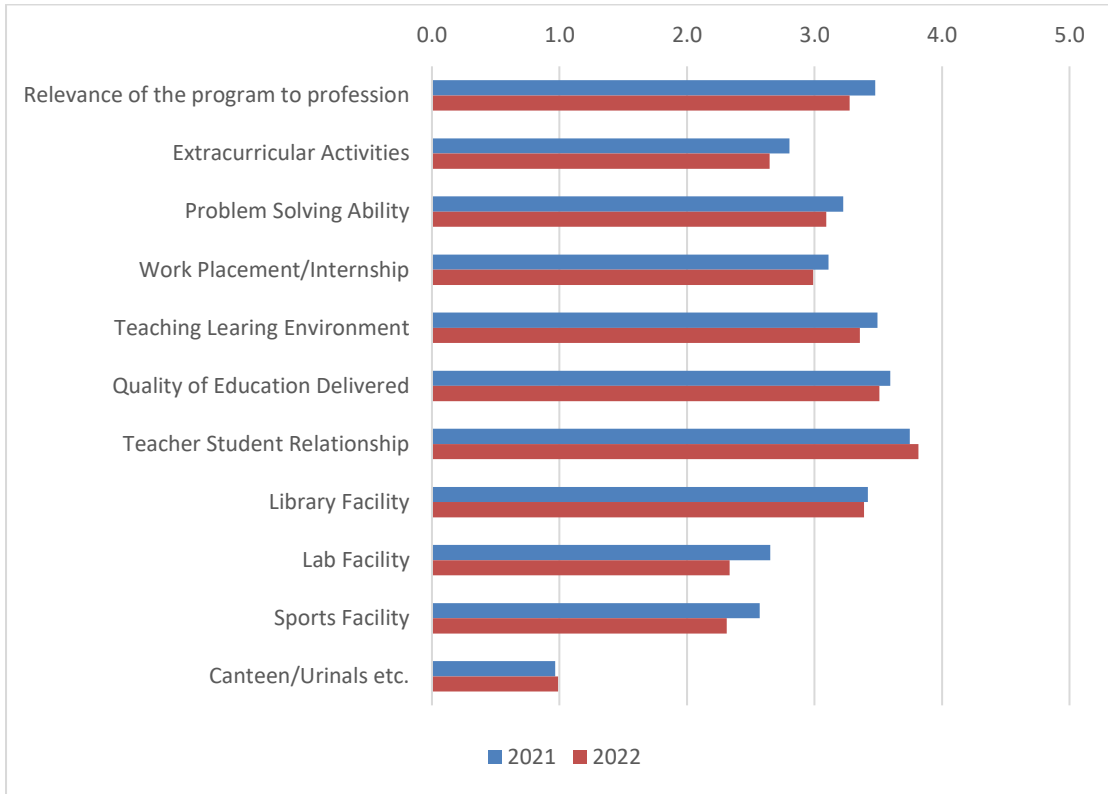
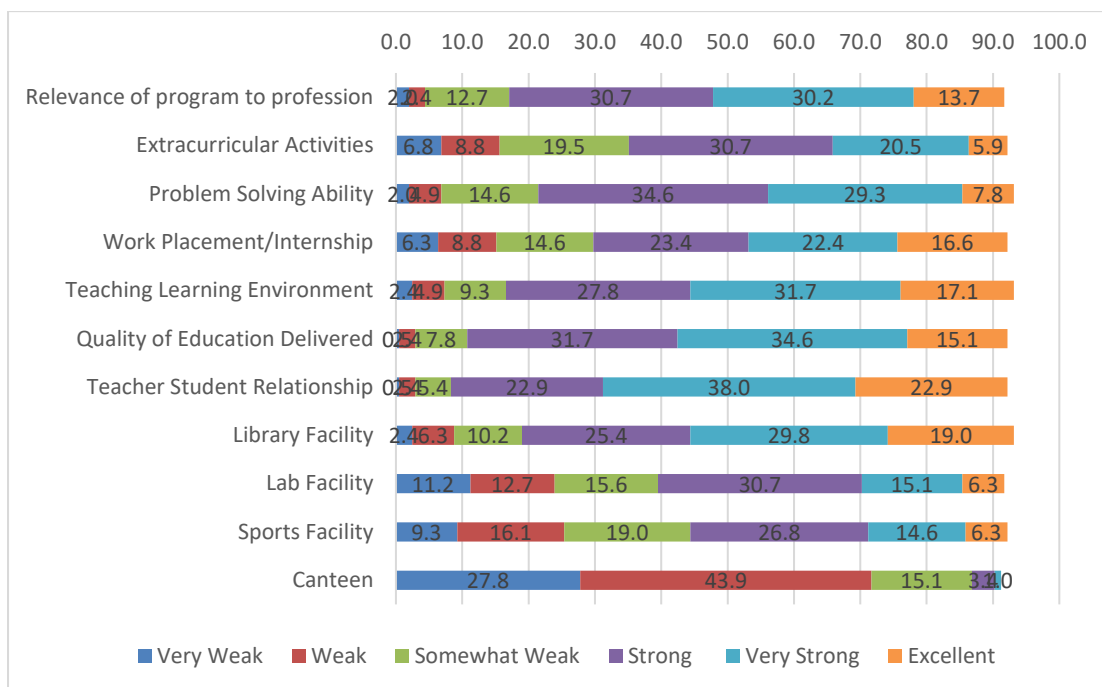


Figure 2.9 displays the frequency distribution of responses provided by the graduates of SOB on their perceived strength or weakness of various dimensions of academic quality measured using 6-point Likert scale (0 = Very weak, 5 = Excellent) in year 2021 and 2022. The highest number of responses are offered on the anchor points strong or very strong. It indicates that the academic quality of SOB is perceived to be strong on most of the dimensions. The quality of education is perceived to be very strong by 34.6 percent. The teacher student relationship is perceived to be either very strong or excellent by 60.9 percent of the respondents. Work placement is perceived to be excellent by 16.6 percent and very strong by 22.4 percent of the graduates. The frequency of weak appears relatively larger for dimensions; sports facility, canteen and lab facility.

**Figure 2.9: Frequency Distribution of Responses on Different Dimensions of Academic Quality**



#### 2.4 Programs' Contribution to Graduates' Professional and Personal Development

Table 2.4 presents the differences in the mean scores of various dimensions of academic quality by program level. It shows the program level-wise mean scores and results of independent samples t-test used to test for equality of mean scores by program level. The null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference in mean scores of academic quality dimension by program level of the graduates. In case of the t-stat values flagged with asterisk, the null hypotheses are rejected at 5 percent significance level. Significance differences in perceived academic quality factors have been found only for program relevance, and library facility. The null hypotheses have been accepted in case of extracurricular activities, problem solving, work placement, teaching learning environment, quality of education delivered, teacher student relationship, lab facility, canteen and sports facility. It means both bachelors and masters level graduates' perception are similar in these dimensions. The results show that the perception of masters' level students is favorable as compared to bachelors level students on most dimensions as revealed by average aggregate score of 2.98 and 2.90 for masters and bachelors level respectively. It is found that in academic quality dimensions MBA program is better while in student services and amenities bachelor program is better.

**Table 2.4: Differences in Mean Scores of Items on Strengths and Weakness of the Institution by Program Level**

Particulars	Mean Score			t-stat	Sig.
	Aggregate	Bachelors	Masters		
Relevance of the program to professional requirement	3.37	3.20	3.59	-2.42*	0.01
Extracurricular Activities	2.72	2.83	2.59	1.26	0.20
Problem Solving Activities	3.15	3.11	3.21	-0.66	0.50
Workshop Placement, attachment and internship	3.04	3.05	3.03	0.09	0.92
Teaching/Learning Environment	3.42	3.40	3.44	-0.21	0.82
Quality of Education Delivered	3.55	3.59	3.48	0.76	0.44
Teacher Student Relationship	3.78	3.71	3.87	-1.13	0.25
Library Facility	3.40	3.17	3.69	-2.88*	0.00
Lab Facility	2.48	2.37	2.63	-1.23	0.22
Sports Facility	2.43	2.58	2.24	1.69	0.09
Canteen/Urinals etc.	0.97	0.93	1.03	-0.78	0.43
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>2.98</b>		
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>0.78</b>				
<b>Correlation</b>		<b>0.95</b>			
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>0.84</b>				

\* Means the statistics is significant at 5 percent level of significance.

Relatively, the graduates of MBA have positively regarded teacher student relationship, quality of education, and teaching learning environment as the major strengths of the institutional program. Both MBA and BBA graduates have perceived the teacher student relationship as the major strength of the institutional program as revealed by the highest mean scores of 3.87 and 3.71 respectively. Although significant differences have been found in perception of bachelors and masters level graduates in two criteria, the correlation of their scores is 0.95. It reveals that the perceptions of bachelors and masters level student is highly correlated.

The qualitative information analysis supported the findings of the quantitative analysis. The graduates shared that although the academic quality of the school are acceptable but the student support facilities should be increased. The graduates were found to express their willingness in supporting and working with the institution for betterment of its educational quality and outreach activities.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **MAJOR FINDINGS**

This section discusses the major findings of the study derived from analysis of the data. The key findings related to employment status of the graduates, their characteristics, employment and self-study status of the graduates, issues related to quality and relevance of higher education, and contribution of education to graduate's personal development are presented in the following sections.

#### **3.1 Graduates' Characteristics**

The traced graduates' profile reveals notable trends in program distribution and gender composition for the academic years 2021 and 2022. In 2021, the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program had 50 traced graduates, making up 50.5% of the total, while in 2022, this number decreased to 41, comprising 38.7%. The Bachelor of Business Administration in Banking and Insurance (BBA-BI) program experienced a slight increase from 15 graduates (15.2%) in 2021 to 16 graduates (15.1%) in 2022. The Master of Business Administration (MBA) program showed a significant rise from 34 graduates (34.3%) in 2021 to 49 graduates (46.2%) in 2022.

Regarding gender distribution, male traced graduates increased from 41 (41.4%) in 2021 to 50 (47.2%) in 2022. Conversely, female traced graduates decreased slightly from 58 (58.6%) in 2021 to 56 (52.8%) in 2022. Despite these shifts, female graduates remained the majority in both years, indicating a persistent gender dynamic.

#### **3.2 Ethnicity and Age-wise Distribution**

The ethnic distribution of traced graduates shows a notable increase in Brahmin graduates from 51 (51.5%) in 2021 to 60 (56.6%) in 2022. Chhetri graduates remained constant in number but decreased slightly in percentage from 21.2% to 19.8%. Indigenous graduates decreased from 23 (23.2%) to 17 (16.0%), while Scheduled Caste graduates doubled from 4 (4.0%) to 8 (7.5%).

Age-wise, the proportion of younger graduates aged 20 to 25 increased from 16 (16.2%) in 2021 to 31 (29.2%) in 2022. Graduates aged 26 to 30 decreased from 71 (71.7%) to

61 (57.5%). The 31 to 35 age group saw an increase from 8 (8.1%) to 13 (12.3%), whereas the 36 and above age group decreased from 4 (4.0%) to 1 (0.9%). These shifts indicate a trend towards younger graduates completing their studies, along with a rise in slightly older graduates.

### **3.3 Employment and Further Study Status**

The employment status of traced graduates shows that in 2021, 60% were either employed or pursuing further/higher studies, which increased to 64% in 2022. This increase suggests an improvement in graduates' transitions into the workforce or further education. Self-employment or entrepreneurial activities saw a decrease from 28% in 2021 to 22% in 2022. The proportion of graduates not engaged in any of these activities remained relatively stable, increasing slightly from 12% to 14%.

Program-wise, BBA graduates had a lower employment rate (29.7%) compared to BBA-BI graduates (36.7%) and MBA graduates (73.2%). This trend indicates that higher education levels are associated with better employment outcomes. The percentage of BBA and BBA-BI graduates pursuing further studies was higher than that of MBA graduates, suggesting a stronger inclination towards further education among undergraduate students.

### **3.4 Quality and Relevance of Programs**

The mean score evaluation of the academic programs indicates that the School of Business offers programs of average quality (aggregate mean score of 3.0). Strengths include the teacher-student relationship (mean score of 3.81), relevance of programs to professional requirements, quality of education, and teaching-learning environment. However, weaknesses were identified in the canteen (mean score of 0.97) and sports facilities (mean score of 2.43).

Year-wise comparison reveals a decline in mean scores for most components from 2021 to 2022, which is a concern for the school. The qualitative analysis supports these findings, with graduates expressing the need for improved student support facilities despite acceptable academic quality.



### **3.5 Programs' Contribution to Professional and Personal Development**

The analysis indicates that MBA graduates perceive higher academic quality in terms of teacher-student relationships, quality of education, and teaching-learning environment compared to BBA graduates. Significant differences were found in perceptions of program relevance and library facilities, with MBA graduates rating these higher. Both groups, however, regarded teacher-student relationships as the major strength.

In summary, the tracing study reveals that while the School of Business at Pokhara University generally provides a satisfactory educational experience, there are areas, particularly in student support services, that require improvement to better support graduates' professional and personal development.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **IMPLICATIONS TO INSTITUTIONAL REFORM**

On the basis of the study results, this section offers policy and practical implications of the findings for further improvising the educational quality and outcomes of the School of Business. It identifies some key issues and areas to focus on in order to improve its quality of education. It also provides suggestions on improvement of academic environment, teaching pedagogy, curriculum, skill development, better job placement of its graduates, faculty quality, infrastructural improvement, and other major policy formulation and organizational reform dimensions. Based on the findings of the tracer study, the following measures are recommended for institutional reforms at the School of Business, Pokhara University, aimed at improving student learning quality, employability, and satisfaction:

#### **4.1 Enhance Academic Programs**

Take initiatives to increase relevance to professional requirements or employability of the graduates by:

***Curriculum Update:*** Regularly update the curriculum to align with current industry standards and market needs. Engage industry experts and alumni in curriculum design and review processes to ensure relevance and applicability.

***Skill Development:*** Integrate practical skills training, such as soft skills, communication, and teamwork, into the curriculum to better prepare students for the workplace.

***Quality of Education:*** Faculty Development: Implement continuous professional development programs for faculty members to enhance teaching methodologies and subject knowledge. Encourage faculty to engage in research and stay updated with the latest industry trends.

***Innovative Teaching Methods:*** Adopt innovative teaching methods such as flipped classrooms, case studies, and project-based learning to make learning more interactive and engaging.

#### **4.2 Improve Student Support Services**

The physical infrastructure and amenities for students such as canteen and sports facilities should be improved by:

***Facility Upgrade:*** Invest in upgrading the canteen and sports facilities to provide a better student experience. Ensure that the canteen offers a variety of healthy food options and that sports facilities are well-maintained and accessible.

***Extracurricular Activities:*** Offer extra-curricular activities support for the students and encourage the formation of student clubs and societies that focus on various interests, including academic, cultural, and sports activities. Provide necessary support and resources for these clubs to thrive.

#### **4.3 Strengthen Career Services**

Focus on employment and entrepreneurship of the graduates by:

***Career Counseling:*** Establish a robust career counseling center that provides guidance on career planning, job search strategies, resume writing, and interview preparation.

***Industry Partnerships:*** Forge strong partnerships with industries to create internship and job placement opportunities for students. Organize regular job fairs and networking events to connect students with potential employers.

***Entrepreneurship Support:*** Initiate incubation programs and provide resources such as seed funding, mentorship, and workspace to encourage students to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

#### **4.4 Foster a Supportive Learning Environment**

Maintain teacher-student relationship through:

***Mentorship Programs:*** Implement mentorship programs where faculty members mentor a group of students, providing academic guidance and personal support.

***Feedback Mechanism:*** Establish a transparent and effective feedback mechanism where students can provide feedback on courses, teaching methods, and overall experience. Use this feedback to make necessary improvements.

***Teaching-Learning Environment:*** Enhance the use of technology in teaching and learning processes. Provide training for faculty and students on using digital tools and platforms effectively.

***Learning Resources:*** Ensure that the library and other learning resources are well-stocked and accessible. Invest in digital resources and databases to support research and learning.

#### **4.5 Monitor and Evaluate Reforms**

Develop framework of continuous improvement in academic and support activities for students through:

**Regular Assessments:** Conduct regular assessments and surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented reforms. Use data-driven approaches to identify areas for further improvement.

**Stakeholder Involvement:** Involve students, faculty, alumni, and industry partners in the evaluation process to gather diverse perspectives and insights.

Implementing these measures can significantly improve the quality of education, enhance employability, and increase overall student satisfaction at the School of Business, Pokhara University. By addressing the identified weaknesses and building on the strengths, the institution can create a more supportive and effective learning environment.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings of the tracing study conducted on graduates of the School of Business at Pokhara University for the academic year indicate that the educational quality and job status of the graduates are deemed satisfactory. The school's programs have been proven to effectively provide students with a strong academic foundation and the necessary skills to succeed in their personal and professional growth. The employment outcomes of its alumni are extremely favorable as a significant majority of them are either working or engaged in further academic pursuits. The employment status of the school's graduates is deemed effective since a substantial proportion of them have secured jobs. A significant majority of graduates are employed in the public sector, particularly in the financial services business. The school's programs are crucial in meeting the personal and professional needs of the alumni. A considerable percentage of the graduates are employed in positions at the officer and administrative level.

However, the tracer study of reveals both strengths and areas for improvement. A significant majority of graduates are either employed or pursuing further studies, indicating effective preparation through the university's programs. However, a notable are not engaged in any productive activities, suggesting challenges related to unemployment and underemployment. Program-wise, MBA graduates have the highest employment rate significantly higher than BBA and BBA-BI graduates, highlighting variations in program effectiveness. Gender analysis shows that female graduates outnumber males, though the gap is narrowing, while ethnic diversity sees an increase in Brahmin and Scheduled Caste graduates but a decrease in Indigenous graduates. The quality of education is perceived as average, with strengths in teacher-student relationships and the teaching-learning environment, but weaknesses in facilities such as the canteen, sports amenities, and laboratory equipment.

To enhance student learning quality, employability, and satisfaction, the study recommends several measures. Curriculum updates and practical skills training should be integrated to align with industry standards. Facility upgrades and enhanced extracurricular activities are necessary to improve the overall student experience. Strengthening career services through robust career counseling and industry

partnerships can create more job and internship opportunities. A supportive learning environment can be fostered through mentorship programs and effective feedback mechanisms. Inclusivity and diversity should be promoted via support programs for underrepresented groups and awareness campaigns. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of reforms are essential to ensure ongoing improvements and stakeholder involvement will be crucial for gathering diverse perspectives and insights. These comprehensive measures aim to prepare graduates better for their professional careers and personal development, ensuring their success in the job market and beyond.

When considering the two key aspects of educational quality, the School of Business excels in the academic dimension. This includes factors such as the relationship between teachers and students, the quality of education, the program's relevance in meeting professional needs, and the overall teaching and learning environment. However, the institution is comparatively less proficient in providing another aspect of student assistance and facilities. Hence, the school should focus on student support activities, development of extra-curricular activities, and providing facilities like sports, lab, canteen, parking, transportation etc. In order to improve institutional reform and raise academic quality, management education institutions should prioritize the development of innovative instructional methods, such as case studies, simulations, project work, seminars, and workshops. These approaches will effectively enhance the academic quality and competency of higher education institutions. Library resources and the infrastructural facilities are also the main aspects in increasing the academic quality; hence it is advised to the institutions to implement programs that support its development.

It is recommended for the educational institutions participating in higher studies to emphasis more on building and developing courses and program giving entrepreneurial capabilities. Furthermore, it is more plausible for the government and its official bodies to develop and integrate entrepreneurial activity among the graduates. The representation of scheduled castes and other minorities are found to be reduced in higher education. Hence, encouraging and supporting environment is significantly important for enticing the graduates towards higher education. The government and educational institutions of the country should devise more inclusive initiatives to entice female, scheduled castes and minorities into higher education.

Skill development, conceptual basis and academic atmosphere are proven to be highly connected with educational quality which finally supports improved work placement prospects. Therefore, it is suggested to the higher education institutions to invest more of their resources and expertise in improving skill development, conceptual foundation and academic environment in order to prepare workplace or market-oriented graduates possessing sound conceptual foundation as well as job related skills. The higher educational institutions and government authorities of the country is suggested to focus in the continuous quality improvement of the faculties by organizing skillful training, motivating and encouraging faculties involved to the further higher education and inculcating research skills and activities among them to improve the educational quality.

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