

Towards Global Optimal Scaffolding: The Success Stories of University High Honor Graduates in Overseas Employment

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Abstract:- **Background:** Students who graduated with high honors had undergone many challenges in all aspects of their life before landing a fulfilling career both in a local and overseas setting. **Method:** A qualitative research design specifically phenomenology was utilized in this study to obtain an in-depth understanding of high honor graduates' lived experiences in overseas employment. Data were gathered through the twenty-seven semi-structured interview guide and were analyzed using an inductive approach to theme development. **Findings:** Findings have shown that graduating with honors indirectly affects job performance but it helps them possess a cultivated mindset through having instilled optimism, propelled perseverance, and challenged self-confidence; sustained development by actively involving in job skills development, pursued graduate education, and reinforcing work-related reliability; processed success by attaining a feeling of gratified hard work, developed work values, pursued opportunities abroad, and achieved set goals. **Conclusion:** Graduating with high honors calibrates one's attitude, mindset, and work values that directly or indirectly develops one's motivation to search for a fulfilling job and maintain the most satisfactory work performance abroad. **Recommendations:** Thus, it is recommended that students must focus on sustaining a proper mindset such as goal setting, develop grit in attaining such goal, and also process oneself to be a self-righteous person so that their hard work could pay off in pursuing a successful career whether local or overseas.

Keywords:- Overseas Employment, Honor Graduates, Work Performance, Cultivated Mindset, Sustained Development, and Processed Success.

I. INTRODUCTION

Students who graduated with high honors from a college or university had undergone many challenges in all aspects of their life before landing a fulfilling career both in a local and overseas setting.

Studying in a university is the natural next step to build on the student's achievements. It is a path many people take. Although maintaining high grades can be quite challenging, its results are gratifying. Honors programs open better job market opportunities, especially when recruiters recognize their value (A. Kool et al., 2016). Moreover, it gives motivation to one's professional life. According to Hoekman, McCormick, and Gross (1999), as cited by A. Kool et al. (2016), honors programs are an opportunity for high-achieving students to be motivated to develop themselves fully.

Attaining an honorable distinction nurtures strong motivation in the search for a fulfilling job. According to Bontuyan et al. (2017), achievers have superior motivation, adaptive education methods, and an optimistic view of the future. This indicates that they become self-motivated and confident. According to Dietrich, Parker, & Salmela-Aro, 2012; Hirschi (2009), as cited by Valero, D., & Hirschi, A. (2017), "motivation is broadly considered one of the most important predictors of successful entry into working life."

Moreover, in Deci and Ryan's (1994) theory, as cited by Bontuyan et al. (2017), someone who has a passion is always motivated to excel and manage different stress levels. Their experiences as honors bring them to triumph over hindrances. It sets their mind to accept challenges and positions them to achieve better goals in life.

Across the world, higher education's intrinsic value is increasingly linked with the graduate's ability to secure highly skilled employment (Minocha et al., 2017). These honor graduates have a good background, which catches the attention of the eyes of the employer. Having an honorary degree will make these graduates confident about themselves, but also it will be a motivation to them. In this situation, these honor graduates will be ahead of non-honor graduates. Furthermore, honor graduates get to experience benefits such as enjoying the stimulation of classes, valuing opinions from close family and friends, and pursuing their honors (Nichols et al., 2016). Honorary graduates are easily recognized and commonly praised due to their hard work and determination. Those are a few factors that gave them a boost in the coming of their chosen career.

According to Calma et al. (2012), graduates must possess relevant skills to seize more employment opportunities. They need to apply the knowledge and skills they learned from school and perform satisfactorily on the job. Meanwhile, honor graduates are educated better to be competent and have exceptional skills. Professors anticipate them to achieve better employment immediately after graduating from university. This is because fresh honor graduates have higher chances of employability compared to ordinary graduates. They have an honorary title to support their applications and interviews. This gives companies the idea of hiring the honor graduate because their achievement compensates for their lack of experience. Thus, they are presumed to be successful in their career and expected to be on top of their fields.

The Philippines is the most labor-sending country (Studymoose, 2016). Due to this situation, honor graduates aimed to work abroad, leading them to work hard towards attaining their goals in life.

There are different causes for one to work overseas: to acquire specific skills and a higher salary. Working abroad is a great way to earn money. The flows of income earned abroad are used to purchase household goods to improve living standards (Semyonov & Gorodzeisky, 2004). These factors lead to a better lifestyle and living conditions for the workers. Working in a different environment allows one to gain new experiences. These can be an advantage to them as it can improve their skill set. Overseas employment continues to increase. (Tan, 2000).

Working overseas has multiple benefits. It opens opportunities for a comfortable lifestyle for the worker and his/her family. Relocating abroad is a crucial decision to be made, and thus, there are plenty of reasons why individuals prefer to be employed abroad. For example, one can overcome financial problems or have a new environment to live or work in (Oda et al., 2018). Furthermore, being an honor graduate has various advantages, such as acquiring a higher salary offer, boosting one's curriculum vitae, and having higher living standards. Working overseas also helps the employee get more work experience and to increase cultural awareness. (Karrera, 2017)

Attaining a fulfilling job overseas can be considered as an indicator of success. However, it can be challenging because of the escalated competition. Since corporations are open to accepting applicants internationally, they attract people from all over the world to apply for the same spot. This brings the importance of making oneself more marketable (Writer, 2019). Thus, an individual must have the right work attitude, mindset, and leadership skills. It is known that people graduating remarkable grades are most likely to attain a satisfying occupation in a complex working environment such as abroad (Gao et al., 2017).

Overall, the honor graduates' motivation, advantages, and overseas employment are essential factors to find a satisfying job and self-efficacy (You et al., 2016; Bandura, 1977).

II. METHODS

A. Research Design

This study uses a phenomenological research design with a qualitative approach. Its fundamental objective is to arrive at a universal description of a specific phenomenon's nature with a more profound understanding. (Creswell, 2013; Chambers, 2013). Thus, it was used to construct an in-depth understanding of university high honor graduates' lived experiences in overseas employment. The researchers were able to gather all the ideas with the use of this approach. It was analyzed using an inductive approach to theme development.

The participants were selected using purposeful random sampling. Cohen (2006) defined it as the process of identifying a population and developing a systematic way that is not based on advanced knowledge. Its purpose is to increase credibility, not to foster representativeness. In this study, the population of interest are high honor graduates who are currently working overseas.

B. Research Locus and Sample



Figure 1: Location of Qatar cc: Google Images

The study was conducted in Philippine School Doha (PSD) in the State of Qatar. PSD is the leading institution and a non-stock, non-profit school founded in 1992. Moreover, PSD has made many achievements throughout the years and overcame multiple obstacles whilst promoting “Service and Excellence”.

The nine participants of the study are currently excelling in their fields from various parts of the world: the United States of America, Qatar, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Denmark. The participants were chosen considering their years of occupancy in the Philippines before migrating abroad.

C. Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

To capture this study's significance, the researchers used a robotfoto and a twenty-seven semi-structured interview guide to acquire data.

Preliminarily, personal data sheets were given to the respondents, asking them to provide relevant information. (de Guzman & Tan, 2007) The researchers sought the respondents' demographic sketch, namely gender, educational background, work experience, years of service, and the honorary title he/she has received. The twenty-seven semi-structured interview guide was also used to find the respondents' lived experiences based on the chosen topic.

The data were gathered and transcribed word for word with the help of recording devices. The participants were reassured that their responses would be kept with high confidentiality (Kayed & Hassan, 2013; Vallesteros et al., 2019).

Before the interview proper, different preparations were done, such as the scheduling of interviews. Afterward, the researchers sought approval from participants by using a consent letter to inform them about what the study is all about.

D. Mode of Analysis

Data analysis is the most complicated of all of the qualitative research stages. A qualitative researcher must engage in active and demanding analytic processes throughout all research phases (Thorne, 2000).

Practical data analysis requires preparation, and it follows these specific steps: (1) Formulation of the questionnaire; (2) Transcription of all data from recordings to text form; (3) Converting the transcription to the researcher's understanding; (4) Analyzing the transcription of data to have a general perception of the participants' experiences; (5) Identifying similar ideas to create thought units and formulate possible themes; (6) Creating the simulacrum that the readers can understand; (7) Ending the transcription by having a member checking procedure to ensure the accuracy of the interpretation of the researchers on the data gathered.

III. FINDINGS



Figure 2: Simulacrum Overseas Employability of Honor Graduates

This phenomenological study describes the overseas employability of honor graduates relative to the central question, "How did the achievement of high honor graduates from the universities in the Philippines affect their work performance overseas?"

Figure 2 shows the simulacrum centered on three major themes: *Cultivated Mindset*, *Sustained Development*, and *Processed Success*, with three to four corresponding sub-themes under each topic. These themes highlight the work experiences of honor graduates in an overseas setting. Moreover, this shows the interconnected processes that an honor graduate undergoes as they work diligently to achieve satisfactory career success.

Furthermore, the simulacrum is constructed like a medal to portray various symbolism, such as the golden crown, the laurel wreath, and the medal piece. The crown depicts victory, triumph, and glory. The laurel wreath symbolizes the academic success of the honor graduates. The plate represents the entitlement they receive as they graduated with flying colors. At the heart of the simulacrum is an illustration of the earth. It represents the different parts of the globe where the participants reside and work.

Each subtheme corresponds to a particular color scheme and symbolism:

Cultivated Mindset is in green because it symbolizes growth, harmony, and freshness. It is the color of nature, emphasizing one's development. It is strongly related to cultivating a positive mindset to achieve significant growth. Furthermore, a plus sign represents how honorary titles instill optimism. A propelling rocket depicts propelled perseverance. A mirror signifies how self-confidence affects mindset.

Sustained Development is in blue since it is often associated with depth and stability. It symbolizes wisdom and intelligence. These are the qualities that a reliable employee develops when working in a professional environment. Moreover, a book portrays the honor graduate's pursuit of learning. A shield signifies how the honorary title reinforced reliability when applying for a job. Lastly, the hand holding the gear shows the development of skills.

Processed Success is in orange color because orange represents gratification, enthusiasm, determination, and success. It is the color of fall and harvest, which shows the processes of working hard and reaping what one sows. A puzzle being completed demonstrates the gratification and satisfaction felt after their hard work. A hand holding a heart illustrates how one develops passion and values for their work. A person climbing the stairs portrays the pursuit of opportunities abroad. A bullseye demonstrates the goal that one can achieve through discipline developed while working hard.

IV. CULTIVATED MINDSET

Individuals who graduate with high honors earn endless opportunities to continually develop their mindset: to strive and achieve their life goals. As these people seek success in academics, they also nurture a positive way of thinking and viewpoint of life. It cultivates their mindset to be optimistic, persevering, and confident in everything they do. They ensure that they give their best at every opportunity given to them.

A graduate with an honorary title develops motivation as they pursue a satisfying career. It provides an impeccable direction in life. It also inclines their attention to the advantages they had because of their honorary title. Despite the pressures, expectations, and demands of their employer, it pushes them to persevere and have confidence as they work.

A. Instilled Optimism

Optimism plays a crucial role in achieving a cultivated mindset. It is the driving force of a person to continue working despite the mishaps and negativity around them. Honor graduates who worked hard to achieve their titles develop optimism. They apply these values from college to their work. It helps them to deliver their best and maintain composure even under pressure continually.

Honor graduates become positive that they can surmount anything that they may have faced. Since they are used to overcoming academic challenges, they are also trained to keep an optimistic mindset when achieving their goals. It also serves as an indicator of how well they can do in the future. It helps an individual visualize their success as they search for a rewarding job, as stated by a participant:

"This title made me more optimistic. It made me feel like I could overcome any challenge. This achievement became a good predictor of my future, especially in finding a job and doing it well." P1

As they graduate with honors, it also becomes an occasion to realize that the future ahead of them is promising. It boosts them to have a positive mindset when transitioning from college to work. They visualize themselves as a successful individual, even at the start of their career. Their minds are instilled with excitement and positivity, even though they lack experience. Since they have this captivating title, employers hired them with more certainty. It reinforced a striking first impression. It gave the honor graduates a definite mindset to seek good jobs despite the lack of experience. As expressed by a respondent:

"Graduating with honors always had a concept that getting into a job would be easy because of an excellent first impression. It gave me a positive mindset that I could land a good job, even without experience." (P2)

The honor graduates eventually had a smooth transition from education to employment. This raises their optimism despite the failures and mistakes that they may have made. They keep a mindset in doing their daily tasks to bring out the best in them. It influences them to improve their performance as affirmed by a participant:

"Overall, it has motivated me positively even though I make mistakes and adjustments. I keep a positive mindset while doing my best in my daily routine. I know that I need to do the job right, so I exert more effort and perform better." (P8)

B. Propelled Perseverance

Persevering, despite the hardships and difficulties, is one of the values that a person achieves as they graduate with an honorary title. An individual who develops an optimistic mindset also develops perseverance. It is a crucial part of developing one's mindset. Since they conquered every obstacle when they were still studying, their minds are set that they can accomplish more in life. Honor graduates apply this principle of perseverance to be able to adapt to the demands of good performance.

Honor graduates inspire and remind themselves to do their best in every situation possible. They set their mind to acquire the skills that they need to improve their overall performance. It gives the honor graduates an urge to be competitive and competent at the same time. They even push themselves to exceed their limits, as said by a respondent:

"Because of my honorary achievement, I always tell myself that I can do better. You become more competitive when you reach the extent of your potential." (P4)

After continually reminding oneself to persevere, critical values were inculcated to these people. They became determined and motivated as they focused on achieving goals. Their attitude was adapted to work even after graduation. These values are more valuable than the certificate or medal that one can receive. The process of achieving an honorary title trained people to persevere and work hard as asserted by a participant:

"If you are already working hard and persevering like what you did in school, you carry it with you. It is not just about the certificate you get in schools. It is what you become. It is more of what you grow as an individual that helped me." (P5)

With the gratification that one receives as they graduate with an honorary title, they develop the urge to desire more success. They become competitive in achieving their long-term goals. It strengthens their self-discipline, passion, and drive, as stated by a participant:

"It assisted me in reaching my goals in life because it helped me develop discipline and desire to move up, to excel, and to be competitive." (P3)

These academic titles also reinforced professional development. It prepared their mind to be the best at all times. Having been used to outstanding achievements, these people developed the habit of striving and working hard. Exceeding past one's capabilities has become customary to them as expressed by a respondent:

"Becoming an honor student affected my professional development because I always thought that I needed to do my best when it comes to my job. Striving in everything I do has always been my habit since then." (P9)

C. Challenged Self-Confidence

Graduating with honors challenges and pressures a person's self-confidence. It plays a significant role in the development of a person's career. It assures that he/she completely trusts and knows in his/her mind that he/she is capable of doing the job. Thus, others always expect them to be composed even when facing difficulties.

Employers often expect more from these kinds of employees. The company leaders expect the high honor graduate to exert much effort and produce high-quality work. They might often question themselves if they are capable of accomplishing or from getting the job done. However, they often see the pressure as a reflection of what they have achieved before, knowing that nothing will stop them from achieving more if they have attained a goal.

With an honorary title, most employers are expecting good work performance to be carried by the achiever. Moreover, with these expectations, most high honor

graduates can feel pressured most of the time. However, usually, the pressure felt by the honor graduates becomes the drive for them to push a lot more in their careers. These expectations can give the honor graduate the realization that they could not receive the award given to them if not because of their hard work while studying. So, it gives them the mindset that they can do it, and they will do it with determination to get their jobs done. As stated by one participant:

"In my first company, I felt pressured. The managers were expecting a lot from me because of my honorary title. However, the pressure I felt became a motivation for me as time went by. I always have given my best not only while I was studying, but also now that I am working." (P9)

Besides the pressure felt, high honor graduates tend to become conscious of their honorary title. It opens their eyes that if they have already achieved their goal of becoming an honor graduate, it can potentially stop them from aiming high. Nevertheless, they have this conviction that they can continually achieve more life goals because they have already accomplished an achievement before. The honorary achievement did not just give them a title to carry, but it became their source of motivation at work, and it gave the sense that life does not stop with that title. The title can open more goals for them to reach and pursue throughout life. As said by one participant:

"It is a matter of looking back on your previous achievements. If you can do it before, then you can still achieve great things today. It assisted my goals in life because being a cum laude cannot be removed from you. It is with you throughout a lifetime. It serves as my motivation at work." (P4)

Also, receiving the honorary award can help them have an overview of their future career. Being a high honor graduate will give a person the jumpstart to knowing what lies ahead of him/her; the title prepares that person to experience the real world and its challenges. Achieving an honorary title gives a person the gist of how he/she should handle stress, both personal and social. Knowing how to have a balanced life during one's college days can help a person manage his/her personal life and work experience. One participant asserted:

"The honors just gives you a little bit of confidence, and that will impact whatever you do. Magna cum laude prepares you to tackle anything else that you will face in your future career. It is the preparation to do that, you know. You have to manage your stress, which is both social and personal as well as academic. You need to find that balance. You have to apply the way you have handled pressure in college to how you manage your stress now." (P7)

Furthermore, the mindset of the high honor graduate comes back to their achievement from the past. The title became essential to their lives and gave them full confidence in what lies ahead. It brings them the success that they need later on in life. It also became their reference wherein they

can instill an optimistic approach in life, knowing that they can surpass the challenges ahead of them. The honorary title serves as an example that no matter how much they wanted to give up, they can remember that they emerged through that specific point in their life victorious. Their success in the past became the stepping point of becoming more successful in the present and future. As stated by one respondent:

"The general belief is essential if it will give you confidence at work. It will provide you with the experience of success, so later on in life, if you have difficulties and you think you cannot do something, it gives you a bit of a push to say that I achieved this in the past, I could do it again. If you are at the point of giving up, then you realize that you are capable of doing something difficult. It gives you an example. You can always remember a successful moment in the past and push you to do more things in your career." (P5)

V. SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT

Sustained career development is the ability of employees to perform well in their job with continuous growth. At some point in a person's career, there would come a time when they have reached their peak and may feel like there is nothing left to explore. In such a situation, one must redefine their goals and develop new ideas on how to achieve them. Sustaining one's development in their career requires a lot of growth and progress.

Graduating with honors, one would want to sustain their career. Knowing that the honorary title gave them a boost at the start of their career, they would like to develop their skills by pursuing further studies. An honor graduate's mindset would not allow them to settle for less. They have the drive to enrich their knowledge further because they know that learning does not ever stop.

A. Reinforced Reliability

Employee selection is when an employer evaluates information about the pool of applicants generated during the recruitment phase. After assessing the candidates, the company decides which applicant gets the position. Employers do not expect recent graduates to have much professional experience. They look for graduates that understand the skills needed in the job market, and they also look at the graduate's academic history and accomplishments.

Having an honorary title could be a tiebreaker between two candidates with similar skills and experience. Employers will be more confident in hiring an honor graduate, for they give an impression of instilling excellence in their work. Superiors in the workplace will want to entrust challenging jobs to an honor graduate because they know that a person with such a title will persevere when it gets tough. As one respondent said:

"One of the benefits was when they saw that I had good grades from college. My employers hired me with more certainty. When the company employed me, my superiors assigned me to special wards. While others were assigned to general wards." (P8)

Trust is inevitably essential in the workplace. If a workplace can foster a strong sense of trust within the organization, there would be an increase in employees' productivity and morale, and employees can work more effectively as a team rather than as individuals. Employers and colleagues see that the honorary title serves as proof that an honor graduate can be entrusted with their work. As one respondent affirmed:

"The benefit of my achievement was gaining their trust because they know that I have achieved something before. My colleagues and employer trust me with what I do at work because of my records." (P4)

However, graduating with an honorary title does not guarantee that a company will instantly hire the person. It only serves as an additional measure that the employers may use in selecting an employee from a pool of applicants. Additionally, having an honorary title does not determine whether or not a person is a good employee. Being a good employee comes down to a person's reliability, which comes from being adaptable. Adaptability in the workplace is essential because employers value employees who can successfully manage through the workplace changes. Being adaptable showcases one's resourcefulness, leadership skills, determination, analytical skills, and more. As a respondent claimed:

"Graduating with honors is an indicator of how a person will perform in his/her job. However, it is not a hundred percent assurance that if you graduate with honors, it is just a gauge for the hiring company or person to determine how well you will do. Additionally, if you graduate as a magna cum laude, it does not mean that you will be doing well at your job. It is more on how well you adapt and persevere, and also your creativeness and resourcefulness with your job." (P3)

B. Pursued Learning

Having an honorary title in one's academic background, the person has the mindset to continuously improve on the skill set that they currently have and simultaneously add more to what they already know. Being in the workplace gives them the realization that employment is not the end of their self-improvement, but instead, it is just the beginning of something even more. Because of the constant changes in the environment, the person involved has to develop and secure their position.

As a result of the ever-changing environment, people are introduced to different things. This gives way for the employee to further enhance their knowledge by following through on their interests. The passion for learning from the moment they have received their honorary achievement serves as their drive to further improve. As one respondent affirmed:

(P7) *"My honorary achievement made me pursue different interests that further enriched my knowledge. Learning does not stop after earning an honorary title. The passion for learning is instilled in me."* (P1)

Moreover, when following through with interests, it leads to something that he/she is knowledgeable enough then hone it enough, and it will become a skill, but learning just one thing does not fully satisfy them. The passion inclines them towards achieving more, so people will aim for the highest possible honorary achievement to reach. As one respondent said:

"It encourages you to learn more. You become more inclined to get your masters degree, which I finished a few years ago. Now, it pushes me to get a doctoral degree." (P7)

Correspondingly, other than being knowledgeable about the career chosen, it is also necessary for a person to have experience. He/she was able to attend different seminars and was also invited to other professional groups. Being with the professional group, he/she could socialize with the people already in the field. They were inclined to join groups wherein they can develop their career skills, which were of great help because it gave him/her more insight into the career he/she was going to take. As one of the respondents claimed:

"After I graduated as a cum laude, I was motivated to pursue advanced degrees. A year after my bachelor's degree, I was already taking my master's degree. I attended different seminars and was invited to other professional groups like the Philippine Nursing Association. They gave me a special invitation, and I became a member quickly." (P8)

C. Skills Development

Not only should one's knowledge continuously grow, but also one's developing skills must be honed. While working, it is always necessary that skills are refined. There is no guarantee that the current job will be a permanent one in a competitive environment, such as a workplace. That is why being open to different interests is vital in proving that an employee is a valuable member of the company.

As an honor student, there is an effect on development as a professional. Habits are something done without the necessary decision-making involved. It is just automatic for the person to always provide the best quality in everything that they do. It is something that can be carried over from school days until the person's career. As said by one respondent:

"Being an honor student affected my professional development because I always think that I need to do my best when it comes to my career. Striving in everything I do has become my habit since school days until now." (P9)

The honor graduates are provided with seminars and training. As assets to a company, employees are given seminars and training to ensure their skills are not

diminished, and they continue to learn. They are encouraged to restore their skills for them to renew their contract with the company. The company also sponsored the employees in continuing education units. As affirmed by one of the respondents:

"My current company provides us with different pieces of training and seminars like the Basic Life Support and Advance Basic Life Support. We are also required to continue education units and renew our license, which is also sponsored by my company." (P8)

Moreover, development plans are made for the employees to identify their weaknesses and guide them through the programs. These plans ensure that the employees have a wide range of skills to be used for the company. Weaknesses are addressed and improved upon through different training and seminars that the company provides them, as mentioned by one of the respondents:

"I have had many job training and seminars since I started working in my current company. My colleagues and I always have development plans where we identify our gaps. We are sent to different types of training ranging from take-home to face-to-face or external training. They encourage and support you to take professional qualifications. They ensure that you get training if you have a skills gap on negotiations or updates on regulation. If there are updates that would impact your business, they always give training for those." (P5)

In the fast-paced world that we live in today, the demands of the labor market are complex and progressive. Professionals must have a solid foundation in their ability to adapt to shifting market conditions and must possess strategic thought. Sustainable career development features perpetual learning, security that comes from employability, and a harmonious fit of one's skills, interests, and values. A key to having a sustainable career is to attune oneself to the fields and companies a person is interested in to identify places where he/she can add value. Graduating with honors, one would have the proper mindset and drive that one must possess to sustain their career.

VI. PROCESSED SUCCESS

In every aspect of people's lives, they do their best to achieve satisfaction. This mindset pushes them to be patient, determined, and disciplined whenever they pursue success. It starts with realizing one's motivation and knowing that every hard work has a positive outcome. It instills certain values on a person that is beneficial in the process. It results in attaining more opportunities and life goals.

Achieving an honorary title has numerous benefits when pursuing a successful career. The title itself is beneficial when a person is transitioning from academic life to career life. It is beneficial at the onset of one's career as it provides employers a reference to map the person's attitude at work. It also gives graduates the gratification and motivation to further develop themselves. It helps people

realize potentials and opportunities beyond their capabilities. They achieve goals that continually provoke the desire to succeed in everything that they do. It assists them in success as it trains them to overcome any adversities that come their way.

A. Gratified Hard Work

Despite the impassable hurdles that batter them from every side, these graduates weathered every tempest and storm that came their way—proving once again that with sheer determination and will, one can achieve their goals, scathed yet victorious.

With the feeling of accomplishing and achieving something through hard work, euphoria filled the workers' fulfillment. Success through hard work was a gratifying feeling when an individual's work paid off with the amount of time they spent to achieve their rewards and goals. Gratified Hard Work is a feeling of accomplishment of the individual's blood and sweat, as it is their reason and drive to achieve what they aim for.

At the end of every path comes with a reward for the individual's determination to acquire it. To be rewarded well for the amount of time they have spent to achieve that reward through their hard work is something worth having. As affirmed by a participant:

"It made me feel rewarded because as I work hard, there is a reward waiting for you." (P1)

Furthermore, the moment of being fulfilled in finishing such tasks like research, a heartfelt feeling comes through the individual's life. The amount of blood, sweat, and tears sacrificed by the individual was not in vain, as they could make their parents proud. As said by one of the hardworking participants:

"I felt fulfilled when I finished my endless nights of projects and research. I was also fortunate to make my parents proud since they supported me throughout my studies." (P6)

Further on to success and fulfillment comes with impending difficulties and challenges that an individual may encounter. Even with the ability, skill, and determination to overcome those obstacles, one may still find difficulty traversing them. Nevertheless, a journey with dangers and rewards ahead is a journey worth going as it provides the individual a feeling of enjoyment and happiness. As a hardworking participant once said:

"Being an honor graduate is difficult, but I was able to enjoy my college life because I was focused on my studies, and when I graduated with honors, I felt happy." (P9)

As one goes down a risk-taking path for success, one finds a sense of accomplishment, confidence, hope, discipline, and patience. Along with those senses comes hard work that will gratify oneself of all the efforts they have done to achieve their rewards and accomplishments, and prepare and endure the new challenges they will

encounter in their future journeys. As a brave participant once answered:

"When I graduated with honors, I felt proud because it resulted from the five years of hard work, discipline, and patience. It is gratifying that I can see all the efforts that I have made while I was studying. I also felt very hopeful because graduating with honors is a stepping stone for me in my life's dream of having a good life. Lastly, it gave me the confidence and assurance that I will endure whatever challenges I will have in the future." (P3)

B. Developed Work Values

There are lessons, morals, and values bound to develop and come for every journey one travels to. The individuals who have gone through many obstacles using their hard work and determination have developed values that could help them through the hardships they shall encounter in another journey. Developed Work Values are one of the things an individual gains throughout their journey of hardships.

Throughout the individual's difficult journey, they come with the newly developed values they gained. The difficulty they have experienced made the individual come to realize and to believe themselves that even though there were times they felt like they could not go further anymore, they still persevered and did their best. As said by two great individuals:

"It affected my personal development because I believed in myself more even though there were times that I could not do it anymore. It also changed my advancement because you need to push yourself more, knowing that you still have to bring out the best in you." (P4)

"The process is more important than the award itself. Along the process of achieving, you learn work values like working hard, managing your time, getting back up after a failure." (P2)

After even through difficult times, one may find themselves able to fend and deal against any obstacles and challenges. This event results in making every difficulty they encounter into a stepping stone to achieving greater achievements. As a wise individual once said:

"Having an honorary title served as my stepping stone and foundation as a person and a worker." (P4)

C. Pursued Opportunities Abroad

These opportunities are one of the elements that make these honor graduates advance towards success. Even though they already had stable jobs with an adequate salary, they still desire to achieve more. It is how they have been trained in college. With their background, pursuing an opportunity is not a new occurrence as they had been exposed to it before.

These honor graduates pursued opportunities abroad after developing specific work values. This is the process of how they attain their success. It boosts their confidence to grab opportunities and follow the peak of their career outside the Philippines. Though people may see them as gifted individuals, it is not easy to achieve everything they had. It takes time, effort, and determination to attain success.

Once a person graduates with an honorary title, it opens their eyes to a broader perspective to see the opportunities they did not see before. It gives them an experience of success and the drive to achieve more. This mindset becomes not only a foundation to have a clear vision and goal, but it also becomes a driving force for them to raise their career to the next level. A respondent stated that:

"It assisted me, and it was very beneficial to me. Having the honorary title helped me see those opportunities to obtain my higher goals. Once I found a job, I studied for my master's degree, and it prompted me to become a Human Resource officer. From then on, it became a domino effect, and it opened doors." (P1)

Not only did the honorary title helped them see their potentials, but it also helped them apply for further studies. It reinforces an excellent first impression to their colleagues, as well as their employers. They had been looked up to since having the honorary title made them appear determined when pursuing a goal. This is also evident when applying for a suitable position outside the Philippines. The employers will hire a person with more certainty as his/her records and experiences reinforce this. As said by a participant:

"My honorary achievement helped when I was applying to pursue further studies in Canada. My achievements have shown the immigration officers that I am serious about my career in academia, and I will come here to pursue my studies." (P6)

Afterward, they do not settle for working overseas; instead, they thrive on ascending further. They pursue opportunities to be a leader and the chance to influence other people. They make sure that their performance is the best and impressive to their immediate employer. Thus, their employer sees these potentials and gives them more significant responsibilities. They get a chance to lead other people, even in an international setting. A respondent attested that:

"Because of my achievements, I have been given a chance to stand up, to lead teams, to lead projects, to manage certain workgroups, and so in that instance when I was allowed to stand up, they saw in me the potential to be promoted, given higher responsibilities, and able to contribute towards the organization." (P1)

D. Achieved Goals

After pursuing opportunities overseas, these graduates achieve more goals with the help of their titles. They become trained to yearn for more. They continue to accomplish more goals until they become satisfied.

Achieving goals are challenging as it is but these graduates. Having an honorary title will help an individual accomplish their desires. It acts as a foundation and a confidence booster. Even after failing, they are still motivated as they reflect on what they achieved before. If they achieved great things before, they have faith in themselves that they can do it again.

After pursuing opportunities, the honor graduates achieved further goals. Having an honorary title gave them chances to exercise their passion and explore their capabilities. It provides them a stable platform to push their abilities beyond the limits. It gives them higher chances of being employed in a job that they are passionate about. A respondent emphasized that:

"One of the goals I have achieved was when I was able to teach at a university for two years. The university believed in my skills in imparting knowledge to students. My former electronic engineering students thanked me for what I did. Additionally, I would not be able to get my job and passed the interviews if it was not for my honorary title." (P9)

Graduating with an honorary title is overwhelming, as it is a giant leap towards a satisfying career. After pursuing these opportunities, how they achieve their goals is made easy to attain higher goals. A respondent stated that:

"I was delighted because it was my goal to be an honor graduate, and it turned out that I was able to achieve the title of magna cum laude. I was thrilled to achieve my goal." (P2)

They have achieved a successful career that made this person to be a leader. It allowed them to grow more and be an asset to the company. They reached the goal of being important in the organization. This is stating that being an honor graduate makes one a future leader. A respondent disclosed that:

"One of the goals is being satisfied with the career that I'm having. Now, I can say that I am leading and managing people and seeing them grow within the organization and provide value to the company. That's the goal I wanted to achieve while making my professional career. On the other hand, the honorary degree that I achieved during college helped me. It is more like differentiating yourself between the leader and the boss or manager. So all of that helped me achieve whatever goals I have now." (P3)

Indeed, achieving an honorary title makes the process of success easier as it establishes discipline, determination, hard work, and patience. It becomes a strong foundation as an individual starts their career. Graduating with honors gives them gratification that every hard work is worth it. It instills specific values that are extremely useful in the workforce. These work values widen their perspective in pursuing further success. It aligns them to a path of working overseas as respected professionals. It urges them to work abroad and lead and influence other people, even in an international setting. This proves that achieving honors is a good indicator of success.

VII. DISCUSSION

Employees who graduated with honors are different from their non-honor peers. Presumably, they have developed better academic attitudes and behavior (Brimeyer, Schueths, & Smith, 2014). As one works hard while studying, they also learn self-managing skills. It opens their minds to the essential skills to help them land on a fulfilling job (Yorke and Knight, 2006, as cited by Qenani, MacDougall, & Sexton, 2014). It serves as a guidance on how to enhance their employability. It also indicates that everything the student does will impact their self-esteem and performance (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007). This was further strengthened by a respondent's statement emphasizing that "Graduating with honors is an indicator of how a person will perform in his/ her job."

These kinds of professionals are motivated to pursue a successful career. It opens their eyes to achieve higher goals, resulting in applying for jobs overseas. According to Raharto (2002), one of the impacts of international labor was that it created certain opportunities. Moreover, studies by Thang et al. (2002), as cited by Andersen et al. (2015), stated there are many advantages from international experience in the acceleration of career development, more job opportunities, and an increase in salaries. Furthermore, overseas employment equates to 'greener pastures' with countless job opportunities for the next generations (Nititham, 2011).

Honor graduates create career resiliency associated with professional advancement, adaptation to changing circumstances, even in discouraging instances. It consists of characteristics such as having high self-esteem, risk-taking, and being goal-driven (Day & Allen, 2002). These developments project a successful career path. Objective career success is an external view focusing on less tangible indicators of career situations. It can be attained through self-confidence, personal impact, outstanding performance, communication skills, and interpersonal competence (Zaman, Sulaiman, & Hashim, 2013). Furthermore, this results in the accomplishment of career satisfaction. According to Verbruggen & Sels (2009), "career satisfaction has more progress toward goals, as they are possessed with more self-efficacy regarding their ability to realize their career goals."

A. *Cultivated Mindset*

Having an honorary title does not only mean that one is proven to possess intelligence, but one is also trained to overcome difficulties. It is more on the values that one can learn as he/she achieves success. This idea was supported by a respondent stating, "It is the discipline that cultivated within you, which resulted in success. As you were trying to achieve higher grades, you have already developed your mindset to work long hours to achieve a goal." Employers focus on whether a person has the mental aptitude to perform tasks. There is also the factor of expectations, in which the honor graduates are expected to execute duties exceeding one's expectations. Being an honor graduate, they are trained to those expectations and perform the job well. (Kassae, Ameneh M., 2016)

Honor graduates can adapt and transform according to the situation at hand. They are encouraged and can power through because the little positivity they see fuels them to push past their limits. It develops their professional mindset in which they are seen as more than ready for labor. (Bethge, Judith Swanson, 2018). The cultivated mindset of honor graduates makes them an effective communicator. They can express their ideas and transform them into real-life applications. They are also trained to endure hardships, which is vital for success. Those with a cultivated mindset love knowledge in which they continue to strive for wisdom to achieve success. (Kristjan, Sophia & Tashijian, David, 2016)

Honor graduates think critically. They identify problems they encounter and can reflect and learn from mistakes vital in employment. Honorary title holders realize that their capabilities are infinite and can develop through effort. This realization is what motivates them to go beyond and nurture their skills. (Robinson, Cheska, 2017)

Optimism brings out the best in people. It results in self-improvement and interpersonal relationships being improved because of increased self-confidence. (Milhabet, Cambon, & Shepherd, 2019). As said by one of the respondents, "It is because there is always a concept that if you graduated with honors, then it will be easy and that it will be an excellent first impression." However, optimism should not be confused with overconfidence. (Bernoster, Rietveld, Thurik, & Torres, 2018)

Moreover, Bone (2020) argued that optimism has developed coping mechanisms to battle against concerning situations. Optimism creates a sense of purpose and a sense of self-identity. One of the respondents also firmly believed this and said, "This title made me more optimistic that any obstacle coming my way would be something that I would be able to overcome. Having had that achievement in the past would be a good predictor for my performance in the future." Optimism is seen as an influential lens to see through career success. To battle with rational issues, optimism plays a significant role. It creates an increased space in knowledge absorption which enables the person to retain knowledge. (Kelberer, Kraines, & Wells, 2018)

Optimism is seen as a factor for a person to achieve his or her goals. It helps one nurture information and to be able to use it fully. It also promotes the morality of one's actions and removes undesirable factors in any situation. Through optimism, it produces hope in which it can uplift a person's drive to do daily tasks. (Gasper, Spencer, & Middlewood, 2019)

Optimism increases the time honor graduates are able to endure the difficulties which also creates the right mindset to achieve. (Scott Asay, 2017) Optimism is an integral part to be able to have the grit and passion for their future careers. It develops the influence on the attitude of honor graduates on how to handle everyday tasks and realize their goals. (Eva, Newman, Jiang, & Brouwer, 2020)

Perseverance is a needed factor to achieve long-term goals. As argued by Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007), cited by Gerhards & Gravert (2020), there are two types of perseverance which is "consistency of interests over time" and "perseverance of effort". Passion and perseverance come hand in hand. They assist in the achievement of a person's goals despite the trials. As one of the respondents said, "Because of my honorary achievement, I always tell myself that I can do better. You become more competitive when you reach the extent of your potential." Perseverance is said to be the building blocks of success and sustainability (Santos, Marques, & Ferreira, 2020).

To be able to develop a cultivated mindset, one must endure hardships that come with tasks and exert effort. Consistency in effort increases one's chances to reach his or her goal. With the steady increase of challenges, perseverance is a much-needed virtue (A. Mrazek, Ihm, Molden, M. Mrazek, Zedelius, & Schooler, 2018). Perseverance is seen as a signature behaviour of a mentally sturdy individual. It affects one's behavioural pattern in which they are able to succeed and endure challenges. Perseverance assists in the advancement of oneself and improves mental health (Gucciardi, Peeling, Ducker, & Dawson, 2016).

As argued by Gerschewski, Lindsay, & Rose (2016), perseverance is a significant factor that contributes to increment of passion in one's ventures. Patience and perseverance come hand in hand to be able to accomplish one's life goals and succeed with flying colors. In which one of the respondents supported the claim and said, "It assisted me in reaching my goals in life because it helped me develop discipline and desire to move up, to excel, and to be competitive." Having the grit to endure difficulties as students creates a strong foundation that can be applied to their careers in the future. (Wolfe & Patel, 2016)

Perseverance influences the honor graduate to be able to obtain his/her goals. Perseverance is found to be a better predictor of achievement. It does not only forecast career success but also the life outside their careers (Choi, Young, & Lee, 2020). Perseverance shows a positive implication to honor students since they are seen successful in their

academic years. (E. Similie, K. Similie, K. Kipton, 2017)

Optimism and perseverance play a significant part in achieving a cultivated mindset, but self-confidence dramatically contributes to a grown mindset. Self-assessments, such as self-confidence, are known to positively influence employees' fidelity, function, and welfare (Murtagh, 2019). One of the respondents also observed this and said, "But, being good at your job is general, so, wherever you go, if you are excellent in doing your job, then it is applicable in any place that you work in. So, it made me feel motivated to do my best and let the output of my work speak for itself." Self-confidence is an individual's perception of the capabilities and skills they have. Their belief that what they uproot is that they are with full potential to deal with different circumstances productively (Fuvich, 2017; Sharuger and Schohn, 1995). Having self-confidence plays a critical role in a person's personal and work life.

In the workplace, honor graduates feel this pressure within them because they know that employers look forward to the outstanding skills because of the award presented to them. Self-confidence directly influences learners' perceived competence stages (Fuvich, 2017; Kim et al., 2014). The self-confidence of a person is tested when it comes to feeling pressure from their employers. This pressure quickly becomes motivation knowing that they can achieve more. This was supported by one of the respondents stating that "In my first company, I felt pressured. The managers were expecting a lot from me because of my honorary title. However, the pressure I felt became a motivation for me as time went by. I always have given my best not only while I was studying, but also now that I am working." Having self-confidence becomes the starting point towards a prosperous career (Vallesteros et al., 2019; Kratz 2015).

Nevertheless, high honor graduates also become motivated when feeling pressured. The idea of motivation takes part in a significant role in analyzing how people in corporations behave and how this affects the organization's performance (Vanpoucke et al., 2016; Frey, 1992). With this motivation they have within them, honor graduates are on the road to a satisfying career and achieving lifelong goals. Motivation becomes a factor that will become an understanding of behavior to accomplish the objective of becoming satisfied in oneself (Lee and Hidayat, 2018; Handoko 2008). Motivation is a highly significant characteristic that can determine the employees' job performance (Lee and Hidayat, 2018).

In summary, a high honor graduate has a mindset wherein they think positively, endure with strong perseverance, and have confidence in achieving something more than what they have attained already in life. A proper mindset influences motivation and fulfillment (Bethge, 2018; Haimovitz & Dweck, 2016) and how people broaden their ambitions, which shows how they resolve issues (Bethge, 2018; Sevincer et al., 2014). Having a cultivated mindset widens an honor graduate's outlook in life and work life. This mindset affects the way they accomplish their jobs

and their personal lives positively.

B. Sustained Development

Filipinos have a long history when it comes to working overseas. They need to provide for their family's needs, so their drive to climb the economic ladder and create opportunities for themselves increases. Those who successfully land a job in an unfamiliar environment can contribute indirectly to the economy of their home country through the remittances they make (Nititham, 2017). There are also those who work abroad to have a lifestyle change. Their migration was a way to improve one's self and gratification (Limpangog, 2013).

The labor market has drastically transformed over the years, corporations expect their workforce to meet the increasing demands and pressures (Victor & Hoole, 2017). One must develop his/her skills to fit in today's ever-competitive workforce. A sustainable career is dynamic that emphasizes constant learning, confidence in one's employability, and unity of one's skills, interests, and values. An employee acquires opportunities for dynamic learning within a complex environment across time (Li, Li, Chen, & Xue, 2020).

Trust is a vital element in the workplace. According to Victor & Hoole (2017), the term trust is one's ability to be vulnerable to others' actions and believe that positive outcomes will result from others' intentions and behaviors. One of the respondents supported the claim and said, "The company would not hire you if you did not have an honor in the first place because that kind of recognition is like the gauge of how well you are doing a task that was given to you."

As stated by a respondent, "The benefit of my achievement was gaining their trust because they know that I have achieved something before. My colleagues and employer trust me with what I do at work because of my records." This was supported by Victor & Hoole (2017), trust builds cooperation between employees in the workplace. It enhances relationships in a workplace, leading to better organizational performance.

The world undergoes constant changes. Thus, higher education's role is given more significance now. It leads employees to recognize changing trends, be responsive to opportunities since they are exposed to diverse ideas leading them to adapt to circumstances presented to them (Ali & Jalal, 2018). In which one of the respondents affirmed this thought and said, "Personally, people were expecting me to pursue advanced degrees. Those expectations have affected my personal development."

Educational background remains a critical predictor of employment, it is also an important criterion that companies are looking for: someone who has a learning intention and willingness to progress from the knowledge received from when they were students. (Kyndt et al., 2014).

Certain factors lead to having the drive to enhance the knowledge that the employees already have, and the first is inquisitiveness. A person who practices this virtue initiates questioning to feed their curiosity. (Horstmeyer, 2019) As mentioned by one of the respondents "My honorary achievement made me pursue different interests that further enriched my knowledge. Learning does not stop after earning an honorary title. The passion for learning is instilled in me." Watson (2015) supported the idea that a person who has interest will continue to find the answer just to feed their curiosity.

According to Astin (1999), as cited by Hafsyhan (2015), some researchers have suggested that students who excel in academics may be more invested and more prepared to find employment after college to pursue advanced degrees. They are generally believed to be more involved in educational activities and hold higher career aspirations than their peers.

The skills acquired during education are the competence that employees carry over to their careers and develop. This is evident in training and seminars for it benefits the employees by preventing the decline of their job-specific skills (Gauly & Lechner, 2019). Furthermore, it leads to a better understanding of the job and a better output. It also enhances the employee's contentment with the feeling of importance and serves as a motivator (Tolulope, 2016).

As said by one of the respondents "I have had many job training and seminars since I started working in my current company. My colleagues and I always have development plans where we identify our gaps. We are sent to different types of training ranging from take-home to face-to-face or external training. They encourage and support you to take professional qualifications. They ensure that you get training if you have a skills gap on negotiations or updates on regulation. If there are updates that would impact your business, they always give training for those." Fejoh & Faniran (2016) supported this statement by mentioning that it served as a bridge to the gap with the skills that the employee has to the requirement of the job.

In summary, in an environment where there are no certainties, the employee has to find ways to affirm to their superiors and co-workers that they can get work done. It is vital in a competitive setting to be ahead while there is still time to do something. Building reliability among the people a person works with would lead toward a more comfortable workplace and better productivity. When employees perceive that their environment is supportive of what they are doing, they are more likely to go beyond what is asked (Coxen et al., 2016). Multi-skilled employees are given more importance because of their competency in all work areas (Ahlgren & Engel, 2011). As reinforced by one of the respondents, "My company is confident when it comes to giving me training and certifications. I am free to take any certification that will help me with my job." When a person can improve on his/her skills, one can be a flexible and essential member of the workforce. It would be a good investment for the employee because it can improve their prospects (Kohlrausch & Rasner, 2014).

C. *Processed Success*

Many honor graduates have experienced success. Achieving such goals brings them satisfaction and determination to continue pursuing further than the last.

While graduates do accomplish their studies during their graduate school, some are bound to create many means of achieving success. Whether it may be presentations, services, or assessments, the graduates will find ways to achieve success (Kunkel, 2016).

After graduation, the graduates now have to find a job. This may be affected by their honorary title. As such, it creates a path for them to succeed in their chosen career. However, employers would also see if the graduates have the willingness, cooperation, determination. Therefore, honor graduates must expect some competencies to meet their employers' expectations (Pang et al., 2019).

Rewards are a part of why an individual is determined to finish a task. They contribute to why a company contains a sense of competitiveness as employees receive rewards like promotions (Benkoff, 1996). One of the respondents also said, "I felt happy and relieved because I was graduating as a cum laude after four years of effort and hard work." How employees and graduates still maintain this kind of drive is nothing short of a reward system to achieve positive work outcomes.

As said by one of the respondents: "It made me feel rewarded because as I work hard, there is a reward waiting for you." Furthermore creating that positivity that made the employees/graduates continue to further strive for the better (Kim & Beehr, 2020).

Methods of finishing work given by the company depend on the graduates' determination to complete the tasks they were given and the company's strategy to cut costs in a highly competitive environment. A method created by employees and graduates is a method called "smart work" that could increase an employee's work efficiency (Fragouli & Ilia, 2019). Such methods were used by the graduates interviewed and have resulted in different consequences that have led to a learning work experience.

Values come from the graduates' experiences and each value varies from the experiences they have come across during their life. Furthermore, work values act as a guide to them if they are compatible with their work environment and as said by a respondent: "It affected my personal development because I believed in myself more even though there were times that I could not do it anymore. It also changed my advancement because you need to push yourself more, knowing that you still have to bring out the best in you." Values also do represent the long-lasting beliefs of what is important and worthwhile to the hardworking graduates (Vivek & Raveendran, 2017).

On the other hand, beliefs are also factors that motivate the employee to strive more. Such beliefs provide the graduates with perceptions of hard work that could be

used to get ahead of society (Bullock et al., 2014). Beliefs also result in positive rewards as the graduates are praised for the protective factors towards their general health and well-being. However, strong beliefs may result in delayed gratification and weaker morality (Zoupanou & Rydstedt, 2017).

The graduates come and go with values that they carry from company to company or from experience to experience. Work values vary from an individual to another as these affect how they do their given tasks. For example, hard-core trainees differ from regular employees with work values due to their lack of emphasis on being active on the job and its intrinsic rewards. Another example would be employees desperately making on the job as they take pride in their work more than the regular employees (Goodale, 1971). One of the respondents supported this claim and said, "It is the process of how I got it that helped me because I worked hard, I was self-disciplined, and these are the values I have kept until now, even after I graduated." These examples show significant differences between graduates and employees with their work values, as work values motivate them to continue their work without problems.

Other than that, values are a social process that motivates the employees and graduates to continue their jobs. Middle managers integrate their respective organization's strategic practices with values that have been derived from employees' societal, cultural, and religious experiences (Paarlberg & Perry, 2007).

Further adding to their values are their uptake of energy efficiency. Nowadays, many companies have been trying to limit financial costs. Energy is a value that many graduates take part in to shape the organization they are in. Thus, businesses have made energy efficiency necessary. They are further creating new values for new employees, like graduates (Pellegrini-Masini & Leishman, 2011).

Going from company to company with new or developed values is a surprise to various companies. Thus, making critical evaluations to the employees and graduates. The company evaluates validity and reliability as values, whether the employee or the graduate do their work correctly or not. The evaluations are a basis for a refining plan to improve the employees (Beuhring, 1989). Furthermore, improving the graduates' values as they remain within the company.

Leadership is a value highly praised by organizations. Styles of leadership from employees and graduates are vital when culture represents their values in their respective organizations. The graduates' satisfaction increases when they have met the organization's expectations as they would also become more committed to their respective organizations (Sabir et al., 2011).

After graduating with honors, pursuing opportunities can make a great way to be attracted to big companies and enterprises. These opportunities that are to be pursued can create a path to success in the future. According to Mon

(2019), some graduates have achieved high positions with attractive remuneration in multinational or local enterprises, while some returnees are running their businesses successfully. And as mentioned by a respondent: "Because of my achievements, I have been given to stand up, to lead teams, to manage certain workgroups, and so in that instance when I was allowed to stand up, they saw in me the potential to be promoted, given higher responsibilities, and able to contribute towards the organization."

Since there are vital skills in achieving an honorary title, the values that the graduates had acquired in the past are easily transferred with their current job. The higher the skill requirements of the job, the more likely an individual is in a position to utilize his or her existing skills and develop new ones (Arnold, 1994; Nabi, G. R., 2003). Graduates with honorary degrees can quickly pursue these opportunities as they have the skill and are backed by their excellent credentials. One respondent supported the claim and said, "It opens doors, and the likelihood is that the thing that happened was they could map you if you have your honors degree. I think it just opens doors for you."

After these graduates worked abroad, they continued to work on achieving more goals. These were the graduates' primary focus as they want to earn more and not settle for less. In life, people tend to accomplish the things they focus on, whether these are good or bad. Another statement of the respondent reveals that, "One of the goals is being satisfied with the career that I'm having. Now, I can say that I am leading and managing people, seeing them grow within the organization, and providing value to the company."

Graduates who have achieved many goals will make them more confident and feel better (Westwood, C., 2010).

However, these goals that they want to achieve can affect what they want to accomplish in the first place. As these graduates want many goals to be achieved, they often stack their goals up and forget the goal they want to achieve first and skip to the goal that makes them more satisfied. The conflict in multiple goals leads to conflict with the outcome of not achieving their very first goal (Dunaetz, D. R., 2014). As employees achieve their goals, they are also directed towards a successful career path. As stated by one of the respondents, "Promotion is one of them. I have been promoted several times now, and it is not a passive promotion, you have to apply for it. I did manage to get the jobs that I wanted. I am working with patient records now, which is quite useful because it is another specialization that I did not study when I graduated in college."

Career success is an outcome of a person's career experiences. It can be described in two fundamentally different ways: subjective and objective. (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005). According to Maanen (1997), as cited by Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom (2005), subjective career success may be defined as the individual's internal apprehension and evaluation of his or her career, across any dimensions that are important to that individual. In contrast, objective career success may be defined as an external

perspective that delineates more or less tangible indicators of an individual's career situation. These may involve occupation, family situation, mobility, task attributes, income, and job level.

These graduates have achieved big things in their careers. This is because they have been trained in the university to be the best. They have visualized a career path to success. These visions are anchored with a certain level of difficulty. According to Holtschlag & Masuda (2011), individuals with challenging dreams should perform more effectively in their jobs, leading to higher job satisfaction. Additionally, Wiese and Freund (2005), as cited by Holtschlag & Masuda (2011), stated that the pursuit of difficult goals does not only lead to higher achievement but also influences the effective evaluation of job success. Therefore, those who graduated with honors have had their mindset cultivated, which sustained their personal and professional development. This results in success in their respective careers.

In summary, a graduate with high honors cultivates and conditions their mindset to follow a successful career path. It instills optimism, propels perseverance, and challenges their self-confidence. Achieving academic awards promotes a positive mindset (Milhabet, Cambon, & Shepherd, 2019), sets their minds to persevere when met with difficulties, and challenges their confidence due to high expectations and pressure received from others.

When the honor graduates enter the workforce, the title they received reflects reinforcement of reliability, the pursuit of learning, and the development of their skills. It provided an excellent first impression, which gained the trust of their employers, opened opportunities to pursue further learning, which further enhanced their skills (Kyndt et al., 2014), and developed skills tailored to their job. These events honed their skills and sustained their overall performance.

As they have developed and maintained their work performance, having an honorary title helps their success journey. It gives them a sense of gratification that all their hard work starts to pay off. These values learned from the university now evolved to work values. It helped them realize that their potential can be acknowledged in an overseas setting (Bandung and Vilog, 2019). It creates a sense of confidence to thrive and pursue success outside of the Philippines. Now, they work towards realizing their visions and achieving their goals.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Graduating with honors opens various opportunities for self-development and career success. Those who studied hard in the university and attained the highest distinction are rewarded for their hard work. They are individuals who have a strong motivation and passion for learning. Attaining such achievement has various benefits, especially at the onset of one's career. It not only promotes qualifications, but it also motivates them in everything they do. Graduating with

honors cultivates mindset, sustains development, and processes success.

A Cultivated Mindset is one of the benefits of graduating with high honors. As they have conquered difficult situations in their academic years, they can now soar high and become the best of themselves. An Instilled Optimism is an essential factor in coping with everyday problems, for it fosters positivity and motivation. This results in a Propelled Perseverance, which is having determination despite the odds. Thus, resulting in a Challenged Self-Confidence, which tests capabilities and affirms competency. Thus, this nurture one's self-esteem and mindset. They can trust their capabilities and stay positive in any situation.

Sustained Development is one of the effects of graduating with high honors to job performance overseas. Since the graduate's foundation was developed in their academic years, now it is a matter of sustaining the development. This begins with Skills Development, an essential factor developed by exemplary students and employees. This results in Pursued Learning, which is an actual occurrence as the employees want to learn more and have more substantial credibility. Achieving such helps obtain a Reinforced Reliability, which helps an employee gain the trust of their employers. Thus, these honor graduates are continuously developed even in employment.

Processed Success is the most beneficial aspect of graduating with high honors. It is because the values learned along the process are more important than the outcome itself. Graduating with honors is a significant achievement that can motivate one to find a fulfilling job. Gratified Hard Work is the first part of the process. It is the fulfillment one can get as they accomplish a task. In the process, they also attain Developed Work Values. It coincides with hard work as the person develops a proper attitude and mindset. This instills a more profound motivation to advance one's career. It leads to Pursued Opportunities Abroad, which is one way to measure career success. It portrays that one can lead the competition even in an overseas setting. Lastly, it advances one to have Achieved Goals. The participants of the study have experienced graduating successfully and working satisfactorily and abroad.

Although, honor titles do not guarantee smooth sailing in employment. Different companies focus on who can adapt and showcase skills like leadership and discipline. It helps one realize when to take risks and when not to. It develops one's virtue of resilience and being able to endure hardships. Now, exerting effort past their limits is a typical action for them. They become people who do not settle for less but strive for the best.

The researchers suggest that university students should continuously prepare and develop to achieve their goals. Graduating with honors requires a massive amount of effort and hard work. Achieving that title will help the graduates learn essential workplace values such as perseverance and time management.

Additionally, students should also know that the values learned along the process weighs more than the honorary title itself. The title does not guarantee a "perfect" job, and it certainly does not guarantee any promotions, but it obliquely develops mindset and attitude. It gives determination and endurance to strive in life.

Lastly, the researchers recommend students to have strong will. Meeting failures and disappointments are inevitable, but students should keep in mind that it would serve as a reminder to learn from their mistakes. Students must stay motivated and have a clear goal. One should have an embedded discipline, a proper attitude, and a definite mindset on the goals one wants to accomplish. By studying hard, an individual becomes more passionate to learn more. This habit opens doors to a great future and a fulfilling career.

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