

Graduates of Bachelor in Performing Arts: Careers and Career Choices

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to collect information and analyze the careers of the theater arts graduates of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines from 2015 to 2019 – how the career factors led them to their career choices and the recommendations to improve the Bachelor in Performing Arts (BPeA) of program.

The researcher used mixed methods design to provide descriptions, specific real-life experiences, and comprehensive analysis of the research problems. Due to Covid-19 quarantine protocols in the Philippines, the researcher collected data through e-survey questionnaires and online interviews. A total of 71 respondents participated in the research, of which, 56 accomplished the survey and 15 joined the interview.

Majority of the respondents pursued a career in the field that is not related to theater or performing arts. They agreed that their self-efficacy beliefs, outcomes expectations, and personal goals were essential factors that led them to their career choices. The need to support their family or children, competitive salary, and health benefits were other important factors. They recommended the BPeA program to provide a conducive theater facility for the students, hire eligible professors, and improve the curriculum.

Keywords: Career; Career Choices; Outcome Expectations; Performing Arts; Personal Goals; Responsive Curriculum; Self-Efficacy Beliefs; Theater Arts

1. Introduction

Theater Arts is the course of all courses because a learner is not only being trained onstage but in life's real stage performance (Theater Arts Graduate, A.S., 2007).

Theater Arts or Performing Arts, as an academic program, is designed to develop ways in which one can advance his interests and skills in the arts into concrete, meaningful, and successful outcomes. The mix of practical and rigorous discipline offered in the course is a great preparation for the professional-life artistic performances. In a global perspective, The Times Higher Education (2019) emphasized that performing arts degrees are highly practical programs and immersed in interdisciplinary practices where the learners are prepared for competitive industry. Most of the universities abroad provide an option for students to gain work experience in the theater or performing arts industry during their studies. This provides a great opportunity to further develop their knowledge and skills within a professional career context (Times Higher Education, 2019).

According to the article written by Jorgensen (2015), theater arts as a degree is definitely necessary but it is also not for everybody because of the risk of not landing a job in the theater or performing arts industry. The unemployment rate of those who earned a degree in theater in USA is higher than others because securing a

career in acting and theater is tough. Only twenty percent of professional union actors have acting jobs at a given time (Jorgensen, 2015). Due to this, the University of Iowa, Theater Arts Department; designed their theater program in a formal way where students are encouraged to take a second major. One that is applicable to a job outside the field of theater or for any work setting (Jorgensen, 2015).

In the Philippines, Theater Arts and Performing Arts are offered as a degree program in various universities and colleges. Based on the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memorandum Order no. 25, series 2017, Performing Arts, as a bachelor's degree program, is designed to impart meaningful awareness of the characteristics, qualities, roles, and functions of the performing arts as practiced and created in the Philippines and in the world. It also aims to impart an understanding of the physical and communicative abilities of theater and dance context of cultures, provide opportunities for creation and performance, and contribute to national progress by forming citizens who are culturally and nationally filled with pride. The graduates of a Theater Arts or Performing Arts programs are expected to obtain a career in performance, production, directing, choreography, and teaching (CMO no. 25, s. 2017).

Theatre is a perfect means in expressing one's talent because theatre is the most expressive art form where a person develops his ability to communicate his thoughts, express his feelings, and demonstrate his actions. It helps a person to see how the environment where he lives affects who he is and who he will become (Brown, 2014). A person who pursues the theater and delivers a stage performance has the desire to showcase himself and at the same time have a deeper understanding of himself. In this sense, theater plays a big role in bridging the gap of misunderstanding as to why a person exist but most importantly, theatre gives a purpose for life (Sanders, 2012).

The aptitudes and capacities that are created through studying theater will fill in as a mechanism to have an extensive variety of occupations and profession ways (The University of Texas of Austin, 2015). It provides the opportunity to combine creative talents with practical aspect of self-promotion and arts management. As a means of helping learners prepare for a professional career, theatre arts program offer various courses that are directly associated to the field of theatre, like acting, speech and voice production, movement, improvisation, directing, designing, script writing, production management, and stage management, to name a few. These foundations serve as preparations for careers in theatre such as artist/performer, director, designer, choreographer, singer, technician, community arts worker and any related field that requires a high-level of knowledge and skills. While a degree is not required to become an actor or a director, it may help individuals interested in these careers develop skills and increase their job prospects (University of Toronto, Mississauga, 2019.).

Beyond any doubt that graduating with a theater degree does not secure a person a spot of turning into a performer. Knowing that there is intense competition and given the number of gifted individuals battling for each occupation, a person should by one means or another set himself competent over the others (The University of Texas of Austin, 2015). The majority of the theater artists and practitioners work within the context of freelance contracts or short-term employment. This is how the mainstream theater and performing arts industry works. Due to this, it is essential for theater students to build their network, attend auditions, collaborate with other artists, and put up his/her own show. On the other hand, while many of the graduates do not always fall into the field of performing arts, other career opportunities are still be available to them. These careers include the field of broadcast media, education, and management (Times Higher Education, 2019).

In the Philippines, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (Sta. Mesa, Manila) offers a degree in Bachelor in Performing Arts or BPeA, (previously called Bachelor of Arts in Theater Arts or ABTA). The degree program is included in the Humanities and Philosophy and the Arts department where craftsmanship,

science and management are synthesized all together. BPeA demands the ability to be well versed on critical analysis, imagination, creativity, artistry, and skills. Thus, this program keeps abreast with the current and emerging environment, nationally and globally. The core competencies are keyed on efficient, effective, and creative acting, direction, producing, scriptwriting/playwriting, design and technical management, (Polytechnic University of the Philippines, ABTA, 2018). The program started in the year 2003 with its first batch that graduated in 2007. The recent batch graduated last year, 2019. The ABTA program produced a total 26 batches of graduates, including the year-end and mid-year graduations. As shown in the recently issued memorandum of CHED, CMO No. 25, S. 2017, the ABTA program was renamed to Bachelor in Performing Arts (BPeA).

The BPeA program takes on the challenge of developing the future career of its target takers who are keen on inter-disciplinary school of thoughts in theater. Significantly, while the program updates with global theater nuances, the program also promotes Philippine Theater anchored on the appreciation of Filipino values, culture and arts. The BPeA students gained knowledge and skill throughout the duration of the course (CMO no. 25, s. 2017).

In contrast to the BPeA program offerings and job targets two significant researches – “A Tracer Study of ABTA Graduates Batch 2010-2017” by Isidera et. al. (2017) and “The Effectiveness of the ABTA Program Based on its Graduates 2013- 2014” by Ipogon et. al. (2015) revealed that majority of the ABTA graduates from 2010 to 2017 considered working in the field of theater or performing arts when they were still enrolled in the program but have decided to pursued a career in the field that is not related to theater because of the lack of industry connections, job placements, and career opportunities after they graduated.

With this given, this study sought to collect information and analyze how the theater arts graduates from 2015 to 2019 came up with their career choices or obtained their current employment. This also wanted to answer how the learner studied theatre, how he/she perceived himself/herself as he/she went through the program, and how he/she decided to pursue a career in theater, in a related field, or in other field. Mainly, the researcher hoped to find out the reasons and factors that affect these decisions, and ultimately, made recommendations to improve the Bachelor of Performing Arts program of PUP.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The Social Cognitive Career Theory was developed by Robert W. Lent, Steven D. Brown and Gail Hackett in 1994 which was based on the General Social Cognitive Theory, an influential theory of cognitive and motivational process that was developed by Albert Bandura. The Social Cognitive Career Theory also concentrates on individual's practices and environmental interactions. This theory is a relatively new explanation to understand the process through which people, from interest, make choices and achieve varying levels of success in educational and occupational pursuits. It also aimed to explain the three interconnected aspects of career development such: how basic academic and career interests develop, how educational and career choices are made, and how academic and career success is obtained. Furthermore, the Social Cognitive Career Theory includes variety of concepts that was considered to be affecting the career development and career decision making (Lent et.al., 1994).

Within the Social Cognitive Career Theory, it consists of three linked social cognitive variables that influence individuals' vocational interests, choices, and performance which are called self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent, et. al., 1994). These variables also serve as the building blocks of the theory. They are the main focus of this theory and how these variables might be in contact with other features of the person and his or her environment to help shape the course of career development.

Based on the Social Cognitive Career Theory, this study focused on three major components namely: self-efficacy beliefs, outcomes expectations, and personal goals. These factors when combined affects the career choice of a person. The first component, self-efficacy beliefs, refers to the beliefs that people have about their abilities to successfully perform or complete the tasks that was given to them (Lent & Brown, 2002). Individuals form their sense of self-efficacy from personal performance, learning by example, social interactions, and how they feel in a situation. This theory explains that people will exert more interest, choose to push through and will do better at activities which they have strong self-efficacy beliefs, as long as they also have the skills needed and environmental support to pursue these activities.

The second component, outcome expectations, refers to the person's convictions about the consequences of doing a specific behavior which are usually formed through experiences from the past and the perceived results of these experiences (Lent & Brown, 2002). According to Social Cognitive Career Theory, persons' commitment in activities, the effort and persistence they put into them and their final success are partly controlled by both their self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations. For example, people are more likely to choose to explore an activity to the extent that they see their contribution similarly as prompting valued, positive outcomes (e.g., social and self-approval, tangible rewards, and engaging fill in conditions).

The last component, personal goals, refers to the person's expectations to take part in specific practices (Lent & Brown, 2002). It is the determination of the people to commit in a particular activity or to produce a particular outcome which are called choice goals and performance goals and by setting goals, people help to organize and guide their own behavior (Lent, et. al., 2000). People tend to set goals that are consistent with the views of their personal capabilities and of the outcomes they expect to achieve from pursuing a particular course of action (Swanson & Woitke, 1997). Success or failure in attaining goals becomes important information that helps to alter or confirm self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations.

In recent studies, the Social Cognitive Career Theory was instrumental in determining how self-efficacy beliefs, outcomes expectations, and personal goals affects career choices. The dissertation on Ambriz (2016) indicated that the Social Cognitive Career Theory of Lent et. al. (1994) provided a valid and useful framework in understanding and predicting the career choice goals Mexican-American high schools students in the STEM fields (Ambriz, 2016). There were direct and indirect relationships between the self-efficacy beliefs, interests, and choice goals of the students.

In another study that used the Social Cognitive Career Theory, self-efficacy beliefs and interests of pre-college and college students in computer-based technology affects their learning and career development in a holistic manner. It was contributory in identifying and synthesizing the gaps using interventions in learning experiences (Eljabiri, 2014). To add, Ligouri's (2012) dissertation on the "Entrepreneurship Education Project", which included 40 universities in America, revealed that entrepreneurial self-efficacy beliefs and outcomes expectations mediates student's personal inputs and personal goals therefore impacting their individual entrepreneurial career aspirations.

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The researches cited above validates the reliability of the theory that was used in this study including the major components being focused on. In sum, the Social Cognitive Career Theory, an individual is likely to form lasting interests in activities, develop a feeling of being successful, and achieve positive outcomes when they

possess strong by self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals. Contrary to this, an individual with a self-efficacy belief of low personal competency is like to avoid the activity or task. Therefore, career interests are influenced by self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals which leads to career choices.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study primary aimed to discover the career choices and the resultant career choices of the graduates of Bachelor in Performing Arts. To do this, the following questions were answered:

1. What careers do Performing Arts graduates have after graduation – nature of the current job and current job title/position?
2. How do the Performing Arts graduates perceive the effects of the following factors on their career choice: self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations', personal goals, and other factors?
3. How may the Bachelor in Performing Arts (BPeA) program be improved for students to pursue a career in theater or performing arts after they graduate – recommendations for the BPeA program and recommendations for the BPeA students?

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

In order to study the Bachelor in Performing Arts (formerly Bachelor of Arts in Theater Arts) Graduates of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines from batch 2015 to 2019 and the factors affecting their career choices, this research used mixed methods approach. An approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs.

Mixed methods research is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analyzing, and integrating quantitative and qualitative research in a single study or a longitudinal program of inquiry. The purpose of this form of research is that both quantitative and qualitative research, in combination, provide a better understanding of a research problem or issue that either research approach can do alone. (Creswell, 2007).

The researcher used convergent or concurrent method wherein both quantitative and qualitative data converges in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, the research collected both forms of data at the same time during the study and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results. (Creswell, 2014).

The researcher also used descriptive design to provide a comprehensive summary of the informants' specific real-life experiences in their experiences in Theater Arts/Performing Arts and the factors that affected their career choices. Descriptive design allowed the researcher to provide descriptions, record analysis, interpret conditions, and answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study.

The research design was adapted from the study of Bakhtyari, M. B. (2015), entitled "Afganistan's Student' Perceptions of the Use of Online Tools for Enhancing Learning". The data were collected concurrently where the quantitative data were obtained through an electronic survey questionnaire while the qualitative data were gathered with the use of a semi-structured interviews guide. The instruments were also adapted from two published researches.

As for the analysis and interpretation of the results, the quantitative data were proficiently computed and verified with the use of statistical treatment and interpreted by means of descriptive statistics. The study used

frequency and percentage distribution formula and weighted mean formula with the corresponding verbal interpretation.

Along with the quantitative data, the qualitative data were carefully analyzed and interpreted using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was done through the process of coding data, categorizing codes, and synthesizing categories and themes (Adu, 2019). To categorize the data, subcoding was done. Subcoding is appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies with multiple participants and a wide variety of data forms including interview transcripts (Saldaña, 2013). After the interpretation and summarization of the findings, the researcher arrived achieved specific conclusions and recommendations.

In general, mixed method was the approach of this study in order for both quantitative and qualitative elements be combined to produce a better research quality by eliminating biases which may be inherent to either quantitative or qualitative methods alone.

2.2 Tradition of Inquiry and Data-Generation Method

A purposive sampling technique, also known as selective sampling technique, was used in the selection of research informants for the one-on-one interview or a focus group discussion. This sampling technique allowed the researcher to set a criterion in choosing the members of the population to participate in the study. The population of this study are the graduates of the Bachelor in Performing Arts (formerly Bachelor of Arts in Theater Arts) of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Sta. Mesa, Manila from batch 2015 to 2019, which includes the year-end and mid-year graduates. They are the needed informants who will impart their learning experiences and the factors that affected their career choices.

For the quantitative method, the researcher used convenience sampling technique and snowball sampling technique. An online survey was given to fifty six (56) respondents out of 138 graduates of the Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from year 2015 to 2019. Snowball sampling procedure was used to locate the respondents by which the graduates were tracked down through referrals and the social media, platforms and guided by the list of the graduates that was requested from PUP Registrar's Office. The researcher considered as many respondents as possible.

2.3 Description of Respondents

Based on the data collected, there were a total of 71 respondents or Theater Arts graduates from 2015 to 2019 who participated in the study of which 56 were survey respondents and 15 were interview respondents. Below is the description of the respondents according to age, gender, current home location, and year of graduation.

Most of the survey respondents are from the age group 21-25 years old with the percentage of 66.07%. The other survey respondents belong to the age group 26-30 years old with the percentage of 33.93%. As for the interview respondents, most are also from the age group 21-25 years old with the percentage of 60%. The remaining interview respondents belong to the age group 26-30 years old with the percentage of 40%.

The majority of the survey respondents are female with the percentage of 73.21%. The male respondents got a percentage of 23.21% while the transgender respondents got a percentage of 3.57%. For the interview respondents, the majority are also female with the percentage of 73.33%, while 26.67 are male respondents. No transgender respondent participated the interview.

The current home location of most of the survey respondents are in National Capital Region (NCR) with the percentage of 75%. 23.21% of the respondents are currently residing outside NCR, while 1.79% is living

abroad. For the interview respondents, the current home location of most of them are in the National Capital Region (NCR) with the percentage of 73.34%. 13.33% of the respondents are currently residing outside NCR, and 13.33% is living abroad.

The year of graduation of both survey and interview respondents which is comprised of year-end and mid-year graduations with the total of 138 graduates. Of the 138 graduates, a total 71 respondents participated in the study of which 56 were survey respondents and 15 were interview respondents. The highest number of survey respondents came from the graduates of May 2018 with the percentage of 25%; while highest number of interview respondents came from the graduates of April 2015 with the percentage of 26.66%.

2.4 Instrumentation

For quantitative method of instrumentation, the researcher adapted the survey questionnaire from the thesis of Isidera et. al., (2017), "A Tracer Study of AB Theater Arts Graduates Batch 2010-2017 of Polytechnic University of the Philippines". The researcher formally asked Isidera for him to be authorized to use and adapt the said survey instrument. The instrument was adapted based on the statement of the problem that the researcher has formulated. Prior to data collection, the instrument was validated by three experts--- a research professor, a performing arts department chairperson, and a professional theater performer and teacher.

The online survey questionnaire was composed of five sections which are all answerable through a Google Form. The first part is composed of the demographic profile of the respondent. The second part is composed of the employment profile which is divided into two section – employed (working in theater, in a related field, or in other field) and unemployed respondents. The third part is composed of the educational experiences of the graduates and the factors that lead to their career choices. The fourth part is composed of the impact of the educational training, which is divided into two sections; first is by rating the impact of the education the respondent's received from BPeA/ABTA Program on their personal and professional life; and second is by commenting on how the degree they obtained helped them to attain their career goals. The last part is composed of recommendations or improvements that the program should undertake to enhance the quality of education it offers and at the same time empower the graduates to pursue a career in theater or performing arts.

For qualitative method of instrumentation, mainly, a one-on-one online interview or focus group discussion via Zoom was conducted to gather the essential data. This is the mode of gathering the data due to the present COVID-19 pandemic and the community quarantine that was implemented in several cities and communities in the Philippines. There was set of semi-structured questions that were answered by the informants during the interview. The questions were adapted based on the interview guide of a study about career choices. The questions were anchored from Social Cognitive Career Theory. Each question was intended to measure the three main variables of the theory which are self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals. These variables relate to the BPeA/ABTA graduates' pursuit of degree and career choice, ergo answering the statement of the problem. The researcher adapted the research instrument that Denum & Canlas (2017) used in their study of "Theater Arts and Performing Arts Graduates of Assumption College and the Factors Affecting Their Career Choice". The researcher formally asked Denum for him to be authorized to use and adapt the said interview instrument. Moreover, the instrument was validated by the same validators--- a research professor, a performing arts department chairperson, and a professional theater performer and teacher.

Prior to data collection, the interview informants were provided with the interview guide before the one-on-one interview or focus group discussion. It allowed them to prepare for the interview ahead of time and for them to impart significant answers or insights about their learning experiences and the factors that affected their career choices. No interview questions made the interviewees feel uncomfortable about his/her participation in the study.

2.5 Statistical Treatment of Data

The researcher obtained the frequency of the respondents' profile, careers, and recommendations to improve the BPeA program with the use of Frequency and Percentage Distribution Formula. The frequency was attained by adding all the answers of the respondents to a certain question and to be specific, by adding the frequency to the total number of the respondents multiplied to 100%, e.g. out of fifty (50) respondents, twenty (20) are currently working in theater.

For factors leading to career choices which includes variables such as self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals; the survey respondents were requested to check the space provided for each option for the degree of agreement on the stated questions using the Likert Scale.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The researcher wrote a formal letter addressed to the PUP Registrar's Office to request for the list of names of the graduates of Bachelor in Performing Arts (formerly Bachelor of Arts in Theater Arts) from 2015 to 2019. As soon as the list of names of the graduates was received from PUP Registrar's Office, a letter requesting the permission of the respondent to be interviewed was sent through email and Messenger. The letter included an introduction or an overview on what the study is all about and a consent confirmation that could be mailed back to indicate whether the desired participants are willing to participate or not. The date and time of the interview depended on the availability or preference of the informant/s.

The interview was conducted via Zoom. Before the start of the interview, the researcher provided the significance, rationale and purpose of the study. To ensure that the interview is recorded accurately, researcher used recording feature of Zoom and his laptop as the tool for recording the conversation with the informant's consent. The researcher also took down notes during the interview. Furthermore, the researcher assured the informants that all the data that they provided will solely be used for the purpose of the research and that their identities will be kept confidential.

The ethical considerations that were mentioned above were also applied to the respondents of the online survey. The survey was given to 56 participants out of 138 graduates of the Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from year 2015 to 2019 using convenience sampling technique and snowball sampling technique via Google Form. The survey respondents were also assured by the researcher that all the data that they provided will solely be used for the purpose of the research and that their identities will be kept confidential.

These ethical considerations are aligned with the policy of PUP and in compliance with the requirements of the R.A. 10173, Data Privacy Act of 2012, where the respondents and informants authorize and consent the general use, collection, and sharing of their information for the purposes of the study only.

3. Summary of Findings

The goal of this mixed-methods study is to capture and describe the factors leading to the career choices of the Bachelor of Performing Arts (former Bachelor of Arts in Theater Arts) graduates of PUP from 2015 to 2019. In order to achieve this goal, the data collected based on the responses of 56 survey participants and 15 interview informants were carefully studied. All in all, 71 Theater Arts graduates from 2015 to 2019, participated in this research.

Based on the analysis and interpretation of results through statistical treatment using frequency and percentage distribution formula and thematic analysis for both quantitative and qualitative data, the findings are:

1. Career of the Performing Arts Graduates

1.1 Nature of the Current Job. The 59.15% of the respondents are currently employed in the field that is not related to theater or performing arts; 21.13% of them are currently employed in the field that is related to theater or performing arts; 15.49% of the respondents are currently employed in the field of theater or performing arts; and 4.23% of the respondents are currently employed with dual jobs which are in the field that is related and not related to theater or performing arts.

1.2 The Current Job Title/Position. The job title or position of the most of the survey respondents, or 26.79% them are customer service representatives or sales agents; while the job title or position of the most of the interview respondents, or 46.66%, are senior specialist, social studies teacher, digital specialist, fulfillment associate, fraud detection analyst, customer service representative, and account receivables analyst.

2. Factors Affecting Career Choices of the Performing Arts Graduates

2.1 Self-Efficacy Beliefs. With all the variables used in obtaining the Self-efficacy Beliefs of the survey respondents when they were still enrolled in the AB Theater Arts program, an average weighted mean of 3.98, was attained with an interpretation of "Agree". For the interview informants, their self-efficacy beliefs were reflected in their motivation, abilities, and aptitudes. Most of the interviewees or six informants, with a mean score of 0.40, were motivated to study and finish the program because of the new learning and interesting courses that the program was offering; and five informants, with a mean score of 0.33, were focused, persevering, and hardworking when they were enrolled in the ABTA program.

2.2 Outcome Expectations. With all the variables used in obtaining the Outcome Expectations of the survey respondents when they were still enrolled in the AB Theater Arts program, an average weighted mean of 4.09, was attained with an interpretation of "Agree". For the interview informants, their outcome expectations were evident in their confidence in facing difficulties, most challenging experiences, and solutions to challenges. In terms of confidence in facing difficulties, the majority of the interviewees or nine informants, with a mean score of 0.60, were confident during their study but it diminished after finishing the program because their learnings were not at par with the industry standards or practices, were confident in academics but were less confident in theater performance because their professors provided insufficient knowledge or instruction about their productions, and were not totally confident in facing their challenges because of the limited knowledge about theater and the lack experience in performing. For the most challenging experiences, five informants, with a mean score of 0.33, experienced the lack of resources such as theater venue and theater equipment including the inadequate lights and sound system, scripts, and learning materials. For the solutions to the challenges, five informants, with a mean score of 0.33, solved the challenges that they encountered by being resourceful and persevering.

2.3 Personal Goals. With all the variables used in obtaining the Personal Goals of the survey respondents when they were still enrolled in the AB Theater Arts program, an average weighted mean of 3.80, was attained with an interpretation of "Agree". For the interview informants, their personal goals were revealed in their self-determination to pursue a career in theater or performing arts, and the acquired knowledge and skills from the ABTA program. The majority of the interviewees or eight informants, with a mean score of 0.53, were determined to pursue a career in theater as an actor or as a backstage production staff. For the acquired knowledge and skills which are helpful in choosing a career, six informants, with a mean score of 0.40, developed self-confidence and strong interpersonal skills

2.4 Other Factors. The majority of the survey respondents, or 51.97%, considered the need to support their family or children as another important factor in career choices; while for the interviews, most of

the interview informants with a mean score of 0.47, considered competitive salary and health benefits as a significant factor in deciding on a career to pursue.

3. Recommendations for the Improvement of the BPeA Program of PUP

3.1 Recommendations for the BPeA Program. Most of the respondents, with 26.26%, recommended the BPeA program to hire professors who are eligible, theater practitioners, or have studied theater. The other top recommendations are: to provide a conducive theater facility with basic equipment such as lights and sound system, and storage space for props and costumes, with 25.35%; and to improve the curriculum by strengthening the specialized/major courses and internship program, with 22.54%.

3.2 Recommendations for the Current Students of the BPeA Program. Most of the respondents, with 30.99%, recommended the current BPeA students to stay true to themselves and improve their knowledge, skills, and self-confidence. The other top recommendations are: to build connections and gain experiences in the theater industry by performing, working backstage, internship, connecting with the alumni, watching stage plays, or participating in events, with 29.58%; and to reflect on the career path that they really would like to pursue, with 9.68%.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researcher arrived at these conclusions:

1. The majority of the participants pursued a career in the field that is not related to theater or performing arts. Most of them secured a job in the corporate sector or the BPO industry as a customer service representative and financial account specialist.
2. The majority of the participants have strong self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals which are factors that affected their career choices. Their self-efficacy beliefs are reflected in their motivation, abilities, and aptitudes; while their outcome expectations were evident in their confidence in facing difficulties, the challenges that they encountered, and solutions to their challenges. Moreover, their personal goals were revealed in their self-determination in pursuing a career and the knowledge and skills that they acquired in the BPeA program. The other factors that affected the career choices of the majority of the respondents are competitive salary, health benefits, and the need to their family or children.
3. The majority of the participants recommended the BPeA program to provide a conducive theater facility, hire eligible professors, and improve the theater curriculum. Furthermore, majority of the respondents recommended current BPeA students to stay true to themselves; improve their knowledge, skills, and self-confidence; and build connections outside PUP and gain experiences in the theater industry.

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