

Tracer Study on the Graduates of Master of Arts in Education Program of Tomas Claudio Colleges

Dr. Eva R. De Rosas¹, Dr. Julieta T. Beringuel², Kristel Mary SF Perez³

¹Dean, Graduate School Program, Tomas Claudio Colleges, Philippines

²Professorial Lecturer, Tomas Claudio Colleges, Philippines

³Secretary, Graduate School Program, Tomas Claudio Colleges, Philippines

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Email of Corresponding Author: evan.derosas@yahoo.com.ph

Abstract

This tracer study examined graduates of the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) program at Tomas Claudio Colleges from School Year 2010–2011 to 2019–2020. Using quota sampling and a descriptive survey design, data were collected through a researcher-made questionnaire checklist. Results show that most graduates are 31 years old and above, female, and single, teaching in public schools with permanent appointments. The majority have held their positions for 5–9 years, earning ₱30,000 or more per month. Age was significantly associated with employment status, while sex and civil status were not. Graduates reported that the MAEd program substantially contributed to their personal and professional development, and expressed high satisfaction with the curriculum, instruction, faculty, and program delivery, regardless of age, sex, or civil status. The study concludes that the MAEd program effectively supports graduates' professional and personal growth, with employment outcomes influenced by age but not by sex or civil status. Overall, graduates are highly satisfied with the program, highlighting its value in preparing competent education professionals.

Keywords: MAEd, Tracer Study, Graduates, Professional Development, Education Program, Satisfaction

1. Introduction

Education is a lifelong process through which knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits are transmitted across generations, enabling individuals to meet academic requirements, pursue meaningful employment, and maximize personal potential. As a profession grounded in public trust, teaching requires educators to facilitate learning, implement state policies, and uphold professional standards; thus, continuing professional development through graduate education, seminars, and training remains a key pathway for strengthening competence and accountability (Santos, A. R., & Cajucom, 2020). Graduate education, in particular, supports human resource development by preparing teachers to assume leadership roles, engage in evidence-based practice, and contribute to research-informed improvements aligned with national development priorities (Hipolito & Santos, 2025). Within education systems, graduate studies enhance critical competencies needed in teaching and educational management, including technical expertise, communication, leadership, research capability, and the strategic use of information and digital tools. These competencies help educators make data-informed decisions, adapt to complex work demands, and improve service delivery within institutions (De Lara & Santos, 2024; Gamit et al., 2024; Santos, A. R., 2022). In the Philippine context where reforms in basic and higher education continue to reshape expectations there is a practical need to assess the responsiveness of graduate teacher education programs to evolving professional standards and workplace realities. Contemporary higher education and organizational environments increasingly require teachers to navigate digital systems, documentation requirements, and performance-based quality assurance, underscoring the value of structured capacity-building and institutional supports (Jacoba et al., 2025; Tuliao et al., 2025).

Graduate education also strengthens teachers' research orientation by developing their capacity to produce and apply knowledge, meet higher professional benchmarks, and contribute to innovation in practice. In parallel, institutional quality systems such as ISO-aligned processes and performance excellence frameworks highlight how governance, standardization, and continuous improvement mechanisms can reinforce staff competence and productivity, including in academic settings (Gamit et al., 2024). These conditions are increasingly relevant in Philippine education institutions that manage instructional delivery, learner support, and administrative services amid disruptions and recovery transitions, where quality assurance and service effectiveness directly shape stakeholder trust (Santiago, J. M., & Santos, 2021). Tracer studies provide a practical evaluation approach for graduate programs by examining graduates' employability, relevance of training, and professional satisfaction. Prior research notes that advanced degrees can improve employability, eligibility for higher positions, and professional growth (Asmus, 2017; Borich, 2019; Hugget & Stinner, 2018). Tracer studies also inform curriculum relevance and alignment with labor market expectations (Mangaliman, 2019; Tutor, 2019; Mendoza,

2017). In addition, patterns from Philippine studies on workforce development and human capital suggest that career outcomes are influenced not only by qualifications but also by organizational structures, incentives, and enabling work environments (Yu & Santos, 2025; Ortiz et al., 2025).

Despite these recognized benefits, empirical evidence remains limited on the specific outcomes of the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) program at Tomas Claudio Colleges, particularly across multiple cohorts. Existing studies often emphasize general professional development or employment trends without systematically tracing employability, productivity, and satisfaction over time. This creates a research gap in understanding how the MAEd program contributes to graduates' personal and professional growth and how demographic and institutional factors shape employment outcomes and program satisfaction. Addressing this gap is essential for evaluating program effectiveness, guiding curricular refinement, and strengthening institutional policies that ensure graduate education remains aligned with professional standards and national development objectives (Hipolito & Santos, 2025; Jacoba et al., 2024).

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study applied the descriptive method of research specifically, the survey design. According to Calmorin (2016) the descriptive method is designed to gather information about the evaluation of present/existing conditions. It is helpful to express the cause of the phenomena

2.2 Research Setting

The study was conducted in Tomas Claudio Colleges located at Sitio Taghangin, Morong Rizal. The school offers Master of Arts in Education Program.

2.3 Respondents

The study considered the graduates of Master of Arts in Education Program of Tomas Claudio Colleges. These include the graduates from School Year 2010-2011 up to 2019-2020. However, quota sampling was applied in the selection of the respondents. Hence, 20 graduates for every semester in each school year were considered with a total of 400 graduates for 10 years.

2.4 Research Instruments

A researcher-made questionnaire checklist was used as the main instrument in gathering the needed data. The questionnaire-checklist consists of four parts. Part I includes items which describe the profile of the respondents such as age, sex and civil status Part II focused on the status of employment of the respondents in terms of employing agency, nature of job, nature of appointment, position title, length of service and monthly income. Part III dealt with the extent of contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on the personal and professional development of the respondents.

2.5 Data Collection

The researcher followed the Gantt Chart of Activities in the conduct of the study. This includes the formulation of the research problem up to the revision of the manuscript and submission of the final copy. After the validation of the instrument, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the concerned authorities. The questionnaire-checklist was administered to the respondents through the Google survey form considering the guidelines in the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Retrieved data were encoded and processed utilizing Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Based from the interpreted data, summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations were formulated.

2.6 Data Analysis

In order to obtain answers to the research problems, the study employed various statistical tools appropriate for each objective. To describe the profile of the respondents in terms of selected demographic variables, frequency, percentage, and rank distribution were utilized. The status of employment of the graduates of Master of Arts in Education program of Tomas Claudio Colleges with Respect to the Different Categories, was determined using the weighted mean. To examine significant association between the status of employment of the respondents with regard to the different categories in terms of their profile, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied. To determine the extent of contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on the personal and professional development of graduates as perceived by themselves, mean was used. To determine the significant difference on the perception of the respondents on the extent of contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on their personal and professional development in terms of their profile, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied. In addition, to determine the level of satisfaction of graduates in the Master of Arts in Education Program of Tomas Claudio Colleges, weighted mean was used. Finally, to determine the significant difference on the level of satisfaction of graduates in the Master of Arts in Education Program in terms of their profile one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied

2.7 Ethical Considerations

The study ensured the protection of the rights and welfare of all respondents. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Confidentiality and anonymity of all information provided were strictly maintained, and data were used solely for research purposes. The researcher ensured that the respondents were treated with respect and that no harm, whether physical, emotional, or psychological, would result from their participation in the study..

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables

Table 1 presents that out of 400 graduates, 33 % belong to age bracket 41-50 years old, 28 % have ages 31-40 years old and 22 % belong to age bracket 21-30 years old. Only 17% have ages 51-60 years old. In terms of sex, females dominated the male respondents with 77% females and 23 % males. With regard to their civil status, 50% are single while 44 % are married. A few are separated and widow/widower with 4% and 2% respectively.

Table 1: *Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of the Selected Variables*

Age	f	%	R
51-60 years old	68	17	4
41-50 years old	131	33	1
31-40 years old	112	28	2
21-30 years old	89	22	3
Total	400	100	
Sex			
Male	90	23	2
Female	310	77	1
Total	400	100	
Civil Status			
Single	198	50	1
Married	177	44	2
Widow/ Widower	10	2	4
Separated	15	4	3
Total	400	100	

3.2. Status of Employment of the Graduates of Master of Arts in Education Program of Tomas Claudio Colleges with Respect to the Different Categories

Findings reveal that majority of the respondents are teaching in public schools with permanent positions. Findings also indicate that many of them have been promoted to higher position. Moreover, results showed that most of the respondents have been in their present designation for less than 10 years. Most of them are earning below ₱40,000 as their monthly income. Findings imply that almost all of the respondents have been promoted after earning their Master's degree.

This is aligned with the findings of Bueno (2017) that many of the graduates are school supervisors and head teachers, while the MBA and MPM graduates are supervisors and executives. The graduate programs are responding to the needs of various industries. Ed. D. graduates are highly satisfied with basic salary; the MA and MBA graduates were receiving at least Php 30,000; and at least Php25,000 a month for the MPM graduates. Administration and governance, curriculum and instruction, research, professional and cognate courses, student services, library, internet laboratory, interdisciplinary learning, and teaching/ learning environment are the school-related factors relevant to their current employment. Communication, human relations, entrepreneurial, information technology, problem-solving, critical thinking, and research skills are considered relevant skills learned at the graduate school.

Table 2: *Frequency and Percentage Distribution on the Status of Employment of the Respondents with Respect to the Different Categories*

Employing Agency	f	%	Rank
Public School	318	80	1
Private School	60	15	2
Private Company	10	2	4
Others	12	3	3
Total	400	100	

Nature of Job	f	%	R
Teaching	289	72	1
Supervisory	48	12	2
Administrative	35	9	3
Others	28	7	4
Total	400	100	
Nature of Appointment			
Permanent	370	93	1
Temporary	10	2	3
Contractual	15	4	2
Part Time	5	1	4
Total	400	100	
Position Title			
Public Schools District Supervisor	6	2	6
Associate Professor	4	1	7
Principal	38	9	2
Head Teacher	19	5	5
Master Teacher	24	6	4
Teacher III	278	69	1
Teacher II	31	8	3
Total	400	100	
Length of Service			
20 years and above	12	3	5
15-19 years	19	5	4
10-14 years	54	13	3
5-9 years	236	59	1
Below 5 years	79	20	2
Total	400	100	
Monthly Income			
₱70,000 and above	13	3	6
₱60,000 - ₱69,999	34	9	3
₱50,000 - ₱59,999	28	7	4
₱40,000 - ₱49,999	69	17	2
₱30,000 - ₱39,999	236	59	1
₱20,000 - ₱29,999	20	5	5
Total	400	100	

3.3. Significant Association Between the Status of Employment of the Respondents with Regard to the Different Categories in Terms of their Profile

As depicted in the table, with regard to the status of employment of the respondents with respect to the different categories in terms of age, for the chi-square test, the probability values are all less than .05. This rejects the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant association between the status of employment of the respondents in terms of their age with regard to the different categories. On the other hand, in terms of sex and civil status, the null hypothesis is accepted since all the probability values are all greater than .05.

Findings reveal that age is significant on the status of employment of the respondents. On the other hand, sex and civil status are not significant. Findings imply that being male or female and being single or married have nothing to do with the employment status of the graduates of Master of Arts in Education Program. Findings imply that age level of the respondents is contributory to their status of employment. This relates with the study of Mangalindan (2019) which revealed that all respondents are employed, have permanent job items, and are mostly working in government institutions and professional/ technical/ supervisory job levels. Honors graduates preferred working in government educational institutions and public agencies since the benefits in the government sector are better when compared with the benefits offered in the private sector.

Table 3: *Computed Chi-Square Values on the Significant Association Between the Status of Employment of the Respondents with Regard to the Different Categories in Terms of their Profile*

Variables/Aspects	χ^2_{comp}	χ^2_{tab}	Decision	Verbal Interpretation
Age				
Employing Agency	8.615	.005	Reject Ho	Significant
Nature of Job	9.888	.006	Reject Ho	Significant
Nature of Appointment	8.933	.003	Reject Ho	Significant
Position Title	19.003	.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Length of Service	14.986	.003	Reject Ho	Significant
Monthly Income	8.945	.004	Reject Ho	Significant
Sex				
Employing Agency	1.633	.225	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Job	.983	.099	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Appointment	1.004	.133	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Position Title	1.022	.456	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Length of Service	1.211	.218	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Monthly Income	1.004	.765	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Civil Status				
Employing Agency	1.112	.542	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Job	2.876	.231	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Appointment	4.117	.117	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Position Title	3.097	.165	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Length of Service	2.221	.265	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Monthly Income	1.095	.217	Accept Ho	Not Significant

3.4. Contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on the Personal and Professional Development of Graduates as Perceived by Themselves

The table reflects that with respect to the extent of contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on the personal and professional development of graduates as perceived by themselves, all items are interpreted very Much with an overall weighted mean of 4.59. Among the items, first in rank is “Academic Skills“ and last in rank is “Learning Efficiency “ with weighted means of 4.71 and 4.53 respectively.

Findings revealed that respondents believe that MA Ed program have contributed a lot on their personal and professional development. This means that graduates of the program believed that earning a Masters’ degree have improved their personal and professional life.

This is in relation with the tracer study of Zaras (2018) which revealed that majority of the graduates from MAEd-EM are in the age bracket of 31-40, female, married, BEED graduates, LET passers, permanently employed in public institution, took up their advance study for professional development, work as Master Teachers III and Teacher I, have been employed for 6- 10 years, and PAFTE members. They assessed that master’s program contributed to their personal and professional growth to a very great extent. The employers strongly agreed that they have shown critical thinking skills and work ethics in performing their job.

Table 4: *Extent of Contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on the Personal and Professional Development of Graduates as Perceived by Themselves*

Indicators	W $\bar{X}$	VI	Rank
1. Academic skills	4.71	Very Much	1
2. Research capability	4.54	Very Much	9
3. Learning efficiency	4.53	Very Much	10
4. Communication skills	4.60	Very Much	4
5. Technology skills	4.57	Very Much	7
6. Human Relation skills	4.56	Very Much	8
7 Critical Thinking skills	4.59	Very Much	5
8. Salary improvement and promotion	4.58	Very Much	6
9. Personality development	4.61	Very Much	3
10. Values formation	4.62	Very Much	2
Overall W $\bar{X}$	4.59	Very Much	

3.5. Significant Difference on the Perception of the Respondents on the Extent of Contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on their Personal and Professional Development in Terms of Their Profile

Table 5: *Computed F-Values on the Significant Difference on the Perception of the Respondents on the Extent of Contribution of Master of Arts in Education Program on their Personal and Professional Development in Terms of Their Profile*

Variables	F-comp	p-values	Ho	VI
Age	.508	.684	Accepted	Not Significant
Sex	1.324	.262	Accepted	Not Significant
Civil Status	1.685	.172	Accepted	Not Significant

As gleaned from the table, in terms of age, sex and civil status, when subjected to F-test, all the probability values are all greater than .05. This fails to reject the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference on the perception of the respondents on the extent of contribution of MA Ed program on their personal and professional development in terms of their age, sex and civil status.

Results reveal that age, sex and civil status are not significant on the perception of the graduates on the extent of contribution of MA Ed program on their personal and professional development. This means that regardless of the age bracket, sex and civil status, being a graduate of the graduate program, their personality development and professional development have improved.

This relates with the study of Sevim (2021) which revealed that the teachers pursued graduate education mostly to achieve personal and professional development and to build an academic career. They stated that graduate education provided them with the skills of scientific thinking and research, communication, teaching and evaluation, and establishing theory-practice relationships, as well as knowledge of the profession and the field.

3.6. Level of Satisfaction of Graduates in the Master of Arts in Education Program of Tomas Claudio Colleges

Table 6: *Level of Satisfaction of Graduates in the Master of Arts in Education Program*

Indicators	W $\bar{X}$	VI	Rank
1. Curriculum	4.53	Very Much Satisfied	3
2.. Relevance to profession	4.93	Very Much Satisfied	1
3. Extra-Curricular Activities	3.53	Much Satisfied	10
4. Research orientation	4.24	Much Satisfied	7
5. Interdisciplinary learning	4.25	Much Satisfied	6
6. Teaching and learning environment	4.38	Much Satisfied	5
7. Quality of instruction	4.50	Very Much Satisfied	4
8.. Teacher-student relationship	3.84	Much Satisfied	9
9. Library resources	4.04	Much Satisfied	8
10.. Professor's pedagogical expertise	4.55	Very Much Satisfied	2
Overall W $\bar{X}$	4.28	Much Satisfied	

The table depicts that with respect to the level of satisfaction of the respondents in the Master of Arts in Education Program, the overall weighted mean obtained is 4.28 interpreted Much Satisfied. Among the items, first and second in ranks are "Relevance to profession" and "Professor's pedagogical expertise" with weighted means of 4.93 and 4.55 respectively both interpreted Very Much Satisfied. Curriculum and Quality of Instruction are both interpreted Very Much Satisfied with weighted means of 4.53 and 4.50 respectively. All the remaining items are interpreted Much Satisfied with last in rank is the item "Extra-Curricular Activities" with a weighted mean of 3.53. Findings imply that respondents are much satisfied with the learning environment and other aspects of the program

This is similar with the findings of the study of Kahlon (2019) which found out that satisfaction scores with the program were high, with 92% of respondents reporting the program had met or exceeded their expectations. Learning resources and quality of teaching and learning were the aspects of the program graduates were most satisfied with. The main motivations for taking the program were to progress in career path and improve employment prospects.

3.7. Significant Difference on the Level of Satisfaction of Graduates in the Master of Arts in Education Program in Terms of Their Profile

Table 7: Computed F-Values on the Significant Difference on the Level of Satisfaction of Graduates in the Master of Arts in Education Program in Terms of Their Profile

Variables	F-comp	p-values	Ho	VI
Age	1.128	.084	Accepted	Not Significant
Sex	1.397	.699	Accepted	Not Significant
Civil Status	1.629	.195	Accepted	Not Significant

As reflected from the table, in terms of age, sex and civil status, based on the results of the F-test, all the probability values are greater than .05. This fails to reject the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference on the level of satisfaction of the graduates in MA Ed program in terms of the cited variables.

It could be deduced from the results that age, sex and civil status are not significant on the level of satisfaction of the graduates in the Master of Arts in Education Program. This means that graduates are contented in attaining their master's degree regardless of their age, sex and civil status.

This is similar with the findings of the tracer study of Mendoza (2017) which revealed that the most highly developed institutional program was relevance of the program to professional requirements while the least rated factors were library and laboratory. Moreover, the respondents were fully satisfied on the contribution of the graduate degree to their present position. Due to the positive results revealed, it was strongly recommended that teachers should continue to pursue their post graduate schooling because of the vast opportunity, professional growth and promotional benefits associated with getting a graduate degree

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that the status of employment of graduates of the Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) program is significantly associated with their age, while sex and civil status are not related to employment outcomes. The program has contributed substantially to the personal and professional development of graduates, regardless of their demographic profile. Graduates also expressed high satisfaction with the curriculum, delivery of instruction, faculty, and other aspects of the program, reflecting the program's effectiveness in preparing competent education professionals.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that the MAEd program continue to strengthen its curriculum and instructional delivery to maintain high levels of graduate satisfaction and professional growth. Professional development initiatives should be sustained to enhance graduates' competencies in teaching, leadership, research, and communication skills. Additionally, the institution may consider conducting regular tracer studies to monitor the employment outcomes and professional achievements of graduates, ensuring that the program remains responsive to the evolving demands of the education sector. Stakeholder feedback, including input from alumni and employers, should be integrated into program improvements to further align graduate skills with current and future educational needs.

Compliance with ethical standards

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