

Graduate Tracer Study of Master in Customs Administration Graduates: Employment Outcomes, Employability Competencies, Career Advancement, and Program Enhancement

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Abstract

This study identified the employment status, employability skills, career advancement and work relevance of the Master in Customs Administration (MCA) graduates and validated the results through the assessment of the employers. The study investigated the demographic and educational background of the graduates, their employment experiences and career achievements, the competencies obtained from the MCA program, and the employers' views on the professional skills of the graduates and their work performance. We adopted a mixed-methods tracer-study design that combined quantitative survey data of MCA graduates and qualitative evaluations of employers. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the graduates' profile and employment outcomes, while mean and standard deviation were used to determine the perceived level of employability competencies. Employer responses were analyzed thematically and triangulated with the quantitative findings. The findings indicate that the MCA graduates generally experienced favorable employment and career outcomes. Most of the graduates were working in jobs related to logistics, tracking, shipping, delivery, education, public administration and related fields, with many in regular or permanent jobs. The results also show a high employment alignment, as most graduates say their current jobs are related to their MCA preparation. The MCA qualification was also considered as a pathway to employment, career progression, promotion and higher salary or income. These results indicate that the MCA program has substantial professional value beyond the attainment of a graduate degree. The employability competencies developed through the MCA program were also perceived as very highly developed by the graduates. Research skills, communication, writing skills, critical thinking, problem solving, adaptability, collaboration and professional skills are important competencies used in the workplace. While technological proficiency, financial proficiency, entrepreneurial skills, and cultural competence were also developed, these areas emerged as opportunities for further curriculum strengthening. Employer assessments generally corroborate the graduates' perceptions. Themes emerging from the qualitative analysis were those related to strong professional and employability competencies, alignment between MCA preparation and workplace needs, career advancement and professional growth, and the employment and economic value of the MCA qualification. The fact that the views of the graduates and the employers are aligned suggests that the MCA program is professionally relevant, competency-based and responsive to the needs of the workplace. The study recommends continuous curriculum enhancement, increased industry and employer engagement and regular graduate and employer tracer assessments to sustain and improve the program's contribution to graduate employability and career development.

Keywords: Master in Customs Administration, graduate tracer study, employability, employment outcomes, career advancement, workplace relevance, employer validation, curriculum development

