

# **Career Trajectory of Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Educational Foundation, Inc. - Physical Therapy Department Graduates from Batch 2013 to 2022**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The career trajectories of graduates from the Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Educational Foundation, Inc. (DRTREFI) Physical Therapy Department offer critical insights into the effectiveness of the educational programs in preparing students for professional success. This study examines the career trajectories of its graduates from batch 2013 to 2022. The primary objective is to comprehensively explore the career trajectories of the alumni of the DRTREFI - BSPT from batch 2013 to 2022. Data were collected through an online survey, which gathered information on current employment status, how does the knowledge and skills they acquired during their education correlate to their employment, and the diversity of career paths pursued post-graduation. The findings reveal a strong correlation between the education received at DRTREFI and the successful career outcomes of its graduates, underscoring the curriculum's effectiveness in preparing students for the varied challenges of the physical therapy profession. The study concludes with recommendations for curriculum enhancements to better align educational outcomes with industry demands, thereby ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of education and career readiness for future graduates.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the Study**

Physical therapy is an indispensable healthcare discipline that plays a pivotal role in restoring and maintaining the health and well-being of individuals facing a wide array of musculoskeletal, neurological, and physical health challenges. As such, it is imperative for educational institutions to continually assess the impact and effectiveness of their physical therapy programs. The study titled "CAREER TRAJECTORY OF DOÑA REMEDIOS TRINIDAD ROMUALDEZ EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, INC. - PHYSICAL THERAPY DEPARTMENT GRADUATES FROM BATCH 2013 to 2022" embarks on a comprehensive journey to explore and analyze the career trajectories and outcomes of alumni from the esteemed Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Educational Foundation Inc.

(DRTREFI) (Formerly Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Medical Foundation Inc. - DRTRMFI) Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy (BSPT) program.

Understanding how the curriculum shapes alumni's career trajectories not only measure former students' success but also enhances the institution's reputation and appeal to prospective students. By tracing alumni career trajectories, this research provides valuable insights into the career choices and pathways pursued by alumni, offering guidance to current and future students in their career decision-making. The study's findings serve as a valuable tool for ongoing quality assurance within the institution, ensuring that the curriculum effectively prepares alumni for successful careers and maintains the provision of high-quality education.

Knowing potential career paths and specialization options empowers students and graduates to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge (Rafanan et al., 2020). Moreover, a good understanding of the various career paths available in physical therapy is crucial for educational programs to align with industry demands. This enables institutions to customize curricula and prepare graduates for evolving healthcare needs (Mozafaripour, 2023).

The role of education in determining career success has long been recognized (Schudde & Bernell, 2019), and an increased levels of education are often associated with higher income potential (Radcliffe, 2023). Furthermore, well-educated individuals are more likely to experience job satisfaction and secure leadership positions within their careers, emphasizing the multifaceted benefits of education in the job market (Inayat & Khan, 2021).

Factors influencing career trajectories in physical therapy are manifold. The caliber of education obtained is one of the main factors influencing a person's professional trajectory. The program's curriculum, faculty expertise, and clinical exposure influence graduates' readiness for diverse roles within physical therapy (Bliss & Jacobson, 2020). Clinical experience is a critical factor. As internships and fieldwork experiences expose students to various aspects of physical therapy and may lead them toward specific career pathways (Teng et al., 2021).

The overarching objective of this study was to track the career trajectories of the alumni from batch 2013 to 2022, following graduation, with a specific focus on understanding how the curriculum had shaped their employment patterns. Through surveys, the researchers collected and analyzed data to provide recommendations for potential curriculum enhancements. These objectives collectively aimed to offer a comprehensive understanding of the long-term impact of the DRTREFI - BSPT curriculum on alumni careers. This included their education's influence on various aspects of their careers, such as career progression and the diversity of career choices pursued. The conceptual framework offered a holistic view of these relationships, and the research hypotheses suggested that the DRTREFI - BSPT curriculum provided a competitive advantage in the field, leading to enhanced career opportunities and career progression.

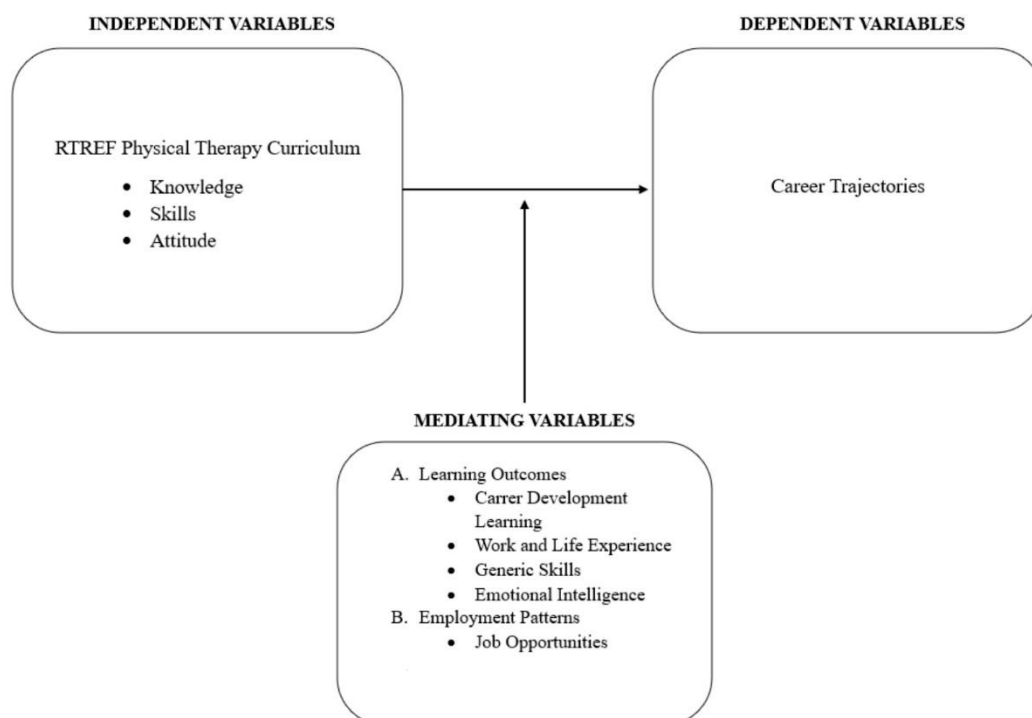
### Theoretical Framework

This study used the Human Capital Theory to create a coherent and well-organized basis for investigating the relationship between the DRTREFI Physical Therapy program and the career paths of its graduates. This theory states that an individual's education, knowledge, and skills are essential resources that significantly influence their career growth (Becker & Schultz, 1960). The DRTREFI Physical Therapy curriculum can be viewed as an investment in human capital in this context. Graduates' acquired skills, abilities, and knowledge are expected to influence their career outcomes. The framework investigates how

the curriculum contributes to the accumulation of human capital, and as a result, determines alumni's career trajectories.

The theory correlates with the "Learning and Employability Framework," which combines the learning process, environment, and outcomes of learning with employability. The Framework provides a structured approach to understanding and improving graduates' employability through educational interventions, aligning educational goals with industry demands, and ensuring graduates are well-prepared for their careers. This approach addresses the limitations of popular employability models that often lack operational clarity or simplicity provides a structured approach to understanding and improving graduates' employability through educational interventions, aligning educational goals with industry demands, and ensuring graduates are well-prepared for their careers. This offers simplicity for students, parents, employers, and faculty to understand while also providing the research community with essential operational clarity and theoretical support (Sumanasiri et al., 2015). The framework will be revised and discussed in the conceptual framework, supporting those responsible for developing curricula and teaching approaches that maximize employability. This component also emphasizes the significance of conducting tracer studies to acquire information regarding alumni's career paths. Additionally, the graduate survey results are important for the "analysis of the relationship between higher education and work" (Schomburg, 2003).

## Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Curriculum and Career Trajectories (Followed from Learning and Employability Framework)**

The flowchart represents a comprehensive conceptual framework exploring the interplay between the DRTREFI Physical Therapy Curriculum, alumni career paths, and influential factors. The DRTREFI -

BSPT curriculum provides technical knowledge, skills, and attitudes, significantly impacting the dependent variable.

Alumni Career Trajectory is the primary focus, examining Employment Patterns and Career Progression influenced by the curriculum. Alumni Satisfaction, assessing educational contentment and preparedness, is another vital factor. Additionally, the framework considers Diversity in Career Choices. Mediating variables, including Employment Patterns and Learning Outcomes from the Learning and Employability Framework by Sumanasiri et al. in 2015, provide insights into how the curriculum shapes alumni journeys, emphasizing job opportunities, obstacles, and learning outcomes.

This flowchart portrays a robust causal-explanatory framework, offering a holistic view of how the DRTREFI - BSPT curriculum, alumni experiences, and their professional paths intertwine. It provides a structured roadmap for investigating these relationships, intending to shed light on how educational experiences shape long-term career outcomes (see Figure 1).

### Statement of the Problem

This study endeavored to evaluate the impact of the DRTREFI - BSPT curriculum on tracking the career trajectories of its alumni from batch 2013 to 2022 following their graduation. The primary focus of this investigation was to comprehend how the curriculum played a role in shaping their employment journeys. To address the research problem, the following key questions were explored:

1. What is the employment status of the graduates?
2. Is there a significant correlation between the school-acquired skills and competencies of the graduates and their employment status?
3. What are the other career choices that the graduates ventured into?

### Objectives of the Study

#### General objective

The general objective of this study was to comprehensively explore the career trajectories of the alumni of the DRTREFI - BSPT from batch 2013 to 2022.

#### Specific objective

The specific objectives of this study were the following:

- To determine the correlation between the acquired knowledge and skills during their study influenced their career progression.
- To explore the variety of career choices alumni pursued.

These objectives aimed to offer a holistic understanding of the long-term impact of the DRTREFI Physical Therapy curriculum on alumni careers.

### Significance of the Study

This study assessed the impact of the curriculum on alumni's career trajectory, guiding future students and enhancing the institution's program and reputation.

**Alumni:** Alumni who have pursued careers in physical therapy can benefit from this study by gaining insights into how their education and training have influenced their career paths. It can help them reflect on their educational experiences and the effectiveness of their training.

**Educational Institutions:** The institution can use the study's findings to assess the effectiveness of its curri-

culum in preparing graduates for successful careers in physical therapy. This information can be invaluable for program development and improvement.

Students. This study will help students to know what to expect from the institution's educational quality.

Prospective Students: Individuals considering taking up physical therapy courses in DRTREFI can benefit from this study by gaining insights into the career trajectories and satisfaction levels of alumni who have gone through similar programs. It can help them make informed decisions about their choice of educational institution and program.

Parents. This study will assure them of the educational quality their children are receiving from the institution.

Faculty: This study will help the faculty members to be aware of their teaching strategy and will give them a better perception of what strategy will work best for the students to give better results.

Future Researchers: Future researchers can use the study as a reference point for further investigations into the impact of physical therapy education on alumni careers. They can explore specific areas such as the relationship between clinical training experiences and alumni success or the role of continuing education in shaping careers.

### Scope and Delimitation

This study assessed the impact of the curriculum on the career trajectories of graduates from the Physical Therapy Program of DRTREFI from batch 2013 to 2022. It focused on the progression of each chosen respondent.

This study did not include assessing the impact of any other curriculum from other institutions on the career trajectories of the graduates, nor did it examine the impact of other courses aside from the Physical Therapy graduates of DRTREFI.

### Definition of Terms

The key terms in this study are given the following operational definitions:

Alumni: Graduates of the Physical Therapy program of DRTREFI Physical Therapy program, whose career trajectories are being tracked over 10 years to understand how the curriculum shapes their employment patterns and satisfaction with their education.

Career Trajectory: The path and development of a person's career over time, particularly examining the progression of alumni from the Physical Therapy program at DRTREFI to understand how their education impacts their professional journey over 10 years post-graduation.

Curriculum: The structured framework of courses, learning experiences, and educational activities designed by the Physical Therapy curriculum at DRTREFI

Educational Institutions: DRTREFI, where the Physical Therapy program is offered and whose alumni are the focus of this research.

Human Capital: Refers to the knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by individuals, crucial for their career development and productivity. In this research, it pertains to the education and expertise acquired by alumni from DRTREFI's Physical Therapy program, shaping their career paths.

Job Satisfaction: Refers to alumni's perceptions and feelings regarding their careers after graduating from the Physical Therapy program at DRTREFI.

Physical Therapy: A healthcare discipline focused on restoring, maintaining, and promoting optimal physical function and mobility in individuals with musculoskeletal, neurological, or physical health



challenges. In this research, it is the field of study offered at DRTREFI, and alumni from this program are the subjects of investigation regarding their career trajectories.

**Quality Assurance:** Involves evaluating the effectiveness of the Physical Therapy program at DRTREFI in preparing alumni for successful careers and maintaining high-quality education.

**Tracer Study:** A research method used to track the career paths and outcomes of graduates from a specific educational program over a period. In this research, it involves tracing the career trajectories of alumni from DRTREFI's Physical Therapy program to understand the long-term impact of their education.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Theoretical Literature

#### Identification of career trajectories of the graduates

In the ever-changing field of healthcare and rehabilitation, it is essential to determine suitable career paths for graduates from the DRTREFI – Physical Therapy Department. This crucial factor guides graduates toward successful and fulfilling careers. Multiple important factors highlight the significance of this task. The identification of career trajectories plays a pivotal role in ensuring that graduates are adequately prepared to meet the demands of the physical therapy industry. Knowing potential career paths and specialization options empowers students and graduates to acquire the necessary skills and expertise (Rafanan et al., 2020). Another critical aspect is aligning with societal needs. Having a comprehensive understanding of the various career paths available in physical therapy is crucial for educational programs to align with industry demands (Mozafaripour, 2023). This knowledge enables institutions to customize curricula and prepare graduates for evolving healthcare needs, thereby improving their employability prospects. Additionally, Ibourk and Aynaoui in 2023 highlight the importance of analyzing career trajectories to optimize educational resources. By identifying areas of specialization, academic institutions can allocate resources more effectively and equip students for in-demand positions upon graduation.

#### The influence of education on career success

The role of education in determining career success has long been recognized. By equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills, education establishes a solid foundation for professional growth. Moreover, it broadens the scope of employment opportunities available to individuals. Schudde and Bernell in 2019 support this view by emphasizing the positive relationship between educational attainment and employability.

Increased levels of education are often associated with higher income potential. Research conducted by Radcliffe in 2023 reveals that those who hold advanced degrees tend to earn more, highlighting the economic benefits of investing in education. However, the advantages offered by education extend beyond financial gains alone. Inayat and Khan's study in 2021 shows that well-educated individuals are more likely to experience job satisfaction and secure leadership positions within their careers, highlighting the multifaceted benefits of education on the job.

#### Factors that affect the career trajectory

The physical therapy field and the educational institution itself play a unique role in shaping the career paths of graduates from the DRTREFI – Physical Therapy Department. The caliber of education obtained is one of the main factors influencing a person's professional trajectory. According to Bliss and Jacobson in 2020, the program's curriculum, faculty expertise, and clinical exposure influence graduates' readiness for diverse roles within physical therapy. Clinical experience is a critical factor. The breadth and depth of

clinical rotations completed throughout schooling significantly influence graduates' preparedness for the workforce. Apart from imparting practical skills, Teng et al. in 2021 mentioned that internships and fieldwork experiences expose students to various aspects of physical therapy and may lead them toward specific career pathways. Personal qualities like empathy, adaptability, and communication abilities also have a big impact on the trajectory. In physical therapy, where patient-centered treatment is crucial, these qualities are especially important. Graduates with a flair for research or leadership might forge unique careers in the industry, while those with excellent interpersonal skills may flourish in positions involving patients (Herrity, 2023).

### **Curriculum's role in shaping career trajectories**

The subjects that graduate of the DRTREFI – Physical Therapy Department undertook during their schooling had a significant impact on their future professional paths. The training received in a physical therapy program influenced their knowledge, abilities, and employment prospects.

Graduates' preparedness for the field was directly impacted by the breadth and depth of the curriculum. According to Memon et al. in 2020, a well-structured curriculum that encompassed a wide range of disciplines, from anatomy and physiology to specific treatment procedures, provided graduates with a strong foundation and a variety of professional options. This ensured graduates were ready to meet the demands of physical therapy practice.

Another crucial aspect was the curriculum's emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Alsaleh in 2020 stated that graduates who were challenged to think critically and adapt to diverse clinical scenarios were better equipped for a range of professional opportunities within the field.

Moreover, the curriculum needed to align with the evolving needs of the healthcare sector. According to the National Academies Press US in 2021, courses incorporating the latest evidence-based techniques and emerging technology better equipped graduates to address industry demands and trends.

### **Conceptual Literature**

#### **Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)**

SCCT, rooted in the fundamental concepts of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals as articulated by Lent and Brown in 2013, offers a valuable framework for comprehending the curriculum's impact on the career development of alumni. This study delves into how the knowledge and skills acquired influence career progression, assesses alumni satisfaction with their educational journey and examines the breadth of career choices pursued. These inquiries harmonize with SCCT's core principles, emphasizing self-regulation, outcome expectations, contextual factors, and environmental influences, as discussed by Akinlolu et al. in 2023. The study's objective of suggesting curriculum enhancements resonates with SCCT's practical utility in guiding interventions and enhancing educational quality. SCCT enhances this inquiry by shedding light on the intricate interplay between the curriculum and the career trajectories of alumni.

#### **Service quality theory in education**

The application of Service Quality Theory, derived from the service marketing domain, offers a valuable framework for the assessment of the curriculum's impact on alumni career development (Sibai et al., 2021). This theory allows for an examination of the curriculum's role by emphasizing the quality of educational services provided. Investigating essential inquiries related to the influence of knowledge and

skills acquired on career advancement, alumni satisfaction with their educational journey, the array of career choices pursued, this study closely aligns with the foundational principles of Service Quality Theory. These principles encompass responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibles (Hirschi & Koen, 2021). The study's core objective of proposing enhancements to the curriculum is consistent with the theory's focus on a continual improvement of service quality, with the aim of enhancing career prospects and the overall quality of education.

### **Human capital theory**

Human Capital Theory, rooted in the concept of investing in skills and knowledge, offers a valuable framework for comprehending how the curriculum has contributed to the development of alumni's human capital (Gillies, 2015). This perspective enables an in-depth exploration of how the knowledge and skills they have acquired during their education have influenced the progression of their careers, the shaping of their diverse career choices, and their satisfaction with their educational experiences (Zaini et al., 2021). Human Capital Theory enriches this inquiry by shedding light on the intricate relationship between educational investments and long-term career outcomes, underscoring the significance of human capital development in the professional journeys of alumni (Hung & Ramsden, 2021).

### **Kern's six-step approach**

Kern's methodology, celebrated for its methodical and organized characteristics, furnishes a well-defined roadmap for the development and evaluation of curricula, presenting a systematic approach to investigate and analyze the curriculum's influence on alumni's acquisition of knowledge and skills (Sweet & Palazzi, 2015). This framework facilitates a thorough examination of the pivotal role that these newly acquired skills play in shaping the progression of careers, diversifying the spectrum of career choices pursued, and significantly affecting alumni's contentment with their educational experiences. Kern's Six-Step Approach enriches this inquiry by providing a systematic, methodical, and comprehensive framework for understanding the intricate and long-lasting impact of the curriculum on the career paths of alumni (Sweet & Palazzi, 2015).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This tracer study employed a quantitative descriptive research design that covered the career trajectories of various alumni of DRTREFI from the Physical Therapy department. Quantitative data was gathered through structured surveys and assessments to supplement the insights obtained from the Tracer Study (Shuttleworth, 2008).

This approach enabled a nuanced exploration of the different factors that contributed to the career trajectories of the graduates. The integration of quantitative analysis provided statistical rigor and enhanced the robustness of the findings, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the research objectives.

### **Research Respondents**

The respondents of the study were the alumni of DRTREFI, particularly those who graduated from the Physical Therapy Program of the institution from batch 2013 - 2022. The identification of graduates was primarily based on the roster from the DRTREFI - BSPT Department office.



## Sampling Method

The researchers utilized the Stratified Sampling Method, where respondents were divided into subgroups based on the year they graduated. Once divided, the researchers randomly selected respondents from each batch of the population to ensure a representative sample and to maintain the proportionality of responses across different batch years. The researchers acquired the proportionality per batch by getting the sample size from 235 population size which encompasses the entire population of alumni from batch 2013 – 2022, by using the sample size calculator with a confidence level of 95% which resulted to 147. Then the researchers divided the number of graduates per batch to the sample size then multiplied with 95 in line with the confidence level that was utilized.

Formula 1. Formula on attaining the sample size per batch

$$\frac{\text{Graduates per batch}}{\text{Sample Size}} (95) = \text{Sample Size per Batch}$$

**Table 1. Sample size per batch**

Population Size	Sample Size (95% Coefficient Level)	Graduates per Batch (Year)	Sample Size per Batch
235	147	19 (2013)	12
		22 (2014)	14
		14 (2015)	9
		21 (2016)	13
		21 (2017)	13
		23 (2018)	14
		19 (2019)	12
		45 (2020)	28
		17 (2021)	11
		34 (2022)	21
Total		235	147

## Inclusion Criteria:

- Graduates of the Physical Therapy Program at Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Educational Foundation Inc. (DRTREFI).
- Alumni who completed their education within the specified timeframe of 2013-2022.
- Respondents provide consistent and non-contradictory information in their survey responses, This will be monitored through the Google Sheet where the response are inputted.

- Respondents who pursued the Physical Therapy program at DRTREFI, ensuring alignment with the study's focus.

**Exclusion Criteria:**

- Individual who did not graduate from DRTREFI's Physical Therapy program.
- Respondents who graduated outside the specified timeframe of 2013-2022.
- Respondents provide inconsistent or contradictory information.
- Students who pursued programs other than Physical Therapy at DRTREFI.
- Duplicate responses from the same individual, ensuring unique and independent contributions to the study.

**Research Locale**

The data gathering was conducted at DRTREFI Calanipawan Road, Tacloban City, Leyte. The researchers chose this locale for its convenience in logistics and to save time and resources during data collection. Data collection for this study was conducted through online messaging using Facebook. The collection of data took place from April to May 2024.

**Research Instrument**

The researchers employed a survey questionnaire delivered and completed online to collect necessary data focusing on DRTREFI - BSPT graduates from 2013 to 2022. The questionnaire was adapted from Balatay et al. in 2021, which assessed the career trajectories of graduates from batch 2016 to 2020 of Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology at DRTREFI, in their study titled "TRACER STUDY ON THE GRADUATES OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FROM 2016 TO 2020 OF AN ALLIED MEDICAL SCIENCES SCHOOL IN A HIGHLY URBANIZED CITY". The validity of the questionnaire was thoroughly evaluated and analyzed by the research committee of the mentioned study. Permission to use the questionnaire was sought and allowed by the proponents of the mentioned study through verbal agreement in an actual meeting. Google Forms was utilized as the platform to deliver the survey form to the respondents.

**Data Gathering**

This section outlined the sequence of data collection procedures, which were analyzed through Descriptive Analysis. Initially, the researchers adopted a questionnaire from Balatay et al. (2021) to address both the general problem and specific issues through the obtained data. The research instrument used was of the descriptive type.

Subsequently, the researchers submitted a formal request to the relevant authorities, specifically the Dean of the College, seeking permission to conduct the study within the BSPT Department at DRTREFI, Tacloban City. The data collection phase commenced after approval of the consent letter. Respondents that were selected from the sampling process were contacted through Facebook Messenger application and administered the survey questionnaires sent through mentioned applications along with the attached consent letter. Data gathering took place from April to May 2024.

Moreover, the researchers provided clear instructions to guide respondents in completing the survey questionnaires. It was emphasized that participation in the survey was entirely voluntary, and no financial

compensation was provided. Respondent's information and identity were kept confidential. Subsequently, the collected data were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

## Data Analysis

To determine the prevalence of the various variables included in the questionnaire, the researchers in this study utilized descriptive statistical tests including frequency count, percentage, correlation, and coefficient on the collected data. The gathered data were visualized in table form to provide a clear representation. Furthermore, the researchers verified the connection between graduates' employability and their professional choices, advancement, and satisfaction, as well as their skills and acquired knowledge. Correlation analysis was used to identify and measure the strength of the relationship between the school-acquired skills and employment status, and a hypothesis test was utilized to determine the correlation's statistical significance (Senthilnathan, 2019) .

## Ethical Consideration

Information gathered during the study was treated as confidential and was only accessible to the researchers involved. Respondents were required to confirm and sign an informed consent document before the research began. Only respondents who signed the informed consent were considered for inclusion in this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 2. Employment status of the graduates.**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Employed	113	76.9
Not Employed	31	21.1
Never Employed	3	2
Total	147	100.0

The analysis of the employment status of the 147 respondents indicates that 113 of them are employed, which accounts for approximately 76.9% of the total respondents. Among the respondents, 31 (21.1%) are not employed, and 3 (2%) have never been employed. The high employment rate suggests that the educational program is successful in preparing graduates for the labor market. A significant portion of the graduates who are not employed might be seeking better opportunities, taking further studies, or dealing with personal issues. The minimal percentage (2%) of graduates who have never been employed indicates a strong initial job market entry for most graduates. This data signifies the program's effectiveness in equipping graduates with the necessary skills and qualifications for employment. The high rate of employed graduates can be used as a marketing tool to attract prospective students by showcasing the program's success in job placement. It also indicates that there is a relatively small percentage of graduates who might need additional support or resources to secure employment (Cheng et al., 2021). By addressing the reasons for unemployment among the 21.1%, the program could further improve its outcomes.

**Table 3. Current occupation of the employed graduates**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Clinical Instructor	10	8.8

Physical Therapist	62	54.9
Virtual Assistant	13	11.5
Others	28	24.78
Total	113	100.0

Among the 113 employed graduates, around 54.9% are working as Physical Therapists, totaling approximately 62 individuals. Clinical Instructors make up 8.8% of the employed cohort, with 10 individuals in this role. Virtual Assistants account for 11.5%, and the remaining 24.78% are employed in various other occupations. The data reveals that a majority of the employed graduates are in roles related to physical therapy, indicating the program's strong emphasis or specialization in this field. The presence of graduates in diverse roles such as Clinical Instructor and Virtual Assistant highlights the versatility and broad applicability of the skills acquired through the program. This distribution demonstrates the program's effectiveness in preparing graduates for specific career paths in physical therapy while also providing a foundation for other roles (Zuwayny et al., 2024). The significant number of Physical Therapists suggests that graduates are likely to secure positions directly related to their field of study. The variety of other roles indicates that graduates have transferable skills that are valued in various industries. The research suggests that the graduates questioned have a reasonably high rate of employment, with a substantial number of them working in the field of physical therapy. This may indicate that their educational program has a particular emphasis or expertise in this area. Nevertheless, a minority of the graduates hold positions of authority or in more advanced positions, indicating potential for professional progression within the industry. The elevated employment rate indicates that the educational program is efficacious in equipping graduates for the labor market (Cheng et al., 2021). The significant presence of physical therapy positions suggests that the program likely has a high focus or concentration in this field, effectively preparing graduates with the essential abilities. Graduates of this curriculum are highly probable to secure work in positions linked to physical therapy, therefore providing a distinct career trajectory for current and potential students.

The program can utilize these statistics in marketing campaigns to attract potential students by emphasizing the high rate of employment and the successful placement of graduates in their chosen fields, highlighting the potential for career progression and leadership opportunities. This can be particularly appealing to individuals who are seeking long-term career development. In order to enhance employment results, the program should consider enhancing its curriculum in the field of physical therapy, as a significant proportion of graduates pursue careers in this area (Cuadra et al., 2019). The data substantiates the importance of establishing and upholding alliances with healthcare facilities and clinics that employ physical therapists, assistants, and technicians. By enhancing these collaborations, students can have access to a greater number of internship opportunities, secure job placements, and acquire practical experience in real-world settings. The analysis concludes that the program in physical therapy has achieved success, as evidenced by its alumni's outstanding job results and the potential for professional growth.

Other employment roles include Billing Officer, Medical Biller, Call Center Agent, Clinical Director, Entrepreneur, ESL Teacher, Executive Assistant, Firefighter, Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), Pharmacist Assistant, Physician, PT assistant, PT Technician, Recruitment Specialist, School Director, Self-Employed, Senior Health Care Assistant, Sports Coordinator, Telecommunication Operator, Therapy Case Reviewer, and Senior Health Care Assistant.

**Table 4. Reasons of not being employed of the graduates**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Business	3	6.1
Continued Studying	9	18.4
Family Concern	5	10.2
Plan to seek job outside the country	6	12.3
Starting pay is too low	7	14.3
Lack of work experience	3	6.1
No connection	4	8.2
No interest in getting job	1	2
No job opportunity	11	22.4
Total	49	100.0

Among the 31 respondents who are not employed answered with one or several reasons, the most common reason is the lack of job opportunities (22.4%), followed by continued studying (18.4%) and low starting pay (14.3%). Other notable reasons include planning to seek jobs outside the country (12.2%), family concerns (10.2%), and lack of connections (8.2%). These findings suggest that while the educational program is effective in preparing many graduates for the job market, there are still significant barriers to employment for some. The lack of job opportunities and low starting pay indicate economic factors that affect graduates' employment status. Continued studying reflects a commitment to further education, possibly to enhance qualifications and job prospects. Family concerns and plans to seek jobs abroad highlight personal and geographical factors influencing employment decisions (Donald et al., 2018). Understanding these reasons is crucial for the program to address and mitigate barriers to employment. Efforts could include enhancing career services, providing networking opportunities, and advocating for better starting salaries in the industry. Additionally, offering support for further education and flexible career options can help accommodate graduates' diverse needs and circumstances. By addressing these issues, the program can improve employment outcomes and provide better support for graduates facing employment challenges (Albien & Naidoo, 2017). Highlighting the reasons for unemployment in a transparent manner also allows the program to develop targeted interventions and improve overall graduate satisfaction and success.

The acquired data can be used in several aspects. For program improvement, identifying the main barriers to employment can help in developing strategies to overcome these obstacles. In student support, providing tailored resources and support for graduates who are facing challenges in securing employment can enhance their job prospects. For marketing, addressing the reasons for unemployment transparently can demonstrate the program's commitment to continuous improvement and support for its graduates. Engaging with alumni to understand their post-graduation challenges can also help in refining the program and its support services.

**Table 5. Significant correlation between the school-acquired skills and competencies of the graduates and their employment status**

Variables	Value	p-value	Interpretation
School-acquired skills and	0.651	0.000	Result is Strong



competencies versus employment status			
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The results demonstrate a robust and statistically significant correlation between the abilities and competences that graduates learn during their education and their later career status. The p-value of 0.000 implies that the relationship between school-acquired abilities and work status is statistically significant at the 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that the likelihood of the observed correlation being a result of random chance is less than 1%. The exceptionally small p-value offers strong evidence that the abilities and proficiencies acquired via education are vital factors in determining one's employment status. This discovery confirms the efficacy of educational programs in equipping students with pertinent skills that greatly improve their chances of getting employment.

The score of 0.651 signifies a moderately positive correlation between the two variables. These findings indicate that a stronger correlation exists between higher levels of abilities and competencies obtained in school and improved employment results. Graduates who have gained additional skills and competences during their study are more likely to secure employment, emphasizing the significance of skill development in education. Educational institutions should prioritize the development of curricula that emphasize the acquisition of practical skills and the cultivation of competencies to improve the employability of graduates (Cheng et al., 2021). The moderate correlation emphasizes the necessity for ongoing enhancement in matching educational programs with industry demands to further fortify this connection.

Schools and colleges should evaluate and improve their curricula to ensure they are equipping students with the skills and competences that are sought after in the job market. Integrating supplementary skill enhancement initiatives, internships, and hands-on experiences can enhance employment results for graduates. In addition, policymakers can utilize this data to provide a rationale for allocating funds and aiding educational programs that have been demonstrated to improve employability by acquiring new skills (Qubati & Tamim, 2021). Promoting cooperation between educational institutions and industry can facilitate the synchronization of educational achievements with the demands of the job market, thereby guaranteeing that graduates are adequately equipped for employment. Students should recognize the significance of obtaining pertinent skills and abilities during their education and actively pursue chances to enhance these through a range of academic and extracurricular activities. Furthermore, it is crucial to highlight the significance of lifelong learning and ongoing skill enhancement to adjust to the evolving demands of the work market (Buckley & Lee, 2018).

However, companies can customize their recruitment techniques in order to give priority to individuals who have shown exceptional abilities and competencies gained via their schooling. Establishing collaborations with educational institutions helps ensure that the training offered is tailored to meet the specific requirements of the sector (Chen, 2022).

**Table 6. Other career choices that the graduates ventured into.**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Healthcare	89	78.76
Education	13	11.50
Hospitality and Tourism	4	3.54
Others	7	6.20

Total	113	100.0
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The results of the analysis of the data concerning the career paths chosen by 113 graduates of physical therapy who are currently working demonstrate that employment opportunities cover a wide range of industries. Nearly seventy-nine percent of those who have graduated from physical therapy programmes have decided to work in the medical field. In light of the fact that physical therapy is inherently a healthcare profession, it is reasonable to anticipate that graduates will look for employment opportunities that make use of their specialised skills and training. A solid job market in the healthcare industry is shown by the high proportion, which shows that there is a great need for physical therapy specialists within the realm of healthcare (Maayah et al., 2022).

It was estimated that approximately 11.5% of the graduates were working in the education sector. In the context of educational institutions, this may encompass jobs such as teaching, research, or administrative positions. This shows that graduates of physical therapy programmes have the opportunity to broaden their professions beyond providing direct patient care, thereby contributing to the progress of academic and research endeavours in the area.

A small minority of individuals (3.54%) have discovered employment opportunities at the hospitality and tourism industry. These opportunities may include wellness programmes, spa facilities, or rehabilitation services at hotels and resorts. This indicates that there is a possibility for growth in wellness and rehabilitation services within the hospitality industry, which shows that there are increasing prospects for graduates of physical therapy programmes in non-traditional sectors. Graduates are able to place their abilities to use in a variety of settings, making a contribution to the overall wellness of guests and establishing a niche market for physical therapy services.

## CONCLUSION

The study of the career paths of graduates from the Doña Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Educational Foundation, Inc. (DRTREFI) Physical Therapy Department, from batches 2013 to 2022, highlights several important points. Most graduates have found employment in various physical therapy roles, such as physical therapists, assistants, and technicians, reflecting the strong demand for these professionals in healthcare. Additionally, some graduates have branched out into other roles like clinical directors, instructors, and virtual assistants, demonstrating the versatility of the skills acquired at DRTREFI. There is a clear link between the education received at DRTREFI and their employment, with many graduates noting that the curriculum provided them with the necessary technical and interpersonal skills to succeed professionally. While employment outcomes are generally positive, graduates have faced challenges, including competition in the job market and the need for ongoing professional development to stay current in their field. Graduates expressed high satisfaction with their education, particularly valuing the practical training that was key to their career growth. These findings underscore the effectiveness of the DRTREFI Physical Therapy program in preparing students for successful careers, evidenced by the high employment rate and diverse career paths of its alumni. The strong alignment between the curriculum and professional success highlights the importance of a comprehensive and adaptive educational approach.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations emerge from these findings. To keep the curriculum aligned with the evolving demands of the physical therapy field, it should be continuously updated to include new technologies and

therapeutic techniques. Creating a structured alumni network could provide mentorship opportunities and practical insights for current students, fostering a feedback loop for curriculum enhancement and ongoing professional development. Encouraging graduates to pursue further certifications and advanced degrees can help them remain competitive and achieve career advancement. The institution can support this by offering workshops and seminars focused on continuing education. Strengthening career services within the institution, such as job placement assistance, resume workshops, and interview preparation, can further support graduates in their job search. Additionally, future research should expand to include more recent graduates and examine long-term career trajectories, as well as investigating the impact of specific curriculum components on career outcomes to identify areas for targeted improvement

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