
A Tracer Study on the Career Outcomes of Far Eastern University - Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation Pharmacy Graduates

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ABSTRACT

Tracer studies are valuable tools for assessing the long-term impact of academic education by tracking the career paths of graduates. This study aimed to describe the demographic and employment profiles, as well as the job satisfaction, of FEU-NRMF Pharmacy graduates from 2018 to 2024.

Methods: A descriptive quantitative design was employed, and data were collected using a validated survey questionnaire. The sample size was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator and selected through purposive sampling.

Results: A total of 155 pharmacy graduates participated in the study. The results indicated that most respondents were female, single, and residing in Quezon City. The majority held a BS in Pharmacy as their highest educational qualification, suggesting strong and stable employment prospects associated with the degree. Many were employed in hospital pharmacies, indicating the availability of opportunities in clinical settings. Among those not currently employed, underemployment was reported in roles such as virtual health assistants, while unemployment was primarily attributed to the pursuit of further education. These findings reflected potential job mismatch and highlighted the need for more strategic career planning. Most respondents held full-time or regular positions and were employed in the private sector. Retention in their first job was primarily influenced by opportunities for training and experience, career development, and wages—suggesting a focus on long-term professional growth. In contrast, reasons for leaving included low income, limited career advancement, and difficult workplace relationships, emphasizing the role of financial and workplace factors in job turnover. Overall job satisfaction was rated favorably, with high scores in task alignment, career growth, job stability, training, and the work environment. Lower satisfaction levels were noted in salary and social benefits.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the pharmacy profession in the Philippines offers promising employment and career development, particularly in urban settings. However, challenges related to underemployment, limited advancement, and compensation remain. To address these issues, regular alumni tracking, mixed-method approaches, employer feedback, expanded community engagement, and broader study scopes are recommended to better align pharmacy education with labor market needs.

Key words: Pharmacy education, tracer study, educational attainment, field of work, underemployment, unemployment, employment status, duration of employment, job satisfaction

Pharmacy education and training are essential for developing a skilled workforce capable of delivering high-quality pharmaceutical care. However, program

structures vary globally due to economic conditions, infrastructure, and academic resources¹. The demand for a patient-centered approach in healthcare has emphasized the need for pharmacists to expand their skill sets through sound, evidence-based education. By adhering to evidence-based practice, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals can provide optimal care to their patients².

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Evaluating the impact of pharmacy education supports the enhancement of student readiness for professional practice. One effective way to assess educational outcomes is through a tracer study, which tracks graduates' employment status and career development³. Tracer studies not only provide continuous feedback on institutional program effectiveness and outcomes which allow refinement by aligning it with the actual needs of the job market⁴ but it can also serve as a basis for accreditation by meeting standards in tertiary education, the institution can raise its reputation in the long-term^{5,6}. Tracer studies also help authorities and regulators in future decision-making with regards to higher education policies, curriculums, assistance in professional development such as career guidance and coaching, and skills realignment and such research are typically conducted six months to three years after the completion of the undergraduate/graduate degree⁷. Several tracer studies have been conducted in the past both local and foreign yet there are only a few who have given emphasis on outcomes during curricular transitions as well as data about job satisfaction among pharmacists. Moreover, limited input has been gathered in past institutional tracer studies involving FEU-NRMF pharmacy graduates. Over the years, notable changes have been implemented in the Pharmacy curriculum, which may have influenced graduates' training experiences and subsequent employment outcomes. Graduates from 2018 to 2021 followed the previous curriculum, which required 960 hours of internship across hospital, community, and manufacturing pharmacy settings. Each area required 200 hours, with an additional 360 hours allotted for the major internship⁸. In 2022, a new curriculum was introduced that incorporated public health (180 hours) and institutional pharmacy (120 hours) as additional internship settings, while the hours for hospital, industrial, and community settings were increased from 200 to 300 hours each.

Thus, this tracer study aimed to determine the demographic and employment profiles as well as the job satisfaction of pharmacy graduates from FEU-NRMF between 2018 and 2024. The findings highlight the benefits of tracer studies for graduates and also provide valuable insights that can guide curriculum enhancement and academic planning for present and future students. By identifying gaps between academic training and actual professional practice, the results can help educators design more responsive programs, integrate relevant competencies, and strengthen career preparation initiatives. These

improvements ensure that students are better equipped for future employment and professional growth even before graduation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

The researchers employed a descriptive quantitative research design. The descriptive type was chosen to present the demographic and employment profiles of the respondents, as well as their job satisfaction with the use of Likert scale.

Population and Sampling Technique

The population of the study was pharmacy graduates of FEU-NRMF from 2018 to 2024. The respondents were 21 to 30 years old, an age range selected to capture the varied experiences of recent graduates from different batches, and were either unemployed, independent, or employed (locally or abroad), whether in pharmacy-related fields or other professions, with accessible email addresses and/or social media accounts. Those who failed to complete the survey, provide incomplete responses, explicitly decline participation, or do not provide consent for the study were excluded.

The sample size computed for this study was 153 participants, based on the total population of 252 using the Raosoft calculator. The study utilized purposive sampling to focus on individuals who could provide relevant insights into their career outcomes after graduation.

Research Instrumentation and Validation

The researchers used a structured survey questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, incorporating a Likert scale for data collection. The questionnaire was adapted from⁹ Carrido et al. (2015) and¹⁰ Navarro et al. (2021), and consisted of close-ended questions designed to gather insights from pharmacy graduates (2018–2024) regarding their post-graduation experiences.

The survey consisted of two main sections. The first covered demographic information, including age, sex, civil status, municipality, and year of graduation. The second focused on employment-related data, with 15 items on highest educational attainment, current field and position, employment status,

employer, means of securing their first job, duration of employment, reasons for staying or leaving, and job satisfaction.

The questionnaire underwent face validation by one professor and one licensed psychometrician, who confirmed that the items were clear, relevant, and aligned with the study objectives. Pilot testing was also conducted, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a score of 0.817 for the satisfaction section (6 items), which is interpreted as Good reliability. This assured the questionnaire's acceptability before data collection.

Table 1. Results of Cronbach's Alpha

Section	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Interpretation
Satisfaction	0.817	6	Good

Data Collection

Prior to data collection, the necessary ethical and data privacy approvals were obtained from the appropriate FEU-NRMF committees. Upon authorization, the list of eligible Pharmacy graduates from 2018 to 2024 was secured from the Office of the Registrar. A pilot test involving 30 respondents was then conducted to evaluate the clarity and reliability of the survey instrument before the actual data collection.

Data were collected through online surveys distributed via Google Forms. The researchers collaborated with the president of the School of Pharmacy Alumni Association to disseminate the survey link through alumni group chats. Additionally, individual graduates were contacted directly via social media platforms including Facebook Messenger, Telegram, and Instagram. Partnership with the alumni association facilitated wider dissemination and improved the overall response rate. Data were collected from February to April 2025.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data were encoded in Microsoft Excel 2023 and pseudonymized using randomly assigned numerical codes. Descriptive statistics using mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage were employed to analyze the demographic profile (age, sex, civil status, municipality, and year graduated) and employment profile (educational attainment, field of

work, job position, work location, employment status, method of finding first job, waiting time, duration of employment, reasons for staying or leaving the first job, and job satisfaction) of the graduates.

Ethical Considerations

The research received approval and clearance from the Data Privacy Office (DPO), followed by Far Eastern University - Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation Institutional Ethics Review Committee (FEU-NRMF IERC) on the 7th of February 2025 before its commencement, and the amendment of generalizing the population to 2018-2024 on the 26th day of March 2025, under the IERC Code 2024-0132. The request submitted to the DPO included the study objectives, respondent details, data collection and disposal procedures, and a request for access to the list of Pharmacy graduates from 2018 to 2024, along with available email addresses.

RESULTS

Demographics

A total of 155 out of 252 Pharmacy graduates (61.5%) participated in the study. The majority of respondents were female (81.94%) and single (95.48%). Most participants were residents of Quezon City (55.48%), followed by those from Caloocan City (10.97%) and Bulacan (10.32%), with the least representation coming from Baguio City, Pampanga, and Samar (0.65% each). In terms of year of graduation, the highest proportion of respondents were from Batch 2023 (17.42%), followed by Batch 2019 (16.77%), while the lowest came from Batches 2020 and 2021 (9.68% each). (Table 2)

Overall, these findings indicate that the respondents were predominantly young, female, single, and urban-based graduates, reflecting the common demographic profile of recent pharmacy graduates in the study.

Employment

In Educational Attainment, the majority of the respondents were BS Pharmacy graduates, accounting for 138 out of 155 participants (89.03%). A small number pursued other paths, including Medical Doctor (MD) with 11 respondents (7.10%), Master with 4 respondents (2.58%) and PharmD with 2 respondents (1.29%). (Table 3)

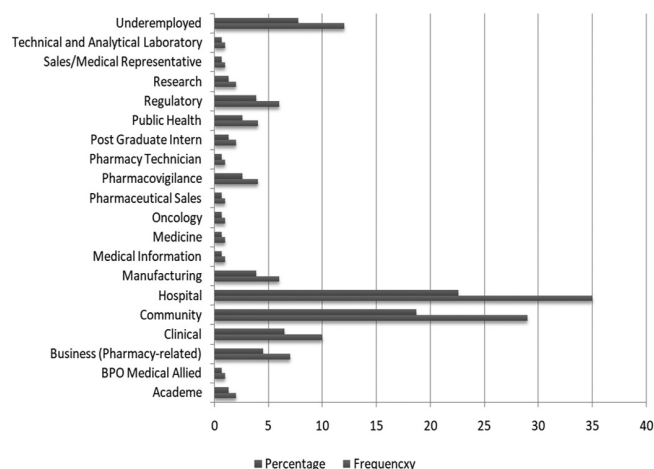
Table 2. Demographic profile of the respondents.

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
22 years old	7	4.52
23 years old	25	16.13
24 years old	25	16.13
25 years old	25	16.13
26 years old	33	21.29
27 years old	29	18.71
28 years old	6	3.87
29 years old	1	0.65
30 years old	4	2.58
Sex		
Female	127	81.94
Male	28	18.06
Civil Status		
Married	7	4.52
Single	148	95.48
Municipality		
Baguio City	1	0.65
Batangas	2	1.29
Bulacan	16	10.32
Caloocan City	17	10.97
Labrador City	3	1.94
Laguna	2	1.29
Mandaluyong City	3	1.94
Manila	2	1.29
Marikina City	4	2.58
Niagara Falls City	2	1.29
Nueva Ecija	3	1.94
Pampanga	1	0.65
Parañaque City	2	1.29
Pasig City	2	1.29
Quezon City	86	55.48
Rizal	6	3.87
Samar	1	0.65
Walnut Creek City	2	1.29
Year Graduated		
2018	24	15.48
2019	26	16.77
2020	15	9.68
2021	15	9.68
2022	24	15.48
2023	27	17.42
2024	24	15.48

Table 3. Educational attainment.

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Baccalaureate (BS Pharmacy)	138	89.03
Masters	4	2.58
Medical Doctor (MD)	11	7.10
PharmD	2	1.29
Total	155	100.00

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates remain in the profession, with the BS Pharmacy degree serving as the preferred and versatile qualification for career advancement in pharmaceutical and health-related fields.

**Figure 1.** Current field of work

In the current field of work, the majority of the respondents were employed in hospitals, with 35 out of 155 participants (22.58%), followed by those working in the community with 29 respondents (18.71%). The smallest group, with only 1 respondent (0.65%), worked in other locations.

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates are employed in hospital settings, where their clinical expertise in drug management and patient care is most utilized.

Table 4. Current field of work of underemployed.

Current Field of Work	Frequency	Percentage
Business not Related to Pharmacy	4	30.77
Call Center Agent	1	7.69
Hospitality Management	1	7.69
Logistic Staff	1	7.69
Virtual Assistant	5	38.46
Total	12	100.00

In the current field of work of underemployed pharmacy graduates, the majority of respondents were working as virtual assistants, with 5 out of 12 individuals (38.46%). The least represented category, with only 1 respondent (7.69%), was spread across various other fields. (Table 4)

These results suggest that most underemployed pharmacy graduates are working outside their

professional field, particularly in virtual assistance, which may reflect job mismatch or shifting career interests among graduates.

Table 5. Reasons for unemployment.

Reasons for Unemployment	Frequency	Percentage
Currently preparing to go abroad	2	7.14
Experiencing family issues and/or problems	1	3.57
Lack of job opportunities at my location	1	3.57
Lack of work experience	1	3.57
Pursuing graduate studies	22	78.57
Still planning	1	3.57
Total	28	100.00

In the reason for unemployed pharmacy graduates, the majority of the respondents cited pursuing graduate studies as their main reason, with 22 out of 28 individuals (78.57%). This was followed by those preparing to go abroad (2 respondents, 7.14%), while the lowest frequency of 1 respondent (3.57%) fell for various other reasons. (Table 5)

These results suggest that most pharmacy graduates opted to further their education rather than immediately enter the workforce, reflecting a deliberate effort to enhance their qualifications and improve future career opportunities.

In the current work position, the majority of the respondents were employed as hospital pharmacists, including Hospital Pharmacist, Hospital Pharmacy Assistant, and Supervisory level RPh, with 35 out of 127 individuals (22.58%). This was followed by community pharmacists with 29 respondents (22.83%). The lowest frequency, with only 1 respondent (0.69%), fell under other work posts. (Table 6)

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates are employed in positions aligned with their academic training, particularly in hospital and community settings, indicating a sustained demand for pharmacy professionals in healthcare practice.

The majority of pharmacy graduates were employed in Quezon City (55.91%), followed by Makati City (7.87%). A smaller proportion of graduates were employed in nearby areas such as Bulacan (3.94%), Taguig (3.94%), Caloocan City (3.15%), and Manila (3.15%), while the least representation, with only one respondent each (0.79%), was recorded in Antipolo City, Laguna, Mandaluyong, Pampanga, and Samar. (Table 7)

Table 6. Current work position.

Current Work Position	Frequency	Percentage
Administrative Assistant	1	0.79
Branch Pharmacist	2	1.57
BPO Medical Allied	1	0.79
Business Owner (Pharmacy Related)	5	3.94
Call center Agent	1	0.79
Clinical Pharmacist	10	7.87
Clinical Researcher	1	0.79
Community Pharmacist	29	22.83
Country Approval Specialist	1	0.79
General Physician	1	0.79
Hospital Pharmacist	25	19.69
Hospital Pharmacy Assistant	7	5.51
Instructor	2	1.57
Licensing Officer	1	0.79
Medical Information	1	0.79
Medical Analyst	4	3.14
Medical Information Specialist	1	0.79
Medical Data Entry specialist	2	1.57
Medical Representative	1	0.79
Medical Support Specialist	1	0.79
Personal Support Worker	2	1.57
Pharmacy Sale Auditor	1	0.79
Pharmacy Technician	1	1.79
Post Graduate Intern	2	1.57
Production Pharmacist	1	0.79
Public Health Pharmacist	1	0.79
Quality Assurance Supervisor	2	1.57
Quality Control Analyst	2	1.57
Quality Control Head	1	0.79
R&D / Marketing Associate	1	0.79
Regional Coordinator - Tuberculosis Program	1	0.79
Regulatory Pharmacist	4	3.15
Senior Process Executive	1	0.79
Senior Reference File Maintainer	1	0.79
Supervisory Level RPh	3	2.36
Virtual Assistant	5	3.94
Waitress	1	0.79
Total	127	100.00

Table 7. Current work location.

Current Work Location	Frequency	Percentage
Local		
Antipolo City	1	0.79
Baguio City	2	1.57
Bulacan	5	3.94
Caloocan City	4	3.15
Laguna	1	0.79
Makati City	10	7.87
Mandaluyong	1	0.79
Manila	4	3.15
Muntinlupa City	2	1.57
Nueva Ecija	3	2.36
Pampanga	1	0.79
Paranaque City	2	1.57
Pasig City	3	2.36
Quezon City	71	55.91
Samar	1	0.79
Taguig	5	3.94
Valenzuela City	2	1.57
International		
Australia	2	0.79
Canada	3	2.36
USA	4	3.15
Total	127	100.00

In terms of international employment, a limited number of graduates reported working abroad, specifically in the United States (3.15%), Canada (2.36%), and Australia (0.79%).

The results suggest that Quezon City serves as the main hub for pharmacy-related employment, likely due to the concentration of hospitals, community pharmacies, healthcare institutions, and pharmaceutical companies within the area. Meanwhile, the presence of a small but notable proportion of graduates employed overseas indicates that FEU-NRMF pharmacy graduates possess the competence and qualifications to pursue international career opportunities, reflecting their competitiveness in the global job market.

Table 8. Employment status.

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Contractual/Probationary	26	20.47
Part-time	2	1.57
Regular/Permanent	86	67.72
Self-employed	13	10.24
Total	127	100.00

In employment status, the majority of the pharmacy graduates were employed as regular/permanent staff, with 86 out of 127 respondents (67.72%). This was followed by 26 respondents (20.47%) under contractual/probationary employment, while only 2 respondents (1.57%) were employed part-time. (Table 8)

These results suggest that most pharmacy graduates have secured stable, long-term positions within the healthcare sector, reflecting strong employability and steady demand for pharmacy professionals.

Table 9. Employer.

Employer	Frequency	Percentage
Government	16	10.32
None	28	18.06
Private	104	67.10
Self-employed	7	4.52
Total	155	100.00

In the employment profile, the majority of the pharmacy graduates were employed by private institutions, with 104 out of 155 respondents (67.10%). This was followed by 28 respondents (18.06%) who reported having no current employer. The least number, only 7 respondents (4.52%), were self-employed. (Table 9)

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates prefer employment in the private sector, likely due to better compensation, career development opportunities, and higher job satisfaction.

Table 10. Methods of finding the first job.

Methods of Finding the First Job	Frequency	Percentage
N/A	17	10.97
Through an Online Advertisement	58	37.42
Through Internships	6	3.87
Through Job Fairs	7	4.52
Through Referral/Recommendations	50	32.26
Walk-in Application	17	10.97
Total	155	100.00

In terms of how pharmacy graduates obtained their first job, the majority reported finding employment through online advertisements, with 58 out of 155 respondents (37.42%). This was followed by 50 respondents (32.26) who secured jobs through recommendations or referrals. The lowest number, only 6 respondents (3.87%), found employment through internships. (Table 10)

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates secured their first jobs through internet-based platforms, highlighting the importance of online job advertisements and digital networks in employment opportunities for new graduates, reflecting the increasing reliance on technology-driven job markets.

Table 11. Waiting time before getting the job.

Waiting Time Before Getting the Job	Frequency	Percentage
Less than a month	81	52.26
1 to 3 months	36	23.23
4 to 6 months	8	5.16
7 to 12 months	8	5.16
More than 1 year	5	3.23
N/A	17	10.97
Total	155	100.00

In terms of waiting time to be employed, the majority of pharmacy graduates reported being hired in less than a month, with 81 out of 155 respondents (52.26%). This was followed by 36 respondents (23.23%) who were employed within 1 to 3 months. The lowest number, only 5 respondents (3.23%), waited for more than a year before securing a job. (Table 11)

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates are gainfully employed within one month of graduation, reflecting the strong demand for pharmacy professionals and indicating moderate to high job satisfaction.

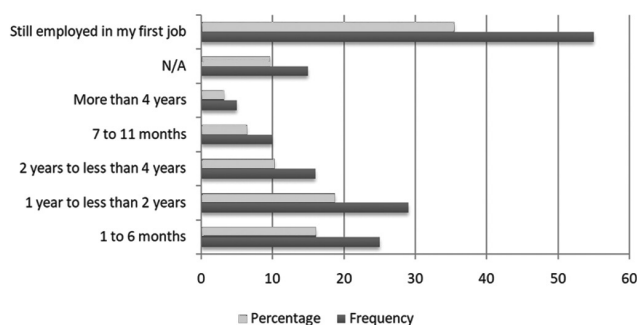


Figure 2. Duration of employment in first job.

In terms of the duration of employment in their first job, the majority of pharmacy graduates reported that they were still working in their first job, with 55 out of 155 respondents (35.48%). This was followed by 29 respondents (18.71%) who had been employed for 1 to under 2 years. The lowest number, only 5 respondents (3.23%), had stayed in their first job for over 4 years. (Figure 2)

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates were able to find stable employment early in their careers, as many remained in their first jobs for an extended period, indicating that initial job placements provide favorable working conditions and opportunities for long-term retention.

Table 12. Duration of employment.

Duration of Employment	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 month	3	1.94
1 to 6 months	15	9.68
7 to 11 months	6	3.87
1 year to less than 2 years	17	10.97
2 years to less than 4 years	19	12.26
More than 4 years	2	1.29
N/A	93	60.00
Total	155	100.00

The majority of employed Pharmacy graduates reported a duration of two to less than four years (12.26%). This indicates that most respondents had acquired moderate professional experience since graduation. (Table 12)

The results suggest that most respondents have gained moderate professional experience since graduation. The results further imply that the knowledge and skills acquired during their academic and internship training contributed to their ability to secure and sustain employment in the early stages of their professional careers, reflecting a smooth transition from education to the workforce.

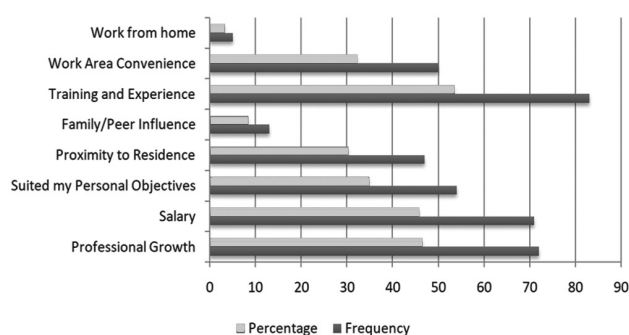


Figure 3. Primary reasons for staying the first job.

In terms of the reasons for remaining in their first job, the majority of pharmacy graduates cited training and experience, with 83 out of 155 respondents (53.55%). This was followed by 72 respondents (46.45%) who cited professional development, and 71 (45.81%) who cited salary. The lowest number, only 5 respondents (3.23%), identified work-from-home as their reason for staying. (Figure 3)

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates prioritized gaining experience and advancing professionally during the early stages of their careers, rather than focusing on immediate financial benefits, reflecting their commitment to long-term career growth and professional development.

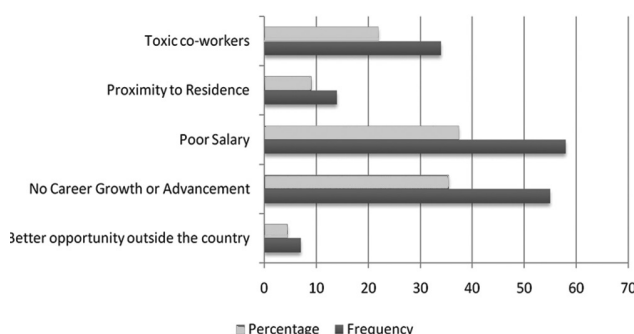


Figure 4. Primary reasons for leaving the first job.

In terms of reasons for resignation from their first job, the majority of pharmacy graduates cited poor salary (37.42%). This was followed by lack of career development or advancement (35.48%). The third most common reason was toxic co-workers. Fewer respondents cited closeness to home and better prospects abroad as their reasons for leaving (21.94%). (Figure 4)

The results suggest that most pharmacy graduates resigned from their first job due to issues related

Table 13. Satisfaction in current work.

Satisfaction in Current Work	WM	SD	Interpretation
1. Form of employment is satisfying (e.g. nature of work, job responsibilities, opportunities for career growth)	3.35	0.67	Strongly Agree
2. Current level of salary is satisfying.	3.06	0.87	Agree
3. Social package offered by the company is satisfying.	3.13	0.74	Agree
4. Working conditions in the company are satisfying.	3.25	0.72	Agree
5. The level of employment stability in the company is satisfying.	3.33	0.69	Strongly Agree
6. The trainings offered by the company are satisfying.	3.29	0.72	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	3.23	0.57	Agree
Legend: 3.26 - 4.00 Strongly Agree 2.51 - 3.25 Agree 1.76 - 2.50 Disagree 1.00 - 1.75 Strongly Disagree			

to compensation and limited career advancement, reflecting their pursuit of better professional growth opportunities and improved working conditions.

In terms of job satisfaction, pharmacy graduates reported being generally satisfied, with a weighted mean of 3.23. They expressed the highest satisfaction with job roles, career advancement (WM = 3.35), job security (WM = 3.33), and training (WM = 3.29). Lower satisfaction was noted in salary (WM = 3.06) and benefits (WM = 3.13), while work environment scored moderately (WM = 3.25).

The results suggest that pharmacy graduates experience overall job satisfaction, though improvements in salary and employee welfare remain areas of concern, reflecting the importance of fair compensation and supportive work conditions in sustaining professional fulfillment.

DISCUSSION

Out of 252 respondents, only 155 (61.51%) respondents were able to answer the questionnaire successfully within the inclusion criteria with the majority being female participants. The majority of the respondents were 26 years old, residing in Quezon City, and graduates from 2023. A significant number were employed as registered pharmacists, predominantly in hospital and community pharmacy settings. This supports the well-established trend of hospitals being the primary workplace for pharmacy graduates, largely due to their central role in medication management and direct patient care¹¹. The majority held BS Pharmacy degree, which continues to demonstrate its relevance and value in the healthcare industry¹².

Some respondents reported being underemployed, often working as virtual assistants. This suggests

a possible mismatch between qualifications and employment, or a shift in career interests. These results align with previous findings, which noted that some professionals pursue alternative careers due to market demands or personal goals¹³. Unemployment among respondents was mainly due to further education. This indicates a desire among graduates to enhance their qualifications for better career opportunities in the future¹⁴.

The majority of employed participants held regular or permanent positions (67.72%), suggesting job stability and consistent demand for pharmacy professionals. Most were working in the private sector, which may indicate more competitive pay and clearer opportunities for growth¹⁵.

Quezon City was the most reported area of employment, which is understandable due to its high concentration of hospitals, clinics, and pharmaceutical companies. This urban preference reflects how location and access to professional infrastructure influence job selection¹⁶. Additionally, 37.42% of graduates found their first job through online platforms highlighting the increasing reliance on digital job hunting¹⁷.

More than half of the respondents (52.26%) secured employment within a month after graduation, which reflects strong demand in the labor market¹⁸. About 35.48% remained in their first job, which may indicate positive early job experiences and overall satisfaction¹⁹. Key reasons for staying included opportunities for training (53.55%), professional development (46.45%), and salary (45.81%). Conversely, the most cited reasons for leaving a job were low salary (37.42%), limited chances for career growth (35.48%), and difficult work environments (21.94%), which are consistent with the previous findings²⁰.

When it came to overall job satisfaction, respondents gave a relatively high average rating, with a weighted mean of 3.23. Although most participants expressed satisfaction in their roles, compensation (WM = 3.06) and benefits (WM = 3.13) were rated lower, pointing to areas where improvements could enhance the overall employment experience.

Overall, the data gathered from the demographics and pharmacy settings up to the employment status, job security, continuity, and satisfaction have led to the general finding that there is a high employability and satisfaction shown among FEU-NRMF pharmacy graduates, fulfilling the study's aim in assessing academic outcomes especially as it focused on the university's own School of Pharmacy's transition to the new curriculum which was implemented way back in 2018 as well as the shift to alternative modes of learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that the pharmacy profession in the Philippines is a steady stream and multifaceted career avenue for graduates, especially those possessing a BS Pharmacy degree. Hospitals and community pharmacies remain the mainstay of employment, with most graduates gaining regular or permanent employment status, particularly in private institutions, which are perceived to be paying better with more growth opportunities.

Despite this positive employment outlook, some challenges persist. Underemployment and career shifts outside the pharmaceutical field, such as in virtual assistant roles, suggest a mismatch between qualifications and available opportunities. Nevertheless, the strong inclination toward graduate studies among unemployed respondents reflects a proactive pursuit of academic advancement and specialization, indicating long-term career planning.

Quezon City emerged as the most common area of employment, highlighting how urban locations play a major role in shaping job opportunities. With its high concentration of hospitals and health institutions, it serves as a central hub for pharmacy professionals. As the pharmaceutical profession evolves, the findings underscore the importance of continuous professional development and adaptability to meet the changing demands of the healthcare sector.

Moreover, pharmacy graduates are generally well-positioned in the labor market, with many securing employment within a month of graduation. The

majority remain in their first jobs due to opportunities for training, experience, and career advancement. Online job platforms have emerged as the dominant method of job acquisition, reflecting broader shifts in recruitment practices and job-seeking behavior.

Even with these positive developments, there are still issues that affect how long graduates stay in their jobs. Low wages, limited room for career progression, and tough working conditions are among the most common reasons people decide to leave. Addressing these concerns is essential to ensure long-term job satisfaction and professional retention.

The pharmacy profession offers promising employment prospects and meaningful career growth. However, sustaining this momentum requires that both public and private employers invest in better work conditions, fair compensation, and clear development pathways to fully support and retain the next generation of pharmacy professionals.

In summary, the study is one of the few tracer studies covering the pre- and post-curriculum revision period and the pandemic-to-post-pandemic employment transition among pharmacy graduates. It highlights the relevance of how tracer studies such as this one contribute to the effectiveness of academic programs and guide universities in improving curricula and policies to better prepare students for professional practice.

The researchers recommend 1) Annual updating of alumni records; 2) Use mixed-method research designs by incorporating interviews or focus group discussions; 3) Involve employers for feedback on graduate performance and skill gaps; 4) Promoting student and graduate involvement in community engagement activities beyond medical missions; and 5) Broader scope for future references.

LIMITATIONS

Several limitations should be acknowledged in this tracer study.

First, the study was limited to pharmacy graduates from Far Eastern University–Dr. Nicanor Reyes Medical Foundation (FEU-NRMF) only. As a result, the findings may not apply to graduates from other schools or programs.

Second, the study relied solely on quantitative data collected through structured questionnaires. While this approach allows for broad analysis, it limits the depth of insight into graduates' personal experiences, motivations, and challenges.

Third, because some respondents graduated as early as 2018, recall bias may have affected the accuracy of their responses. Over time, memories may fade or become less detailed, especially regarding earlier post-graduation experiences.

Lastly, self-reported answers to an online survey served as the basis for the data collection. This approach relies on the respondents' honesty, recall, and comprehension, which might result in bias or inaccurate data.

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