

# A Tracer Study on the Collegiate and Employment Alignment of Humanities and Social Sciences – Senior High School Graduates

Kurt Zeus L. Dizon  
Saint Louis University, Baguio City, Philippines  
Kimberson P. Alacyang,  
University of the Cordilleras, Baguio City, Philippines

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**Abstract:** *With the first batch of K-12 graduating from college, various stakeholders began evaluating the program's outcome. Thus, it is important to look into several outcomes. Particularly, through descriptive and comparative survey, this study traced the profile of selected Humanities and Social Sciences – Senior High School (HUMSS-SHS) graduates and determined their collegiate and employment alignment. Results reveal that the majority of the selected HUMSS graduates are college graduates. Most are employed and receive fair monthly income above the poverty threshold. Furthermore, the majority are aligned in terms of the collegiate background and substantially in terms of employment alignment. Both alignments can be attributed to monthly income, educational attainment, and employment status. Civil status is only attributed to collegiate alignment, whereas sex and residence are insignificant for both alignments. Hence, the study proposes career guidance programs, organizational partnerships, and curriculum reviews to sustain the alignment of the graduates.*

**Keywords:** *collegiate alignment, employment alignment, humanities and social sciences, senior high school, tracer studies*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippine education landscape was transformed by Republic Act (RA) No. 10533 also known as the “Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013” or informally as the “K-12 program”. Before the K-12 program, the Philippines was the only country in Asia and one of three globally (the other two are Angola and Djibouti) with a 10-year basic education program (Corrales, 2020). Hence, the law added two academic years to the basic education level and changed the curriculum. The changes in the curriculum are in response to the demands of a globalized society. The K-12 program promises graduates will be more employable and globally competitive in the labor market.

It was during the School Year (SY) 2016-2017 that the first batch or cohort of students entered the newly implemented SHS program and were able to graduate in SY 2017-2018. In the Philippines context, this "first batch" refers to the inaugural group of students who progressed through the K-12 program, which was a significant shift from the previous 10-year basic education system. The batch also included the same students who underwent the new college curriculum in coherence with the K-12 program. Looking into the expected duration for college education, which is usually four to five (4-5) years, the first batch of the K-12 program was able to finish their college degrees in SY 2021-2022 and SY 2022-2023.

Thus, it is essential for governments and institutions to monitor their graduates to ensure that they are right on track and to ensure quality education. This can be achieved through tracer studies. A tracer study establishes a close and continuous link between the institution and its graduates whose feedback can be gathered, which is instrumental in improving the institution (Romaldon & Arifin, 2021). Through these graduates, the institution mirrors its success in pursuing higher education and curricular offerings. Moreover, tracer studies guide government and academic institutions in planning their revisions and programs. Importantly,

tracer studies are crucial for monitoring and assessing alignment objectives, specifically collegiate and employment alignment, which this study tends to focus on.

Examining alignment among graduates also ensures the Philippines' competitiveness and recognition of its graduates on an international scale. The study can also be an instrument by sharing the Philippine experience and informing educational policies in other countries. The results can also be applied to other contexts, particularly in other educational institutions or even countries where outdated curricula hinder economic and social progress.

Apparently, there is still limited literature and tracer studies of SHS graduates since the K-12 program is relatively new (Padios et al., 2021). Only a few academic institutions conduct tracer studies in their SHS. Also, tracer studies have been a primary document being looked at and mandated by government agencies such as the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and accrediting agencies regarding the quality performance of these institutions (Ramos & Flores, 2022).

Specifically, this tracer study focuses on the HUMSS strand since studies looking exclusively per strand are limited. To attain these objectives, the study sought to answer the following:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the selected HUMSS graduates in terms of:
  - a. Sex;
  - b. Civil status;
  - c. Residence;
  - d. Monthly income/allowance status;
  - e. Highest educational attainment; and
  - f. Employment status?
2. What is the collegiate alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates when moderated according to:
  - a. HUMSS-related degree;
  - b. Non-HUMSS-related degree; and
  - c. No collegiate background?
3. What is the employment alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates when moderated according to:
  - a. HUMSS-related job;
  - b. Non-HUMSS-related job;
  - c. Currently studying (undergraduate level);
  - d. Currently studying (graduate level); and
  - e. Unemployed?
4. Is there a significant difference between collegiate alignment and the socio-demographic profile of the selected HUMSS graduates?
5. Is there a significant difference in the employment alignment and socio-demographic profile of the selected HUMSS graduates?

## II. RELATED LITERATURE

### **Need of Educational Reform and the Dilemmas of the Old Curriculum**

Educational reforms and the alignment of national education systems with global standards have been a major focus of international education discourse. Various countries have undertaken significant changes to their education structures to enhance global competitiveness, ensure the international recognition of their graduates, and contribute to societal development. For instance, Adeniyi et al. (2024) provided that various African countries incorporated educational reforms as a primary instrument to pursue socio-economic development and assert de-colonialization while partaking in globalization. Similarly,

countries like South Korea and Japan extended their basic education programs to align with global norms, aiming to improve their citizens' competitiveness in the international labor market and foster a more educated, innovative, and socially responsible populace (Jeong, 2020, Yamanaka & Suzuki, 2020).

In the Philippines, education reforms are needed due to the problems the old curriculum faced. K12 Philippines (2015) argued why the former 10-year program puts the Philippines at a disadvantage. First, following the global education standards, the Philippines is far behind almost all countries following a 12-year basic education program. This makes Filipinos globally uncompetitive. For instance, in terms of the labor market, hosting countries do not recognize Filipinos' educational background abroad. Additionally, many Filipino professionals are not fully acknowledged since their education is not adherent to the education and professional licensing standards of many foreign countries (K12 Philippines, 2015; SEPO, 2011).

Second, graduates of the 10-year program are deemed too young for the labor force since they lack 2 years in their primary education. Graduates of the 10-year program are commonly less than 18 years old. The median age is considered immature for graduates entering employment and engaging in legal agreements. Competencies needed for industries still need to be fully established with the curriculum and time length of the old program (K12 Philippines, 2015).

Third, many argued that the 10-year program exhibits poor quality education. Such determinants of why the 10-year shows poor quality education are the results of the National Achievement Test (NAT). The NAT is part of evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum and assessing and monitoring the quality of primary education in the Philippines (Philippine Basic Education, 2013). Alarmingly, the overall results of the NAT before that K-12 program show that students have “low proficiency” (Behiga, 2022; Dios, 2019; SEPO, 2011; PBE, 2013). In addition, the Philippines participated in international exams such as the Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS). TIMSS is a global large-scale assessment in mathematics and science. For four (4) times that the Philippines participated (1995, 1999, 2003, and 2008), the results show dismissal performance and Filipino students lag behind other countries (TIMSS, 2019; Balagtas, 2019; Ogena et al., 2013; Cruz, 2010).

Fourth, the old curriculum does not prepare students well for college. DepEd pointed out that high school graduates of the former 10-year basic education program are not adequately prepared for college since the majority of first-year college courses, known as General Education subjects, are actually remedial courses, as they should have been learned and mastered in high school (SEPO, 2011; DepEd, 2010).

Hence, the K-12 program attempts to solve the ills of the old curriculum. To catch up with the global standards, one of the novel features of the K-12 program is the added two academic years, the senior high school (SHS). The SHS is two years of specialized education wherein students may choose their career track in the future. Each student in SHS can choose among three tracks: Academic, Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL), and Sports and Arts. The Academic track includes three strands: General Academic Strand (GAS), Accountancy and Business Management (ABM), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) (DepEd, 2020).

### **Collegiate and Employment Alignment**

With the conclusion of the first batch of the K-12 program, various stakeholders including many government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), and the academe, began evaluating and assessing the program's outcome. Sadly, several data suggest that the goals of the K-12 program were not fully satisfied or achieved. One of the objectives of the K-12 is to

improve the quality of education among Filipino learners. However, the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) showed that the Philippines remains at the 2022 bottom rankings in reading, math, and science proficiency (OECD, 2023; Hernando-Malipot, 2023).

Another primary concern raised are the alignment objectives. The Philippine educational system with other countries adheres to an “outcome-based education” (OBE). OBE refers to “what students are expected to know and be able to do, what skills and knowledge they need to have when they leave the school system” (Connecticut General Assembly, 1994). Hence, OBE aims to ensure that there is a clear transition through alignment between what students learn in school, the competencies they develop in college, and the skills required in the workplace are fully meant (Dana et al., 2018; Travis, 2006).

Among the significant alignment issues raised is the collegiate alignment of students’ strands, wherein their college degree is not aligned with their SHS strand. An essential purpose of the SHS is to prepare students for collegial education and career paths. Through their chosen strands, the students are given the necessary knowledge, background, practice, and preparation to be productive in college and the workplace. This can be confirmed by the study of Nazareno et al. (2021), wherein the chosen degree of a college student is strongly associated with their SHS strand. Likewise, Barroso et al. (2022) suggested that the strand is a determining factor for academic performance in college. Various studies would provide that the strand of SHS graduates is aligned with their college degrees (Cho-oy, 2023; Santos et al., 2019; Arded, 2019).

However, some studies beg to disagree. The study of Santos et al. (2019) indicated that there is a possibility that SHS graduates are misaligned on what degree they wanted from the strand that they have taken in college. Religioso et al. (2022) also presented that there is a bulk misalignment of the strand of SHS graduates in terms of their pursued higher education (35%), entrepreneurship (40%), and employment (20%). In a similar study, Padios et al. (2021) showed that the graduates are not aligned in terms of their college degrees (49%), occupation (80%), and entrepreneurship (3%). Quintos et al. (2020) reveal a high level of mismatch between the SHS strand of the graduates and the course they enrolled in college, with a rate of thirty-nine percent (39%) for SY 2017-2018 and thirty-one percent (31%) for SY 2018-2019. Even though the data presents a small percentage, this is a problem since strand mismatch or misalignment makes the college transition more challenging for most SHS graduates (Formaran et al., 2022).

Furthermore, there is a challenge regarding the employability of K-12 graduates. According to the Philippine Business for Education (PBED), although graduates held “theoretically” 93 percent of abilities relevant to the needs of the nation's industry (Monzon, 2022), only about 20 percent of 70 of the country's leading companies across all sectors were inclined to hire SHS graduates (Orbeta & Potestad, 2020). The study indicated that the hiring policy of many companies requires applicants with at least two years of college education, potentially excluding SHS graduates (Corrales, 2020; Yee, 2018).

Regarding employability, employment misalignment or job mismatch has been a perennial problem among K-12 graduates. Senator Bam Aquino argued that the SHS courses “offered to students do not necessarily match the available jobs in the industry” (Cepeda, 2019). The rising job mismatch was due to the unfilled jobs related to technical-vocation courses. National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) Undersecretary Rosemarie G. Edillon and the University of Asia and the Pacific Economist Bernardo M. Villegas, as cited by Robles (2022), explained that “there are not enough technical or skilled workers such as carpenters, electricians, and masons because of the obsession with college diplomas of both parents and student.” This can be manifested in the study of Gomez and Mapa (2022), wherein most SHS students prefer to enter college education as their exit after graduating

from SHS rather than enter technical-vocational education or skill-based training. This preference creates a job mismatch since most of the unfilled labor market is concentrated on technical-vocational jobs. There is firm competition and small vacancies on jobs that require college degrees, which is why most college graduates are forced to enter other employment related to technical-vocational jobs.

### **Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS)**

Generally, the study focused on the HUMSS strand. HUMSS is intended for students who are interested in the disciplines of the humanities, liberal arts, and social sciences. HUMSS prepares students who wish to become teachers, psychologists, political scientists, criminologists, anthropologists, sociologists, historians, journalists, social workers, community workers, lawyers, etc.

For HUMSS students to be prepared for the following college degrees, they have to take up the following specialization subjects unique from other strands including Introduction to World Religions and Belief Systems; Disciplines and Ideas in the Social Sciences; Disciplines and Ideas in the Applied Social Sciences; Creative Writing; Creative Nonfiction: The Literary Essay; Philippine Politics and Governance; Trends, Networks and Critical Thinking in the 21st Century Culture; and Community Engagement, Solidarity and Citizenship. HUMSS students are also required to take up Core Subjects (equivalent to General Education courses in college) such as Understanding Culture, Society, and Politics; Personal Development; and Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Person, and Contextualized Subjects such as Practical Research I and II, and Entrepreneurship (DepEd, 2019).

Sadly, there has been an increasing dismissive attitude towards the HUMSS strand. There has been a trend that society and the corporate world look down on the liberal arts (Andin, 2016). College administrators downsize liberal arts and humanities programs and bent on promoting “job-oriented” programs concentrating on the STEM and ABM strands (Dutt-Ballerstadt, 2019). This trend in education leads to a dystopian education, as argued by Henry Giroux, a proponent of critical pedagogy. Giroux further contends that society has undermined the humanities and social sciences, which leads to alienation on the part of the students. Hence, students are being robbed of values such as critical thinking, civic involvement, and social awareness, the main competencies offered in HUMSS courses (Dizon, 2022).

This trend led to the perception that HUMSS is below the hierarchy of academic strands (Tan, 2017). HUMSS students are belittled since they are perceived to evade complex subjects such as math and suffer from social stigma which some would say the strand does not promise employment opportunities (Camaligan et al., 2019; Calendatas, 2018; Bermejo, 2017).

On the contrary, several contend that HUMSS is a practical and promising strand for employment. HUMSS equips students with various skills, including critical thinking, socialization, writing, communication, problem-solving, creativity, etc (DepEd, 2010). These skills provided at HUMSS promise wide-range employment opportunities that are demanded in the job market (REVA, 2021; Rugerri, 2019). It is also less constrained and more flexible than highly technical courses like ABM and STEM, opening more career paths which can lead to a brighter future (Strauss, 2017).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### **Research Design**

The research method and design used was primarily quantitative design. This study utilized a descriptive and comparative survey to determine and differentiate the collegiate and employment alignment of UC-SHS HUMSS graduates.

#### **Population and Locale**

The study focuses only on selected HUMSS graduates of the University of the Cordilleras – Senior High School (UC-SHS). UC is a private, coeducational university in Baguio, Philippines. It is the university with the third highest student enrollees in Baguio City and the Cordillera Administrative Region (Delos Reyes, 2021). As of 2022, UC attends around 21,000 students with programs at the elementary, junior high school, senior high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels (UC, n.d.).

Mainly, the respondents are UC-SHS HUMSS graduates of the SY 2017-2018. Remarkably, SHS graduates of 2017-2018 are the first batch of the K-12 program. Looking into the time frame from the year they graduated and the time this study was conducted (2023), most of these graduates are either done with their college degrees and/or are already employed.

A purposive, non-random sampling technique was employed in this tracer study. For the SY 2017-2018, there are 399 HUMSS graduates. Through Slovin's Formula, the sample size required, and actual data gathered throughout the study was 196 respondents. The selection of the respondents was based on their availability and willingness to participate. To reach out to as many graduates as possible, different communication channels such as emails and Facebook Messenger were utilized to maximize response rates. To minimize selection bias, the authors ensure that all blocks, classes, or sections of Batch 2017-2018 are represented, and each block was sent a message informing and requesting data collection with a link directing to the formal letter, informed consent, and questionnaire.

#### **Data Gathering Instrument**

A descriptive survey, specifically through a questionnaire checklist, was employed to attain this study's objectives. The respondents accomplished the questionnaire using a Google Form.

The first part of the questionnaire collects the respondents' general information, including sex, civil status, monthly income/allowance status, highest educational attainment, residence, and employment status.

The second part consists of a checklist of the respondent's collegiate alignment. An item asks if the respondent is an "undergraduate," "graduate," or has "did not enter college." Next, a list of college degree programs was enumerated in the questionnaire. The programs were organized in HUMSS and non-HUMSS-related degrees. A blank slate was provided if the college degree was not mentioned in the questionnaire, allowing the respondent to encode the college degree. For degrees answered in the blank slate, the researcher will decide whether the degree is HUMSS or non-HUMSS-related degrees.

The third part pertains to the employment alignment of the respondent. The respondents selected the nature of their employment, which the list was classified as HUMSS, non-HUMSS related job, currently studying (undergraduate level), currently studying (graduate level), and unemployed. It must be noted that the category "currently studying" or being a full-time student is not considered part of the labor force nor considered unemployed (Bureau

of Labor Statistics, 2015). Therefore, for this study, it is considered to be another category under employment alignment.

For the list classified under HUMMS and non-HUMSS related jobs, the respondents will identify if their employment belongs to the sectors enumerated in the checklist. A blank slate was also provided if the industry was not mentioned in the checklist, and the respondent was allowed to encode the nature of the work. The nature of work identified by the respondent was classified as whether it is a HUMSS or non-HUMSS-related job.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

To formally access the respondents, a communication letter was sent to the Academic Director of the UC-SHS requesting that this study be conducted. Upon approval, the questionnaire link was distributed and communicated to the graduates through Facebook Messenger. The office of the director also provided a list of the official graduates to be used for cross-checking.

The researchers were able to communicate with the respondents since the respondents were former students of the researchers. For ethical purposes, a letter of request and informed consent is part of the questionnaire (through Google Forms) discussing the anonymity of the respondents and the data to be gathered is strictly for research purposes.

### **Treatment of Data**

The data gathered and obtained in this study were organized, presented, and analyzed through frequency and percentage. To determine the significant difference between the socio-demographic profile of the HUMSS graduates when moderated according to their collegiate alignment and employment alignment, Chi-Square Test of Independence was used.

## **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Socio-demographic profile of the selected HUMSS graduates**

For the socio-demographic profile of the selected HUMSS graduates, frequency and percentage were used. Table 1 presents profile arranging from sex, civil status, monthly income/allowance status, highest educational attainment, residence, and employment status.

**Table 1**  
**Socio-demographic Profile of Selected HUMSS Graduates**

<b>Profile</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	61	31.10%
Female	135	68.90%
<b>Civil Status</b>		
Single	183	93.40%
Married	13	6.60%
<b>Residence</b>		
City	121	61.70%
Municipality	75	38.30%
<b>Monthly Income/ Allowance Status</b>		
Less than P3,000	0	0%
P3,001 to P6,000	8	4.10%

P6,001 to P9,000	28	14.30%
P9,001 to P12,000	15	7.70%
P12,001 to P15,000	18	9.20%
P15,001 and above	127	64.8%
<b>Highest Educational Attainment</b>		
Senior High School	7	4.10%
Technical/Vocational Graduate	4	2.00%
College Undergraduate	44	22.40%
College Graduate	117	59.20%
Graduate Student (MA, MS, JD)	24	12.20%
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Studying only	23	11.70%
Study and work	6	3.00%
Casual	48	24.40%
Contractual	56	28.60%
Part-time	17	8.70%
Full time regular	27	13.80%
Self-employed	10	5.10%
Unemployed	9	4.60%

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of respondents. Regarding sex, it is observed that 31.10% are males while 68.90% are females. Of the 196 respondents, the majority (93.40%) are single, while a few are married (6.60%). Most of the respondents live in cities (61.70%), while the rest live in municipalities (38.30%). For monthly income/allowance, 4.10% have received a monthly income or allowance of P3,001 to P6,000, 14.30% have P6,001 to P9,000, 7.70% have P9,001 to P12,000, 9.20% received P12,001 to P15,000, and the majority (64.8%) have P15,001 and above monthly. This would confirm that the majority of the graduates are above the poverty threshold since, based on the 2021 Philippine Institute of Development Studies (PIDS), the monthly average estimated poverty threshold in the Philippines is P12,082 (Zoleta, 2022; PSA, 2021).

In terms of highest educational attainment, more than half (59.20%) are college graduates, and several are college undergraduates (22.40%). There are a handful of respondents (12.20%) who are currently graduate students (law or master students), a few are only SHS graduates (4.10%), and technical/vocational graduates (2.00%). The number shares the results of Arimbay and Veloso (2023), Religioso et al. (2022), and Awi et al. (2021), which indicate that the majority of the curriculum exits of the graduates to pursue higher education.

Regarding employment status, 23 respondents are currently studying, 6 are simultaneously studying and working, 48 are casual workers, 56 are contractual, 17 are part-time workers, 27 are full-time regular, 10 are self-employed, and 9 are unemployed. The data indicates that most of the graduates are employed rather than unemployed. In addition, most of the graduates are casual, contractual, and part-timers because, looking into the timeframe, most of the respondents just graduated in 2022. This implies that the majority are in the entry-level positions of their respective work organizations.



### Collegiate alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates

For the collegiate alignment of the respondents, frequency, and percentage were used. Table 2 presents the collegiate alignment arranged from those with HUMSS-related degrees, non-HUMSS-related degrees, and no collegiate background.

**Table 2**  
**Collegiate Alignment of the Selected HUMSS Graduates**

Collegiate alignment	Frequency	Percentage
HUMSS-related degrees	137	69.90%
Non-HUMSS-related degrees	48	24.50%
No collegiate background	11	5.60%
<b>Total</b>	196	100.00%

Based on Table 2, 137 out of 196 respondents are HUMSS-related, 48 out of 196 are non-HUMSS-related, and 11 out of 196 did not enter college. It can be incurred that most of the college degree entry of SHS graduates is aligned with their strand. In this case, HUMSS graduates are more likely to take up HUMSS-related degrees in college. This is in consonance with the studies of Cho-oy (2023), Barroso et al. (2022), Nazareno et al. (2021), Santos et al. (2019), Arded (2019), and Tutor et al. (2019) wherein the strands of the SHS graduates are aligned with their preferred higher education courses. However, it should also be acknowledged that there is always a possibility of misalignment in the collegiate alignment and strands of SHS graduates, which is also similar to the findings of Religioso (2022), Padios (2021), Quintos et al. (2020), and Tutor et al. (2019) wherein misalignment of college degrees seems to be unavoidable among SHS graduates and will always exist.

**Table 3**  
**College Degrees Taken by the Respondents**

College Degrees	College Status				Total	Percentage	Rank
	Undergraduate	%	Graduated	%			
<b>HUMSS related degrees</b>							
Bachelor of Arts in English	1	0.50%	3	1.50%	4	2.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science	2	1.00%	2	1.00%	4	2.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication	2	1.00%	16	8.20%	18	9.20%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science	3	1.50%	17	8.70%	20	10.20%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education	0	0.00%	3	1.50%	3	1.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor in Public Administration	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	8 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Arts in Behavioral Science	1	0.50%	3	1.50%	4	2.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Criminology	7	3.60%	13	6.60%	20	10.20%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Bachelor of Physical Education	1	0.50%	2	1.00%	3	1.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Psychology	7	3.60%	22	11.20%	29	14.80%	1 <sup>st</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Public Safety (PNPA)	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	2	1.00%	7 <sup>th</sup>

Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	8 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Social Work	1	0.50%	3	1.50%	4	2.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education major in English	2	1.00%	7	3.60%	9	4.60%	4 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education major in Science	1	0.50%	3	1.50%	4	2.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education major in Filipino	0	0.00%	4	2.00%	4	2.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education major in Mathematics	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	2	1.00%	7 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education major in Special Education	1	0.50%	3	1.50%	4	2.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education major in Values Education	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	8 <sup>th</sup>

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**Non-HUMSS related degrees**

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Bachelor of Science in Forestry	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Real Estate Management	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Air Craft Mechanic Technology	1	0.50%	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering	1	0.50%	2	1.00%	3	1.50%	4 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Financial Management	0	0.00%	3	1.50%	3	1.50%	4 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management	0	0.00%	5	2.55%	5	2.60%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Management Accountancy	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science	0	0.00%	2	1.00%	2	1.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>

in Medical Laboratory Sciences							
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	3	1.50%	9	4.60%	12	6.10%	1 <sup>st</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology	0	0.00%	2	1.00%	2	1.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration	8	4.10%	3	1.50%	11	5.60%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy	0	0.00%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>22.50%</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>71.90%</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>94.40%</b>	

About collegiate alignment, Table 3 identifies the college degree enrolled by the respondents and if the respondents are still undergraduates or graduated with their degrees. Table 3 also shows the percentage for each college degree and the ranking for the most chosen or entered college degrees. For HUMSS-related degrees, the highest degree selected and entered by the respondents is Bachelor of Science in Psychology, followed by Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Bachelor of Science in Criminology, ranked 2nd. The 3rd most chosen degree is Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication. For non-HUMSS-related degrees, 1st in rank is Bachelor of Science in Nursing, followed by Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (2nd), and Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (3rd). The top 3 degrees for both HUMSS and non-HUMSS related degrees conform to the study of Tutor et al. (2019) of the PIDS, in which all these 6 degrees are mentioned in the top 15 college courses enrolled by students.

### Employment alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates

For the employment alignment of the respondents, frequency, and percentage were used. Table 2 presents the collegiate alignment arranged from those with HUMSS-related job, non-HUMSS-related job, currently studying (undergraduate level), currently studying (graduate level), and unemployed.

**Table 4**  
**Employment Alignment of the Selected HUMSS Graduates**

<b>Employment alignment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
HUMSS-related job	81	41.30%
Non-HUMSS-related job	77	39.30%
Currently studying (undergraduate level)	15	7.70%
Currently studying (graduate level)	14	7.10%
Unemployed	9	4.60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

For Table 4, the employment alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates is as follows: 81 have HUMSS-related jobs, 77 have non-HUMSS-related jobs, 15 are currently studying at

the undergraduate level, 14 are currently studying at the graduate level, and 9 are unemployed. For respondents currently studying at the graduate level, it was noted that 13 are taking up Juris Doctor degrees (law school), and 1 is a Master of Arts student.

Based on Table 4, many (41.30%) of the HUMSS respondents are aligned with their employment, which is higher than those with non-HUMSS related jobs (39.30%). The results are coherent with the findings of Religioso et al. (2022), Padios (2021), and Santos et al. (2019), wherein the majority of the SHS strand of graduates are aligned with their employment. The findings also parallel with other tracer studies such as those of Pentang et al. (2022), Cornillez et al. (2021), Albina and Sumagaysay (2020), Cuadra et al. (2019), and Tutor et al. (2019) wherein the job of graduates is relevant with their college degree. Although the findings indicate that a considerable number of HUMSS graduates are aligned with their employment, a portion of HUMSS graduates are not aligned with their employment, accounting for 39.30%. This substantial number is also apparent in the studies mentioned above, which confirms the unavoidability of employment mismatch among the SHS graduates.

However, it should also be considered that there are respondents who are still studying, which accounts for 7.70% at the undergraduate level and 7.10% at the graduate level. This implies that there will be definite changes in the overall data for employment alignment once these students have their degrees and/or attain a job.

**Table 5**  
**Nature of Employer**

<b>Nature of Employer</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>HUMSS related job</b>			
Academe	28	14.30%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Government (Administrative)	30	15.30%	1 <sup>st</sup>
Health or Medical Field	9	4.60%	4 <sup>th</sup>
Law Enforcement	10	5.10%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Media	2	1.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Non-Government Organization (NGO)	2	1.00%	5 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Non-HUMSS related job</b>			
Agriculture	2	1.00%	8 <sup>th</sup>
Business outsourcing (BPO)	10	5.10%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Business Co-Owner	4	2.00%	7 <sup>th</sup>
Retail Business	11	5.60%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Construction	2	1.00%	8 <sup>th</sup>
Cosmetics	1	0.50%	9 <sup>th</sup>
Finance or Banking	4	2.00%	7 <sup>th</sup>
Food and Beverages	4	2.00%	7 <sup>th</sup>
Health or Medical Field	13	6.60%	1 <sup>st</sup>
Information Technology	4	2.00%	7 <sup>th</sup>
Manufacturing	5	2.60%	6 <sup>th</sup>
Recreation	2	1.00%	8 <sup>th</sup>
Service Industry	8	4.10%	4 <sup>th</sup>
Tourism	6	3.10%	5 <sup>th</sup>
Transportation	1	0.50%	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>81.10%</b>	

Table 5 specifically categorizes the nature of the respondents' employers. For HUMSS-related jobs, the government ranks first as the employer of the respondents, accounting for 15.30%. In terms of the government, all respondents identify that the nature of the job

focuses on administrative and clerical work. The second common employer is the academe which homes 14.30% of the respondents. The third is the law enforcement sector, which accounts for 5.10% of the respondents. Regarding non-HUMSS-related jobs, the first in rank is the health or medical field (6.60%). Second is retail business (5.60%). And third are those working in business process outsourcing (BPO) (2.00%). The results are analogous to the findings of Awi et al. (2021), wherein employers such as the government, health, and BPO are the common destinations for SHS students to work.

The findings for both Tables 4 and 5 further imply that the HUMSS respondents have a high likelihood of employability, wherein the total of HUMSS and non-HUMSS related jobs accounts for 80.60%. Moreover, Table 4 indicates that 4.60% are unemployed. This can be accorded with the study of Carada et al. (2022), wherein SHS graduates, regardless of the strand, were rated as having a high likelihood of employment. The findings also validate the versatility and flexibility of the HUMSS strand, which offers a wide range of employment opportunities (REVA, 2021).

### **Socio-demographic profile and the collegiate alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates**

This portion presents the test of significant differences between the socio-demographic profile and the collegiate alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates. The Chi-Square Test of Independence was used in this part.

**Table 6**  
**Test of Significance Between the Socio-demographic Profile and the Collegiate Alignment of the Selected HUMSS Graduates**

Socio-demographic Profile			Collegiate Alignment			
			Chi-Square	df	P-value	Interpretation
Sex			0.162	2	0.922	Not significant
Civil Status			25.623	2	0.000	Significant
Residence			2.767	2	0.251	Not significant
Monthly Income/ Allowance Status			29.871	8	0.000	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment			55.461	8	0.000	Significant
Employment Status			64.220	14	0.000	Significant

*Legend:  $p \leq 0.05$  - Significant*

Regarding the socio-demographic profile and the collegiate alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates, Table 6 reveals that among the socio-demographic profile, civil status, monthly income/allowance status, highest educational attainment, and employment status show a significant difference in collegiate alignment. This is supported by the obtained p-value (0.000) at a level of significance. This means that civil status, monthly income/allowance status, highest educational attainment, and employment status are predictors that affect the respondent's collegiate alignment. On the other hand, sex and residence display no significance regarding collegiate alignment.

For civil status, Orion et al. (2014) argue that civil status is a contributory factor that leads students not to pursue college education since married students prioritize their family over studying. Regarding monthly income or allowance status, the study validates that college degree holders promise higher incomes (Nietzel, 2021). Moreover, Daway-Ducanes et al. (2022) posit that more affluent household have higher probabilities of entering college and their preferred degrees. Correspondingly, Jerrim et al. (2015) suggest that economically disadvantaged students are much less likely to enter a college than their more advantaged

peers. For the highest educational attainment, the significance in terms of collegiate alignment can be explained by Religioso et al. (2022), wherein the SHS program, together with the schools, ensures the alignment of the strand to the chosen college degree of the student.

### **Socio-demographic profile and the employment alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates**

The test of significant differences between the socio-demographic profile and the employment alignment of the selected HUMSS graduates are presented here. The Chi-Square Test of Independence was used in this portion.

**Table 7**  
**Test of Significance Between the Socio-demographic Profile and the Employment Alignment of the Selected HUMSS Graduates**

Socio-demographic profile	Employment Alignment			
	Chi-Square	df	P-value	Interpretation
Sex	6.300	5	0.278	Not significant
Civil Status	8.704	5	0.121	Not significant
Residence	6.586	5	0.253	Not significant
Monthly Income/ Allowance Status	54.114	20	0.000	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	128.588	20	0.000	Significant
Employment Status	219.328	35	0.000	Significant

*Legend:  $p \leq 0.05$  - Significant*

Table 7 presents that among the socio-demographic profile, monthly income/allowance, highest educational attainment, and employment status exhibit a significant difference in the employment alignment of the respondents wherein all obtain a p-value (0.000) lesser than 0.05.

Concerning monthly income or allowance and employment status, the significance can be elaborated by Cheng (2021), where a college major and the current occupation significantly predict life satisfaction. Such indicators of life satisfaction are income, salary, and employment status. Importantly, Pentang et al. (2022) suggest that schools were able to prepare students for their employment, ensuring employment alignment and competitive income. For the highest educational attainment, the result can be attested in the study of Schmitt-Wilson and Faas (2016) wherein educational attainment predicts occupational ambitions.

Sex, civil status, and residence does not pose a significant difference in employment classification. This is in consonance with the study of Abd Majid et al. (2020), wherein sex and civil status do not affect the graduates' employment and employability. The same study also argues that sex and civil status do not determine the nature of employment.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

In general, this tracer study presents that majority of the selected HUMSS graduates are already college graduates. Mainly, all are employed as part-time, casual, and contractual workers. Commonly the respondents received a monthly income or salary higher than the poverty threshold of approximately P12,000.

Most of the HUMSS graduates of the UC-SHS are aligned in terms of their collegiate background. In terms of employment, there is a substantial portion of HUMSS graduates that are not aligned and a notable number of those who are currently studying. Specifically, more graduates are aligned in their employment than those who are not. Hence, the study reveals a noteworthy trend of collegiate and employment alignment among most HUMSS graduates but also a considerable number of those who do not.

The alignment in college education implies that many HUMSS graduates pursue degrees or fields related to their strand. This can be attributed to civil status, monthly income/allowance, highest educational attainment, and employment status. Regarding employment alignment, a significant number of graduates were able to land jobs related to the HUMSS strand. Factors such as monthly income/allowance, highest educational attainment, and employment status may contribute to the employment alignment of the graduates.

### Recommendations

Hence, the following recommendations are proposed to improve and sustain the collegiate and employment alignment of HUMSS students. First, schools, particularly the guidance offices, must provide career guidance programs that will assist students in deciding their college degrees and future careers; the programs must be initiated at the junior high level since this is where the students will first decide on the strand they will pursue. The program's initiative by the guidance office should incorporate work exposure through field visits and talks from guest speakers representing various professions. Interestingly, schools can invite alumni or graduates who have successfully aligned their college degrees and careers to inspire and guide students.

Second, SHS should foster partnerships with companies, government, or other work organizations to facilitate work immersions or internships. This would provide students practical insights regarding their preferred career or work path, which can reduce the possibility of employment misalignment and link students to possible employment opportunities.

Third, there should be regular monitoring and evaluation of the HUMSS and other strand curriculums, and individual schools (private and public) to see if the program is up to date with the demands of the industry and society. Also, similar tracer studies are highly recommended to focus on public schools since most Philippine SHS students are graduating. Moreover, schools and government agencies, specifically DepEd, must regularly review and revisit the program and each course to see if it aligns with the evolving skills and competencies needed by the economy, society, and the students. Moreover, tracer studies should be conducted regularly to evaluate the current HUMSS and other strand programs, make necessary improvements and innovations, and produce new programs in the future.

Lastly, comparative studies can be conducted focusing on other countries facing similar challenges in aligning basic education with college and employment can provide valuable insights. Additionally, sharing best practices and outcomes through international education

platforms and conferences can foster global learning and adaptation of successful models across different educational contexts.

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## About the Authors



Kurt Zeus L. Dizon is an assistant professor of the Department of Political and Social Sciences at Saint Louis University, Baguio City, Philippines. He was also a former and pioneering social science teacher at the Senior High School Department - University of the Cordilleras, under the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand. His research interests focus on political sociology, public administration, and the informal sector.



Kimberson P. Alacyang is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Political Science at the esteemed University of the Cordilleras. His academic journey commenced with the completion of a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science at Saint Louis University in 2014. Since 2016, he has been contributing his expertise as a dedicated social science teacher in the Senior High School Department of the University of the Cordilleras, Baguio City. His scholarly pursuits are anchored in his profound interest in political behaviors, indigenous studies, and good governance.