

# **SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS’ QUEST FOR A VERTICALLY-ARTICULATED CAREER PATH**

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## **Abstract**

Nelson Mandela once said, “*Education is the only weapon we can use to change the world*”. Hence, today’s “educational policies aim at making education more effective” (Uusiautti & Maatta, 2013) and consequently, “seeing teaching as a continuous process of learning” (Stockard, 2001) can make education stronger. In order to be branded globally competitive, educators are pushed to be important prime movers of change for social transformation. This study sought to find out the career paths of Social Studies teachers who graduated with Master’s degrees in Education from 2000 to 2013. Their profile, motivational factors, and benefits acquired were investigated through purposive sampling. A mixed method of both quantitative and qualitative approaches was used in the study with a descriptive survey through a researcher-made-questionnaire in the collection of data. To facilitate the data collection, online/personal interviews and analysis of the curriculum vitae of respondents were used. The study revealed a diverse demographic profile, different motivational factors, and varied significant insights. The attainment of a master’s degree in social studies had contributed to a lot of benefits that led to a vertically-articulated career path that ensures professional quality and sterling professional commitment.

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**Keywords:** Work designation, significant insights, vertically-articulated career path

## **Introduction**

Our society today is confronted with challenging issues. While all networks of information release various reports of human interests. These issues may disturb our social life in the community where we live. These demand an immediate call for action, which necessitates government

response. Otherwise, incessant ineptness in these dreary situations, the Philippines can experience a quagmire, far behind other Asian countries, which are now moving toward economic growth, as emerging key players in globalization. These haunting issues have one appropriate solution: EDUCATION.

According to Nelson Mandela, “*Education is the only weapon we can use to change the world*”. The development of any country relies on its resources and especially on the efficiency of its human capital (Kouassi, 2014). Hence, today’s “educational policies aim at making education more effective” (Uusiautti & Maatta, 2013) and consequently, “seeing teaching as a continuous process of learning” (Stockard, 2001) can make education stronger. In order to be branded globally competitive, educators are pushed to be prime movers of change for social transformation. Education is responsible in shaping and reshaping the minds of our countrymen, which is essential to the formation of our people’s scholastic life. The Philippines can make a difference for educators through an effective career plan that progresses on a vertically-articulated career path for excellence. Laplap, Reston, Batomalaque, Bayani & Tomakin (2014) theorized that “vertical articulation as a dimension of curriculum articulation and organization is geared toward providing smooth transition and continuity as well as creating pathways and linkages within and between levels of undergraduate and graduate programs”. This pushes higher education institutions to decentralize and realign their undergraduate and graduate school programs vertically to ensure the production of more expert human capital.

However, we believe that educators are the most important players in the learning environment. Without them, the other elements of that environment would be ineffective. Theilheimer (1991) in Uusiautti & Maatta (2013) suggests “five factors (comfort, clarity, respect, relationships, and responsibility) that contribute to a positive learning environment”. They direct and stimulate the youth’s quest for a nationalistic identity that establishes a quintessential orientation of different perspectives for human development, which calls for a caring leadership. As agents of change, teachers are most influential in molding children to take part in the nation’s progress and development. Therefore, there is an unrelenting need for these educators to be equipped with all the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills relevant in teaching. The Social Studies educators, who are the front-liners in today’s education, have a vital role in this pursuit for social change, stewardship, and global solidarity.

The field of social studies, however, as a program of the social sciences, concentrates on society and its social elements. It encompasses a broad range of knowledge of the different branches of the social sciences. The social studies program is described as the study of a variety of fields that

deal with human behavior and interaction of the past and present realities in a social environment. Hence, this aspect demands relevant training for effective instruction through a functional Faculty Development Program (FDP) in every academic institution, in order to sustain quality and a more efficient delivery of instruction. “FDP includes, among others, such experiences as attendance and participation in conventions, in-service courses and workshops, travel and exchange programs, postgraduate studies, participation in professional education, reading of desirable professional literature, and self-evaluation” (Dobkin, Fisher, Ludwig & Koblimer, 1985) in Stockard (2001). The Faculty Development Program of the Commission on Higher Education (FDP-CHED) in the Philippines aims for high quality education, which depends largely on the qualifications and competencies of the faculty members. In view of the faculty’s vital role in influencing education outcomes, CHED requires teachers in higher education institutions to have at least a master’s degree in their field of specialization before they can teach in a university, as an entry qualification. In line with the CHED goals and thrusts on quality and excellence, it intends to require its full compliance, whereby no instructors may teach the general education courses without the appropriate master’s degree in a relevant field of specialization.

“The completion of an academic degree is a student responsibility” (Uusiautti & Maatta, 2013). Despite CHED’s mandate, there is a declining figure of enrollees in MAED Social Studies, specifically in the Cebu Normal University (CNU) – a sad reality that calls for an urgent stakeholders’ response. Most MAED students, who enrolled in CNU, are not that willingly determined to finish the course due to varied reasons: after taking all the subjects required, they quit because of work-related pressures: some go to transfer to another university and finish the degree, the rest migrate abroad for work, and the social studies teachers who remain are not exceptional. As a result, there were only one or two who graduated at the end of the school year based on the registrar’s report. Hence, there were no graduates in social studies under the Master’s Degree Program in the Academic Years 2004 to 2006.

Derasin (2010) verbalized that “there are few enrollees in MAED-Social Studies because enrolling in this field may not be responsive in one’s pursuit for work abroad”. However, he further laments that “the recent National Achievement Test (NAT) results in Social Studies in Cebu City Division achieves very high”. This positive result shows a high expectation that most likely increases motivation among secondary social studies teachers to take further studies in the MAED program in response to the new competencies of the K to 12 spiral curriculum. It is imperative that social studies teachers in the field need to finish their master’s degree. On the other hand, BSED Social Studies students in the LET for the past 5 years show a

consistent 100% passing performance. This is a positive motivational indicator of consistency that presumably prompts them to take the same specialization the moment they proceed to graduate studies.

### **Short Literature Of The Study**

This study is anchored on Deci and Ryan’s Self Determination Theory, “which emphasizes motivation behind the choices people make without any external influence and interference”. Teachers’ personality and motivation influence career selection. The degree to which social studies teachers are motivated and determined had endorsed their actions to a peak level of reflection in order to examine each of their values to pursue graduate studies. “The need for self-introspection about teaching is one of the best measures to ascertain our self-efficacy in establishing a successful career path” (Inocian, 2013). To Eichler (2013), “life is a journey and to bring this to practice necessitates examination of our values in order to bring the best in the workplace”. The infusion of these values catapults interest to perform at the highest level of personal motivation in teaching. When self-determined, teachers experience a sense of freedom to do what is interesting and enhance their career life. Gottfredson’s Theory of Circumscription and Compromise and Bandura’s Social Cognitive Career Theory are sets of constructs that mirror an effective determination of one’s career path.

According to Gottfredson (2002 & 2005) in Leung (2008) “career development is viewed as a self-creation process in which individuals looked for avenues or niches to express their genetic proclivities within the boundaries of their own cultural environment”. This Platonic view implies that “social studies teachers can influence their own teaching and learning environment at their best teaching performance and perform the tasks for which they are best suited” (Stockard, 2001). However, Bandura’s SCCT choice model posits that “career choice as an unfolding process in which the individual and his/her environment influence each other” (Leung, 2008). Though, it is true that social studies teachers are aware of their personal teaching preference, they can still hear feedback from their colleagues and school administrators that influence their career choice. Whatever these teachers need to do, they should have the spirit of self-determination in order to achieve the goals of their profession. Therefore, MAED Social Studies students should likely be well-determined to complete all the requirements to finish graduate studies with a book-bound-thesis as a product of their scholarship. Indeed, in enrolling in the master’s degree, one would have a clear direction to finish it until graduation. However, it is truly challenging that these students need to cope with their work and study in order to ascertain competence that proves self-efficacy.

Alcala (1997) “expounds his concern for quality and excellence in higher education in the Philippines, which have been aggressively pursuing quality assurance system in higher education’s disciplinary programs”. Through this program, he convinced the “need to show our national attempts for realization in achieving quality control that provides a reflection of the growing concern for quality education in various regions of the country patterned from the experiences and best practices of other countries in the world”. But these attempts are measurable means, which would never become possible if our people do not have the vibrant motivation in achieving these ends. This means that being able to perform better is dependent on the individual person’s achievement motivation. It is intrinsic and varies depending on the person’s values system, personality, and attitude. To create attitudinal change necessitates remarkable models that our people can mirror on. No other social groups can make modeling things happen with focus on the young generation except the teachers’ presence in a challenging learning environment. Thus, this expectation compels teachers to be achievers too in their own right and be able to produce the best leaders that the succeeding generation can depend on.

Teachers need to feel that there is always room for improvement in our ways and attitudes in order to succeed in our professional endeavor without prejudice to our endowed rights. We should put ourselves in another stage in a relentless challenge for change that the future holds and reaps rewards in many ways for professional development. Professional growth is a continuing education that remains a career-path determinant. Hence, education also demands a dynamic process of growth and development that every teacher in the workplace is engaged in through a well-planned faculty development program. Shahani (1997) supports the contention “that recent evolution in developmental thinking that the human being is not just an element of the labor force or an object to be trained for certain skills but as means and ends of development in itself”. The technical proficiency of our laborers can be the most valued human capital to generate sustainability that our country needs.

This pragmatism requires the ability to identify different ways students process information, acquire skills, and engage in a happy leaning environment. This means that identifying the learning styles of students is one of the instructional skills of an effective Social Studies teacher juxtaposed with the relevant vision-mission of the school. “The mission and vision-statements of every organization, academic or non-academic, set the goal and direction, establish an institutional distinction, and state the purpose and reason for its existence” (Reyes, 2013). As Laplap (2010) points out, “higher education institutions are places of formation of youth, training of profession, cultural and social force for advocacy and service, intellectual

life and diverse requirements for a research culture which may vary based on the institutions' vision-mission". Reyes (2013) supports it and expounds; "academic institutions play a big role in molding and in preparing students in facing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century life and work, wherein advancement, innovation, and responsibility are dominant".

Inocian (2013) adheres to the principle that "whatever decision the administration arrives in for curriculum transformation is always anchored on the university's vision-mission as a legitimate mandate that enhances the professor's self-efficacy". When self-efficacy is identified, effective learning takes place, and the reputation of the university is elevated to a global standard. With this, evaluation becomes an effective mechanism in determining the kind of graduates produced by the institution. The performance of graduates is a primary indicator of quality instruction and a vibrant faculty development program of an institution. The employability of graduates bespeaks the reputation of the university that mirrors the excellent performance of the faculty and a high academic profile of graduates.

### **Objectives Of The Study**

The aim of this study is to find out the status of MAED-Social Studies graduates of Cebu Normal University from academic years 2000 to 2013. The following objectives were raised in order to answer the main problem: (1) describe the profile of graduates in terms of age, sex, civil status, work designation, income, undergraduate degree earned, and length of service; (2) identify motivational factors attributed to the completion of a master's degree in Social Studies, and (3) analyze the benefits derived after earning the degree in terms of significant insights, job responsibility, interpersonal relationships, and economic status.

### **Methods And Materials**

#### **Research Design**

The study made use of a descriptive design with mixed quantitative and qualitative approaches. A researcher – made - questionnaire was administered for the collection of data through online and personal interviews and the respondents' curriculum vitae were perused as primary techniques. A purposive sampling of 20 MAED Social Studies as respondents, who graduated from year 2000 to 2013, was conducted. Dreyfus & Dreyfus rubrics were utilized in the analysis of the respondents' professional profiles and lengths of service. Responses on significant insights, interpersonal relationships, and economic status were listed, codified, clustered, and themes were generated.

## Results And Discussion

### Demographic Profile of Graduates

There were 20 respondents who consisted of 12 females and 8 males. The MAED Social Studies graduates of Cebu Normal University revealed a conventional gender-orientation of a *mother-instinct-shadowing* of the teaching profession attributed to their direct observation of teachers in the field that influenced their career selection. This conventionalism, though, sounded insignificant in today's time for two reasons. First, maintaining a gender-sensitive working environment, evident with the 8 male teachers, nuanced a perfect balance in terms of *gender-sensitive-leadership* of both genders as a representation of a complete parent-modeling in the classroom. Second, gender emerged as no longer a significant predictor of employability considering the institutional and family characteristics (Borromeo, Prudente & Tayag, 2014).

The respondents belonged to the middle age brackets of “thirties” and “forties” who represented the *most productive years of career life*, where most outstanding achievements as Social Studies teachers occurred; 55 % occupied leadership positions as dean, chairman, principal, coordinator, curator, resident ombudsman, and academic supervisor. Their designations were analyzed through Heatfield's career progress lateral moves, promotions, and transfer (2014). Based on personal interviews, 90% of the respondents had a *career-path through job promotion*, after they finished graduate studies; they were recognized as valuable employees who made significant and effective accomplishments, and there was a substantial increase in their salaries. A significant number, 35%, obtained a *career-path through lateral moves*, their movement reflective of an equivalent role in an organization usually with a similar salary range and job title at a level as their previous academic ranks. They were given the designations in the organizational structure with no change in their salaries based on their academic ranks as faculty members. They performed honorific functions of their respective positions in state universities and colleges with no additional financial equivalent, except for the academic dean who is given a Representation Allocation and Travelling Allowance (RATA). The lowest 15 % had a *career-path through transfer*; who were pulled out as classroom teachers to occupy administrative positions with or without any change in their salaries depending upon management negotiation.

There were 17 married respondents who decided to unite for love in building a family. “A good marriage could be one of life's greatest joys and the single most important factor in making life worthwhile” (Van Pelt, 2000). Though they had differing perspectives on marriage, with some marrying for friendship and intimacy, others viewed it as an economic investment, an instrument of social stability, and social bonding, but majority

believed that they entered marriage for a biological and sexual need for self-gratification, which made family life more meaningful.

Nine of the respondents took up Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Social Studies; eight got their degree at the Cebu Normal University, other colleges and universities in Cebu, and the rest in schools in the Visayas and Mindanao. 100% of their undergraduate background was in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities. The profile showed that their decision in taking the MAED Social Studies degree was in line with their undergraduate specialization, in consonance with the *university's quest for a vertically-articulated career path*. Heatfield (2014) emphasized that “career path gives the employee a sense of direction, a way to assess career progress and career goals and milestones”. The passion to engage in an effective career path had a great impact on the respondents’ decision, choice, and career orientation in order to be socially responsible. Borromeo, Prudente & Tayag (2014) supported this, saying, “employed professionals had a low qualification –job mismatch in the Philippines today because the knowledge, skills, and competencies they learned in college were all very relevant in their current jobs”.

### **Respondents’ Length of Service**

Government regulations in the Philippines required teachers to work until age 65. Once students finished their college education at the age of 21, granting that they could work right away after graduation, then, before reaching the retirement age of 65, they could at least serve 44 years. The total years of active service were divided according to Dreyfus and Dreyfus 5 Levels of Adult Skills Acquisition as: novice, advance beginner, competent performer, proficient performer, and expert in order to get the range of active service. As to the number of years in teaching social studies, there were 14 respondents who had been teaching for 10 to 26 years. According to Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1986 & 1991), these respondents were rational in terms of making decisions and analytical in context assessment. This constituted 50% of the entire respondents who were appointed as educational and organizational leaders in the workplace. In terms of leadership autonomy, they were able to achieve most tasks using their own judgment and a greater number appreciated complex situations but only to achieve partial resolution.

Based on Dreyfus & Dreyfus rubrics, as regards the standards of work, the respondents were fit for the purpose but lacked refinement. Though straight forward tasks were likely to be completed according to an acceptable standard, they saw actions at least partly in terms of longer-term goals after they saw these as a series of steps. Despite these remarkable attributes, they were classified as young professionals who had not fully reached the skills of being holistic and intuitive in order to reach the level of



being proficient and competent as they continued to explore their active service before reaching retirement. By argument, they still had to respond to the greatest challenge of Peter's principle that "*employees within an organization will advance to their highest level of competence and then be promoted to and remain at a level at which they are competent*". This happened when they were appointed as leaders because there were no aspirants for the position or they were forced to accept the position even if they were not qualified. Though finishing the MAED Social Studies degree had shown a great advantage, but this did not guarantee that they could provide the best administrative leadership at all times. Continuing education still remained as the best antidote to job complacency brought by knowledge inadequacy and skill- inefficiency.

### **Motivational Factors Attributed to MAED-Social Studies**

The respondents' highest motivating factor to finish the degree was in line with their interest toward their chosen field of specialization that ranked first. This showed the *passionate career endeavor* that encouraged them to learn more and teach well. Although there was sufficiency after graduation attributed to a bachelor's degree, inadequacies as to the entire field of specialization were not set aside. When one entered the master's degree program, an affirmation to learn more is vowed to be acquired. The second motivating factor represented the *need for vertical articulation* that ranked second. This showed a good indicator that they responded to the CHED's call for a vertically articulated career-path by continuing the undergraduate degree to the graduate level. The third motivating factor was in line with the *call for duty*; because the degree was needed in line with their teaching assignment. The fourth and the fifth motivating factors represented the *sterling career orientation* that prodded them to be career-driven. The five remaining indicators of motivation showed low frequencies implying that the respondents had less self-vested interest to become rich. Though concern about self-esteem and social realities were comparable, this did not contradict the fact that they showed more concern for career performance in their respective work designations and the aspiration to be worthy to be called selflessly-devoted human capital.

### **Benefits Earned from MAED Social Studies On Significant Insights**

The respondents studied for their master's degrees primarily for knowledge enhancement of their undergraduate social studies content. This comprised the highest theme of *personal and professional development* as one of the five models for learning to teach (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997), which can be classified into two cluster codes of content knowledge and

personal orientation. For content knowledge, they said that taking MAED Social Studies: *“It is an additional learning in my specialization (R1). Having finished my undergraduate studies isn’t really enough to make me a more equipped teacher inside a classroom with students belonging to the upper class of the community who are having wider and greater access to information (R2). The acquisition of my Master’s degree afforded me a wider grasp of my field (R3). My master’s degree has given me a deep understanding of people and cultures in general (R8)”*. The need for content knowledge revealed in the study is one of the significant insights generated from the respondents. This set of insights was attributed to more than 18 units of content offered in the MAED Social Studies curriculum. As regards personal orientation, they said that they studied MAED because: *“It is needed for my professionalization, personal development, and self-actualization (R5). I have grown professionally and have also learned more than my undergraduate subjects provided (R10)”*.

To finish MAED Social Studies, the respondents also developed a high social regard for the discipline, which was needed for ***awareness and understanding of social realities***, which had two cluster codes of social regard for the discipline and transcendent knowledge. Concerning social regard for the discipline, they said that: *“My knowledge and insights have given me a wide and broad perspective on social realities and world events (R15). Political, economic and social knowledge broadened my horizon and made me more aware about the different events that may be local, national and international in nature (R8). I’ve been exposed to various sociological foundations. I’ve been made aware of significant social concerns and issues (R11)*. For transcendent knowledge under understanding social realities, one said that the MAED Social Studies program could provide this noble eidetic insight that served a human struggle for professional life’s challenges: *“The more you do well, the more intrigues you suffer from. The more you rise, the more others will pull you down. The more famous you become, the more you establish a distance. The more you see inequalities – the better you see other opportunities” (R7)”*.

This theme projected the need for social relevance and a transcendent knowledge to sublimate the existing realities to a more profound outlook for sound decisions, which were indicative of professional stewardship, pedagogical selection, research priorities, community service, and leadership styles attributed to the 6 units of the pedagogical component in the MAED SS prospectus. Once realized, the ***enduring praxis for relevance*** was constituted as the third theme. Angell, Ryder & Scott (2005) dubbed this as pedagogical content knowledge. This theme represented five cluster codes. First was **passion for research**, wherein the respondents said: *“I learned to love research and the integration of research to my students and to my*

*teaching (R13). I was presented, as a resource speaker in a Research Conference in Bacolod City, a silver award in research presentation (R3)*". These responses implied the justification of Cebu Normal University's vision for multi-disciplinary research wherein the respondents were molded and crafted with integrity in terms of their research pursuit. The second cluster was **the need for extension**. The respondents said: *"It gives me the courage and motivation to think of possibilities of what you can do to your community and the country (R11). I have been invited many times to talk on topics related to my thesis especially on Local History (R15)"*.

These two responses supported one of the four mandates of higher education for community extension and development. The third cluster was on **applied leadership** as represented by this response, *"I am able to put my knowledge into practice. I integrated and applied this knowledge in management" (R6)*. The fourth cluster was on **professional stewardship** as represented by this statement, *"I encourage students to pursue studies in MAED (R7)*. The fifth cluster was on **pedagogical knowledge** as depicted in this response, *"The researcher utilizes the different teaching strategies and learning styles of students for the improvement of instruction (R10)"*. At the outset, this prompted the respondents to professionalize their expertise as passionate researchers, extension workers, and educational leaders. Those who worked in state universities and colleges (SUCs) had to ensure the relevance of their career in order to be globally competitive through relevant instruction and a promising research endeavor. They extended the results of research for the improvement of instruction and community development. While a significant number was affiliated to the public or private school that exhibited a promising career for educational and organizational leadership.

### **On Job Responsibility**

Job responsibility generated three themes. The two clusters of enhanced teaching competence and career opportunities comprised the first labeled theme for **continuing professional stewardship**. On enhanced teaching competence, the respondents remarked, *"My degree equipped me with knowledge and skills needed for the undergraduate subjects I am handling, with which I am satisfied (R8). I was given teaching loads related to my field of specialization (R13). Job responsibility entails teaching regardless of the number of loads handled for as long as it is in line with the teaching of social sciences"(R2)*. On career opportunities, they opened possibilities for career movement. *"I was transferred to teach in the College of Arts and Sciences from the Basic Education department" (R5)*. By this stewardship, the second theme for **promising leadership** emerged relative to their individual professional designations with two clusters of educational and organizational leaderships. On **educational leadership**, *"I was promoted*

*as College Dean from being a Social Studies Coordinator (R7). I became an Associate Dean of the College of Teacher Education and an OIC Curator of the CNU Museum. Before, I was a former chairman of the Professional Education and Pedagogy department (R13). I was promoted and became the Head of the Graduate School from 1999-until my retirement (R4)*". In terms of **organizational leadership**, two remarked, *"I became president of the Faculty Association (R7). I'm a Resident Ombudsman in the university (R14)"*. This proved that they were not only good in their academic profession as teachers in the classroom, but they could also become academic and organizational leaders who were capable of occupying a public office.

Their diverse responsibilities were strongly anchored on third theme, a **strong belief system**, which is either a self-imposed or an externally-imposed belief toward their profession. Regarding **self-imposed belief**, they said, *"I am confident in my job (R1). I became more responsive to the needs of my students and co-workers and became more focused on the importance of human resources in the workplace (R4)"*. Concerning **externally-imposed belief**, they said, *"They believed I can do the delegated tasks knowing my credentials and efficiency in terms of academic responsibility"*. The blending of these two belief systems pushed them to believe that they were responsible teachers and the consideration of their "self-belief" and the "belief of others" made their responsibilities more meaningful and life-enduring.

### **On Interpersonal Relationships**

When asked what benefits they got after earning the master's degree in terms of interpersonal relationships, 10 of the respondents said that they had a good understanding and possessed a positive relationship with peers. This was a good connotation and a sign of a positive psychological condition. Eventually, graduates were nurtured to be emotionally stable which enabled them to interact positively in the workplace. The bipolar aspect of relationship was built on **a culture of trust**. When someone trusts others (self-trust) and vis-à-vis, others trust someone (trust-by-others) then relationship is built. On **self-trust**, they said, *"It has given me enough confidence and self-esteem, on par with my peers. It builds my confidence in meeting other highly esteemed professionals and mentors. I become more mature on social issues"*. On **trust-by-others**, they said, *"Increased interpersonal relationships, more confidence in dealing and interacting with people. My colleagues are proud of me"*. The respondents' interpersonal relationships were anchored on self-trust as the most frequent response in building a healthy relationship with others. This self-trust was a reputation that needed to be nurtured and earned in order to **build a harmonious social**

**responsibility** characterized by two clusters. As a sign of **flexibility**, they remarked, “*I gained a deeper understanding in dealing with difficult personalities in the workplace (R11). To be responsive and attentive to individuals who need help and assistance (R17)*”. As regards **social regard**, they stressed, “*I became more sociable (R4). I established good relationships with my peer group and maintained harmonious relationships with others (R2). I have a good relationship with my co-workers (R14)*”. Hence, the respondents gained more understanding to relate with other people and became more sociable. This social responsibility was greatly needed in a social context in order to be transcendent about their interpersonal relationships with others, thus, seeing a **wider vista of career** responsibilities and opportunities in the workplace through these three clusters. In terms of **career enhancement**, one respondent said, “*I earned through contacts and I was sent to training courses and seminars for academic audiences (R7)*”. Through **transcendent response**, they said, “*It opened a wider view of my job assignment (R5). I have grown more mature as a person (R10). I am now more conscious of the consequences of my actions on others as a point of reflection (R15)*. Lastly, through earned prestige, one said, “*Somehow it becomes a basis of honor and respect from your colleagues (R2)*”.

### **On Economic Status**

The respondents had grown in grace and wisdom evident in their credentials and rank promotions. Melero (2004) said that promotions become the natural consequence of skill acquisition that is more productive in higher-responsibility jobs, which eventually had implications to salary increase. They were best paid in the field who occupied administrative functions as education program supervisor, dean, associate dean, academic coordinator, department chair, curator, resident ombudsman, and public information officer, aside from being designated as university professors and equally competent teachers and instructors in basic education. They said that higher professional status was the driver of financial rewards and rank promotion, which served as the accumulation of human capital that ensures economic growth and growth in income (Romele, 2013). The aim in the completion of their degree marked the **economic catalyzing qualifications** of their career with **financial reward for rank promotion**. They said, “*My degree helped me a lot because it has given me enough points to reach the assistant professorship level and increased my salary and benefits (R3). Attaining a master’s degree is a promotion in ranking which led to a higher income (R14). My income was increased due to promotion in rank (16)*”.

After they finished the program, they built their **self-efficacy in popular wisdom** that gained them the **respect and reputation** from the rest of the academic community. They were invited as speakers in different

seminars and training courses and received economic benefits for additional honoraria. As validated, “*If you’re a master’s degree holder, people will trust in your expertise (R9). Therefore, I could say, I also earn from my career when I am requested to do some researches. I was invited to talk on local history by different sectors of society (R7)*”. As a consequence, the MAED Social Studies degree promoted the respondents’ **job security and tenure** as their **career assurance** before retirement. They said, “*I got the tenure for my teaching post (R15). Salary is based on the exiting plantilla in government service, yet tenure is guaranteed where one is assured work sustainability (R10). Entry level in the government requires a master’s degree which in one way or another has helped me win the regular item (R1)*”. These nuanced the direct correlation between higher education and income i.e., the higher the educational attainment of professionals working over 25 years of age, the higher the income they received (Romele, 2013).

## Conclusion

The attainment of a MAED degree in Social Studies promoted a vertically-articulated career path that ensured professional quality and sterling professional commitment. Rank promotion yielded better income. Motivation to sustain the job, enhancement self-esteem, and transcendence to eidetic insights were elements that enhanced better professional relationship with others in the workplace.

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