



**EXPERIENCES OF TEACHER EDUCATION GRADUATES WORKING
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT OFFICES: BASES FOR POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS**

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the experiences of Teacher Education graduates working in Local Government Unit (LGU) offices as bases for policy recommendations during the 2025–2026 period. Findings revealed that graduates demonstrated transferable teaching skills, professional growth, adaptation to new roles, and commitment to public service and community engagement. However, they faced challenges such as multiple work and people with diverse personalities. To cope with these challenges, graduates engaged in collaboration and organizational support and demonstrated resourcefulness and adaptability. Based on these findings, an LGU Graduate Integration and Support Program (LGU-GISP) was proposed to strengthen workplace support systems through structured orientation, mentorship, capacity-building activities, and organizational improvements.

Keywords: *Teachers Education Graduates, Local Government Unit (LGU), Phenomenological Study, Transferable Skills, LGU-GISP, Career*

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INTRODUCTION

Teacher Education graduates were increasingly employed in non-teaching roles, particularly in local government unit (LGU) offices, where their pedagogical, communication, and organizational skills were applied to community programs and public service. International studies highlighted that education graduates adapted well to administrative and social development roles, although they often faced challenges related to role clarity and professional identity outside formal classroom settings (Smith & García, 2021; Lee et al., 2022).

In the Philippine context, Teacher Education graduates contributed significantly to LGU initiatives such as literacy programs, community outreach, and local development projects. However, research indicated persistent issues including limited career pathways, unclear job assignments, and insufficient institutional support for graduates working outside the Department of Education (Reyes & Santos, 2023; Delos Reyes, 2024). These concerns suggested the need to review employment and professional development policies affected education graduates in public service.

At the municipal level, LGUs often employed Teacher Education graduates to address workforce needs, particularly in education-related and social services offices. While these graduates demonstrated flexibility and commitment, studies noted challenges such as limited training opportunities and lack of formal recognition of their competencies (Municipal Development Review, 2025). These localized experiences reflect broader structural concerns within LGU human resource systems.

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Examining the experiences of Teacher Education graduates in LGU offices provided an empirical basis for policy recommendations aimed at improving role alignment, professional support, and career development (UNESCO, 2020; Civil Service Commission, 2026). Anchored in international and local evidence, this study sought to find out the experiences of Teacher Education graduates working in local government unit offices as bases for policy recommendations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology, design, and participants, as well as the instruments and procedures used for data collection and analysis. The research investigates the professional experiences of Teacher Education graduates within Local Government Unit (LGU) settings to establish a foundation for proposed policy reforms.

Research Method

This study adopted a qualitative approach, using in-depth interviews to investigate how participants interpret their experiences and derive meaning within their social and professional environments. A qualitative descriptive approach is particularly appropriate when the objective is to obtain a comprehensive and straightforward account of participants' lived experiences without manipulating variables (Colorafi & Evans, 2016; Doyle et al., 2020). This approach enables the researcher to present rich, detailed descriptions of the experiences of Teacher Education graduates working in Local Government Unit (LGU) offices.

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According to Doyle et al. (2020), qualitative descriptive research is suitable for studies that aim to provide a holistic and data-near interpretation of participants' perspectives, ensuring that findings remain grounded in their actual narratives. In this study, the method allows the researcher to capture detailed insights into how Teacher Education graduates transition into LGU roles, the challenges they encounter in performing administrative and public service functions, and the coping strategies they employ to adapt to workplace demands. Through this approach, the study generates contextualized and practice-oriented findings that can inform policy recommendations for LGU offices.

Throughout the data collection process, the researcher and the participant were seated in a comfortable and private setting to encourage open communication. Participants were guided to reflect on a series of open-ended questions related to their professional experiences, role adaptation, workplace challenges, and support systems within the LGU.

The purpose of this interaction was to elicit in-depth perspectives and authentic accounts of their lived experiences in local governance, enabling the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Research Design

The study adopted a phenomenological research design, a qualitative approach that focused on understanding and describing the lived experiences of individuals regarding a specific phenomenon. Phenomenology was appropriate for this research as it sought to explore how Teacher Education graduates experienced their work within Local Government Unit (LGU) offices.

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Phenomenology aims to uncover the meaning and essence of experiences as perceived by participants, emphasizing their subjective realities rather than testing hypotheses or producing broad generalizations (Neubauer et al., 2019; Doyle et al., 2020).

Phenomenological inquiry involves in-depth engagement with participants, typically through semi-structured or in-depth interviews, to identify common themes, shared meanings, and essential structures of experience (Tomaszewski et al., 2020; Doyle et al., 2020). Through systematic analysis of participants' narratives, the researcher develops a rich and holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study. This research design allowed for the synthesis of the experiences, obstacles, and adaptive methods of Teacher Education graduates within LGU offices, providing a systematic basis for creating evidence-based policy recommendations.

Participants of the Study

The study's participants consisted of ten (10) Teacher Education graduates employed across various units within the Local Government Unit (LGU) of the Municipality of Miagao. To qualify, participants were required to have at least one (1) year of employment in the LGU and hold a degree from a Teacher Education program. These criteria were established to ensure that respondents possessed the necessary academic background in education and sufficient professional experience in an LGU setting. Their tenure allowed for deep reflection on role adaptation, workplace challenges, and coping strategies, which was essential for generating credible data and developing evidence-based policy recommendations. Before participating, all individuals were fully informed about the nature of the study and provided their formal consent.

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Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was utilized in this study to select participants who could provide rich and relevant information regarding the phenomenon under investigation. As a non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling involved the deliberate selection of participants based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). This method allowed the researcher to intentionally identify individuals who possessed direct experience with the phenomenon and were therefore capable of providing in-depth and meaningful insights.

In qualitative research, purposive sampling is particularly appropriate when the goal is to explore lived experiences and generate detailed descriptions rather than to generalize findings to a larger population (Campbell et al., 2020). In the context of this study, purposive sampling ensures that the selected participants are Teacher Education graduates currently working in different units of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of the Municipality of Miagao, with at least one year of work experience. This criterion guarantees that participants have sufficient exposure to LGU workplace realities, enabling a comprehensive exploration of their experiences, challenges, role adaptation, and coping strategies.

Research Instrument

The data collection for this study was primarily conducted using a researcher-developed interview schedule. In qualitative research, an interview guide serves as a flexible framework of open-ended questions that directs the conversation while allowing the researcher to probe further based on participants' responses. This approach ensures that key

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topics related to the research objectives are consistently addressed while still capturing rich, in-depth, and contextualized data (Tomaszewski et al., 2020).

For this study, the interview guide included core questions focused on the experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of Teacher Education graduates working in Local Government Unit (LGU) offices.

To ensure accuracy and completeness, the interviews were audio- and video-recorded with the participants' informed consent. These recordings allowed for the careful transcription and analysis of the participants' lived experiences.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Prior to the implementation of the interview schedule, the research instrument underwent a rigorous content validation process. This involved a review by the research adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, and a panel of experts specializing in research methodology, assessment, and education. This step was taken to ensure that each item was clear, relevant, and strictly aligned with the study's objectives.

Validity refers to the accuracy with which a research tool measures its intended concepts and the extent to which the resulting findings are credible and significant (Merriam & Tisdell, 2021).

To establish content validity, the instrument's questions, structure, and format were evaluated for alignment with the study's framework, variables, and goals. Feedback from the expert panel provided essential perspectives on the clarity, relevance, and representativeness of each item.

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Incorporating these expert suggestions bolstered the trustworthiness and precision of the tool, ensuring it effectively captured the lived experiences, obstacles, and adaptive strategies of Teacher Education graduates within LGU settings (Polit & Beck, 2021).

The feedback provided by the expert panel was carefully reviewed and incorporated through necessary revisions to the interview schedule. This process followed the criteria for content validation outlined by Good and Scates (1972), as cited in Soqueña (2021) (Appendix A), to guarantee that the final instrument maintained clarity, relevance, and alignment with the objectives of the research.

Data Gathering Procedures

Before the study began, the researcher secured all required clearances from the research adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Schools Division Superintendent, the District Supervisor, school heads, and the participants themselves. Interviews took place in comfortable, accessible settings, including community offices and schools.

To uphold ethical standards, participants signed informed consent forms prior to being interviewed. These in-depth sessions were audio- and video-recorded with permission to maintain a precise record of the discussions.

Following the data collection phase, the researcher organized and synthesized the information to ensure the participants' insights were accurately reflected, creating a dependable basis for the study's findings and resulting policy proposals.

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Data Analyses

The data collected through the researcher-developed interview guide were analyzed using thematic analysis, a systematic qualitative approach aimed at identifying, interpreting, and reporting recurring patterns or themes within narrative data. This method enabled the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of Teacher Education graduates working in Local Government Unit (LGU) offices.

Each interview transcript was carefully reviewed and coded to extract key themes that accurately reflected the participants' professional experiences and workplace realities. This thematic analysis allowed for the systematic organization and interpretation of the qualitative data, ensuring that the graduates' perspectives and lived experiences were faithfully represented. The insights derived from this analysis served as the foundation for formulating evidence-based policy recommendations aimed at enhancing workforce integration, professional support, and the effective utilization of Teacher Education graduates within LGU offices. According to Braun and Clarke (2023), thematic analysis offers a systematic yet adaptable framework for qualitative data analysis, enabling researchers to detect both surface-level and underlying patterns within participant accounts. This methodology is especially effective in educational studies for investigating intricate social dynamics, professional behaviors, and organizational life.

The interview transcripts were examined using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2023), a method particularly effective for detecting, interpreting, and presenting recurring patterns or themes within qualitative data.

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The analysis followed a rigorous six-stage framework, beginning with a deep familiarization with the data. The researcher engaged in repetitive reading and immersion in the transcripts, reviewing both the original local dialect and the English translations. Following this, initial codes were generated by assigning concise labels or descriptors to specific segments of meaning, such as "shared equipment," "apprehension of criticism," or "unstable connectivity." The process then transitioned into searching for themes, where preliminary codes were organized into broader categories and sub-themes that captured significant recurring patterns; for instance, "discreet feedback" and "absence of ridicule" were grouped under a single conceptual heading.

During the next phase, the candidate themes were reviewed, refined, and cross-referenced against the entire dataset to ensure they accurately represented the participants' intent and the study's primary objectives. This led to the stage of defining and naming themes, where scholarly and precise titles were developed for the final emergent themes detailed in the subsequent chapter. Finally, the report was produced by weaving the identified themes into a cohesive narrative—supported by verbatim participant quotes—and contextualizing them within the study's theoretical framework during the presentation and interpretation of the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research was undertaken to investigate the professional journeys of Teacher Education graduates employed within Local Government Unit (LGU) offices in the Municipality

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of Miagao during the 2025–2026 academic year, serving as a foundation for policy development.

In particular, the study sought to identify the firsthand experiences of these graduates, the obstacles they faced, the adaptive mechanisms they utilized, and the specific policy proposals that could improve their job performance and career growth within the public sector.

The inquiry adopted a qualitative methodology centered on in-depth interviews. A phenomenological research design was applied to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the lived realities of Teacher Education graduates occupying non-teaching positions in LGU environments.

The study's participants included ten (10) Teacher Education graduates chosen through purposive sampling from various departments within the Miagao LGU. Selection was based on the requirements that each individual held a degree in Teacher Education and possessed a minimum of one year of work experience within the local government.

Data collection was facilitated by a researcher-developed interview guide, supplemented by audio and video recordings—obtained with participant permission—to maintain precise records. This instrument was evaluated by an expert panel for validation, with all recommended adjustments integrated into the final version.

Before gathering data, the researcher obtained all required authorizations from relevant officials and held interviews in settings that ensured participant comfort and convenience. The resulting information was systematically categorized and processed through thematic analysis.

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The findings of the study are as follows:

Based on the results of the in-depth interview with participants it was found out that the experiences of Teacher Education graduates in LGU offices included transferable teaching skills and professional growth, adaptation and role transition, commitment to public service and community engagement.

It was found out that the challenges of Teacher Education graduates in LGU offices included multiple work and people with diverse personalities.

It was also found out that the coping strategies of Teacher Education graduates in LGU offices included personal strategies and resilience, collaboration and organizational support, and resourcefulness and adaptability.

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The experiences of Teacher Education graduates revealed that their teaching competencies are highly transferable to LGU work. Skills such as communication, organization, facilitation, and planning enabled them to perform effectively in administrative and community-based roles, highlighting the versatility of Teacher Education as a foundation for diverse career pathways.

The findings also showed that transitioning to non-teaching roles required significant adjustment. Graduates experienced role mismatches, unfamiliar systems, and organizational challenges, indicating a need for structured orientation and clearer role expectations within LGU offices. Furthermore, workplace and organizational obstacles—such as heavy workloads, limited resources, and unclear policies—affected employee performance and adaptation.

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Interpersonal dynamics and a lack of structured support further contributed to the complexity of LGU work environments.

Despite these challenges, the study underscored the resilience and adaptability of the graduates. Through personal strategies, collaboration, and resourcefulness, they were able to cope effectively and continue contributing to public service. Ultimately, the findings emphasized the importance of institutional support, professional development, and policy interventions to enhance the integration and performance of Teacher Education graduates within LGU offices.

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings and insights of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

First, Teacher Education graduates working in LGUs should continue to maximize their transferable skills and engage in continuous learning to enhance their competence in administrative and public service roles. By leveraging their pedagogical background, they can bridge the gap between their training and the specific demands of local governance.

Second, Local Government Units (LGUs) should implement structured orientation and mentorship programs to guide newly hired graduates in understanding office systems, roles, and responsibilities. LGUs are encouraged to provide continuous professional development opportunities, such as targeted training and seminars, to strengthen employees' technical, organizational, and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, organizational policies should be

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developed to promote clear procedures, standardized workflows, and efficient coordination across departments to minimize confusion and improve overall productivity.

Third, it is recommended that LGUs establish robust support systems, including teamwork initiatives, peer collaboration, and formal mentoring programs, to enhance employee performance and workplace relationships. Policies promoting employee well-being—such as manageable workloads, mental health support, and recognition programs—should also be implemented to boost job satisfaction and motivation.

Fourth, the study specifically suggests that LGUs adopt the LGU Graduate Integration and Support Policy to ensure a structured, supportive, and enabling work environment for Teacher Education graduates. This policy framework would provide the necessary institutional foundation to fully leverage the unique human capital these graduates bring to the public sector.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies in other municipalities or sectors. Expanding the scope of this research would allow for a deeper exploration of the career transitions of Teacher Education graduates and help identify additional factors that influence their professional experiences in non-traditional, non-teaching roles.

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