Tracer Study of MAED-EM & MPA Graduates

of Apayao State College - Conner Campus

S.Y. 2018-2022 T

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ABSTRACT

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| A tracer study serves as a vital tool for this purpose, allowing institutions to gather data on graduates' employment status, career progression, and the relevance of their academic programs to their professional lives. This research assesses the career paths of Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Management (MAED-EM) and Master in Public Administration (MPA) graduates of ASC-Conner Campus in the last five years (2018–2022). Using quantitative design, data were gathered through a modified survey questionnaire. Statistical methods like frequency, percentage, ranking, one-way ANOVA, and weighted mean using a 5-point Likert scale were used in data analysis. The results indicated that most respondents were female and 31 years and older. Most graduates work in the government sector, both within and outside the area, in permanent capacities. An impressive percentage of respondents indicated that they had received promotion and more duties following the acquisition of their master's degrees. The relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the graduate programs were assessed to an extremely high level, with the overall mean being 4.55. Also, no remarkable differences were noticed in the perceived relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the two graduate programs. The respondents concurred that their master's degree played a great role in their professional and personal development. It is thus suggested to update and strengthen the curriculum to suit 21st-century learners and prepare graduates for employment opportunities relevant to their needs. |

*Keywords: Tracer study, graduates, employment*

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing demand for quality education and effective leadership in various sectors has prompted educational institutions to assess the performance and outcomes of their graduates. A tracer study serves as a vital tool for this purpose, allowing institutions to gather data on graduates' employment status, career progression, and the relevance of their academic programs to their professional lives. In the context of the Master of Arts in Education major in Educational Management (MAED-EM) and Master in Public Administration (MPA) graduates from ASC-Conner Campus for the school years 2018 to 2022, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs in equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge for their respective fields.

Tracer studies provide insights into the employability of graduates and the alignment of academic curricula with industry demands. By examining the career paths of MAED-EM and MPA graduates, this study will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the programs in preparing students for real-world challenges. Research indicates that feedback from graduates can inform curriculum development, ensuring that educational institutions remain responsive to the evolving needs of the workforce (Nguyen et. al, 2020). Thus, the results of this tracer study could lead to significant improvements in the educational offerings at ASC-Conner Campus.

Moreover, understanding the trajectories of graduates allows educational institutions to enhance their support services, such as career counseling and networking opportunities (Khirotdin et al, 2019). Many graduates face challenges in transitioning from academia to the professional world, and targeted support can facilitate this process (Amahan et. al, 2024). By analyzing the experiences of MAED-EM and MPA graduates, this study aims to uncover the common obstacles they encounter and propose actionable recommendations for improving graduate support services at ASC-Conner Campus.

In addition to assessing employability and support services, this tracer study will explore the impact of the MAED-EM and MPA programs on graduates' professional development. The skills and competencies gained through these programs are expected to influence graduates' effectiveness in their respective roles. Previous studies have shown a correlation between advanced education and enhanced job performance, leadership capabilities, and career advancement (Salise et. al, 2021). By investigating these relationships, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the value of graduate education in shaping successful careers.

Finally, the findings from this tracer study will not only benefit ASC-Conner Campus but also contribute to the broader discourse on graduate education and its societal impacts. As educational institutions strive to produce competent and socially responsible leaders, the insights gained from this research can inform policy decisions and strategic planning at the institutional level (Florendo & Regacho, 2024). Ultimately, this study will serve as a foundation for continuous improvement and innovation in the MAED-EM and MPA programs, ensuring that they remain relevant and impactful in the ever-changing landscape of education and public administration.

2. OBJECTIVES

Generally, this study was focused on the tracer of the graduates of MAED-EM and MPA of the ASC-Conner campus in the past five years (2018-2022).

Specifically, it has sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents according to:

1.1. Sex

1.2. Civil Status

1.3. Year graduated

1.4. Graduate Degree Earned

1.5. Scholarship Availed while studying

1. What is the employment profile of the respondents according to:

2.1. Name of Employer/Agency/Business

2.2. Type of Employer/Agency

2.3. Employment Status

2.4. Reason(s) for Unemployment

1. How does an earned graduate degree impact employment outcome for graduates?
2. How do the graduates perceive the relevance, quality and responsiveness of the graduate degree offered/provided by the ASC-Conner campus?
3. Is there a significant difference in the perceived relevance, quality and responsiveness of the graduate school programs when grouped between graduate school programs?
4. What are the personal and professional contributions of earned master’s degrees as perceived by the graduates?

**2.1. Hypothesis**

1.There is no significant difference in the perceived relevance, quality and responsiveness of the graduate school programs when grouped between graduate school programs.

**3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Schomburg (2016), a tracer study or graduate survey is a survey (in written or in oral form) of graduates from education institutions, which takes place sometime after graduation or the end of the training. The subjects of a tracer study can be manifold, but common topics include questions on study process, the transition to work, work entrance, job career, used of learned competencies, current occupation and bonds to the education institution (school, center, university).

Evans & Patton (1987) defined evaluation as a process that critically examines a program. It involves collecting and analyzing information about a program's activities, characteristics, and outcomes. Its purpose is to make judgments about a program, to improve its effectiveness, and to inform programming decisions. In addition, employability depends on knowledge, skills and attitudes every individual possess, (Hillage and Pollard, 1998), knowledge and skills acquired from school that is being applied the moment they get a job. Evaluating graduates can provide targeted benefits to graduates such as the information needed to reform educational programs to bring about the fit between the requirements of the employment world and study.



Administration of Survey – Questionnaire

Demographic and Employment Profile of the Graduates

Employment Effects of Earned Master’s Degree

Perceived Relevance, Quality and Responsiveness of Earned Graduate Degree

Perceived Contribution of Earned Master’s Degree to Personal and Professional Growth

Tracer Study of the Graduates of MAED-EM & MPA of ASC-Conner, Campus, Conner, Apayao

**PROCESS**

**OUTPUT**

**INPUT**

**FEEDBACK**

***Figure 1. Research Paradigm***

***Figure 1. Research Paradigm***

**4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

ILO Thesaurus (2005) defines a tracer study as an impact assessment tool where the “impact on the target groups is traced back to specific elements of a project or program so that effective and ineffective project components may be identified.” In educational research the tracer study is sometimes referred to as a graduate or alumni survey since its target group is former students. They provide quantitative- structural data on employment and career, the character of work and related competencies, and information on the professional orientation and experiences of their graduates. Biographical data on “Where are our graduates now?” may supply information on income, job title, nature of employment, and years of employment.

Shongwe and Ocholla (2011) defined a tracer study as a graduate or alumni survey that attempts to trace the activities of the graduates or previous students of an educational institution. Tracer studies enable the contextualization of graduates of a particular university through a system that is dynamic and reliable to determine their life path or movement. It also enables the evaluation of the results of the education and training provided by a particular institution and examines and evaluates the current and future career and employment opportunities/ prospects of graduates. Graduates’ job titles, years of employment, nature of employment, income levels, and biographical data can be revealed through tracer studies. The absence of such information denies valuable feedback from graduates and their employers and makes it difficult to re-structure the curriculum for current students for them to acquire the knowledge and skills required in the “real world”.

Through tracer study, educational institutions can evaluate the quality of education given to their graduates by knowing the graduate's placement and position in the society which later can be used as a guide in producing more competitive graduates. Ornstein and Hunkins (2017) argue that curriculum development includes how a ‘curriculum is planned, implemented and evaluated, as well as what people, processes and procedures are involved.’. Bosshart, Wents, and Heller (2009) also state these surveys provide critical information for assessing and determining the effectiveness of programs, these results may then be utilized for program improvement. Therefore, with the information provided by the tracer study, thorough planning can be done for a more effective and quality education.

In a related line of research, Robinson and Garton (2008) tried to identify skills to improve a university's curriculum and found that employers assign high levels of importance to problem-solving, effective communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills. Robinson and Garton advised universities to organize workshops/training programs to assist faculty members in incorporating strategies that address deficiencies in the learning outcomes of their academic programs.

Raza and Naqvi (2011) examined employers' perceptions about the quality of university graduates in terms of their development skills such as intellectual, personal, professional, and social. They found that employers are not fully satisfied with the quality of university graduates in various areas of development skills. While they found that personal development skills are strong, social development skills were found to be at the lowest level.

Cuadra, et al., (2019) measured employers' degree of satisfaction with graduate professional skills. They found that the majority of employers consider that their employees’ knowledge is sufficient and corresponds to their needs. They also found the main graduate’s weakness is a lack of practical experience. They concluded that employers recommended adjusting the curricula, including a reasonable number of practical training hours and signing partnerships with the business environment in order to create favorable premises for graduates.

The study of Md Saad, et al., (2013) discovered that problem-solving, tool-handling competency, and presentation skills are highly featured among the skills demanded of graduates by employers. They added that an employee, who possesses the ability to think critically, act logically, and evaluate situations to make decisions and solve problems, is a valuable asset to the organization. Rasul, et al., (2013) added that employers assign great importance to interpersonal skills, thinking skills, and personal qualities that students need to emphasize to be employed in the manufacturing sector. They also provided evidence that employers emphasize that every position, regardless of the size of the industry, requires some kind of teamwork.

Regmi (2009) wrote that alumni tracer studies are the most important vehicle to build strong bonds between the Alma Mater and the ever-increasing graduates. This is feasible through two perspectives. From one perspective, the alumni are a rich source of feedback for improvements in the course curriculum, teaching, research, extension, and networking. On the other, the tracer study helps to measure the extent of professional and academic careers pursued by the graduates after gaining knowledge and skills through academic institutions

**5. METHODOLOGY**

**5.1. Research Design**

The quantitative descriptive survey design is appropriate for this study because it allows for efficient, objective collection and analysis of data from graduates, providing a clear snapshot of their demographics, employment, and perceptions. This method is ideal for tracer studies, as it summarizes trends and differences without manipulating variables, ensuring reliable and generalizable results.

**5.2. Local of the Study**

The study was conducted at Apayao State College (ASC), main campus in Conner, Apayao, Philippines, which serves as the province’s primary higher education institution. The campus offers graduate programs such as the Master of Arts in Education (MAED) major in Educational Management and the Master of Public Administration (MPA) major in Program Development and Administration.

**5.3. Respondents of the Study**

There were 22 MAED and 20 MPA graduates, for a total of 42, to serve as respondents to the study. The sample size was based on the total number of graduates in the past five years. Slovin’s formula was used to determine the sample size at a 5% margin of error. Simple random sampling was used to identify the respondents based on the computed sample size.

**5.4. Instrumentation**

A survey questionnaire was used as the primary instrument for gathering the needed data. Part 1 dealt with the demographic and employment profile of the graduates; Part II was on the effects of earned master’s degrees on employment; Part III was for the assessment of the relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the graduate programs as perceived by the graduates; and lastly, Part IV was for the graduates’ assessment of the contributions of earned master’s degrees to their personal and professional growth.

**5.5. Data Gathering Procedures**

The researchers, through a formal letter, requested the lists of the MAED-EM and MPA graduates from 2018–2022 from the office of the campus registrar. Likewise, a letter informing the Graduate School Program Dean/Coordinator was also submitted for the information of the department about the study.  Survey questionnaires were administered personally by the researchers to the respondents who were residing within Conner; for graduates outside the municipality, the researchers contacted them through online platforms such as Google Forms, Facebook Messenger, SMS, and phone calls.

**5.6. Statistical Tools**

Simple descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and ranking were used in the demographic and employment profiles of the respondents. A weighted mean was used to measure the perceived effects of an earned degree on employment and the evaluation of the graduates' learning experience. Five (5) point Likert criterion scale was used to provide statistical descriptions of the weighted means of the perceived relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the graduate school program and the perceived effects of earned degrees on personal and professional growth.

**Table 1. 5 Point Likert Scale for Perceived Relevance, Quality and Responsiveness**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Perceived Relevance, Quality and Responsiveness** | | |
| Scale | Range | Descriptive Interpretation |
| 5 | 4.01 – 5.00 | Very Great Extent (VGE) |
| 4 | 3.01 – 4.00 | Great Extent (GE) |
| 3 | 2.01 – 3.00 | Moderate Extent (ME) |
| 2 | 1.01 – 2.00 | Some Extent (SE) |
| 1 | 0.00 – 1.00 | Not at All (NA) |

**Table 2. 5 Point Likert Scale for Perceived Contribution of Master’s Degree to Personal and Professional Growth**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Perceived Contribution of Master’s Degree to Personal and Professional Growth** | | |
| Scale | Range | Descriptive Interpretation |
| 5 | 4.01 – 5.00 | Strongly Agree (SA) |
| 4 | 3.01 – 4.00 | Agree (A) |
| 3 | 2.01 – 3.00 | Neither Agree nor Disagree (NAD) |
| 2 | 1.01 – 2.00 | Disagree (D) |
| 1 | 0.00 – 1.00 | Strongly Disagree (SD) |

A one-way ANOVA was used to test the significant difference in the perceived relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the graduate programs by the graduates when grouped between programs.

**6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**6.1. Part I. Profile of the Respondents**

Based on the table, most of the respondents are female, comprising 60% of the total respondents, and 67% are ages 31 and above. The majority are married, comprising 82% of the total respondents. Furthermore, most of the respondents are from the 2019 batch, comprising 36% of the overall respondents who finished the program Master of Arts in Educational Management (MAED-EM).

**Table 3. Profile of the Respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Profile** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| **Sex** |  |  |
| Male | 17 | 40 |
| Female | 25 | 60 |
| **Age** |  |  |
| 18-25 | 4 | 9 |
| 26-30 | 10 | 24 |
| 31 and above | 28 | 67 |
| **Civil Status** |  |  |
| Single | 7 | 16 |
| Married | 34 | 82 |
| Separated | 1 | 2 |
| **Year Graduated** |  |  |
| 2018 | 2 | 5 |
| 2019 | 15 | 36 |
| 2020 | 10 | 24 |
| 2021 | 8 | 19 |
| 2022 | 5 | 11 |
| **Graduated Degree Earned** |  |  |
| MAED-EM | 22 | 52 |
| MPA | 20 | 48 |
| **Scholarship enjoyed while pursuing a graduate degree** |  |  |
| None | 42 | 100 |

As gleaned in Table 3, most of the respondents are working in the government sector (LGU, DepEd, HEI, DPWH, BIR, DILG, DOH, and RHU) within and outside the locality, composing 98% of the overall respondents. This is due to the distance of the workplace and the availability of open and vacant positions that fit with their master’s program. Also, most of the respondents are permanent, composing 90%. This ensures their work stability and positions in their current workplace.

The result is an affirmation that the institution provides the necessary competencies and skills to its graduates. As mentioned by Finch et al., 2013 for graduates to be employable, they need to possess the necessary competencies and skills that are flexible in the changing labor market. Understanding the employment characteristics and factors influencing graduate employment status is critical for HEIs.

**Table 4. Employment Profile**

| **Current employment details** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Employer** |  |  |
| Government | 41 | 98 |
| NGO/INGO | 1 | 2 |
| **Employment Status** |  |  |
| Permanent | 38 | 90 |
| Temporary | 1 | 2 |
| Contract of Service/Job Order | 3 | 8 |

As gleaned from Table 4 most respondents, comprising 76% of the overall respondents, were promoted in less than a year after earning their master's degree. Of the 42 respondents, 19, or 45.23%, were promoted in one step, while 13, or 30.95%, were promoted in two steps after earning their master's degree. Of the fifteen (15) teachers, thirteen (13) were promoted to Teacher III from Teacher I, which marks the highest rank in the data on the promotion of the total respondents. This result is similar to the study of Gallagher (2014), who emphasized in his study that in the past five years, [33% of employers have raised their educational requirements](https://www.careerbuilder.com/advice/employers-looking-for-more-educated-workers), now hiring workers with master’s degrees for positions that had previously been filled by bachelor’s degree holders. The reason for this, according to employers, is that workers with master’s degrees demonstrated increased work quality, productivity, communication skills, and innovation once hired. Additionally, after promotion and after earning their master’s degree, most of them were given additional tasks, especially those who were working as professional teachers.

According to Salise et al. (2021), an auxiliary function is a work that is necessary to the overall goals of how a system or organization operates. The term "ancillary functions" in the context of education refers to the tasks that teachers carry out that are not specifically related to teaching in the classroom, such as serving as class advisers, subject coordinators, club advisers, sports coaches, coordinators of both co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and community engagement services. Teachers do not perform actual teaching, yet these services are vital for the school’s daily operations.

**Table 5. Impact of Earned Graduate Degree on Employment Outcomes**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| * 1. Have you been promoted due to your earned master’s degree? |  |  |
| * + - Yes | 32 | 76 |
| * + - No | 10 | 24 |
| * 1. Average Promotion Interval (years) After Master's Degree Attainment | **F** | **%** |
| * + - After less than 1 year | 10 | 23.8 |
| * + - After 1 year to less than 2 years | 9 | 21.42 |
| * + - After 2 years to less than 3 years | 7 | 16.16 |
| * + - After 3 years or longer | 6 | 14.28 |
| * + - None | 10 | 23.8 |
| * 1. Present employment/job position before the promotion | **F** | **%** |
| * Casual/Contractual | 10 | 23.80 |
| * Teaching (Teacher I, II, and Instructor I) | 20 | 47.6 |
| * Administrative/clerical support | 4 | 9.52 |
| * Finance | 3 | 7.14 |
| * Technical Support | 5 | 11.9 |
| * 1. Steps in promotion after earning the master’s degree | **F** | **%** |
| * 0 step | 7 | 16.66 |
| * 1 step | 19 | 45.23 |
| * 2 steps | 13 | 30.95 |
| * 3 steps | 3 | 7.14 |
| * 1. After earning your master's degree, were you given additional tasks or work? | **F** | **%** |
| * Yes | 28 | 66.66 |
| * No | 14 | 33.33 |

Table 5 shows how the graduates perceive the relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the graduate degree offered or provided by ASC-Conner Campus. Based on the result, the overall mean is 4.55, which is interpreted as a very great extent. The result is an indication that the graduate degree offered by Apayao State College is relevant, of high quality, and responsive to industry requirements.

This implies that Apayao State College, as the lone higher education institution in the province, strives to offer graduate degrees that are not only academically rigorous but also relevant, high-quality, and adaptable to the ever-changing landscape of education and development.

**Table 6. The Perceived Relevance, Quality, and Responsiveness of the Graduate Degree Offered/Provided By ASC-Conner Campus**

| **Particular** | **Mean** | **Interpretation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Relevance | 4.50 | VGE |
| 1. Quality of program offering | 4.62 | VGE |
| 1. Responsiveness of the curriculum to industry requirements | 4.55 | VGE |
| **Category Mean** | **4.55** | **VGE** |

Table 6 presents the significant difference in the perceived relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the graduate school programs when grouped between graduate school programs. As gleaned from the table, the significant difference between the two graduate school programs has high significance, with a P-value of 0.94 and 0.29, respectively. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted, which means there is no significant difference in the perceived relevance, quality, and responsiveness of the graduate school programs when grouped between graduate school programs.

This implies offering graduate degrees that are not only academically rigorous but also relevant, high-quality, and adaptable to the ever-changing landscape of education and development.

**Table 7. Significant difference in the perceived relevance, quality and responsiveness of the graduate school programs when grouped between graduate school programs.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicator** | **Mean** | **Std. Dev.** | **F** | **Df** | **P-Value** | **Decision** |
| **MAED** |  | | | | | |
| Relevance | 4.55 | 0.51 | 0.059 | 2 | 0.94 | Accept Ho |
| Quality | 4.59 | 0.50 |
| Responsiveness | 4.55 | 0.51 | 63 |
| **MPA** |  | | | | | |
| Relevance | 4.40 | 0.11 | 1.26 | 2 | 0.29 | Accept Ho |
| Quality | 4.65 | 0.49 |
| Responsiveness | 4.55 | 0.51 | 57 |

Table 7 presents the contribution of the earned Master’s degree to the personal growth of the respondents. As gleaned from the table, the respondents agreed that their master’s degree enhanced their personal growth. The following areas have the highest category means, such as improved learning efficacy, salary improvement and promotion, meeting present and future professional skills, enhanced academic profession, and improved communication and interpersonal skills, with means of 3.79, 3.74, 3.70, 3.69, and 3.64, respectively. Generally, the overall mean is 3.56, which means that the respondents agreed that the degree has contributed to their personal growth.

This result is supported by the study of Gulua and Kharadze (2022), wherein they mentioned that a master’s program is a great way to develop skills that complement the expertise you already have. Layering broader knowledge and practices like these on top of a more niche skill set can help professionals excel within their existing field and open up an array of exciting career advancement opportunities down the line.

**Table 8. Contribution of the earned Master’s Degree to Respondents’ Personal Growth**

| **Particular** | **Mean** | **Interpretation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Enhanced academic profession | 3.69 | A |
| 1. Improved problem-solving skill | 3.50 | A |
| 1. Improved research skills | 3.50 | A |
| 1. Improved learning efficacy | 3.79 | A |
| 1. Improved communication/interpersonal skills | 3.64 | A |
| 1. Improved information technology skills | 3.50 | A |
| 1. Enhance team spirit/people skills | 3.64 | A |
| 1. Meeting present and future professional skills | 3.70 | A |
| 1. Exposure to Local Communities within the field of Specialization | 3.60 | A |
| 1. Exposure to Internal Community within the field of specialization | 3.43 | A |
| 1. Critical Thinking Skills | 3.62 | A |
| 1. Salary Improvement and Promotion | 3.74 | A |
| 1. Opportunity Abroad | 3.26 | A |
| 1. Personality Development | 3.26 | A |
| **Category Mean** | **3.56** | **A** |

Table 8 presents the contribution of the earned master’s degree to the professional growth of the respondents. The result revealed that the following have the highest means in terms of agreement of the respondents: professors’ knowledge of major subjects with a mean of 3.76; researcher-student relationships (3.69); relevance of the program to professional requirements (6.64); interdisciplinary learning (3.64); teaching and learning environment (3.60); and quality of instruction (57).

In summary, the respondents agreed that all areas as specified in the table had contributed to their professional growth, with a category mean of 3.54.Silva & White (2013) emphasized that graduate school provides the perfect environment for students to [build their professional networks](https://graduate.northeastern.edu/resources/networking-tips-graduate-students/)-a vital practice, considering [85 percent](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/new-survey-reveals-85-all-jobs-filled-via-networking-lou-adler/) of all roles today are filled through networking. Grad students are constantly exposed to new people who have the potential to make a lasting impact on their careers. Between passionate classmates, industry-leading professors, and an [alumni network](https://alumni.northeastern.edu/) with 300,000-plus members, students at Northeastern are able to build positive relationships with contacts that can help them conquer every stage of their careers.

**Table 9. Contribution of the Earned Master’s Degree to the Professional Growth of the Respondents**

| **Particular** | **Mean** | **Interpretation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Range of subjects offered | 3.38 | A |
| 1. Relevance of the Program to your professional requirements | 3.64 | A |
| 1. Extra-Curricular Activities | 3.36 | A |
| 1. Problem Solving | 3.50 | A |
| 1. Premium Given to Research | 3.45 | A |
| 1. Interdisciplinary learning | 3.64 | A |
| 1. Teaching and Learning Environment | 3.60 | A |
| 1. Quality of Instruction | 3.57 | A |
| 1. Researcher-Student Relationships | 3.69 | A |
| 1. Library Resources | 3.52 | A |
| 1. Laboratory Resources | 3.36 | A |
| 1. Class Size | 3.52 | A |
| 1. Infrastructure and Facilities | 3.50 | A |
| 1. Professor’s knowledge of major subjects | 3.76 | A |
| **Category Mean** | **3.54** | **A** |

**7. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings, the graduate study program of Apayao State College has an impact on the careers of its clients, as evidenced by the fact that most respondents were promoted and enhanced their competencies as they were given designations or additional tasks after they earned their master’s degree. The graduate programs of ASC, the MAED and MPA, are likewise relevant, quality, and responsive to the needs of the graduates. As revealed by the results, most of the respondents agreed that their master’s degree enhanced their personal growth and professional growth.

Consent (where ever applicable)

I affirm that the respondents voluntarily agreed to participate after being fully informed about the purpose, nature, and potential implications of the study. Their responses have been collected with utmost respect for their privacy and confidentiality, in accordance with ethical research guidelines.

Ethical approval (where ever applicable)

The study was conducted with the approval and in accordance with the standards of the college. No ethical approval was required, as the research followed all applicable ethical guidelines, ensuring respect for the respondents' privacy and confidentiality

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

I acknowledge that I have not used Copilot for only refining some of the sections in the document.

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