KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE TRACER

PRELIMINARY REPORT

SUBMITTED TO

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VICE CHANCELLOR

BY

KU TRACE COMMITTEE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This report provides results from a pilot Tracer Study at Kenyatta University (KU), undertaken by a committee that was set up by the Vice Chancellor following a training of two members of staff in the UNITRACE in Kassel. The committee members appointed to undertake the Tracer Studies at KU are indicated in Appendix 1.

It was noted that new demands were emerging from Higher Education (HE) that required an understanding of the mobility and employability of the students graduating. The other emerging issues in HE include:

- Higher Education institutions are increasingly being demanded to provide empirical evidence regarding the professional relevance of their study programs.

- In some countries, Higher Education institutions are formally required to conduct undergraduate and graduate tracer studies in order for them to get the accreditation of their study programmes.

- Besides the aspect of accountability, Higher Education institutions are increasingly becoming more interested in getting systematic feedback from their graduates on the quality of education they are getting from their respective institutions.

Furthermore, it was stated in the report that the improvement of study programmes, and more specific the revision of the curriculum are the core objectives of the undergraduate and graduate tracer studies. Appendix 2 provides details on the process of institutionalizing Tracer Studies at KU.

2.0   METHODOLOGY

2.1   Terms of Reference

The committee was reconstituted on July following consultations with the Vice Chancellor on 6th July 2011.The Trace Study is meant to

1. Institutionalized trace studies
2. Collect and analyze data to help:
    a. Improve the curricula and revise relevant policies.
    b. Measure and enhance the marketability of our programs.

The terms of service for the Committee are as follows:

1. To develop and electronic questionnaire using existing software

2. Send the Questionnaire to the 2010 graduates

3. Analyze the data and compile the report by 30th September 2011

2.2   The Survey Questionnaire

The team developed the questionnaire consultatively. Given that it was a pilot to be completed in less than three months, the team agreed on simple 22 questions for the survey indicated in Appendix 3:

2.3   The 2010 Graduates Data

A total of 2868 Kenyatta University 2010 graduates was compiled in a database which was available at the Alumni Directorate. The database consisted on names of students who graduated in both July and December 2010 in various degree programmes.

2.4   The Software

The team decided to use Lime survey as the software for the survey, and it was noted that it had been used by members in previous studies.

2.5   Launching the Tracer Study

In launching the Tracer Study the team agreed as follows:

- The Survey to be controlled, hence tokens to be sent only to 2010 graduates in the database with a link to the survey
- Individual tokens to be sent by email to all graduates with email addresses.
- A general token to be sent to graduates with mobile telephones providing a link to the survey.
- A reminder to be sent to the graduates after 20 days of launching
- The tokens to be activated up to the last day of Committee.

Preparations were made on the web page to interact with the graduates including an introductory section (Appendix 4).

3.0   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1   Schools from which the respondents undertook their studies

From the survey, it was reported that most of the graduates who were interviewed studied from the school of humanities and social sciences (51 respondents, 24.06 % of the total interviewed population), Figure 1. The school with least number of employees in the field is hospitality and tourism (1 respondent, 0.47 % of the total interviewed population), Figure 1. However, schools like visual and performing arts, law and Agriculture and enterprise development had no respondents from the population interviewed (Figure 1).
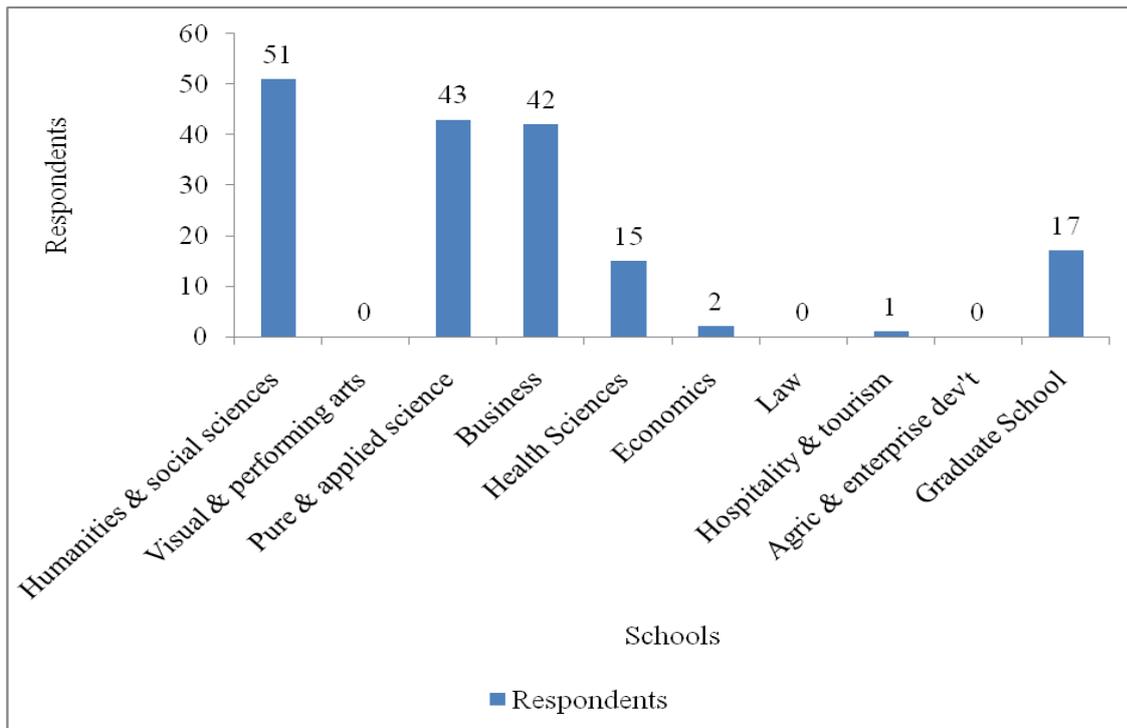
Figure 3.1: Schools from which the respondents undertook their studies

3.2   Reasons for taking the courses or pursuing degree

Out of the 212 interviewed populations, Strong passion for the profession was the major reason as to why the graduates pursued degree/courses of their choice at the University and 114 respondents (53.77 % of the total interviewed population) agreed with that reason (Table 3.1). A prospect for career advancement was the second reason as to why the graduates pursued the courses/degree (93 respondents, 43.87 % of the total population interviewed). From the survey, it was realized that most of the graduates' choice of the courses/ degree pursued were not due to peer influence (5 respondents, 2.36 % of the total population interviewed), table 3.2.

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Table 3.1: Reasons for taking the courses or pursuing degree

Reasons for taking the courses/pursuing degree	Frequency	Percent
High grades in the course or subject area(s) related to the course	57	26.89
Good grades in high school	64	30.19
Influence of parents or relatives	19	8.96
Peer influence	5	2.36
Inspired by a role model	45	21.23
Strong passion for the profession	114	53.77
Prospects for immediate employment	52	24.53
Status or prestige of the profession	25	11.79
Availability of the course in Kenyatta University	55	25.94
Prospects of career advancement	93	43.87
Prospects of attractive compensation	25	11.79
Opportunity for employment abroad	14	6.6
No Particular choice or no better idea	8	3.77
Others	12	5.66
Total	588	

3.3 Training(s) / Advance studies attended after college

After the college, it was realized that most of the students/graduates go for further trainings/advance studies to improve on their skills in their profession (84 respondents, 39.62 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.3. 34.91 % of the population interviewed (74 respondents) do not proceed for further trainings/ advance studies (Figure 3.3).
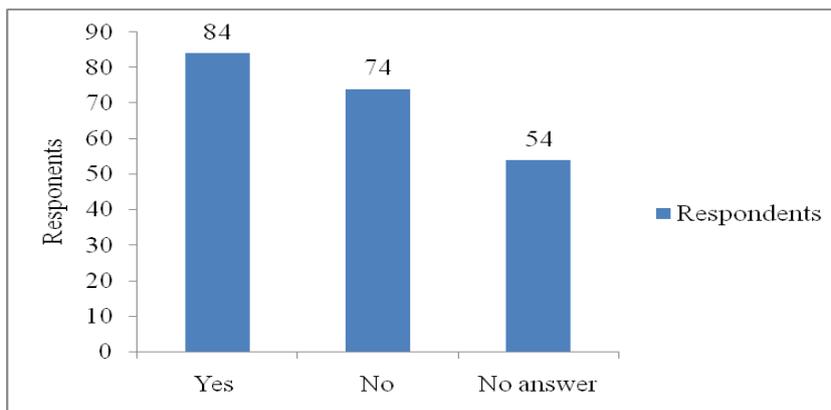

Figure 3.3: Trainings/advance studies attended after college

3.4 Graduates employed

The highest number of the graduates who were interviewed had jobs (154 respondents, 72.64 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.4, however, most of the graduates interviewed were employed by the private sector (88 respondents, 41.51 % of the total population interviewed) followed by the government (66 respondents, 31.13 % of the respondents) and few of the graduates are self employed (21 respondents, 9.91 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.5. 37 respondents (17.45 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.4 were not employed and the main reasons why some graduates were not yet employed was that there were no job opportunities and lack of work experience (Figure 3.6)
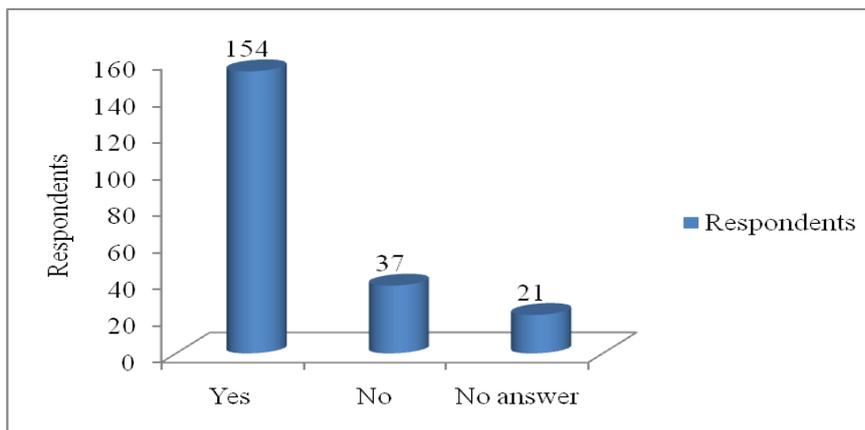
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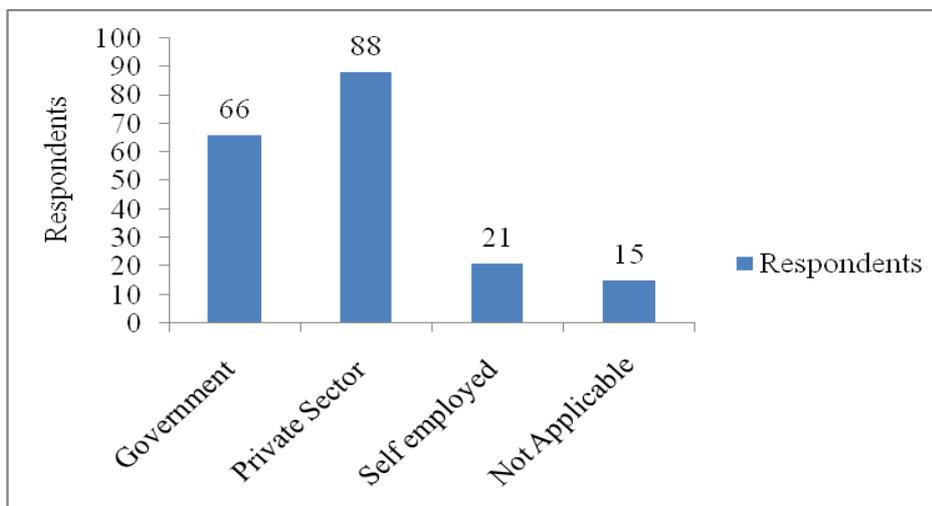
Figure 3.5: Area of employment for graduates
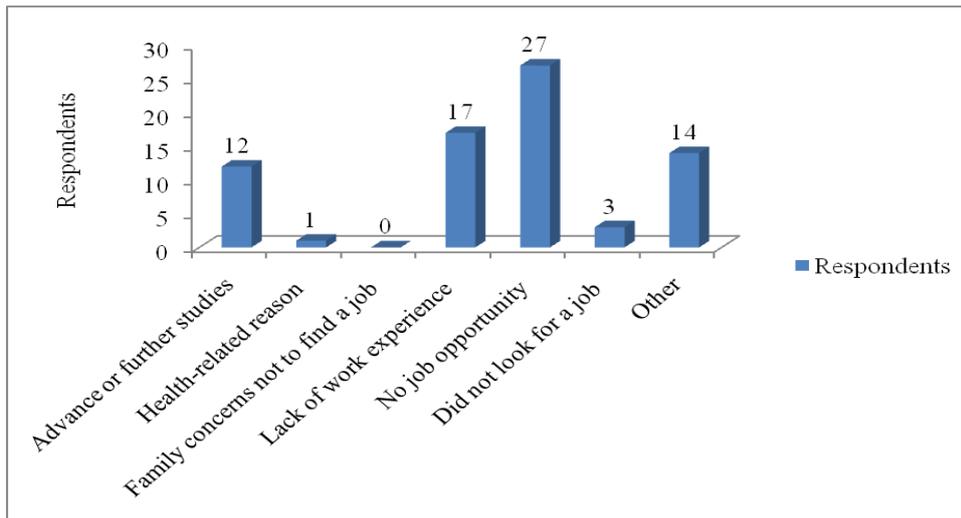
Figure 3.6: Reasons why some graduates are not yet employed

3.5   Present employment status

From the survey, the highest number of the graduates have permanent jobs (104 respondents, 49.06 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.7. 37 respondents (17.45 % of the total population interviewed) said that they do casual jobs and very few graduates who were interviewed are self employed (25 respondents, 11.79 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.7.
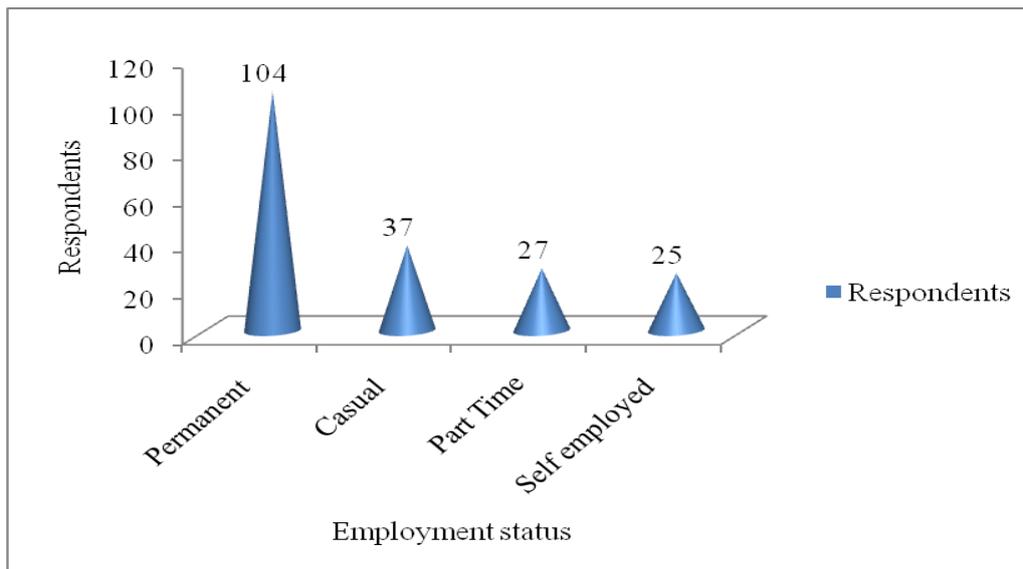
Figure 3.7: Present employment status

3.6   Period for the graduates to land on their first job

The highest number of graduates spend up to one to six months to land on their first job (75 respondents, 35.38 % of the total respondents interviewed) Figure 3.8. 12 respondents (5.66 % of the total population interviewed) reported that they take about one year to less than two years to land on their first jobs, Figure 3.8. The main media through which these graduates land on their first job are through response to advertisement (57 respondents, 26.89 % of the total population interviewed) and as walk in applicant (43 respondents, 20.28 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.9. Very few graduates get jobs from the family business and arrangements from the school placement officer. (Figure3.9).
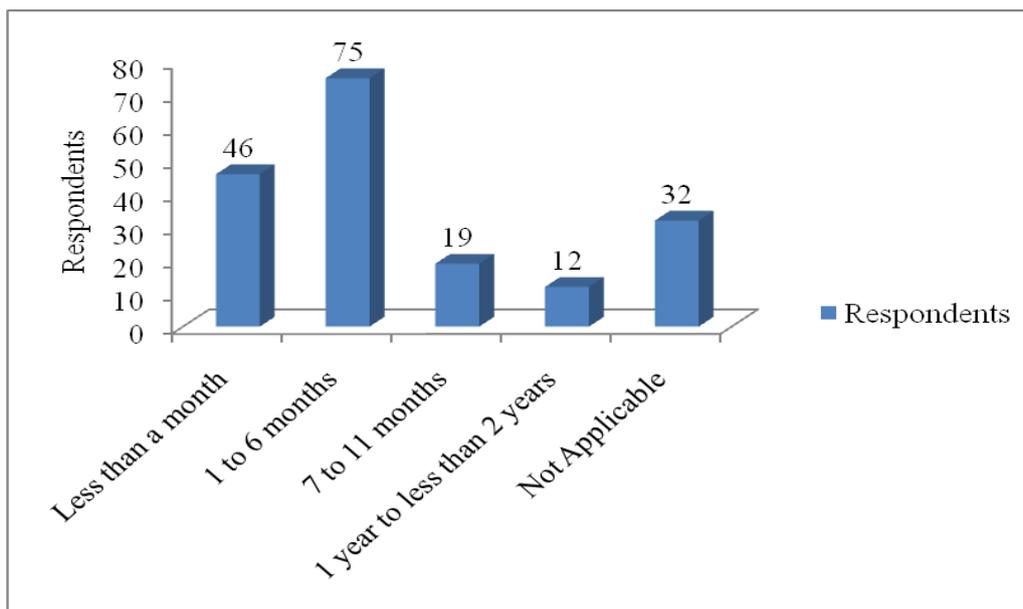
Figure 3.8: Period for the graduates to land on their first job
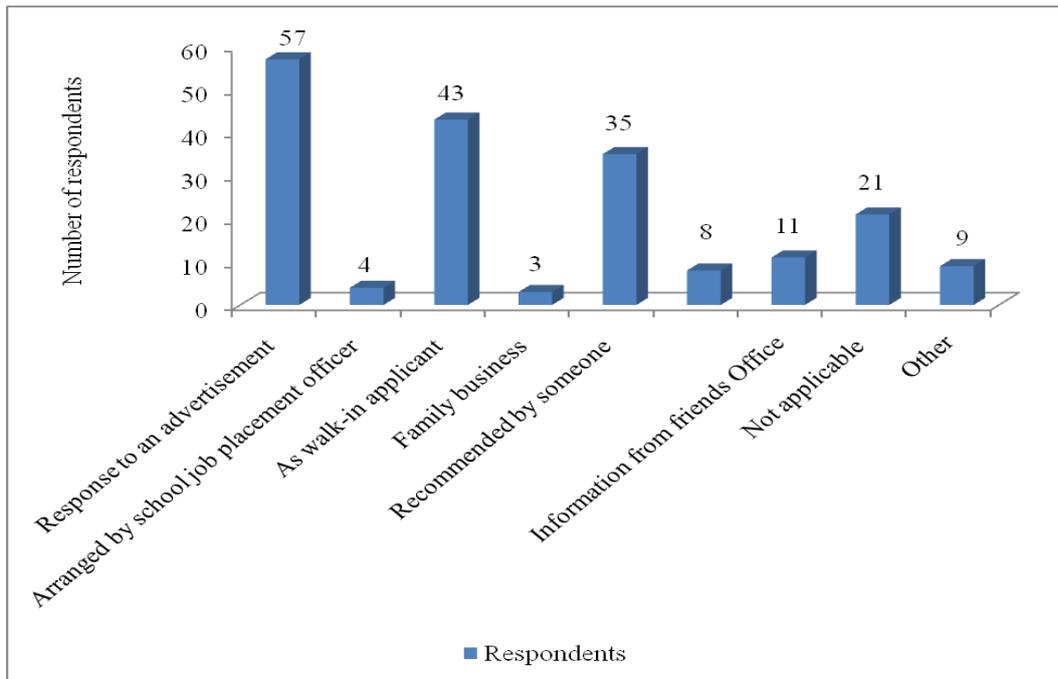
Figure 3.9: Media through which graduates find their first job

3.7 Graduates' job levels in the market

Most of the graduates who were interviewed had their professional jobs (94 respondents, 44.34 % of the total population interviewed) and the least job position level of the graduates was managerial or executive level, 14 respondents (6.6 % of the total population interviewed), Figure 3.10. The highest initial gross monthly earnings for the graduates first job was in the range of 20,000 to 45,000 KShs per month while the least amount range reported was 80,000 KShs and above (Figure 3.11).
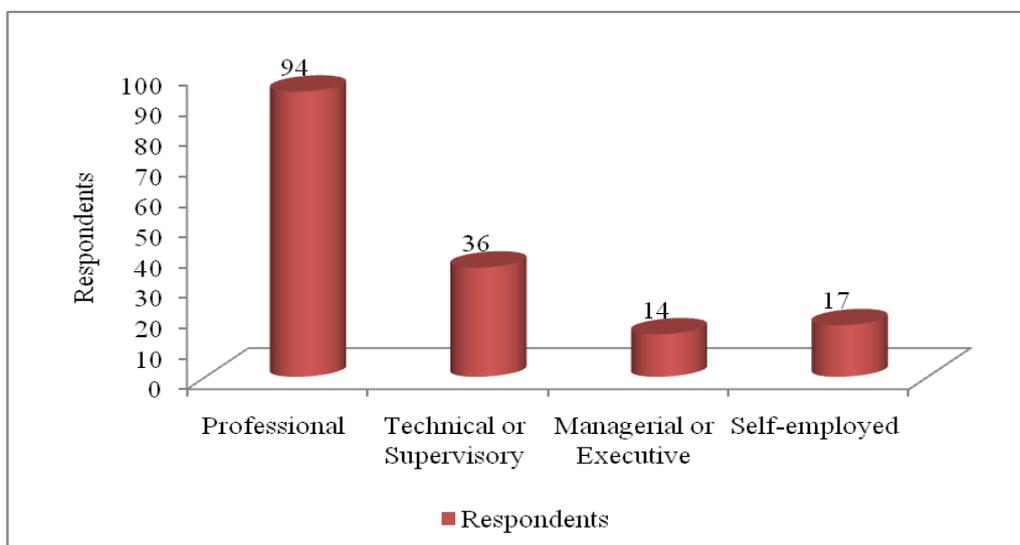
Figure 3.10: Graduates job levels in the market

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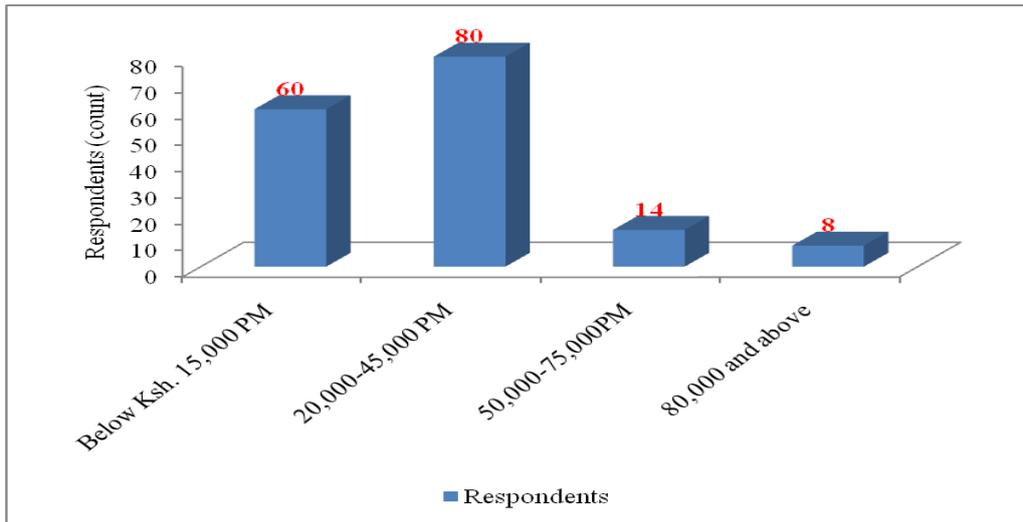
Figure 3.11: Graduates' initial gross monthly earnings for their first job

3.8 Useful/applicable core values learned in college for the first job
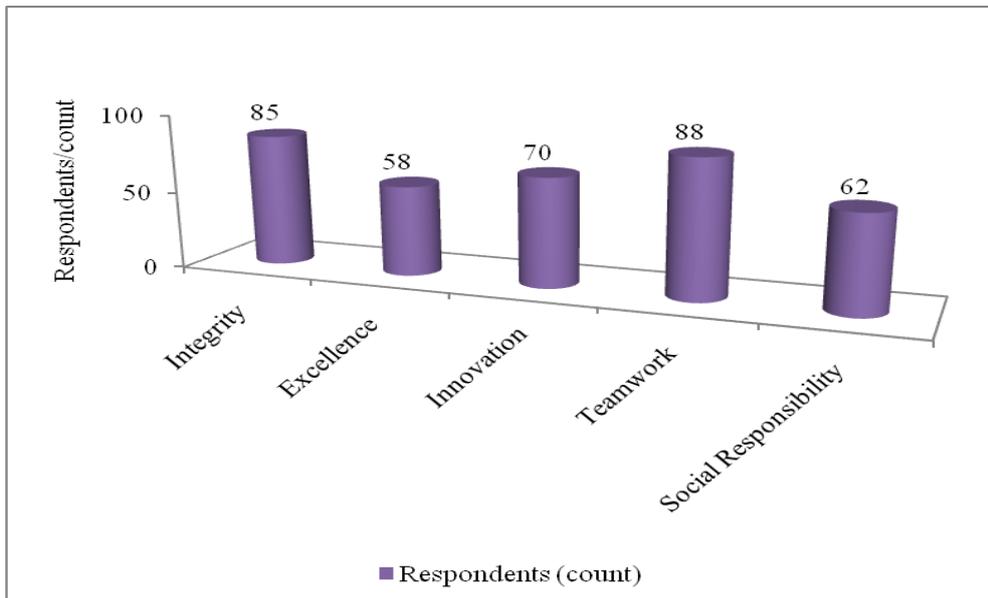
Figure 3.12: Useful/applicable core values learned in college for the first job

LESSONS LEARNT AND WAY FORWARD

The findings from the pilot of Tracer Study at Kenyatta University indicates the importance of following up the graduates with a view to improving the marketability of the graduates while at the same time improving the quality of the programmes at the University.

There is need to undertake the Tracer using an improved questionnaire tool that captures more issues than indicated in the pilot survey.

There is need to carry out these studies annually as students graduate, thus institutionalizinng the Tracer Studies.

There is need to involve the School of Education, such that it can be incorporated in HE education learning.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: MEMBERS OF KU TRACER COMMITTEE

Prof. Joy Obando   - Director, Financial Aid Office, Chairperson
Prof. Chris Shisanya   - Dean School of Humanities and Social Sciences - Member
Dr. Gitau Njoroge   - University Librarian, Member
Dr. Lucy Maina   - Director, Peace and Security Studies, Member
Mr. G. Macharia   - Director, ICT, Member
Dr. Kisiang'ani   - Director Alumni Progarmmes, Member
Ms. Bhoke Chacha   - Administrator, Secretary

APPENDIX 2: TOWARDS INSTITUTIONALIZING TRACER STUDIES AT KU

PREAMBLE

Prof Shisanya and Dr. Obando participated in the DES Training Course "UNIVERSITY GRADUATES' TRACER STUDY COURSE (UNITRACE)" at the Campus of Kassel University October 11th to October 22nd 2010 at the Campus of Kassel University (Module I). This course was jointly organized by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Kassel University. The intensive training course is part of the DIES programme (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies) which has been jointly coordinated by the DAAD and HRK (German Rectors' Conference) since 2001. More information about the DIES programme can be found at http://www.daad.de/dies. The 20 participants from 10 institutions from Southeast Asia, Central America and East Africa were to participate in the course as indicated in the tabulated timelines.

Table 1: Course Structure

Module	Date	Place
I: Survey preparation	October 11-22, 2010	Kassel University, Germany
II: Data analysis	6-9 months after Module I	Kassel University, Germany
III: Interpretation of findings and dissemination two-days regional workshop,	12-18 months after Module I	In the participants' region

It was noted that tracer studies are important as a way of understanding the relevance and quality of programmes offered by the Universities as well as the labour market. Each institution agreed to the following;
- To initiate setting up an organizational structure for Tracer Studies so as to ensure sustainability and to interest students in Higher Education in studying Tracer Issues.
- To use the developed questionnaire to collect survey data using the 2009 graduate cohort – this could be done online to enable the analysis using the QTAFI software
- To share the data during Module II of the training in 2011.

- To share the findings during Module III in 2012.

THE PROPOSAL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF TRACER STUDIES

The team then submitted a proposal with an eight (8) member committee for implementation of the KU Tracer, with the Director Alumni as Chair. The Alumni Directorate was identified as a key stakeholder to host the Tracer Studies at Kenyatta University. The Directorate of Alumni Programmes (www.ku.ac.ke/alumni/) serves present and future alumni and the University community by working to develop viable avenues for successful activities that would support the University's vision to be a dynamic, inclusive and competitive centre for excellence. It strives to be an effective partner in the realization of t he goals cherished by Kenyatta University and its former students. Since its inception as a university college in the early 1970's and its eventual acquisition of a full university status in 1985, Kenyatta University has developed an alumni base of over 60,000 professionals. The Directorate has a mission to mobilize the alumni and well wishers to support the welfare and progress of Kenyatta University and to participate in the enhancement and improvement of intellectual and material well being of Kenyatta University community including fostering close friendship and professional relations between alumni and the university.

The other members proposed for the implementation of the Tracer Study in KU were as follows:

- The Webmaster - has good knowledge of the web-based surveys, which will be utilised in tracer studies.
- The Dean SHSS and SED - Alumni from these Schools will form our pilot cohort for graduate tracer study at KU, hence the need to have the respective Deans on board.
- The Registrar academic office is important in tracer studies for availing accurate student records.
- The ICT Director - Electronic questionnaire for the graduate tracer. This will be done in conjunction with INCHER who will provide a template for the study.

Both Prof. Shisanya and Dr. Obando were important members of the committee since they are involved in the UNITRACE study at INCHER.

APPOINTMENT OF GRADUATE STUDENT TRACER STUDY COMMITTEE

Following the proposal for implementation of the Tracer Studies at Kenyatta University, the Vice Chancellor appointed a ten (10) member committee to take the process forward. This included all the proposed members and the Teaching Programmes Unit. The following were the terms of reference:

The GSTSC embarked on developing a work plan and budget which included buying software for the ICT department. Given that it had been agreed that the Tracer studies would be done with a zero budget, it became necessary to relook at the way forward, thus the Vice Chancellor reconstituted the GSTSC into the Tracer Studies Committee (TSC).

RECONSTITUTION INTO TRACER STUDY COMMITTEE

The reconstituted committee was scaled down to two main directorates in the University, namely, the Alumni Directorate and the Information Communication and Technology Directorate, with support from the ICT Department in the Library. The Alumni Administrator was appointed Secretary to the Committee, hence enabling the Alumni Directorate to take charge of the implementation. The Chair to the Committee was a member of the UNITRACE team hence able to understand the rationale and implementation procedure following participation in UNITRACE 2010. The reconstituted committee now had seven (7) members including the two participants from UNITRACE. Through email consultations and meetings, the team agreed on the survey questionnaire and the software. The ICT Director and Librarian were charged with customizing the survey to the Lime survey and uploading on the server, while the Alumni Office was charged with cleaning the data. All members of the team contributed the questions for the survey.

APPENDIX 3: KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE TRACER QUESTIONNAIRE

A: SOCIO-BIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

A1   Name:

A2   Date of Birth

A3   Current Residence:

A4   County

A5   Gender

A6   Marital Status

A7   Permanent Address:

A8   Telephone Number (Landline):

A9   Mobile Number:

A10   E-Mail

B: STUDY CONDITIONS AND PROVISIONS, STUDY EXPERIENCES

B1   Educational Attainment **Degree** [   ]

B2   Year Graduated

B3   Please check the school from which studies were undertaken at KU

Check any that apply

1 ☐ School of humanities and social sciences
2 ☐ Visual and performing arts
3 ☐ Pure and applied science
4 ☐ Business
5 ☐ Health Sciences
6 ☐ Economics
7 ☐ Law
8 ☐ Hospitality and tourism
9 ☐ Agriculture and enterprise development
10 ☐ Graduate School

B4   Other professional qualifications and/or certificate courses

[text area]

B5   Reason(s) for taking the course (s) or pursuing degree(s). You may check (√) more than one answer. Check any that apply

1. ☐ High grades in the course or subject area(s) related to the course
2. ☐ Good grades in high school
3. ☐ Influence of parents or relatives
4. ☐ Peer influence
5. ☐ Inspired by a role model

6. ☐ Strong passion for the profession
7. ☐ Prospects for immediate employment
8. ☐ Status or prestige of the profession
9. ☐ Availability of the course in Kenyatta University
10. ☐ Prospects of career advancement
11. ☐ Prospects of attractive compensation
12. ☐ Opportunity for employment abroad
13. ☐ No Particular choice or no better idea
14. ☐ Others (Please specify) [   ]

B6.   Training(s) / Advance studies attended after college?

1. ○ Yes
2. ○ No
3. ◉ No answer

D: EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

D1   EMPLOYMENT DATA Are you employed?

1. ○ Yes
2. ○ No

❓If **No** or **Never Employed**, proceed to Question 9

D2   AREA OF EMPLOYEMENT

Check at least 1 answer

1. ☐ Government
2. ☐ Private Sector
3. ☐ Self employed
4. ☐ Not Applicable

D3   Please state reason/s why you are not yet employed. You may check (/) more than one answer. Check any that apply

1. ☐ Advance or further studies
2. ☐ Health-related reason
3. ☐ Family concerns not to find a job
4. ☐ Lack of work experience
5. ☐ No job opportunity
6. ☐ Did not look for a job
7. ☐ Others (Please specify) [   ]

D4   Present employment status Check at least 1 answer

1. ☐ Permanent
2. ☐ Casual
3. ☐ Part Time
4. ☐ Self employed

D5   If self-employed, what skills acquired in college were you able to apply in your work?

[text box]

D6   Name of Company or Organization including address

[text box]

D7   Present occupation (Ex. Grade School Teacher, Self-employed**) (Location of work)**

1. Name of Company or Organization including address [   ]
2. Place of work Local/ Abroad [   ]

C   JOB SEARCH AND TRANSITION TO WORK

C1   Is this your first job after college? **Yes / No** Check any that apply

1 ☐ Yes

2 ☐ No

3 ☐ Not Applicable

> ❓ • If **Yes,** proceed to Question 15

C2   What are the reason(s) for staying on the job? You may check (√) more than one answer. Rank your answers using 1 as the most significant reason

	1	2	3	4	5	No answer
1. Salaries and benefits	○	○	○	○	○	◉
2. Career challenge	○	○	○	○	○	◉
3. Related to my special skill	○	○	○	○	○	◉
4. Related to course or programs of study	○	○	○	○	○	◉
5. Proximity to residence	○	○	○	○	○	◉
6. Peer influence	○	○	○	○	○	◉
7. Family influence	○	○	○	○	○	◉
8. Other reason(s), please specify	○	○	○	○	○	◉

C3   How long did it take to land your first job? Check any that apply

1. ☐ Less than a month

2. ☐ 1 to 6 months

3. ☐ 7 to 11 months

4. ☐ 1 year to less than 2 years

5. ☐ Not Applicable

C4   How did you find your first job? Check any that apply

1. ☐ Response to an advertisement
2. ☐ Arranged by school job placement officer
3. ☐ As walk-in applicant
4. ☐ Family business
5. ☐ Recommended by someone
6. ☐ Job Fair of Public Employment Service Office
7. ☐ Information from friends Office
8. ☐ Not applicable
9. ☐ Others (Please specify) [_____]

C5   How long did you stay in your first job? Check any that apply

1. ☐ Less than a month
2. ☐ 1 to 3 months
3. ☐ 3 to 6 months
4. ☐ 6 months to less than 1 year
5. ☐ 1 years to less than 2 years
6. ☐ Not applicable

C6   What is the job level of your position? Check any that apply

1. ☐ Professional
2. ☐ Technical or Supervisory
3. ☐ Managerial or Executive
4. ☐ Self-employed

C7   What is your initial gross monthly earning in your first job after college? Check any that apply

1. ☐ Below Ksh. 15,000 PM
2. ☐ 20,000-45,000 PM
3. ☐ 50,000-75,000PM
4. ☐ 80,000 and above

E: WORK AND COMPETENCIES, RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDY AND WORK

E1   Was the curriculum you had in college relevant to your first job? **Yes/ No**

  1. ○ Yes
  2. ○ No
      3. ◉ No answer

  [?] • If **No,** please proceed to Question 24.

• If **Yes,** please proceed to Question 23.

E2   What core values learned in college did you find useful/applicable in your first job? Rank your answers using 1 as the most useful/applicable. Check any that apply

  1. ☐ Integrity
  2. ☐ Excellence
  3. ☐ Innovation
  4. ☐ Teamwork
  5. ☐ Social Responsibility

E3   List down suggestions to further improve your course curriculum.
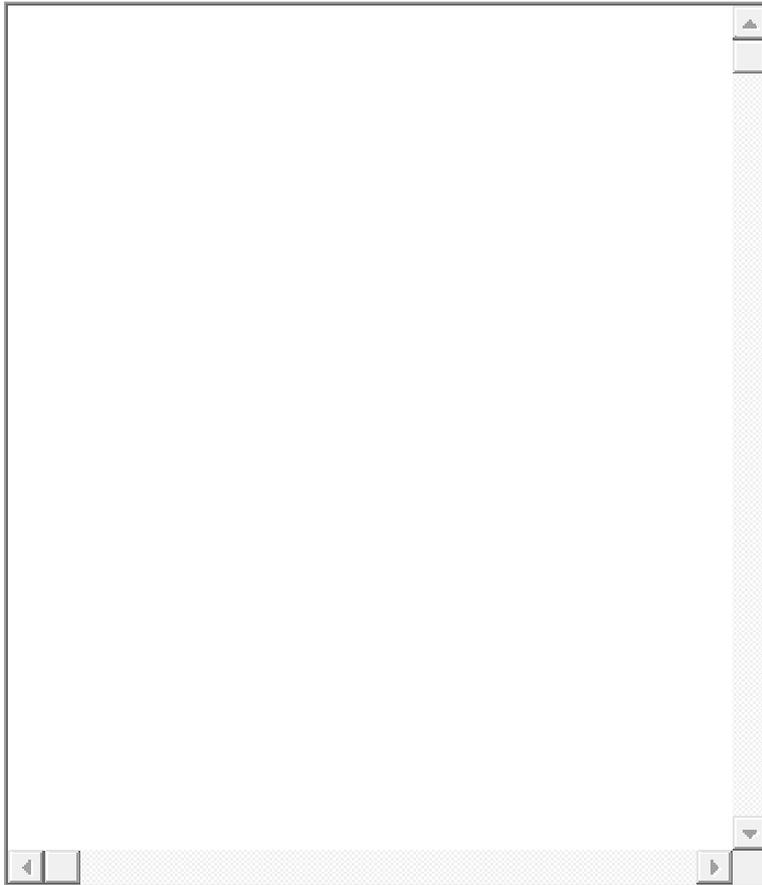
LimeSurvey is Free software
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APPENDIX 4: INTRODUCTION TO TRACER STUDY ON WEBSITE

Kenyatta University has commissioned a tracer study aimed at tracking the various destinations of our graduates as far as job placement, work and career development are concerned. The tracer study is the first of its kind and is informed by the following concerns;

- That tracing our graduates enables Kenyatta University to express our concern for our Alumni beyond graduation.
- That tracking the work destinations of our graduates enables the University to evaluate its programmes and curricula based on information on what programmes lead to faster and relevant job placement for regular improvement of our curricula.
- That a tracer study provides relevant data for evaluating career development of our graduates.