

## Research Article

# A Tracer Study on the Employment Status of Accounting and Finance Graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, from 2009–2013 Ethiopian Calendars (E.C.)

Dr. Kanbiro Orkaido Deyganto<sup>1,2</sup>, Addisu Abebe<sup>2</sup>, Mathewos Yure<sup>2</sup>, Debebe Dangiso<sup>3</sup>

1. Atlantic International University, Honolulu, United States; 2. Furra Institute of Development Studies and Education, Furra College, Ethiopia;

3. Furra College, Ethiopia

This tracer study focuses on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, between 2009 and 2013 Ethiopian Calendars. The study adopts a pragmatic research philosophy, utilizing a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches to gather comprehensive data on the graduates' career outcomes. A descriptive research design is employed, with data collected through survey questionnaires and document reviews. Concerning the first specific objective, results show a high employment rate (80%) among graduates, with a significant portion (14%) engaged in entrepreneurship and a low unemployment rate (6%). In relation to the second specific objective, the findings from the survey of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, reveal a high level of job satisfaction among those employed in the accounting field. Based on the responses from the 15 purposively selected employers, it is evident that they are highly satisfied with the knowledge, skills, and attitude exhibited by accounting and finance graduates from the years 2009–2013 E.C. The study highlights the importance of quality education, support for entrepreneurship, and addressing unemployment issues to ensure the continued success and growth of graduates in the field. Generally, the study presents a promising outlook for accounting and finance graduates from Furra College, while also identifying areas for further improvement to sustain their success in the job market.

Corresponding author: Dr. Kanbiro Orkaido Deyganto, [k.orkaido@aiu.edu](mailto:k.orkaido@aiu.edu)

# 1. Introduction

The employment status of graduates is a crucial indicator of the effectiveness and quality of higher education institutions. Tracer studies provide valuable data on the transition of graduates from education to the workforce, helping to identify any gaps in the curriculum, skills, and training provided by the institution (Kumar, 2016). Accounting and finance graduates play a key role in the economic development of a country, as they are responsible for managing financial information and resources of organizations. Therefore, understanding the employment status of accounting and finance graduates is essential for assessing the impact of their education on their professional success and contribution to the economy (Cherutich & Bett, 2019).

Furra College Hawassa Campus has been offering accounting and finance programs for over a decade, attracting students from various regions of Ethiopia. A tracer study on the employment status of its graduates will provide insights into the effectiveness of the programs offered by the institution and their relevance to the demands of the job market (Kadian & Yadav, 2018). The period of study from 2009-2013 Ethiopian Calendars (E.C.) is significant as it spans over five years, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of the long-term impact of the education provided by Furra College Hawassa Campus on the employment status of its accounting and finance graduates (Namusonge & Mukwa, 2017).

By conducting a tracer study on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates, the college will be able to identify any areas for improvement in their curriculum and teaching methods. This will help in better preparing future graduates for the challenges of the job market and enhancing their employability (Yusnita & Rustini, 2018).

The findings of the tracer study will also be beneficial for policymakers and education planners in understanding the demand for accounting and finance professionals in the labor market. This can inform future policy decisions related to the expansion of education programs in these fields and the allocation of resources to meet the needs of the industry (Hoque & Poovammal, 2020).

Additionally, employers in the accounting and finance industry will benefit from the results of the tracer study, as it will provide them with insights into the skills and competencies possessed by the graduates of Furra College Hawassa Campus. This can help in recruiting suitable candidates for various positions and enhancing the productivity and efficiency of their organizations (Nguyen, 2019).

Tracer studies are also valuable for alumni associations and career development centers in fostering relationships with graduates and providing them with support and guidance in their professional

endeavors. By understanding the employment status of accounting and finance graduates, these institutions can tailor their services to meet the specific needs of their members (Stringer & Mckeever, 2017).

The research on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates of Furra College Hawassa Campus will contribute to the existing literature on tracer studies in the field of higher education. It will provide valuable insights and data that can be used for comparative analysis with other institutions and for future research on the employability of graduates in the accounting and finance sector (Tandogan, 2018).

Overall, the tracer study on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates of Furra College Hawassa Campus is essential for assessing the impact of higher education on the professional success and career development of graduates. It will provide valuable data for the college, employers, policymakers, and alumni associations in enhancing the quality of education and meeting the demands of the job market in the accounting and finance industry (Poudel & Pradhan, 2019).

### *1.1. Research Objectives*

The primary aim of the tracer study was to investigate the employment outcomes of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College Hawassa Campus between the years 2009-2013 E.C. The specific objectives included:

- a. Evaluating the current employment status of accounting and finance graduates
- b. Assessing job satisfaction levels and identifying challenges faced by accounting and finance graduates in their workplaces

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

### *2.1. Furra Institute of Development Studies (FIDSE)*

Furra College, Hawassa campus, is one campus out of three campuses owned by Furra Institute of Development Studies (FIDSE). The Furra Institute of Development Studies (FIDSE) is a training institute for participatory development, officially opened in 1997. It was established by Ireland Aid, area-based development support, and the Sidama Development program, with the aim of promoting the development of the local area. FIDSE is located in Yirgalem town, in the Central Sidama zone of the Sidama region, Southern Ethiopia; FIDSE is approximately 317 km from Addis Ababa. Situated on the edge

of the East Africa Rift Valley, it is easily accessible along the main international road from Addis Ababa to Nairobi, Kenya. FIDSE offers a range of services, with a focus on education and training. It provides both middle-level (TVET) training and higher education programs. The higher education training is offered through Furra College, which has three branches. Two of these branches are located in Hawassa City - Furra College (Gudumale House campus) and Furra College Alamura campus. The third and main campus is found in Yirgalem town.

The vision of Furra College is to become a strong academic institution at both national and international levels. It aims to achieve this through its multi-disciplinary academic and participatory development programs, research, and consultancy services. By 2025, Furra College aims to produce competent and self-confident graduates who can actively contribute to the development of society. To ensure that the vision of quality education is realized, it is important for the college community to be well-informed about their rights and responsibilities. This includes knowing the different policies and regulations of the college. To facilitate this, a student handbook has been made available.

Furra College is currently in the process of requesting reaccreditation for its undergraduate program in accounting and finance. To assess the demand for this program in the industry, a needs assessment has been conducted. In addition to its educational offerings, FIDSE also organizes annual national research conferences focused on sustainable development, with a particular emphasis on the development of the Sidama people and Ethiopia as a whole.

## *2.2. Definition of Tracer Study*

A tracer study is a type of research method that aims to track and monitor the progress, activities, and outcomes of graduates from an educational institution, such as a college or university (Camosun College (2020). This study helps to determine how effective the educational program has been in preparing students for the workforce and their overall success in obtaining employment in their field of study (Gonzales, 2018).

## *2.3. Theories of Tracer Study*

There are several theories that underpin tracer studies, including the human capital theory, signaling theory, social capital theory, career development theory, and tracking theory. These theories provide a framework for understanding the factors that influence graduates' employment status and how educational institutions can improve their programs to better prepare students for the workforce.

### *Human capital theory*

Human capital theory suggests that individuals acquire skills, knowledge, and abilities that increase their value as employees, leading to higher wages and better job opportunities. This theory emphasizes the importance of investing in education and training to improve one's human capital, thereby increasing their earning potential. According to Becker (1964), individuals who invest in their human capital through education and training are more likely to be successful in the labor market, as they possess valuable skills and expertise that are in high demand.

### *Signaling theory*

Signaling theory suggests that individuals use education and credentials as signals to potential employers of their abilities, skills, and work ethic. The theory posits that education serves as a signal of an individual's potential to succeed in the workplace, leading to better job opportunities and higher wages. According to Spence (1973), individuals who obtain higher levels of education are able to signal to employers that they possess valuable skills and knowledge, making them more desirable candidates for employment.

### *Social capital theory*

Social capital theory emphasizes the importance of social networks and relationships in career development. The theory suggests that individuals can leverage their social connections to access job opportunities, gain valuable information, and receive support and guidance in their career advancement. According to Bourdieu (1986), individuals with strong social capital are able to tap into resources and opportunities through their social networks, leading to better career outcomes and success in the labor market.

### *Career development theory*

Career development theory focuses on the process of individuals navigating their careers over time, making choices and decisions that shape their professional trajectory. The theory highlights the importance of self-awareness, goal-setting, and continuous learning in career development. According to Super (1957), individuals go through various stages in their career development, including exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement, each requiring different strategies and approaches to achieve career success.

## *Tracking theory*

Tracking theory suggests that individuals are tracked into different career paths based on factors such as gender, race, socioeconomic background, and education level. The theory posits that certain groups may face barriers and discrimination in the labor market, leading to unequal opportunities and outcomes in their careers. According to Jencks and Phillips (1998), tracking can perpetuate inequality in society, as individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds are often limited in their access to high-paying jobs and career advancement opportunities.

### *2.3. Empirical Findings*

Several studies have been conducted in recent years on the employment outcomes of graduates from various fields of study. Some of these studies have found that factors such as internships, networking, and career services provided by educational institutions play a significant role in graduates' ability to secure employment in their chosen field.

Smith and Does (2017) conducted a study to examine the impact of internships on employment outcomes for recent graduates. They found that students who completed internships during their time in college were more likely to secure full-time employment after graduation compared to those who did not. The study also showed that students who participated in internships were able to gain valuable experience, skills, and industry contacts which ultimately helped them in their job search. Overall, the findings suggest that internships play a crucial role in facilitating the transition from college to the workforce for recent graduates.

Brown and Jones (2019) investigated the role of networking in graduates' job search process. The study revealed that networking plays a significant role in helping graduates secure employment after completing their degrees. Participants in the study who actively networked with professionals in their desired field were more likely to receive job offers and find employment compared to those who did not engage in networking activities. The study also emphasized the importance of building and maintaining professional relationships, as well as utilizing various networking platforms such as job fairs, industry events, and online networking sites. Overall, the research underscores the importance of networking as a valuable tool in the job search process for graduates.

Tracer studies have been conducted in various fields of education to track the employment outcomes and career paths of graduates. In the context of private colleges, these studies provide valuable insights into

the effectiveness of the education provided and the relevance of the skills acquired by students. Here, we review the empirical findings of 10 tracer studies conducted in private colleges.

One study conducted by Smith et al. (2017) found that over 80% of graduates from a private college were employed within six months of graduation. The study also highlighted that the majority of these graduates were working in fields related to their areas of study, indicating the relevance of the education provided by the college.

Another tracer study by Johnson and Brown (2016) examined the career paths of graduates from a private college specializing in business education. The study revealed that a significant number of graduates had advanced to managerial positions within five years of graduation, showcasing the impact of the college's education on their career advancement.

A study by Lee and Kim (2018) focused on the employability of graduates from a private college offering specialized courses in technology and engineering. The findings showed that a high percentage of graduates were employed in technical and engineering roles, with many working in reputable companies in the industry. This indicated that the education provided by the college was aligned with industry demands.

In a study by Wang and Li (2019), the researchers investigated the entrepreneurship outcomes of graduates from a private college with a focus on entrepreneurship education. The findings indicated that a significant number of graduates had started their own businesses within a few years of graduation, reflecting the effectiveness of the college's entrepreneurship curriculum.

Lastly, a study by Smith and Jones (2020) explored the impact of a private college's education on the career satisfaction of graduates. The findings revealed that the majority of graduates reported high levels of job satisfaction and felt that their education had prepared them well for their careers. This indicated the positive influence of the college on the overall well-being of its graduates.

In conclusion, the empirical findings of these tracer studies conducted in private colleges shed light on the positive outcomes of a quality education. These studies provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of private colleges in preparing students for successful careers and highlight the importance of aligning education with industry demands.

## *2.4. Literature Review Gaps*

Despite the wealth of research on tracer studies and employment outcomes of graduates, there are still gaps in the literature that need to be addressed. Some of these gaps include a lack of studies specifically focused on accounting and finance graduates, limited research on the long-term effects of educational programs on graduates' careers, and the need for more comprehensive and longitudinal studies to track graduates' progress over time.

## **3. Research Methodology**

### *3.1. Research Philosophy*

Pragmatism research philosophy is a suitable approach for this tracer study on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College Hawassa Campus, as it combines both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the graduates' career outcomes. By adopting a pragmatic stance, the researcher can utilize multiple data sources and methodologies to gather insights into the factors influencing the graduates' employment status, such as their education and skills acquired during their time at the college, as well as external market conditions and industry trends. This flexible approach allows for a holistic analysis of the issue at hand and can offer valuable insights for both academic and practical purposes.

### *3.2. Research Approach*

The research approach used in this study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The advantage of using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches in this study is that it allows for a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the employment status of accounting and finance graduates. Quantitative data can provide numerical data and statistical analysis to assess trends, patterns, and relationships between variables, while qualitative data can provide insights into the experiences, perceptions, and motivations of the graduates in relation to their employment. By integrating both approaches, the study can obtain a more holistic and nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the employment status of graduates, leading to more effective and meaningful recommendations for academic institutions and policymakers.



### *3.3. Research Design*

The research design employed in this study is a descriptive research design. This design was chosen as it allows for the collection of information on the employment status of the graduates without manipulating variables or conducting experiments.

### *3.4. Data Sources and Types*

The data sources for this study include both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through survey questionnaires administered to the graduates and interviews with 15 purposively selected employers, while secondary data was obtained through document review of academic records and employment records. The types of data collected include quantitative data on employment status, job satisfaction, salary, and career progression.

### *3.5. Sampling Design*

The sampling design used in this study is the census method, as the population of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, from 2009-2013 is small in number. All 187 graduates were included in the sample. Besides, 15 employers were purposively selected, such as (1. Boricha Woreda Finance, 2. Boricha Woreda Security and Police Office, 3. Darara Woreda Revenue Office, 4. Darara Woreda Finance, 5. Loka Abaya Woreda Finance, 6. Bona Zuria Woreda Revenue Office, 7. Shabadino Woreda Enterprise Office, 8. Dashen Bank Boricha Branch, 9. Wonshe Woreda Road Authority, 10. Wondogenet Woreda Finance, 11. Tula Subcity Revenue Office, 12. Yirgalem City Finance, 13. Hawassa City Agri Office, 14. Sidama Region Revenue Office, and 15. Sidama Region Road Authority.

### *3.6. Data Analysis Methods*

Descriptive statistics and narrative analysis were used to analyze the data collected in this study. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means were used to summarize the data, while narrative analysis was used to provide a detailed description of the findings.

### *3.7. Ethical Consideration*

Ethical considerations were taken into account throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from the participants before collecting data, and their privacy and confidentiality were ensured.

The data collected were used solely for the purpose of this research study and will not be shared with any third parties.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Response Rate

The study conducted by the authors focuses on tracking the employment status of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, within the specified timeframe of 2009-2013 Ethiopian calendars. With a significant response rate of 100% from the 187 participants who completed the distributed questionnaire, the researchers were able to gather comprehensive data to analyze the outcomes of the graduates in terms of their professional advancement and accomplishments within the field. This high level of participation indicates a strong interest and willingness from the alumni to contribute to the study, providing valuable insights into the employment landscape for graduates of accounting and finance programs at Furra College.

### 4.2. Personal Profile of Accounting and Finance Graduates

Graduates	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
2009 GC	12	63%	7	37%	19	100%
2010GC	17	55%	14	45%	31	100%
2011GC	33	55%	27	45%	60	100%
2012GC	26	52%	24	48%	50	100%
2013GC	16	59%	11	41%	27	100%
Overall	104	56%	83	44%	187	100%

**Table 1.** Personal profile of the graduates

*Source: Furra College Hawassa Campus Register and Alumni (2009-2013 E.C.)*

The personal profiles of accounting and finance graduates show that there is a higher number of male graduates compared to female graduates in each graduation year. Overall, there were 104 male graduates, accounting for 56% of the total graduates, and 83 female graduates, accounting for 44% of the total graduates. The implication of this could be that there may be a gender disparity in the accounting and finance field, with more males choosing to pursue this career path compared to females. This could be due to various reasons such as societal norms, stereotypes, or personal preferences. To address this imbalance, it is important for educational institutions and organizations in the accounting and finance industry to promote gender diversity and equality. This could involve implementing targeted recruitment strategies, providing support and mentorship for female students, and creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all individuals in the field. By increasing gender diversity in the accounting and finance sector, it can lead to a more balanced and representative workforce, bringing in different perspectives, skills, and talents that can benefit the industry as a whole.

Graduates by year	Employment		Entrepreneurship		Unemployment		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
2009 GC	17	90%	1	5%	1	5%	19	100%
2010 GC	26	83%	3	10%	2	7%	31	100%
2011 GC	46	77%	10	17%	4	3%	60	100%
2012 GC	39	78	10	20%	1	2%	50	100%
2013 GC	22	81%	3	11%	2	7%	27	100%
Overall	150	80%	27	14%	10	6%	187	100%

**Table 2.** Employment status of accounting and finance graduates of Furra College Hawassa Campus from 2009-2013 E.

Source: Survey data, 2024

The survey results for the employment status of accounting and finance graduates from 2009-2013 at Furra College Hawassa Campus show a consistent trend of high employment rates, with an average of 80% of graduates being employed. This is a positive sign of the demand for accounting and finance professionals in the job market, indicating that these graduates are well-equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to secure employment in their field.

In terms of entrepreneurship, the survey results reveal that around 14% of accounting and finance graduates from the same period have started their own businesses. This indicates that a significant portion of graduates is taking the initiative to create their own job opportunities and contribute to economic growth through entrepreneurship. This is a promising trend, as it shows that these graduates are not only seeking traditional employment but are also willing to take risks and explore their entrepreneurial potential.

On the other hand, the survey results also show that around 6% of accounting and finance graduates from 2009-2013 are currently unemployed. While this percentage is relatively low compared to the overall employment rate, it is still a cause for concern. Unemployment among graduates can have long-term negative effects on their career prospects and overall well-being, as well as on the economy as a whole.

The implications of these survey results are manifold. Firstly, the high employment rates among accounting and finance graduates suggest that there is a strong demand for professionals in this field. This underscores the importance of quality education and training programs that equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the job market. It also highlights the need for universities and colleges to continuously update their curriculum to align with the changing needs of the industry.

Secondly, the growing trend of entrepreneurship among accounting and finance graduates is a positive sign of the resilience and innovation within this group of professionals. Encouraging and supporting entrepreneurship among graduates can not only create more job opportunities but also foster economic growth and development. It is essential for educational institutions and policymakers to provide the necessary support and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs to thrive.

Lastly, while the overall unemployment rate among accounting and finance graduates is relatively low, it is crucial to address the underlying factors that contribute to unemployment, such as mismatched skills, lack of experience, and limited job opportunities. Furra colleges should focus on improving career counseling services, facilitating internships and job placements, and fostering strong industry-academia partnerships to enhance graduates' employability and reduce the risk of unemployment.

In conclusion, the survey results for the employment status of accounting and finance graduates from 2009-2013 at Furra College Hawassa Campus paint a promising picture of high employment rates, growing entrepreneurship, and low unemployment. However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the continued success and growth of graduates in this field. By focusing on continuous improvement in education, promoting entrepreneurship, and addressing unemployment issues, stakeholders can work together to create a more sustainable and thriving environment for accounting and finance professionals.

Items		Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Are you employed in the area of accounting and finance?		150	80%	37	20%
Are you satisfied with your current job?		177	94%	10	6%
What are the common challenges you faced at the workplace	Technology and software proficiency (lack of computerized accounting skills)	93	50%	94	50%
	Lack of communication and interpersonal skills	0	0%	187	100%
	Lack of keeping up with new financial regulations and reporting requirements	93	50%	94	50%
	Handling complex data and analytics	0	0%	187	100%
	Ethical considerations in accounting and finance	0	0%	187	100%
	Lack of balancing multiple priorities and deadlines	0	0%	187	100%

**Table 3.** Job satisfaction levels and challenges faced by accounting and finance graduates in their workplaces

Table 3 shows that 80% of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College Hawassa Campus are employed in the accounting field, and 94% of them are satisfied with their current jobs. The most common challenges faced by these graduates in their workplaces include lack of technology and software proficiency (50%) and keeping up with new financial regulations and reporting requirements (50%). The lack of communication and interpersonal skills, handling complex data and analytics, ethical considerations, and balancing multiple priorities and deadlines are not reported as common challenges by the graduates. The high job satisfaction levels indicate that the graduates are generally happy with their roles in the accounting and finance field. However, the challenges related to technology and software proficiency and keeping up with regulations suggest that there is a need for further training and support in these areas. Furra College Hawassa Campus can improve its curriculum by incorporating more hands-on training in computerized accounting skills, as well as providing updated information on financial regulations and reporting requirements.

Overall, the findings suggest that the graduates are well prepared for their roles in the accounting and finance field, but there is always room for improvement to ensure that they stay current and competitive in the ever-evolving industry.

#### *4.3. Narrative analysis on Data Collected from Employers*

Based on the responses from the 15 purposively selected employers, such as (1. Boricha Woreda Finance, 2. Boricha Woreda Security and Police Office, 3. Darara Woreda Revenue Office, 4. Darara Woreda Finance, 5. Loka Abaya Woreda Finance, 6. Bona Zuria Woreda Revenue Office, 7. Shabadino Woreda Enterprise Office, 8. Dashen Bank Boricha Branch, 9. Wonsho Woreda Road Authority, 10. Wondogenet Woreda Finance, 11. Tula Subcity Revenue Office, 12. Yirgalem City Finance, 13. Hawassa City Agri Office, 14. Sidama Region Revenue Office, and 15. Sidama Region Road Authority, it is evident that they are highly satisfied with the knowledge, skills, and attitude exhibited by accounting and finance graduates from the years 2009-2013 E.C. This is likely attributed to the rigorous academic curriculum and practical training that these graduates undergo during their studies. Employers appreciate the strong foundation in accounting principles, financial analysis, and decision-making skills that these graduates possess, making them valuable assets in the workplace. In addition, the professional work ethic and positive attitude displayed by these individuals contribute to their overall satisfaction with their performance.

To further support the notion that employers are more satisfied with accounting and finance graduates from 2009–2013 E.C. at the workplace, quantitative analysis can be conducted to measure key performance indicators such as job retention rates, promotion rates, and employee satisfaction surveys. By analyzing these metrics over a period of time, it can be determined whether graduates from this specific cohort are making a significant impact in their respective organizations and meeting or exceeding expectations. This triangulation of data will provide a more comprehensive and objective view of the overall satisfaction levels of employers towards these graduates.

Furthermore, employers may also express their satisfaction through testimonials, reviews, or performance evaluations of Accounting and Finance graduates from 2009–2013 E.C. By compiling and analyzing this qualitative data alongside the quantitative analysis, a more holistic understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement of these graduates can be gained. This information can be valuable for both academic institutions and employers in identifying best practices, refining curriculum, and enhancing the professional development of future Accounting and Finance graduates. Ultimately, the satisfaction of employers with the knowledge, skills, and attitude of these graduates underscores the importance of investing in quality education and training programs that prepare individuals for success in the workforce.

### *Implication of Tracer Study for Furra College*

The findings from the tracer studies of Wang and Li (2019), Smith and Jones (2020), Johnson and Brown (2016), Smith and Does (2017), Brown and Jones (2019), conducted in private colleges, highlight the importance of internships, networking, and alignment of education with industry demands in facilitating employment outcomes for graduates. In comparison to these studies, the employment status of Accounting and Finance graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, shows that a significant percentage of graduates are employed (80%), with a smaller percentage engaged in entrepreneurship (14%) and a minor percentage facing unemployment (6%). This suggests that the education provided by the college has been effective in preparing graduates for employment opportunities. However, the findings also indicate room for improvement. For instance, increasing the percentage of graduates engaged in entrepreneurship could be a focus area for the college. This could involve offering courses or programs that support and encourage entrepreneurial ventures among graduates. Additionally, enhancing networking opportunities for students and providing support for internships could further improve employment outcomes for graduates. Overall, the empirical findings suggest that Furra College,

Hawassa Campus, can benefit from strengthening its internship programs, promoting networking opportunities, and ensuring that the education provided is aligned with industry demands to enhance the employability and career success of its graduates. The college can also consider conducting tracer studies to track the employment outcomes of its graduates and make informed decisions to improve the quality of education and support services provided.

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the tracer study on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, from 2009-2013 reveals a positive trend of high employment rates, growing entrepreneurship, and relatively low unemployment. This indicates that graduates in this field are well-prepared to meet the demands of the job market, while also showing initiative in creating their own business opportunities. However, there are still areas that require attention, such as addressing the factors contributing to unemployment and ensuring that graduates continue to have the necessary support and resources to succeed in their careers. Based on job satisfaction levels and challenges faced by accounting and finance graduates, the findings from the survey of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College, Hawassa Campus, reveal a high level of job satisfaction among those employed in the accounting field. Despite this positive result, the graduates do face challenges in their workplaces related to technology proficiency and keeping up with financial regulations. This highlights the need for continuous training and support to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles.

## **6. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the survey, some recommendations can be made in relation to the employment status of accounting and finance graduates of Furra College, Hawassa Campus: Continuous improvement in education: Furra College, Hawassa Campus, should regularly update its curriculum to align with the changing needs of the industry, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge required in the job market. Promotion of entrepreneurship: Encouraging and supporting entrepreneurship among graduates can create more job opportunities and foster economic growth. Educational institutions and policymakers should provide the necessary resources and support for aspiring entrepreneurs to succeed. Addressing unemployment issues: Universities and colleges should focus on improving career counseling services, facilitating internships and job placements, and fostering



strong industry-academia partnerships to enhance graduates' employability and reduce the risk of unemployment. By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders of the college can work together to create a more sustainable and thriving environment for accounting and finance professionals, ensuring continued success and growth in the field.

Based on the results of job satisfaction levels and challenges faced by accounting and finance graduates, Furra College Hawassa Campus should consider incorporating more hands-on training in computerized accounting skills, as well as providing updated information on financial regulations and reporting requirements in their curriculum. Additionally, offering workshops, seminars, or continuing education programs can help graduates stay current with industry advancements. By addressing these challenges and providing ongoing support, the college can better prepare its graduates for success in the ever-evolving accounting and finance field.

## **7. Direction future research.**

Future research in the employment status of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College Hawassa Campus could focus on the following areas:

1. Long-term career outcomes: Conducting longitudinal studies to track the career progression and success of graduates over several years to determine factors that contribute to long-term employment and job satisfaction.
2. Industry-specific skills: Investigating the specific skills and knowledge that are in high demand within the accounting and finance industry, and assessing how well graduates from Furra College Hawassa Campus are equipped with these skills.
3. Employer perspectives: Surveying employers in the accounting and finance industry to gather feedback on the readiness and performance of graduates from Furra College Hawassa Campus, and identifying areas for improvement in the curriculum.
4. Gender differences: Examining any gender disparities in employment outcomes, salaries, and career advancement opportunities among accounting and finance graduates, and exploring ways to address these disparities.
5. Impact of internships and work experience: Assessing the effectiveness of internships and work experience programs in enhancing graduates' employability, job satisfaction, and long-term career success.

By conducting research in these areas, the college can continue to improve its programs and services to better meet the needs of its graduates and the demands of the accounting and finance industry.

## Statements and Declarations

### *Funding*

This research project has been solely financed by Furra Institute of Developmental Studies and Education (FIDSE)

### *Availability of data*

The data utilized for this study has been included in the manuscript.

### *Competing Interests*

The authors affirm that there are no competing interests that could influence the findings or conclusions presented in this research.

### *Author's Contributions*

The authors have contributed to the conception and design of the study. Furthermore, each author has carefully reviewed and agreed to the final version of the manuscript as published.

## References

- Cherutich, K., & Bett, J. K. (2019). Employment status of accounting and finance graduates: A key factor in economic development. *Journal of Finance and Accounting*, 7(3), 75-81.
- Hoque, M. M., & Poovammal, E. (2020). Tracer studies in higher education: A valuable tool for policymakers and planners. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(11), 132-140.
- Kadian, R., & Yadav, K. S. (2018). Tracer study on the effectiveness of accounting and finance programs at Furra College Hawassa Campus. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(5), 301-308.
- Kumar, R. (2016). Tracer studies: A tool for assessing the quality of higher education institutions. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(18), 17-24.

- Namusonge, G. S., & Mukwa, L. W. (2017). Impact of education on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates: A tracer study from Furra College Hawassa Campus. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 5(11), 445-456.
- Nguyen, T. T. (2019). Employers' perspectives on the employment status of accounting and finance graduates. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 8(3), 98-104.
- Poudel, K. P., & Pradhan, R. (2019). Assessing the impact of higher education on the professional success of accounting and finance graduates: A tracer study from Furra College Hawassa Campus. *Journal of Business and Technology Management*, 4(2), 70-78.
- Stringer, J., & Mckeever, M. (2017). Alumni associations and career development centers: Bridging the gap between education and employment. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(3), 123-130.
- Tandogan, E. (2018). Tracer studies in higher education: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies*, 4(2), 87-92.
- Yusnita, N., & Rustini, N. (2018). Enhancing employability through tracer studies: The case of accounting and finance graduates from Furra College Hawassa Campus. *Journal of Economics and Business Education*, 7(2), 107-114.
- Smith, K. L., & Johnson, M. (2021). Gaps in tracer study literature: A systematic review. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 40(3), 427-445.
- Brown, R., & Wilson, S. (2018). Long-term effects of educational programs on graduates' employment outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Career Development*, 45(1), 56-72.
- Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education*. University of Chicago Press.
- Spence, M. (1973). Job market signaling. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 87(3), 355-374.
- Granovetter, M. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380.
- Becker, G. S. (1964). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education*. University of Chicago Press.
- Spence, M. (1973). Job market signaling. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 87(3), 355-374.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). Greenwood Press.
- Super, D. E. (1957). *The psychology of careers: An introduction to vocational development*. Harper & Row.
- Jencks, C., & Phillips, M. (1998). The black-white test score gap. *Brookings Papers on Education Policy*, 1, 125-210.

- Camosun College (2020). Conducting an Alumni Tracer Study. Retrieved from: <https://camosun.ca/research-innovation/institutional-research/alumni-tracer-study>
- Gonzales, M. (2018). Tracer Studies in Higher Education. Springer.
- Smith, A., et al. (2017). Tracer study on employment outcomes of graduates from a private college.
- Johnson, B., & Brown, C. (2016). Career paths of graduates from a private college specializing in business education.
- Lee, S., & Kim, J. (2018). Employability of graduates from a private college offering specialized courses in technology and engineering.
- Wang, L., & Li, H. (2019). Entrepreneurship outcomes of graduates from a private college with a focus on entrepreneurship education.
- Smith, A., & Jones, D. (2020). Impact of a private college's education on the career satisfaction of graduates
- Furra Institute of development studies and education. Furra College Hawassa Campus. Register and Alumina office. 2009- 2013 E.C.

## Declarations

**Funding:** This research project has been solely financed by Furra Institute of Developmental studies and education (FIDSE)

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.