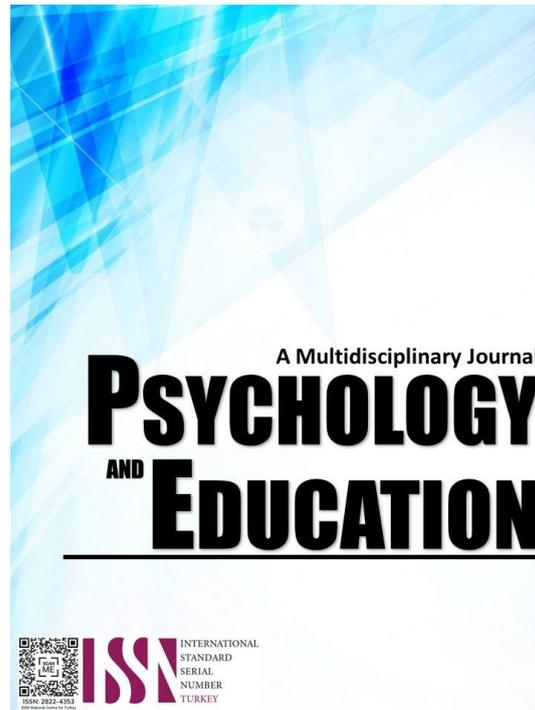


**TRACING THE MASTER IN BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION GRADUATES TOWARDS THEIR  
PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, AND  
PROGRAM ASPECTS' CONTRIBUTION**



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## Tracing the Master in Business Administration Graduates Towards their Personal and Professional Growth, and Program Aspects' Contribution

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### Abstract

The study assessed the MBA graduates towards their personal and professional growth, and the program aspects' contributions. It utilized descriptive method of research, using total enumeration of graduates from 2015-2021. The study revealed that the MBA program contributed to the personal and professional growth of graduates. The problem-solving, decision-making, human relation, critical thinking, and organization skills were the top skills developed and rated Very High; while information technology and personality skills were rated High. Overall, the MBA program aspects' contributions was rated Very Good. It indicates that it has contributed to the attainment of the goals and objectives of the MBA program; and ensured inclusive and equitable education and promoted lifelong learning opportunities for all under the sustainable development goal on quality education. However, it needs to improve the instructional process to further enhance the MBA graduates' skills. Assist and monitor the MBA students to finish the program to increase the number of MBA graduates. Conduct a periodic review of the MBA curriculum to update and ensure its relevance and competitiveness and adopt student immersion. To offer electives aligned to current trends and practices. Invite adjunct faculty members with industry experience and consider offering the MBA program online. The study further recommends that professors use other teaching methodologies like outdoor activities, training, and symposia. Likewise, state-of-the-art facilities with strong internet connection and e-libraries are a necessity in the program. There is also a need to spruce linkages with business or corporate organizations for student experiences.

**Keywords:** *master in business administration, personal growth, professional growth, contributions, curriculum*

### Introduction

Today, we face reality in the academic world that the role of higher education institutions cannot only be limited to imparting knowledge but also to contributing to maintaining a competitive economy and, most important of all, to securing the dream of graduates to get jobs and become socially recognized and successful in their respective fields of endeavors.

It is the thrust of every higher educational institution to assess the professional relevance of the program offered. The various oversight committees like Commission on Higher Education, Department of Budget and Management, National Economic Development Authority, and other agencies emphasized the conduct of tracer studies to capture information on employability of graduates, their job satisfaction, and professional development. The Institutional Sustainability Assessment (ISA) requires Mountain Province State Polytechnic College (MPSPC) to determine its outcomes as a higher educational institution. The graduates are the product of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and the employment of these graduates provides the tangible outcomes of the efforts of HEIs.

Graduate Tracer Studies (GTS) is becoming a

recognizable practice worldwide (Badiru & Wahome, 2016). Towards the end of the 20th Century, European Universities adopted the use of tracer studies for a number of reasons: to accredit their study programs; to determine the link between study programs and the job market; to show uniqueness and positioning of individual universities; and also to enable universities and institutions managing higher education in their respective countries make informed and evidence-based decisions about improvements and quality education and services in higher education (Schomburg and Ulrich, 2011).

It is fitting and proper to keep MPSPC continue setting up priorities and formulating relevant programs for higher education. Hence, to obtain the information pertinent to this task, the MPSPC conducts the second MPSPC MBA Graduate Tracer Study from 2015-2021.

### Research Questions

The main objective of the graduate tracer study is to determine the employment status and the program contribution to the personal and professional growth of the graduates of Master in Business Administration in Mountain Province State Polytechnic College for Academic Years 2015-2021. In addition, the research will answer the following questions:



1. What is the demographic profile of MBA respondents in terms of enrollees vis-à-vis the number of graduates for the School Years 2015-2021, and educational background?
2. What is the employment status of MBA respondents before and after studying MBA, type of employment organization, and job level positions; and the assessed relationship of the current job to the MBA degree earned?
3. What are the contributions of the MBA program to the personal and professional growth of the graduates?
4. What are the problems and suggestions to improve the MBA program?

## Literature Review

Menez (2014) emphasized that the task of higher education institutions is not confined to mere instruction but, more importantly, to ensuring the graduates' employability, recognition, and success in their respective disciplines, and likewise to be productive human resources in a competitive economy. She also added that the inability of graduates to meet the skills and competencies required by the industry is one of the major factors for underemployment and the difficulty in finding jobs.

Buenviaje et al. (2016) discussed the challenges on the MBA curriculum design and development are an essential part of innovation in integrating a more practical approach in delivering instruction towards the achievement of student outcomes relevant to the needs of the global market. They also added that identifying the status of graduates after leaving the academic institution is a primary task of every higher education institution to determine the strengths and weaknesses of certain curricular offerings.

Carlson (2014) noted that business schools' leaders and administrators come to a higher understanding of the needs of employers and explore multiple strategies for MBA curriculum internationalization. He also added that globalization had changed MBA graduates' skills, knowledge, and competencies.

Badiru & Wahome (2016) also believed that conducting graduate tracer studies is a tool for quality assurance. Specifically, they proposed methodological procedures in conducting graduate tracer studies that the universities can use to study graduates' experiences which are helpful for feedback into university programs and graduates' careers. They also showcased how graduate tracer studies results can be used to improve quality assurance, education, and services at

higher education institutions.

Segismundo & Zacarias (2017), in their tracer study, hoped that the results of generated empirical data could be used as bases for program improvement and curricula enhancement to meet the needs and expectations of the industry, thereby reducing the rate of unemployment in the country. Moreover, the tracer study also aimed to help the university institute necessary policies and reforms to ensure that the University and its graduates are prepared to meet the challenges of a 21st-century world.

Buenviaje et al. (2016) explored the employability and skills of MBA graduates based on reviewed studies and literature. Their study provides information on the challenges faced by most employers in selecting employees where they require MBA degree holders. They commonly need employees who demonstrate abilities related to quantitative, analytical, and strategic thinking skills to handle higher responsibilities. Leadership and management skills are essential aspects of student outcomes that should be enhanced by the higher educational institutions to their graduates in order to address the needs of the industries. Student development programs may include activities and projects that would develop their skills in change management, risk management, and human resource management.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The researcher employed the descriptive method of research to gather information about existing conditions of the MBA graduates of MPSPC, which, according to Ariola (2006), is used to analyze, interpret and report the present status of the subject matter. It also requires questionnaires or other instruments to generate data prepared by the researcher. Data must be organized and presented systematically to draw valid and accurate conclusions.

### Respondents

The researcher considered total enumeration in the conduct of the graduate tracer study of the MBA program of MPSPC from 2015-2021. A total of 19 MBA graduates from 2015-2021 were considered, composed of the following: 2015- 5 graduates; 2016- 3 graduates; 2017-4 graduates; 2018- 2 graduates; 2019- 2 graduates; 2020- 2 graduates; and 2021- 1 graduate.



### Instrument

The graduate tracer study survey questionnaire, developed by CHED and adopted by Gines (2014) and Calma (2020) was the main instrument used for data gathering. Modifications were made and delimited to few questions to obtain pertinent information and data about the employment status of the MBA graduates of MPSPC 2015 to 2021. The researcher included the research questions adopted from Calma (2020), on reasons why they pursue MBA program, the contributions of the program to their personal and professional growth, and their assessment regarding the aspects of the MBA program. Respondents will also be asked to give their suggestions on how MPSPC can further improve the MBA Program. The researcher also conducted interviews during the retrieval of the survey instrument and after the data were tabulated are recorded to validate and triangulate the results of the study.

### Procedure

The researcher adhered with research protocols. The survey instruments were delivered personally to the respondents. A phone number was provided for the respondents to contact the researcher for clarification of the statements in the survey instrument if needed. The respondents were given ample time to answer the survey instrument and contacts the researcher when finished. The data collected from the questionnaire were organized, tabulated, analyzed and treated. To further substantiate and validate the data gathered from survey questionnaire, the researcher conducted interviews to selected respondents.

### Ethical Consideration

The researcher adhered to health protocols in the conduct of the study. The researcher reviewed the measures or guarantees to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participant information. This complies with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, as indicated by the data gathering procedure. All who have access to the data and the identities of the respondents can safeguard their privacy and confidentiality. As part of the data gathering procedure, the researcher informed the participants that any information gathered were kept confidential, further the identities of the respondents to safeguard their privacy and anonymity.

## Results

The findings arising from the survey and interviews conducted with MBA graduates from 2015 to 2021 are presented in four sections. This section covers the demographic profile, employment, contributions of the MBA program, and the MBA program assessment, including the difficulties/problems encountered and the suggestions to improve the offering of the MBA program in MPSPC.

### Demographic Profile of MBA Graduates of MPSPC

Table 1. Number of MBA enrollees vis-à-vis the number of graduates and respondents

Year	No. of MBA enrollees	No. of MBA Graduates	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Rank
2014-2015	32	5	5	26.32%	1
2015-2016	32	3	3	15.79%	3
2016-2017	33	4	4	21.05%	2
2017-2018	36	2	2	10.53%	4
2018-2019	40	2	2	10.53%	4
2019-2020	18	2	2	10.53%	4
2020-2021	42	1	1	5.26%	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

Table 2. Educational background

Educational Background (Baccalaureate)	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. BS Commerce- Management	2	10.53%	2
b. BS Commerce- Economics	1	5.26%	3
c. BS Commerce- Banking & Finance	1	5.26%	3
d. BS Business Administration- Financial Management	1	5.26%	3
e. BS Business Administration- Marketing Management	2	10.53%	2
f. BS Accountancy	9	47.37%	1
g. BS Office Administration	2	10.53%	2
h. BS Information Technology	1	5.26%	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	



### Employment of MBA Graduates

Table 3. Employment status before and after studying MBA in MPSPC

Employment status while studying MBA in MPSPC	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Employed	19	100%	1
b. Unemployed	0	0	0
Total	19	100%	

Job status while studying MBA in MPSPC	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Permanent	7	36.84	2
b. Job order	12	63.16	1
Total	19	100%	

Job status after finishing MBA in MPSPC	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Permanent	19	100	1
b. Job order	0	0	0
Total	19	100%	

Table 4. Type of organization of employment and job level positions of MBA graduate respondents

Type of organization	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Private	0	0	0
b. Public/Government	19	100%	1
c. Non-government Organization	0	0	0
d. Self-employed	0	0	0
Total	19	100%	

Job level positions	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Managerial/Executive	5	26.32%	2
b. Teaching with Designation	1	5.26%	3
c. Technical/Officer	1	5.26%	3
d. Teaching/Rank and File	12	63.16%	1
Total	19	100%	

Table 5. Assessed relationship of the current job to the MBA degree earned

Is current job related to the MBA degree earned?	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Yes	19	100%	1
b. No	0	0	
Total	19	100%	

MBA degree earned provided the needed technical know-how of your job	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Yes	19	100%	1
b. No	0	0	
Total	19	100%	

Usefulness of the knowledge and skills learned from the MBA program	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Very much useful	8	42.11%	2
b. Much useful	9	47.37%	1
c. A little useful	2	10.53%	3
d. Not useful	0	0.00%	
Total	19	100%	

Level of satisfaction on current job	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. Very much satisfied	8	42.11%	3
b. Much satisfied	10	52.63%	1
c. A little satisfied	1	5.26%	2
d. Not satisfied	0	0.00%	
Total	19	100%	

### Contributions of the MBA program

Table 6. Reasons for pursuing MBA program in MPSPC

Reasons for pursuing MBA program in MPSPC	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
a. For career advancement/professional development/ job promotion	19	18.63%	1
b. For personality development/personal growth	5	4.90%	6
c. To gain or acquire additional knowledge	14	13.73%	3
d. To join the academe	14	13.73%	3
e. For self-fulfillment/self-actualization	8	7.84%	5
f. For management skills development	9	8.82%	4
g. To be updated with the latest practices in business	9	8.82%	4
h. Meeting the needs of my profession	16	15.69%	2
i. Proximity of the institution	8	7.84%	5
Total	102	100%	

Table 7. Extent of contribution of the MBA program to personal and profession growth

Contribution of the MBA program to personal and profession growth	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
a. Meeting the needs of the profession	4.42	Very high	8
b. Information technology skill	3.82	High	14
c. Personality development skill	3.78	High	15
d. Decision-making skill	4.61	Very high	2
e. Critical thinking skill	4.53	Very high	4
f. Problem solving skill	4.71	Very high	1
g. Human relation skill	4.54	Very high	3
h. Research capability	4.32	Very high	12
i. Communication skill	4.34	Very high	11
j. Salary improvement	4.43	Very high	7
k. Learning efficiency	4.30	Very high	12
l. Organization skill	4.51	Very high	5
m. Values formation	4.46	Very high	6
n. Leadership skill	4.39	Very high	10
o. Job promotion	4.40	Very high	9
Grand Weighted Mean	4.37	Very high	

## Problems and suggestions to improve the MBA program

Table 8. *Difficulties/problems encountered while enrolled in the MBA program in MPSPC*

<i>Difficulties/problems encountered while enrolled in the MBA program in MPSPC</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Rank</i>
a. Work schedule sometimes conflict with class schedule	2	4.88%	5
b. Time management	10	24.39%	2
c. Limited resources and references/materials in the library	6	14.63%	4
d. Difficulty in conducting and completing research due to time	13	31.71%	1
c. Enrolment process	2	4.88%	5
d. Group work activities to meet the schedules of members	8	19.51%	3
Total	41	100.00%	

Table 9. *Suggestions to enhance/improve the MBA program in MPSPC*

<i>Suggestions to enhance/improve the MBA program in MPSPC?</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Rank</i>
a Training or seminar, symposia type of methodology in teaching	8	12%	5
b Offering of online program	2	3%	8
c Some outdoor activities related to the subject (e.g., field trips)	4	6%	7
d Immersion as part of the requirements in the MBA program	6	9%	6
e Offering of electives that are aligned to current trends and practices	15	22%	1
f Continuous quality improvement	10	15%	4
g Invite adjunct faculty members with industry experience	11	16%	3
h Provide free internet access on classrooms utilized by MBA program	12	18%	2
Total	68	100%	

## Discussion

Table 1 shows that the MBA program of the Graduate School of MPSPC produced 19 graduates for the last seven years from 2015-to 2021. Table 1 further provides that 100% of the MBA graduate responded to the tracer study survey. The data shows that the MBA program produced an average of 3 graduates per year. However, gazing at the enrollees of the MBA program, it accommodated an average of 33 MBA enrollees every academic year for the past seven years, and only an average of 3 MBA students continue to finish the program. A research study may be conducted to look at why only a few MBA graduates finished the program, considering the significant number of enrollees per school year.

Table 2 shows the baccalaureate degrees of the MBA graduate respondents. It implies that there is continuity in their studies to an advance study in the MBA program. Pursuing advance studies in business management is provided under CHED Memorandum Order No. 17, s. 2017, as one of the program goals for Business Administration. The program goals are the expected outcomes for Business Administration graduates 2 to 5 years after completing the program.

Table 3 reveals that all or 19 (100%) of the MBA graduate respondents were employed. However, most of the respondents, 12 (63.16%), are under job order contract of service and 7 (36.84%) are permanent employees in different government agencies while studying MBA in MPSPC. At present, those who were under job order status were later employed on permanent status. Thus, 100% of the respondents are employed on a permanent status after finishing the MBA program.

Table 4 revealed that 19 (100%) of the MBA graduates are permanently employed in the government/public sector. Usually, the MBA program is designed for private business organizations. The study results showed all of the graduates are accommodated in the government sector. According to the respondents, it is the dream of every graduate to be employed in the government because they personally see the security of tenure in the government service compared to the private sector. Furthermore, as gleaned from Table 4, 12 (63.16%) are teaching/rank and file positions, 5 (26.32%) are managerial/executive positions, 1 (5.26%) is teaching with designation, and 1 (5.26%) technical officer. The result of the study conforms to the worldwide corporate recruiters' survey conducted by the Graduate Management Admission Council (2019) that students are drawn to enroll in business administration courses because they have a reasonable expectation. A graduate business credential will lead to improved employment outcomes they seek.

Table 5 shows the assessment result on the relationship of the current job to the MBA degree earned. It can be gleaned from the table that 19 (100%) of the respondents agree that the current job is related to their degree earned and have provided the technical know-how in their job. Table 5 also shows the extent of use of the knowledge and skills learned from the MBA program. The result revealed that 9 (47.37%) of the respondent agreed to be much useful, 8 (42.11%) agreed to be very much useful, and 2 (10.53%) were a little useful. Moreover, on the level of satisfaction on their current job, Table 5 discloses that 10 (52.63%)

are much satisfied, 8 (42.11%) are very much satisfied, and 1 (5.26%) are a little satisfied. Generally, the respondents are mostly much satisfied with their current jobs concerning the added knowledge and skills gained from the MBA program.

It is important to know why the graduate respondents have finished the MBA program to understand their personal views and assess their employability. As gleaned on Table 6, for career advancement/professional development/ job promotion tops the reasons for students in pursuing MBA in MPSPC with 19 (18.63%), followed by meeting the needs of my profession with 16 (15.69%), and to gain or acquire additional knowledge and to join the academe with 14 (13.73%). Generally, the respondents believed that graduating from the MBA program is not an end to education rather -learning is a continuous process. Therefore, they need to pursue advanced studies to improve their knowledge in their respective fields, have better employment opportunities, and job promotion.

As gleaned from Table 7, the problem-solving skill was the top skill developed by MBA graduates with a weighted mean of 4.71 interpreted as very high; this was followed by decision making skill at 4.61 (very high), human relation skill at 4.54 (very high), critical thinking skill at 4.43 (very high) and organization skills 4.51 (very high). The table also shows that most of the contributions of the MBA program to personal and professional growth were rated very high; however, information technology skills and personality skills were rated high.

Generally, the MBA program in MPSPC contributed to the development of the graduates in personal and professional growth with a grand mean of 4.37, interpreted as very high. This is supported by an earlier study conducted by Mihail & Elefterie (2006), that graduating from an MBA program has a positive effect on the skills, employability, and compensation and a much moderate effect on career advancement. Furthermore, they provided that graduating from an MBA program provides graduates with business-related competencies, enhances employability, promotes career advancement, and increases compensation. The result of the study is further supported by Segismundo & Zacarias (2017), in a tracer study conducted for graduates of MBA program have "very highly" contribution to the graduates' personal and professional growth particularly on people skills, personality development, values formation, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and the academic profession.

As gleaned on the Table 8, the difficulty in conducting and completing research due to time was ranked 13 (31.71%). Time management ranked second with 10 (24.39%). The group work activities to meet members' schedules were ranked third with 8 (19.51%). The limited resources and references/materials in the library ranked fourth with 6 (14.63%).

The data and interview with MBA graduates provided in-depth results on the suggestions to help improve the MBA program, particularly the instructional process in enhancing the MBA graduates' skills. As a result, the MBA graduates have complementary roles and valuable experiences in improving the MBA program in MPSPC. Table 9 shows that the offering of electives aligned to current trends and practices ranked first with 15 (22%); to provide free internet access to classrooms utilized by the MBA program ranked second with 12 (18%); to invite adjunct faculty members with industry experience ranked third with 11(16%); continuous quality improvement ranked fourth with 10(15%); the MBA graduates suggested that training and symposia methodology in teaching must be included ranked fifth with 8 (12%); immersion as part of the requirements in the MBA program ranked sixth with 6 (9%); some outdoor activities related to the subject ranked seventh with 4(6%); and the offering of an online program was the least suggested improvement with 2 (3%).

## Conclusion

Generally, the enrollees in the MBA program have baccalaureate degrees aligned to business administration. The MBA program in MPSPC has an average of 33 enrollees every academic year; however, it produced an average of 3 graduates per year from 2015-to 2021. There is a continuity of study from allied business administration courses in the undergraduate to graduate study under the MBA program.

All MBA graduates were already employed either job order or permanently in the government service while studying MBA in MPSPC. The MBA program has been instrumental for the permanency of job order employees and the promotion of permanent employees. The MBA graduates from 2015-2021 were all employed in the government occupying teaching/rank and file, managerial/executive, and technical positions.

All MBA graduates agreed that the current jobs were related to their degree earned and have provided the technical know-how; the knowledge and skills learned

from the MBA program were useful, and they are satisfied with the current job. In addition, the MBA program contributed to the personal and professional growth of the graduates.

The problem-solving skill, decision-making skills, human relation skills, critical thinking skills, and organization skills were the topmost skills developed by the MBA graduates as very high. However, information technology skills and personality skills were rated high. Overall, the MBA graduates assessed the different aspects of the MBA program as Very Good.

The MBA graduates recognized the following difficulties/problems while enrolled in the MBA program in MPSPC and ranked accordingly: 1] difficulty in conducting and completing research due to time; 2] time management; 3] group work activities to meet the schedules of members; 4] limited resources and references/materials in the library; 5] work schedule sometimes conflict with class schedule; and 6] enrolment.

The MBA graduates provided in-depth suggestions to help improve the MBA program, particularly the instructional process in enhancing the MBA graduates' skills. The MBA graduates were seen as having complementary roles and valuable experiences; this includes the employability and job promotion of MBA graduates in the labor markets. The following suggestions were ranked as follows: 1] the offering of electives aligned to current trends and practices; 2] free internet access on classrooms utilized by MBA program; 3] invite adjunct faculty members with industry experience; 4] continuous quality improvement; 5] training, symposia type of methodology in teaching must be included; 6] immersion as part of the requirements in the MBA program; 7] some outdoor activities related to the subject; and 7] online program.

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