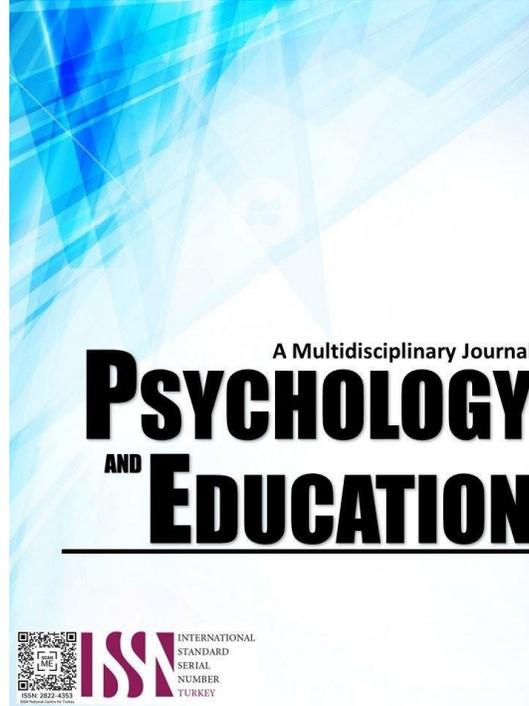


THE STORIES OF KCAST ALUMNI EDUCATION EARNERS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY



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The Stories of KCAST Alumni Education Earners: A Multiple Case Study

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Abstract

The qualitative multiple case study aimed to explore the lived experiences of alumni education earners. The study delved into the experiences of three KCAST alumni who earned education units, using purposive sampling to select participants. In-depth interviews were conducted to gather rich, detailed data about the challenges and coping mechanism faced by the KCAST alumni. Through thematic and cross-case analysis, key findings revealed that alumni experienced emotional challenges such as difficulty in personal and academic adjustment, and continuing educational pursuits despite initial hurdles. Despite these challenges, alumni demonstrated resilience through adaptive coping strategies, including fostering communication with their family, ensuring time management, and seeking external community support. The study also highlighted the positive outcomes of these efforts, such as improved academic performance and emotional well-being of the alumni. These findings underscore the importance of continued support for alumni education earners in navigating their unique circumstances.

Keywords: *education, KCAST Alumni Earners, qualitative research, multiple case study, Philippines*

Introduction

This is to explore stories and various lived experiences of alumni of KCAST as education earners concerning these experiences as to how it influenced their reasons to decide to earn education units, persist, and complete a degree. It was followed by problem of practice approach when it comes to career advancement, career fulfillment, personal and professional growth. Furthermore, many alumni seek extra education to boost their work prospects and achieve promotions. A problem of practice is a persistent, contextualized, and specific issue embedded in the work of a professional practitioner. This follows concerns about contractual agreement which entails stake of work as the reason to earn education units due to its consistency and assurance for a lifelong working due to attaining license (George & Jillian, 2006).

In the Global context, numerous interconnected issues regarding job satisfaction among alumni in the United States reveal a troubling trend of widespread dissatisfaction with both current employment and completed degrees, prompting many individuals to seek further education for additional qualifications. This phenomenon underscores a significant "Problem of Practice," indicating that the educational aspirations and values of these alumni are not being fully realized or met by their initial programs. Many graduates express feelings of unpreparedness for the workforce, leading to a sense of disillusionment with their educational experiences. As they navigate the complexities of their careers, the lack of alignment between their educational backgrounds and job market demands becomes increasingly apparent. This situation highlights the critical need for educational institutions to reassess their curricula and support systems, ensuring they equip students with relevant skills and knowledge that align with evolving career landscapes. Furthermore, it suggests that holistic approaches to education, which address both academic and personal development, are essential for fostering meaningful engagement and satisfaction in graduates' professional lives (Hamilton, 2018).

In the Philippines, particularly in Manila, other alumni discovered a severe lack of job opportunities within their chosen field. Due to a higher number of graduates than available job opportunities, competition for entry into the workforce is getting more intense. Job availability is more critical in certain sectors. This is why graduates on non-board courses are struggling to find work in their courses and decide to earn a unit in a teacher's degree. According to Senator Joel Villanueva licensure examinations are the benchmark that can boost the credibility of Filipino workers locally and internationally (Torregoza, 2021).

This study is urgently needed to address the critical issues surrounding decision-making among undergraduates and to enhance the effectiveness of educational institutions. As the landscape of higher education evolves rapidly, it is essential to develop innovative strategies that equip students with the necessary skills to succeed. Alumni play a pivotal role in this process, significantly contributing to the reputation and visibility of their institutions on both national and international stages. Their active involvement can foster a sense of community and shared purpose, which is vital for the growth and development of educational frameworks. By leveraging alumni experiences and insights, institutions can create robust networks that not only support current students but also strengthen ties within the broader society. This collaborative approach not only enriches the educational experience but also posit challenges, making this research imperative for future advancements in higher education. Ultimately, fostering these connections can lead to innovate solutions that benefit both academic institutions and the communities they serve.

Moreover, the study focuses on understanding the unique challenges and insights of graduates pursuing teaching careers. This aligns with other research that explores similar themes but in different contexts. For instance, a study of Daga (2021) on the Lived Experiences of Pioneering Graduates of the K to 12 program highlights both positive and negative experiences that shape their educational journey, emphasizing the holistic development achieved through various academic activities. Another relevant study of Cuadra et al. (2023) on the Lived Experiences of Graduate Students: The Impact of In-Person and Remote Learning on Engagement and Professional

Development investigates the lived experiences of graduate students during in-person and remote learning, revealing how different learning environments affect engagement and social connections, which can also impact future educators' professional development. Additionally, research on the Lived Experiences of Corporate Workers Transitioning to Teaching by Guadalquivé (2023) underscores themes like career fulfillment and personal growth, illustrating how non-traditional paths to education can influence teaching practices and motivations. While these studies share a focus on lived experiences within educational contexts, the main study specifically addresses the aspirations and challenges faced by alumni earners in a targeted institution, providing a localized perspective that may differ from broader educational trends observed in other research.

The dissemination plan for this research study involves publishing the findings in a peer-reviewed journal to ensure academic rigor and broad accessibility. Additionally, I will present the research at relevant conference to engage with the academic community and solicit feedback, fostering collaboration and discussion. To further enhance outreach, I will create accessible summaries of the study and distribute both physical and digital copies of the full report to interested stakeholders, including participants and community members. By leveraging social media platforms and community forums, I aim to reach a wider audience and encourage public engagement with the research findings.

Research Questions

The study aimed to explore the lived experiences of KCAST alumni education earners who have contributed to their success after obtaining education units, with a focus on three specific sub-questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the KCAST alumni upon earning education units?
2. How do the KCAST alumni who are earning Education units cope with the challenges that they have experienced?
3. What are their insights gained after earning education units that they can share to others and in general?

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative research design using a case study as an approach. As per Lune and Berg (2017), qualitative research pertains to the endeavor of the researcher to understand the situation and its uniqueness, in relation to its context and the interactions inscribed therein. This methodological choice allows for rich exploration of the interactions woven into the fabric of the subject, fostering a comprehensive and nuanced understanding. By embracing qualitative strategies, the study aims to capture the depth and subtleties that may elude more quantitative methodologies, providing a holistic perspective on the phenomena under investigation.

In context, this study used a qualitative design as this study sought to discover the experiences of the alumni education earners through administering in-depth interviews wherein the researcher and the participant can interact with each other. In addition, the researcher can also gather insights from the Alumni education earners as well as what are their coping strategies to overcome the challenges they went through.

In addition, a multiple case study was also utilized in this research. By employing this approach, the study aims to delve into the diverse experiences of Education earners through radio-based instruction within their natural, real-life context. This method facilitates a comprehensive exploration, enabling the discovery and understanding of data that contributes to an appreciation of the nuances involved in the educational process. The multiple case study approach is instrumental in capturing the richness and variability inherent in the experiences of alumni, thereby enhancing the overall depth of insight into the impact of the stories of education earners (Robert, 2020).

Contextually, the multiple case study is a methodological choice in this research study. Therefore, it concentrates on several specific bounded cases chosen to gain a deeper insight into the subject. In this study, multiple case studies were utilized since the primary objective is to obtain a deep understanding of the experiences of students under radio-based instruction. Also, this design provided me the insight into how participants overcome challenges and struggles in learning the English language.

Participants

The primary participants in this study comprised the lived experiences of Alumni Education earners. To delve into the intricacies of the subject, the research engaged with three (3) participants through in-depth interviews, with each participant serving as a key informant for their respective case.

According to Huckin and Ackerman (1988), case studies can use one participant or a small group of participants. Therefore, I utilized three participants as my key informants in order to reach the saturation point to come up with extracted themes. By having this set of participants in a qualitative study, data saturation was highly achieved in the data collection process. The selection of participants is justified because the intended participants of the study.

The participants of this study were the KCAST alumni from non-board program who earn education units to further their education attainment. Furthermore, the participants were selected based on these pre-inclusion criteria: (1) must be KCAST alumni from the non-board program; (2) male or female; (3) must be education earners; (4) must have the willingness to participate in the study.

In the Case A examined within this study, a single participant, and specifically identified as a graduate of BSBA major in Financial Management, who actively engaged as the primary key informant. This participant hailed from KCAST, contributing valuable insights and perspectives to the research inquiry.

In the Case B, a graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration from KCAST, is well-qualified to discuss their reasons for earning education units and pursuing a teaching career. This program emphasizes administrative skills, effective communication, and organizational management, which are essential for educators. Their background enables them to articulate how their education has prepared them for a teaching role, focusing on the importance of administrative competencies in educational settings.

In the Case C, a graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) majoring in Marketing Management from KCAST. This program not only equips students with marketing knowledge but also prepares them for potential teaching roles in business education. Their expertise allows them to provide insights into how their educational experiences have inspired them to pursue further education units and transition into teaching, emphasizing the relevance of marketing principles in contemporary education.

Procedure

In the study, the following steps were employed in gathering the data:

Firstly, the researcher sought a permission letter to conduct the study. Through the purposive sampling technique, the three (3) participants were identified. They were requested to read and understand the consent form and agreement form before they sign to make sure that their participation in my research study is voluntary and not coerced. These consent forms contain the condition specifying that the informant's participation is voluntary and that they are willing to impart their knowledge essentially needed in the success of this study.

Secondly, the participants of the study were given an orientation about the study. The orientation started with an introductory phase, in which we outlined the purpose of the interview, its length, and confidentiality. We also took into account that our informants received the benefits of cooperating with us. It required providing treatment to all the participants in an in-depth interview.

Further, the informants and the researcher should both get benefit from the research. The informants had been given the chance to unload their perceptions based on the experiences that they have, which were the substantial components in making this study successful; lastly, the engaged informants became our research partners who have helped us in disseminating the findings of the research for academic purposes (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013).

Also, during interviews, the data from the responses of the informants/participants were recorded using smartphones. The recorded data were transcribed by the researcher before being translated from raw language to Standard English. After the translation of data, the researcher extracted the emerging themes following the principles of thematic analysis. Lastly, the extracted themes were handed to the data analyst whose expertise is aligned with the concept of language research for verification and approval (Creswell, 2013).

Data Analysis

All the gathered data had been analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method that provides a systematic element to data analysis. It allows the researcher to associate the analysis of the frequency of a theme with the whole content. Therefore, the participants' interpretations are significant in terms of giving the most appropriate explanations for their behaviors, actions, and thoughts.

As described, thematic analysis has link stages; data reduction, data display, and data conclusions, which are all useful for us in drawing and verifying the data collected (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Hatch, 2002; Creswell, 2003; Mark & Yardly, 2004).

Additionally, data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in writing up field notes and transcriptions. It allowed me, as the researcher, to organize and reduce the mass of data in a meaningful manner, making data more manageable.

Furthermore, data reduction often forces choices about which aspects of the accumulated data should be emphasized, reduced or set aside completely for the purposes of shedding lights to the topics at hand. In using this method, I asked help of an expert, a data analyst, particularly in handling, sorting, and organizing voluminous qualitative data for us to merge, manage, sort and categorize data with ease (Creswell, 2003). Data display involves retrieving and using the data. It cannot be separated from data reduction because it complements the former stage. Also, data display is the more organized, compressed assembly of information that aims to make sense of the data collected.

Moreover, the organization of data helped in arranging the concepts and thoughts from the informants. The third steps were embodied by data drawing and conclusions. They suggested the use of some points to make the drawing of conclusions more adaptable in qualitative research. It includes the following: notation of any patterns or themes and the relevance of any statement especially if these are similar or contrasting each other; grouping or establishing categories of information that can go together; identifying interrelations among factors and variables; building conceptual coherence and consistency, which at the end it should use to explore the validity of the findings so that these fit in theoretical framework of the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Ethical Considerations

In conducting this research, strict adherence to ethical standards was observed to protect the rights and welfare of all participants. These standards, based on the principles of respect for persons, beneficence, justice, consent, and confidentiality (Mack et al., 2005; Resnik, 2001), ensured that participants were fully informed about the study and voluntarily agreed to participate. Before any data collection, informed consent was obtained, and interviews were conducted at the participants' preferred time and location to respect their convenience and privacy. Pseudonyms were used to safeguard identities, and participants were assured they could decline to answer sensitive questions or withdraw at any time without explanation. All interviews were conducted in a respectful and secure environment, and participants were informed about the study's objectives, as well as the outcomes of their involvement.

To uphold beneficence and confidentiality, personal data were securely handled, and all materials—such as recordings and transcripts—were stored safely and scheduled for destruction after three years, in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173). Justice was also ensured by treating all participants equitably, recognizing their contributions with appropriate tokens of appreciation, and avoiding any form of discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. The researcher ensured that participation posed no harm and maintained transparency throughout the process. These ethical measures fostered trust, accountability, and fairness, supporting a respectful and responsible research environment in line with recognized international research standards (Creswell, 2013; Bricki & Green, 2007; Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

Results and Discussion

The conduct of the study generated voluminous amount of data that are essential on the inquiry in hand. These data were derived from the in-depth interview and were voice recorded by the researcher. Their responses were transcribed and were carefully analyzed through the meticulous categorization of themes.

Participants

The participants of this study were, three alumni of KCAST who came from the different non-board programs at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. The participants were (1) male and (2) females. They all have their pseudonyms as they request to protect their identity. As a researcher, it is my responsibility to take good actions towards the participants, and to make them validated to respond on the certain study about the accounts of alumni who earn education units. By that, the researcher put her trust on them they could supply what this study sought to find out.

The interviews took place outside the campus, and the researcher spoke with them about where they preferred to be interviewed. The researcher got where she wanted to go, and both the interviewer and the interviewee were pleased with the end result, resulting in a seamless flow and open communication whenever extra or probing questions were required. Participants had the option of refusing to answer any question that they deemed unprofitable or against their choice. The data collected during the interviews was kept in strict discretion to guarantee confidentiality, and only the researcher and informants had access to any information that was Express but not included due to the study's nature.

To adhere to the data collecting method, the researcher used her cellphones in place of the required tape recorder to record the replies of the participants, as well as a notepad to write down notes on the sessions 'events. The researcher also asked all of the responders whether she may capture videos or photos during the interviews, but they politely declined and instead requested that the researcher just record the whole conversation. All of them complied with the request, with the exception of one participant: that their identities be kept anonymous in the research (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

Table 1. *Participants of the Study*

<i>Code</i>	<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Program</i>
IDI-01	Jane	27	BSBA- Financial Management
IDI-02	ED-ED	26	BSAO
IDI-03	Shane	25	BSBA- Marketing Management

Case 1- Jane

Jane (pseudonym) not her real name, is a twenty-seven-year-old female, she was an Alumni and with the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Major in Financial Management at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. She earned the degree of Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Social studies at UM Tagum College campus. After graduating with a degree in BS Financial Management, she promptly pursued various job opportunities. Following a year of employment, she came to the realization that there was particular goal she wanted to accomplish, enhancing her professional status and be able to take her teaching dreams into reality.

However, because she graduated with a degree in BS Financial Management, she found herself needing to enroll in and earn education units to pursue her dreams. Unexpectedly, she encountered challenging circumstances during this process.

Research Question No. 1. What are the lived experiences of the KCAST alumni upon earning Education units?

This question is about experience of KCAST alumni that they encountered in earning education units. This question seeks to delve into the experiences and insight of alumni regarding the challenges, opportunities, and support mechanisms influencing alumni's journey. The following themes are: Experiencing difficulty in personal and academic adjustments, continuing educational pursuits despite initial hurdles, expectation towards earning education units. It was supported by Jane (pseudonym) that experiencing difficulty is personal and academic adjustments can be a significant challenge for many students, often leading to feelings of frustration and self-doubt. She said

Expectation towards Earning Education Units

In the first question, the researcher asked her about on what are some challenges that she encountered upon earning education units. She mentioned the five challenges such as time management, stressful workloads, learning difficulties, poor in the first question, the researcher asked her about on what are some challenges that she encountered upon earning education units. She mentioned the five challenges such as time management, stressful workload, learning difficulties, poor interaction, delayed and financial aspect. She said that:

“The common challenges are these following first one, time management due to conflict with parental duties, work, and class schedules and task activities. Secondly, stressful workload, it is a challenge on how to accomplish 6 subjects weekly task activities on time since I work during weekdays. Third one, learning difficulties, I utilized modular set-up and I need to learn on your own without relying to anyone so in-depth understanding about the topics given s hard time to achieve. Fourth one, poor student-teacher interaction in terms of communication. Fifth and last one distant and delayed feedback in group chats and financial aspect wherein earning a unit in professional education is not free.” (IDI-R1)

Continuing Educational Pursuits Despite Initial Hurdles

The researcher asked her on what are the factors that prompted her to take education units. She shared that the main reason why she decided to earn education units is to uplift her professional status. She draws inspiration from various sources to overcome the challenges such as career growth, family, and job attainment. She confirmed that:

“I believed earning units can uplift my professional status. I want to build good future for my family. My wants and desire to gain achievements and be able to take my teaching dreams into reality.” (IDI-R1)

Expectation towards Earning Education Units

The researcher also asked her responsibilities and expectations of getting a bachelor degree differ from those of obtaining educational units in the present day. She explained that pursuing a bachelor's degree involves a more comprehensive commitment to coursework and research over time, requiring students to engage deeply with their subject. She told the researcher that her expectations for a bachelor's degree program are to train students to be job-ready by nurturing their natural characteristic and abilities. In terms of responsibilities, both programs require students to complete all task and pass the exams. She shared that:

“Getting the bachelor's degree takes 4 years of completion while in obtaining educational units takes only 1 semester. In getting bachelors degree the expectations is you will be train to be job ready by nurturing our natural characteristics and abilities while in earning units my expectations are all of compliance to be qualified for the LEPT or Licensure Examination for Professional Teachers. In terms of responsibilities, the two is the some because you need to comply all the task, pass the exam and the like to be able to complete the course.” (IDI-R1)

Gaining Career Adjustment

The researcher also asked her on what she think the advantages and disadvantages of earning units of education. She stated that the advantages of a bachelor's degree include career and professional growth, knowledge gained, time efficiency, and skills enhancement. However, some individuals may view the program as merely for compliance and not take it seriously, leasing to a lack of engagement and potentially limited benefits from the experience. She shared:

“The advantages I have encountered are career and professional growth, knowledge gained, time efficient, boost confidence, skills enhancement. While the disadvantages are learning gained are not experienced in actual school and costly. Some think it is just for compliance and they did not take the program seriously or optional.” (IDI-R1)

Technological Resources

The researcher also asked her on what kind of support and resources you had during the time you've earn units of education. Then, she told the researcher that having technological resources are advantage in all aspect as well having financial and family support are crucial resources needed to achieve academic success. Furthermore, she emphasized that access to online learning platforms and study materials greatly enhanced her ability to grasp complex concepts and stay engaged in her studies. This combination of support not only facilitated her learning but also motivated her to persevere through challenges. She shared that:

“Knowing how to use technology and ways of online learning tools is an important resource and an advantage. Having own pc or laptop is an advantage because most of the tasks needs these tools. Aside from that, is also financial support and lastly family support is the major resource needed.” (IDI-R1)

Research Question No. 2: How do the KCAST alumni who are earning Education units cope with the challenges that they have experienced?

If you are earning education units experiencing and adopting the new way of learning is the least thing you can do to keep going. That is why, after determining the Alumni earners, the researcher asked her on how she coped with it as well as those pivotal situations that she felt intricate. Otherwise, adapting to new routines, and the need to maintain motivation and focus in a remote learning environment. The researcher gathered many themes at this point. Below is the presentation of the themes.

Thinking Positively

In the second question, Jane was asked how she copes with the different challenges of being alumni earning education units. She had experienced lots of changes upon earning education units. The following themes stated below are thoroughly analyzed and are carefully reflected towards herself. Additionally, she noted that self-reflection has been a vital tool in helping her adapt to these changes and recognize her personal growth throughout the process. She stated that:

“Three things that come to my mind on how to manage the challenges such as positive thinking that always remind yourself what’s the reason why you need to do this. Second one, relaxation techniques where you’ve always taken a pause when needed and lastly, seeking support from family and close friends.” (IDI-R1)

Setting Deadlines each Task

The data gathered from the participants exposed the researcher and asked what adjustments they made while earning education units; Jane emphasized that effective time management through setting deadlines for each task and prioritizing her studies allowed her to plan effectively and maximize her productivity. She shared that:

“I plan ahead of time and note things I needed the most select what needs to be prioritize. Lastly, I would create a way on how to accomplish it by setting deadlines to each task. This way, everything will fall into place smoothly.” (IDI-R1)

Time Adjustment

In connection to the previous question, the researcher asked to Jane (pseudonym) about the necessary adjustment and her techniques and strategies in handling the situations upon earning education units. She emphasized that time management is the best way to accomplish her responsibilities. She mentioned that she utilized techniques such as setting specific deadlines for tasks and breaking her workload into manageable segments, which helped her stay organized and focused. Additionally, she found that using a daily schedule template allowed her to prioritize her studies effectively and allocate time for other commitments. She shared that:

“I adjust holistically in my daily activities and routines. I scheduled my time and activities. I work on KCAST canteen during weekdays from 7: am to 5: pm so at night time I help my youngest son to answer his assignments and if not, that’s the time I study on my lessons and answer my task. I always stay awake late at night to read my modules for me to understand the topics so I could answer my tasks. Sleeping late and waking up early are one of the necessary adjustments I did just to perform my studies and walk well.” (IDI-R1)

Motivations Through Family Support

Intrinsic support is sometimes effective. The researcher has asked to Jane (pseudonym) about how did she balance the demands of her role as a student earning education units with her personal life, emphasizing that effective time management and prioritization are essential strategies for maintaining this balance. She said to put balance, you just need to stay motivated and love what you are doing. She also highlighted the importance of setting clear priorities and creating a structures schedule, which helps her allocate time for both her studies and personal interests effectively. This approach not only enhances her productivity but also ensures that she enjoys her academic journey while nurturing her personal relationships. Ultimately, she believes that finding joy in both her studies and personal life is key to sustaining her overall well-being. By cultivating a positive mindset and surrounding herself with supportive individuals. She shared:

“I always talk to my husband regarding the task I needed and when I have to complete it. This way he could help me by doing my responsibilities at home so I could perform my study.” (IDI-R1)

Asking Friends and Families for Support

In connection to the previous question, the researcher has asked to Jane about her support system behind her pursuing education degree. Jane (pseudonym) emphasized the pivotal role of her support system, particularly the unwavering encouragement from her loving family. Their belief in her abilities and aspirations not only bolstered her confidence but also provided a safety net during challenging times. By openly discussing the importance of such support, she highlights how crucial it is for individuals pursuing higher education to lean on their friends and family, fostering a collaborative environment that nurtures growth and resilience. She shared:

“Whenever I make decisions in life I always involve my family with it and consider their views from it. My family is always supportive to my plans and that motivate me to pursue things. They always believe that I can do it so am I. I can also see some life long learner like me abled to success so that motivate me to study for me to study to unlock what future holds for me.” (IDI-R1)

Research Question No. 3: What are their insights gained after earning Education units that they can be share to others and in general?

Insights are so powerful that it takes just an advice to overcome something you feared to encounter. In the third main question, the importance of adapting to the new educational environment and seeking out new opportunities for growth and development were emphasized. Highlighting that a proactive mindset can significantly enhance one’s learning experience. This approach not only fosters resilience but also encourages individuals to embrace challenges as stepping stones toward personal and academic success.

See the Potential of Education Degree

When the researcher asked to Jane, she replied that patient the insight that impacted to her decisions upon earning education units are seeing how can she leverage her potential skills from other fields. She explained that recognizing her transferable skills, such as communication and problem-solving, allowed her to approach her studies with a broader perspective and greater confidence. She Shared that:

“I have learned and see the great potential for bachelor’s degree holder of non-education courses in the field of teaching. I learned that schools needed knowledgeable expert on different field impart their expertise to young learners.” (IDI-R1)

Understanding the Different Pedagogical Approaches

According to Jane, the understanding of different situation empowers her to take an active role in education, making the learning process more efficient and affective. As future teachers, a solid understanding of pedagogy will enable her to create engaging, effective and inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive and succeed, she admitted the lesson she learned upon earning of education units. She stated that:

“That in order to teach well, we must know and understand the different pedagogical approaches, theories and child development processes in order to understand the child’s / learner’s diversity and learn how to handle learners learning difficulties. A teacher is facilitator of child’s learning so she needs to be knowledgeable, skillful, creative and a good model of good value towards his/her student.” (IDI-R1)

Practice Makes Enhance

When the researcher asked her about the significant skills and qualities she developed through the journey of earning education units, she emphasized that she was able practice and enhance her confidence. She also noted that this newfound confidence allowed her to engage more actively in discussions and collaborative effectively with her peers. Additionally, she noted that this newfound confidence encouraged her to take risks in her work, leading to more innovative ideas and approaches that she had not previously considered. This allowed her to become more creative in her presentations. She shared that:

“I was abled to practice and enhance my confidence, my technical skills, editing skills and become creative on my presentations.” (IDI-R1)

Developed Significant Skills

When the researcher asked her on what are the key factor or elements that she believe have had the most significant impact on shaping her during her journey of earning units. Jane’s reflections on her educational journey highlight the significance of personal growth and the non-linear nature of development. She believes that personal growth is not always a straightforward path; rather, it involves navigating challenges and learning from experiences along the way. A crucial element in her success has been the presence of well-trained instructors, who have played a pivotal role in enhancing her skills and fostering her development. This mentorship has not only improved her technical abilities but also contributed to her overall confidence and self-awareness, essential for her ongoing journey of self-improvement. She shared that:

“Well-trained instructors, quality education and instruction, feedback and engagement/teacher-student relationship.” (IDI-R1)

Case-2 Ed-Ed

Ed-Ed (pseudonym) not her real name, was a female students and twenty-six years old, and she was an Alumni and graduated to non-board programs taking the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. She earned, Bachelors of Elementary Education at Davao del Norte State College, Panabo City.

Since, she was a kid, she always wanted to be a teacher. Due to unforeseen circumstances, she was unable to pursue an Education courses. For this reason, she resolved to pursue a non-board course, harboring the hope that if another opportunity arose to pursue her dream course, she would seize it without hesitation.

Furthermore, a year later, she successfully graduated with a degree in BS Office Administration. Her passion for educating children, coupled with the promise of stable employment in the future, motivated her to pursue earning education units.

However, she presumed that acquiring education units would be a relatively straightforward and comfortable, underestimating the challenge. She believed that obtaining 18 units within a span of six months would be achievable, but reality proved to be far more demanding than she had anticipated.

Research Question No. 1: What are the lived experiences of the KCAST alumni upon earning Education units?

In exploring the live experiences of alumni, it becomes evident that their journeys are rich and multifaceted. Based on the first research question, there are many themes that the found and these are the themes that had emerged about the lived experiences of alumni. These themes encompassed feelings of uncertainty, excitement, challenges associated with earning units. The emergence of these themes sheds light on the diverse emotional response's individuals undergo when taking education units. Moreover, insights highlight the importance of support systems and resources to help alumni navigate their post-education journeys effectively.

Adjusting to New Terminology is Quite Stressful

In the first question, the researcher asked her about on what are some common challenges that a KCAST alumni upon earning education units, including difficulties She shared that the common challenges she encountered is adjusting to new terminology, navigating different educational philosophies, and balancing academic responsibilities with personal commitments. She confirmed that:

“For me, the common challenges I have encountered is difficulty in earning units in an education is adjusting to new terminology that differ from the degree you have earned which is quite stressful.” (IDI-R2)

Dream Course

ED-ED (pseudonym) have also admitted when the researcher asked her about the factors which prompted her to take education units. She said that since she was just a child her biggest dream is to become a teacher, and she believes that pursuing education will equip her with the necessary skills to inspire future generations. She shared that:

“I always wanted to be a teacher since I was a kid. However. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I was unable to pursue an education degree in college. However, my enthusiasms for teaching children and the prospect of an stable work in the future lead me to pursue this path.” (IDI-R2)

Expectation towards Earning Units

She admitted when the researcher asked her what the responsibilities and expectations of getting a bachelor's degree differ from those of obtaining educational at present. She admitted his initial assumption that the process would be significantly easier and more comfortable due to its duration of only six months, but she soon realized that the intensity and det of the coursework required a level of commitment she had not anticipated. This revelation prompted her to reevaluate her study habits and prioritize her time more effectively to meet both her academic and personal. She responded:

“At first, I assumed that earning education units would be lot easier and more comfortable because you only needed to get 18 units in six months. Yes, but the responsibilities assigned to us by our professor are not easy. They just provided us with learning tools to help us cope.” (IDI-R2)

Advantages and Disadvantages of Earning Units

The researcher inquired ED-ED (pseudonym) about the Advantages and Disadvantages of earning education units. In response, she conveyed that there are good and bad impact in her daily lives of being a mom, where she can design her own time table to accomplish her responsibility of being a mother and as a student. She also mentioned that balancing these roles sometimes leads to feelings of stress and guilt, particularly when academic demands conflict with family time, which makes her appreciate the moments spent with her children even more. Furthermore, she expressed that the experience has taught her valuable time management skills and resilience, ultimately enriching both her personal and academic life. She responded that:

“The advantages of earning education units include the ability to design your own time table, which is extremely useful for a student dad like me. The disadvantages are the workloads and pressure because they simply offer us with modules and it I our duty to study and cope with the lessons.” (IDI-R2)

Books and Technological Resources

The researcher also asked question about what kind of support resources she had during the time she earn units in education. She replies that there are two types of support resources and that is modules and technological resources, which played a crucial role in enhancing her learning experience and facilitating her academic success. These resources are essential for students, serving as vital tools for academic success. However, ED-ED (pseudonym) conceded that occasionally, such resources prove insufficient due to challenges like poor internet connectivity, hampering effective communication. This limitation can lead to distractions and hindered access to crucial information. She shared that:

“The modules they provided, as well as the technology and internet we had and sometimes I struggled during my online classes due to low internet connection.” (IDI-R2)

Research Question No. 2: How do the KCAST alumni who are earning Education units cope with the challenges that they have experienced?

In the second question, Ed-Ed (pseudonym) was questioned about how she copes with the different challenges that she encountered in earning education units. The ensuing themes underwent thorough analysis and were extracted from participant data. Upon recognizing her as an Education Earners, I delved into her coping mechanisms, methodically gathering various of themes. Presented below is an enhanced presentation of these themes.

Family Reliance and Stress Relief through Exercise

In this point, the researcher asked Ed-Ed how he overcome the challenges that occur when she earned education units. She really emphasized that she is relying to her husband and family. She expressed the strategy of focusing on herself, highlighting a flexible mindset in addressing the changes that come with earning education units. She shared that:

“To deal with the difficulties, I usually talk to my husband, family and friends about it, exercise like zumba dancing, and walk to release stress and take a break from those stressful lessons before restarting.” (IDI-R2)

Time Management

Ed-Ed (pseudonym) was asked about her management to prioritize her studies while balancing work and what kind adjustment that she did as an alumna who is earning education units. She replied, time management is one of her strategies, emphasizing the importance of setting clear goals and creating a structured schedule to stay focused and organized. Additionally, she highlighted the necessity of being flexible and adapting her study habits to accommodate unexpected work commitments. She emphasized that time management is essential for achieving personal and professional success. She shared that:

“Time management.” (IDI-R2)

Managing Time

ED-ED (pseudonym) shared her techniques and strategies for coping with the challenges of earning education units. Her responses demonstrated a thoughtful and deliberate approach, emphasizing the significance of effective time management in navigating the changes. She emphasis on stay positive and time management reflects a proactive and individualized method of addressing the adjustments inherent in transitioning to earning units. She said that:

“I made a lot of adjustments upon earning education units, such as how to manage my time for study and work. I’m also trying to manage stress in everything, but despite all of these stress times, I always chose to stay positive.” (IDI-R2)

Balancing Student Life and Personal life

The researcher also asked her how did she balance the demands of her role as a student earning education units with her personal life. She stated that there are two ways to balance her role as a student and her personal life. By prioritizing time with herself and to her family, she can achieve a better balance between her personal and professional life, leading to increased productivity, and reduced stress. She shared that:

“To balance my role as a student and to my personal life, I always chose to make time for myself and my family.” (IDI-R2)

Financial and Family Support

The researcher been asked to her about how did she family and community support shape her decision to pursue an education degree. She stated that they support her through emotional and financial. Ed-Ed (pseudonym) mentioned that a family and the community she faced were instrumental in motivating her to study more and grow, providing encouragement during challenging times and celebrating her achievements, which reinforced her commitment to education. Her response underscored the significant impact of external influences and personal resilience in driving her pursuit of academic and personal development. She shared that:

“They supported me out financially and emotionally wherever I was down and stressed.” (IDI-R2)

Research Question No. 3: What are their insights gained after earning education units that they can share to others and in general?

In the third question, the researcher asked the participant about her insights gained after earning education units that they can share. Below are the following themes that emerged during the study: personal growth, enhanced pedagogical skills, increased confidence in teaching, and a deeper understanding of diverse learning needs.

The participant emphasized that these insights not only enriched her professional capabilities but also positively influenced her interactions with students and their families.

Improved Career Prospects

Ed-Ed (pseudonym) provide her insights which impacted her decision in earning education units. She firmly believes that obtaining education units can significantly elevate her job status and lead to better-paying opportunities.

She views further education as a catalyst for career advancement and increased earning potential. With additional qualifications, she anticipates unlocking doors to higher positions and increased recognition within her field. She is motivated by the prospect of leveraging education to enhance her education as an investment in her future success and overall well-being. She stated that:

“Career opportunities like better paying and stability.” (IDI-R2)

Lesson of Perseverance

The researcher asked Ed-Ed what are the most important lesson she learned upon earning education units. She said that nothing is impossible as long as it is accompanied by effort and pray. Additionally, she emphasized the value of perseverance, stating that challenges are merely opportunities for growth. She also highlighted the importance of surrounding oneself with supportive individuals who inspire and motivate one to keep pushing forward. She shared:

“The most important lesson I’ve learned is that nothing is impossible as long as your try your very best.” (IDI-R2)

Collaboration

The researcher asked her about the significant skills and qualities that she had developed through her journey of earning education units. She emphasized that building confidence to teach in the nearest future is crucial for effective classroom management, student engagement and overall teaching success. She shared that:

“I think the significant skills I have developed throughout my journey in earning education units is building confidence to teach in the nearest future.” (IDI-R2)

Family Support

The researcher also asked her about the key factors or elements that she believe had the most significant impact on shaping her journey of earning education units. The importance of family support in education cannot be overstated, as it plays a pivotal role in promoting academic success. She also highlighted that encouragement from mentors and peers further strengthened her resolve and commitment to her educational goals. She shared that:

“My family support.” (IDI-R2)

Chase Dreams with Faith

The researcher advises those with a bachelor's degree to chase their dreams without fear, as this mindset helps overcome the fear of failure and take necessary risks to achieve their goals. By embracing this approach, individuals can unlock their potential and discover new opportunities that may have seemed unattainable at first. She shared that:

“Do not be afraid to pursue your dreams because nothing is impossible as long as it is accompanied by effort and the help of our almighty. Remember to always keep learning, growing and chase your dreams.” (IDI-R2)

Case 3-Shane

Shane (pseudonym) not her real name, a female students and twenty-five years old, and she was an alumni and graduated from Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Major in Financial Management at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. She earned of BSED Major in Filipino at USEP Obrero Davao City.

Since, she was a child, she was dreamed to be a teacher because she wanted to teach children. She made the decision to sit for the entrance exam at KCAST due to the school’s provision of tuition fee waivers, a compelling choice driven by her current financial instability.

First that time she take the entrance exam for board courses like Filipino board programs she is full of excitement in taking that roads without further hesitation.

However, due to the fact that school policy has been emulsifying and molded once you’ve failed the entrance examination, you are not allowed to enroll in that particular courses. Unfortunately, she didn't pass the entrance exam to enroll in the Education program. By this reason, she is not allowed to enroll in the Education program, but instead, she will be enrolled in a non-board course.

After graduating with a degree in BS Financial Management, she made the unwavering decision to pursue further education units, a plan conceived before her setback of failing to pass the college entrance exam.

Despite encountering unforeseen challenges along the way, she found herself on the brink of surrender. Yet, fueled by the unwavering support of her parents, she summoned the resilience needed to persevere and ultimately.

Research Question No. 1: What are the lived experiences of the KCAST alumni upon earning education units?

One of the purposes of this study is to expose the lived experiences of alumni education earners. In the first research question, there are many themes that we have found and it anchored different perspective of a certain participants and lean their answer to share necessary and suited to the question. These are the following themes that we are presenting below.

Academic Pressure and Time Management

Shane (pseudonym) shared that the common challenges she encountered in academic pressure and time management in earning education units. She emphasized that maintaining satisfactory grades can be stressful and having lots of responsibilities makes her time management complicated. Additionally, she noted that balancing multiple assignments and deadlines often leads to feelings of overwhelm, further complicating her ability to effectively manage her time. She said that:

“For me academic pressure is one the challenges I have encountered, meeting academic expectation and maintaining satisfactory grades is very stressful. Next is Time management it is difficult for me to balance coursework with other responsibilities such as work, family and personal commitments.” (IDI-R3)

Recovery from Setback

In addition, the researcher asked Shane (pseudonym) what are the factors which prompted her to take education units. She emphasized that teaching students is what she always dreamed, after she failed the entrance exam she’s still hoping that someday she will be able to pursue her dream career. She also mentioned that encouragement from her family and friends played a significant role in her decision to continue pursuing education despite the setbacks. She shared that:

“After I fail the entrance exam I still manage to get different course but I never lost hope because I know there is another way to reach my goals. Failing to pass the entrance exam have served as a catalyst for me to prove my capabilities and overcome obstacles by pursuing further education.” (IDI-R3)

Getting Bachelor’s Degree differ from Obtaining Educational Units

The researcher asked how the responsibilities and expectations of getting a bachelor’s degree differ from those of obtaining educational units at present. She said, the choice between pursuing a bachelor’s degree or obtaining educational units depends on individual goals, career aspiration and personal circumstances. She shared:

“For me, when pursuing a bachelor’s degree, the focus is on developing job-ready skills by nurturing natural talents and abilities, whereas in earning units, the goal is compliance to qualify for the LEPT or Professional Teacher Licensure examination. Despite the difference in expectations, both paths entail similar responsibilities, including completing tasks, passing exams, and meeting course requirements.” (IDI-R3)

Advantages and Disadvantages of Earning Education Units

The researcher asked what are the disadvantages and advantages of earning education units. Shane (pseudonym) shared the advantages she encountered are career advancement, Skill enhancement, personal development and the disadvantages are Time cost, and limited options. Earning education units can offer numerous benefits. It’s essential to weigh the advantages and disadvantages carefully to make informed decisions about her professional development path. She shared that:

“The advantages that I encountered, first career advancement, second is skill enhancement, third Personal development. For the disadvantages, first is Time, second is Cost, third is limited options.” (IDI-R3)

Technology and Family Support

When the researcher asks Shane (pseudonym) about the support resources she had the time she earned units in education. She shared, Technology and family support. The technology and family support create a robust framework for Shane to thrive, offering a blend of digital connectivity and emotional sustenance essential for navigating the complexities of modern life. She shared that:

“My number one support resources are my Family, second is Technology.” (IDI-R3)

Research Question No. 2: How do the KCAST alumni who are earning Education units cope with the challenges that they have experienced?

In the second question, Shane (pseudonym) was asked how she copes with the different challenges that she encountered in earning education units. We also gathered many themes in this point, including resilience, time management, and the importance of support networks. Her insights reveal a multifaceted approach to overcoming obstacles, highlighting the significance of adaptability and perseverance in her educational journey. Below is the presentation of the themes. Below is the presentation of the themes.

Positive Thinking and Family support

The researcher asked Shane (pseudonym) about her coping mechanisms to manage the challenges of being an alumni earning education

units. And she stated, embrace positive thinking, incorporate relaxation techniques and seek solace and guidance from your family. Furthermore, she highlighted the importance of maintaining a balanced lifestyle, which includes regular physical activity and pursuing hobbies that bring her joy, as essential components of her coping strategy. She shared that:

“To overcome challenges, first I embrace positive thinking, fostering motivation and determination. Second, incorporate relaxation techniques into my routine, ensuring to take rest and unwind whenever necessary, promoting mental and emotional well-being. Third, seek solace and guidance from my family, leveraging their support to navigate challenges and celebrate successes together.” (IDI-R3)

Strategic Planning

Shane (pseudonym) also emphasized that one of the techniques and strategies she did to effectively manage her time is having strategic planning. Which it helps her and guide her throughout her daily life in earning education units. By setting clear goals and priorities, she ensures that her time is allocated efficiently, allowing her to focus on essential tasks while minimizing distractions. She said that:

“I meticulously plan by prioritizing tasks based on their importance, nothing essential items first before deciding on the order of execution.” (IDI-R3)

Time Management

The researcher asked Shane (pseudonym) what are the necessary adjustments that she did upon earning education units. Shane said Time management is her biggest adjust due to the conflict schedule she had. This indicates that Shane found it challenging to manage her time effectively, particularly with the added responsibilities that came with her new education units. She also noted that developing a structured routine helped her balance her academic and personal commitments more efficiently. She answered that:

“I seamlessly integrate holistic adjustments into my daily activities and routines, scheduling both my time and endeavors. Whenever I have vacant time at work I will do my assignment reading my modules. I woke up early to ensure punctuality for work, steadfastly avoiding any risk of tardiness.” (IDI-R3)

Balancing the Demands of Personal Life and Study

Balancing demands of being a student with personal life requires strategic planning and effective time management. Shane (pseudonym) shared her ways on how to balance the demands of being a student. She said, prioritize task, create a schedule, seek support and stay flexible. These strategies align with expert recommendations, such as getting organized and maintaining clear communication with family and friends to foster understanding and support. This is her answer:

“To achieve balance I prioritize task, I will determine my academic and personal priorities and allocate time accordingly. Second, I create schedule that includes dedicated time for studying and attending classes. Third, seek support, I don't hesitate to seek support from friends and family. Lastly, stay flexible, I remain adaptable and willing to adjust my schedule as needed to accommodate unexpected events.” (IDI-R3)

Family Support

The researcher also asked Shane (pseudonym) how did her family and community support shape her decision to pursue an education unit. She said, her family gives her financial support and emotional support while her community serves as her inspiration to climb up. She highlighted that the encouragement and belief from those around her not only motivate her to persevere through challenges but also reinforcer her commitment to achieving her educational goals. This is her answer:

“My family give full encouragement to pursue my goals. They help me with financial assistant to pay other expenses that associated with my study. Pursuing education is challenging my family and community likely provide emotional support during times of stress.” (IDI-R3)

Research Question No. 3: What are their insights gained after earning education units that they can share to other and in general?

In this point, the researcher asked the informant about her insights of in learning about the experiences of alumni education earners. Below are the following themes that emerged during the study, highlighting the diverse perspectives and valuable lessons shared by the alumni. Feel free to let me know if you need further modifications or additional information.

Schools Require Diverse Subject Experts

The researcher asked Shane about the insights that influenced her decision to pursue education units, emphasizing the importance of extra effort, adaptation, deep reflection, and self-reliance, while underscoring resilience and self-motivation as crucial for overcoming challenges in selecting a program. She shared that:

“I've discovered the significant opportunities for individuals with bachelor's degrees in non-education fields like for example courses from BSBA, Agriculture and many more to pursue teaching careers. Schools require experts from various fields to share their knowledge with young learners.” (IDI-R3)



Understanding Pedagogy Aids Effective Learning

The researcher been asked to Shane about are the most important lesson she learned upon earning education units and she replies that it is important to understand different ways on how to teach children. She emphasized that this understanding not only enhances teaching effectiveness but also fosters a more inclusive learning environment for all students. Let me know if you need any further adjustments. She shared:

“As a future educator, it is important to comprehend various teaching methods, theories of education, and stages of child development. This knowledge helped us appreciate the diversity among students and equips us to address their learning challenges effectively.” (IDI-R3)

Confidence and Creativity

Shane added on what are some significant skills and qualities that she had developed through her journey of earning education units. These skills and qualities demonstrate Shane’s growth and development throughout her journey. Her experiences have not only enhanced her critical thinking and problem-solving abilities but also fostered resilience and adaptability, essential traits for navigating the complexities of modern education and the workforce. She said that:

“Through consistent practice, I honed my skills and saw a notable improvement in my confidence levels. This newfound confidence became a catalyst for nurturing creativity, infusing my presentations with innovation and flair. As a result, I found myself delivering more engaging and impactful speeches.” (IDI-R3)

Chase Dreams

Shane added on what is the most important thing to remember is always trust the process and follow all the dreams, even if sometimes it seems like impossible to reach them. Additionally, embracing each step of the journey can transform challenges into valuable learning experiences, reinforcing the belief that perseverance will ultimately lead to success. She said that:

“Just continue their dreams and keep on learning is process of reaching your goals. Through consistent practice, I honed my skills” (IDI-R3)

Cross-Case Analysis

Research Question No. 1: What are the lived experiences of the KCAST alumni upon earning education units?

The researcher interviewed the informants and they ended-up to the three important themes – Experiencing Difficulty in Personal and Academic Adjustments, Continuing Educational Pursuits, Gaining Career Advancement.

Table 2. Experiences of KCAST Alumni upon Earning Education Units

Emerging Themes	Supporting Statements
Experiencing Difficulty in Personal and Academic Adjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The common challenges are these following first one, time management due to conflict with parental duties, work, and class schedules and task activities. Secondly, stressful workload, it is a challenge on how to accomplish 6 subjects weekly task activities on time since I work during weekdays. Third one, learning difficulties, I utilized modular set-up and I need to learn on your own without relying to anyone so in-depth understanding about the topics given s hard time to achieve and financial aspect wherein earning a unit in professional education is not free. (IDI-R1) • For me, the common challenges I have encountered is difficulty in earning units in an education is adjusting to new terminology that differ from the degree you have earned which is quite stressful. (IDI-R2) • For me academic pressure is one the challenges I have encountered, meeting academic expectation and maintaining satisfactory grades is very stressful. Next is Time management it is difficult for me to balance coursework with other responsibilities such as work, family and personal commitments. (IDI-R3)
Continuing Educational Pursuits despite Initial Hurdles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believed earning units can uplift my professional status. I want to build good future for my family. My wants and desire to gain achievements and be able to take my teaching dreams into reality. (IDI-R1) • I always wanted to be a teacher since I was a kid. However. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I was unable to pursue an education degree in college. However, my enthusiasms for teaching children and the prospect of an stable work in the future lead me to pursue this path. (IDI-R2) • After I fail the entrance exam I still manage to get different course but I never lost hope because I know there is another way to reach my goals. Failing to pass the entrance exam have served as a catalyst for me to prove my capabilities and overcome obstacles by pursuing further education. (IDI-R3) • The advantages I have encountered are career and professional growth, knowledge gained, time efficient, boost confidence, skills enhancement. While the disadvantages are learning gained are

not experienced in actual school and costly. Some think it is just for compliance and they did not take the program seriously or optional. (IDI-R1)

- The advantages of earning education units include the ability to design your own time table, which is extremely useful for a student mom like me. The disadvantages are the workloads and pressure because they simply offer us with modules and it I our duty to study and cope with the lessons. (IDI-R2)
- Gaining Career Advancement
- The advantages that I encountered, first career advancement, second is skill enhancement, third Personal development. For the disadvantages, first is Time, second is Cost, third is limited options. (IDI-R3)

Experiencing Difficulty in Personal and Academic Adjustments

The three cases all agree that excessive workloads are a significant source of stress for individuals in their positions. Jane (pseudonym) specifically outlined five challenges she faced: time management, coping with a heavy workload, and financial concerns. Heavy workloads can result in reduced productivity due to the inability to focus, prioritize, and manage time effectively. Moreover, these challenges can lead to burnout, further exacerbating the negative impact on both personal well-being and professional performance. She said that:

“The common challenges are these following first one, time management due to conflict with parental duties, work, and class schedules and task activities. Secondly, stressful workload, it is a challenge on how to accomplish 6 subjects weekly task activities on time since I work during weekdays. Third one, learning difficulties, I utilized modular set-up and I need to learn on your own without relying to anyone so in-depth understanding about the topics given s hard time to achieve and financial aspect wherein earning a unit in professional education is not free.” (IDI-R1)

ED-ED (pseudonym) seconded to Jane (pseudonym) acknowledging that she also faced various challenges in her own experiences. These obstacles not only hindered her ability to adapt but also served as considerable sources of stress. She expressed that sharing these experiences with others provided her with a sense of community and support, reinforcing her commitment to overcoming the barriers she faced. She shared that:

“For me, the common challenges I have encountered is difficulty in earning units in an education is adjusting to new terminology that differ from the degree you have earned which is quite stressful.” (IDI-R2)

Shane (pseudonym) is currently navigating the demanding landscape of academic pressure and time management challenges as she pursues her educational goals. She often finds herself struggling to balance her academic responsibilities with other essential aspects of her life, leading to a continuous battle against stress. The pressure to maintain satisfactory grades is not only demanding but also significantly contributes to her anxiety. Despite these hurdles, Shane (pseudonym) approaches her educational journey with determination and resilience, striving to find a harmonious balance between her studies and personal well-being. Her experience reflects a broader issue faced by many students, where effective time management becomes crucial in alleviating stress and enhancing academic performance. By developing structured strategies and prioritizing her tasks, she aims to optimize her time, reduce feelings of overwhelm, and ultimately achieve her academic aspirations. She said:

“For me academic pressure is one the challenges I have encountered, meeting academic expectation and maintaining satisfactory grades is very stressful. Next is Time management it is difficult for me to balance coursework with other responsibilities such as work, family and personal commitments.” (IDI-R3)

Continuing Educational Pursuits despite Initial Hurdles

The motivation for earning education units is deeply influenced by individual goals, values, and circumstances, particularly among education earners. This drive not only fosters personal growth and professional development but also encourages individuals like Jane to pursue opportunities that resonate with their aspirations, drawing inspiration from various sources to navigate challenges related to career growth and family responsibilities. Ultimately, such motivations empower individuals to seek meaningful change in their lives and careers, enhancing their overall fulfillment and success. She shared that:

“I believed earning units can uplift my professional status. I want to build good future for my family. My wants and desire to gain achievements and be able to take my teaching dreams into reality.” (IDI-R1)

On the other hand, ED-ED (pseudonym) has confirmed that her lifelong dream of becoming a teacher, deeply rooted in her childhood aspirations, has profoundly influenced her decision to pursue further education. This commitment not only underscores the significance of early dreams in shaping one’s educational journey but also illustrates how these aspirations can serve as a guiding force in one’s career path. By embracing her passion for teaching, she exemplifies how childhood ambitions can inspire individuals to seek out opportunities for growth and development, ultimately leading them toward fulfilling their professional goals. She shared that:

“I always wanted to be a teacher since I was a kid. However. Due to unforeseen circumstances, I was unable to pursue an education degree in college. However, my enthusiasms for teaching children and the prospect of an stable work in the future lead me to pursue this path.” (IDI-R2)

In addition, Shane (pseudonym) emphasize the factors which prompted her to take education units. She pointed out that teaching students is what she always dreamed, after she failed the entrance exam she's still hoping that someday she will be able to pursue her dream career. Her passion for education and desire to make a positive impact on students' lives motivated her to seek further qualifications despite the setbacks she faced. She shared that:

“After I fail the entrance exam I still manage to get different course but I never lost hope because I know there is another way to reach my goals. Failing to pass the entrance exam have served as a catalyst for me to prove my capabilities and overcome obstacles by pursuing further education.” (IDI-R3)

Gaining Career Advancement

As we tool the interview is really visible that there are both advantages and disadvantages associated with earning education units. Each of three has provided participants provided valuable insights into their perspective on the benefits and drawbacks they experienced. Jane (pseudonym) stating what kind of advantages and disadvantages she encountered while earning units. She shared that:

“The advantages I have encountered are career and professional growth, knowledge gained, time efficient, boost confidence, skills enhancement. While the disadvantages are learning gained are not experienced in actual school and costly. Some think it is just for compliance and they did not take the program seriously or optional.” (IDI-R1)

Moreover, ED-ED (pseudonym) confirmed that she experienced a range of advantages and disadvantages, highlighting the complex interplay of impacts on her daily life as both a mother and an education earner. This dual role necessitates careful balancing and prioritization of her responsibilities as she navigates the challenges of managing family commitments alongside her educational pursuits. By acknowledging these dynamics, she emphasizes the importance of finding harmony in her life to achieve personal fulfillment and professional growth. She shared that:

“The advantages of earning education units include the ability to design your own time table, which is extremely useful for a student mom like me. The disadvantages are the workloads and pressure because they simply offer us with modules and it I our duty to study and cope with the lessons.” (IDI-R2)

In addition, Shane (pseudonym) discussed the various advantages and disadvantages she encountered in her journey toward career advancement. On the positive side, she highlighted significant benefits such as enhanced skills, personal development, and increased opportunities for career progression. However, she also acknowledged some drawbacks, including the time commitment required and the potential for limited options in certain fields. Earning education units can provide a wealth of benefits, making it crucial for individuals to carefully weigh these pros and cons. She shared that:

“The advantages that I encountered, first career advancement, second is skill enhancement, third Personal development. For the disadvantages, first is Time, second is Cost, third is limited options.” (IDI-R3)

Research Question No. 2: How do the KCAST alumni who are earning Education units cope with the challenges that they have experienced?

In the data the researcher has gathered, she concluded into three emerging themes – Thinking Positively, Managing Time, Asking Friends and Families for Support.

Table 3. Coping Mechanisms of KCAST Alumni Education Earners

<i>Emerging Themes</i>	<i>Supporting Statements</i>
Thinking Positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three things that come to my mind on how to manage the challenges such as positive thinking that always remind yourself what's the reason why you need to do this. Second one, relaxation techniques where you've always taken a pause when needed and lastly, seeking support from family and close friends. (IDI-R1) • To deal with the difficulties, I usually talk to my husband, family and friends about it, exercise like zumba dancing, and walk to release stress and take a break from those stressful lessons before restarting. (IDI-R2) • To overcome challenges, first I embrace positive thinking, fostering motivation and determination. Second, incorporate relaxation techniques into my routine, ensuring to take rest and unwind whenever necessary, promoting mental and emotional well-being. Third, seek solace and guidance from my family, leveraging their support to navigate challenges and celebrate successes together. (IDI-R3) • I adjust holistically in my daily activities and routines. I scheduled my time and activities. I work on KCAST canteen during weekdays from 7: am to 5: pm so at night time I help my youngest son to answer his assignments and if not, that's the time I study on my lessons and answer my task. I always stay awake late at night to read my modules for me to understand the topics so I could answer my tasks. Sleeping late and waking up early are one of the necessary adjustments I did just to perform my studies and walk well. (IDI-R1)

Managing Time

- I made a lot of adjustment upon earning education units, such as how to manage my time for study and work. I'm also trying to manage stress in everything, but despite all of these stress times, I always chose to stay positive. (IDI-R2)
- I seamlessly integrate holistic adjustments into my daily activities and routines, scheduling both my time and endeavors. Whenever I have vacant time at work I will do my assignment reading my modules. I woke up early to ensure punctuality for work, steadfastly avoiding any risk of tardiness. (IDI-R3)
- Whenever I make decisions in life I always involve my family with it and consider their views from it. My family is always supportive to my plans and that motivate me to pursue things. They always believe that I can do it so am I. I can also see some life long learner like me able to success so that motivate me to study for me to study to unlock what future holds for me. (IDI-R1)
- My family supported me out financially and emotionally wherever I was down and stressed. (IDI-R2)
- My family give full encouragement to pursue my goals. They help me with financial assistant to pay other expenses that associated with my study. Pursuing education is challenging my family and community likely provide emotional support during times of stress. (IDI-R3)
- To achieve balance I prioritize task, I will determine my academic and personal priorities and allocate time accordingly. Second, I create schedule that includes dedicated time for studying and attending classes. Third, seek support, I don't hesitate to seek support from friends and family. Lastly, stay flexible, I remain adaptable and willing to adjust my schedule as needed to accommodate unexpected events (IDI-R3)

Asking Friends and Families for Support

Thinking Positively

Alumni navigating stressful challenges often refine their time management skills, striking a delicate balance between personal life and academic responsibilities. They employ a variety of effective coping mechanisms, including cultivating a positive mindset and actively seeking support from family and friends. By prioritizing their tasks and setting realistic goals, they not only enhance their productivity but also foster resilience in the face of adversity. This proactive approach not only helps them manage stress but also empowers them to thrive academically and personally during challenging times. She said that:

“Three things that come to my mind on how to manage the challenges such as positive thinking that always remind yourself what's the reason why you need to do this. Second one, relaxation techniques where you've always taken a pause when needed and lastly, seeking support from family and close friends.” (IDI-R1)

Earning education units poses considerable challenges, presenting unforeseen circumstances that individuals must navigate. Among these challenges, difficulties in time management and bouts of emotional distress are common occurrences. Additionally, the pressure to balance academic responsibilities with personal commitments can further exacerbate these issues. Overcoming these hurdles requires resilience and adaptability to maintain progress towards academic goals. ED-ED (pseudonym) generously shared her coping mechanism for navigating the challenges she encountered. Emphasizing the importance of family support, she leans on her husband and loved ones to seek strength and inspirations. She said that:

“To deal with the difficulties, I usually talk to my husband, family and friends about it, exercise like zumba dancing, and walk to release stress and take a break from those stressful lessons before restarting.” (IDI-R2)

In addition, Shane (pseudonym) also shared her motivation and inspiration to continue her goals despite all the hardships she faced. She emphasizing that to cope those challenges it is important to show yourself more confidence and think positive. Her biggest strength is taking care of herself making sure that despite all the stressful workloads, never forget to take a break and seek guidance from her family. She said that:

“To overcome challenges, first I embrace positive thinking, fostering motivation and determination. Second, incorporate relaxation techniques into my routine, ensuring to take rest and unwind whenever necessary, promoting mental and emotional well-being. Third, seek solace and guidance from my family, leveraging their support to navigate challenges and celebrate successes together.” (IDI-R3)

Managing Time

Due to having responsibilities at work, being a student and responsibility of being a mother creates conflict in time management. It will cause negative effect in their academic performance and also to their work and family.

Jane (pseudonym) shared about her time adjustment by putting scheduled every task and when it should be done. In this way, she will be able to accomplish all the task and responsibilities at time. She shared that:

“I plan ahead of time and note things I needed the most select what needs to be prioritize. Lastly, I would create a way on how to accomplish it by setting deadlines to each task. This way, everything will fall into place smoothly.” (IDI-R1)

She also shared how she effectively manages her time during the workweek. She works on weekdays and, in the evenings, assists her son with his assignments. Whenever she has a spare moment, she prioritizes her studies to ensure she stays on track. She said that:

“I adjust holistically in my daily activities and routines. I scheduled my time and activities. I work on KCAST canteen during weekdays

from 7: am to 5: pm so at night time I help my youngest son to answer his assignments and if not, that's the time I study on my lessons and answer my task. I always stay awake late at night to read my modules for me to understand the topics so I could answer my tasks. Sleeping late and waking up early are one of the necessary adjustments I did just to perform my studies and walk well." (IDI-R1)

Moreover, the informant supported Shane by highlighting that, despite encountering numerous difficulties and time conflicts, she successfully adjusted to fulfill her responsibilities with remarkable efficiency. Participants noted that she effectively manages her time by prioritizing tasks that require immediate attention, allowing her to carve out dedicated time for her studies.

This strategic approach not only helps her stay organized but also ensures that she remains focused on her academic goals amidst her busy schedule. She said that:

"I seamlessly integrate holistic adjustments into my daily activities and routines, scheduling both my time and endeavors. Whenever I have vacant time at work I will do my assignment reading my modules. I woke up early to ensure punctuality for work, steadfastly avoiding any risk of tardiness." (IDI-R3)

Furthermore, Shane shared her insights on effectively managing her time between family commitments and personal pursuits, emphasizing the importance of allocating time for both aspects of her life. She believes that maintaining a balance between her role as a student and her personal life requires prioritizing time for herself and her family above all else. By adopting a structured approach to time management, she ensures that she dedicates quality moments to both her studies and her loved ones, fostering a fulfilling and harmonious lifestyle. She shared that:

"To achieve balance I prioritize task, I will determine my academic and personal priorities and allocate time accordingly. Second, I create schedule that includes dedicated time for studying and attending classes. Third, seek support, I don't hesitate to seek support from friends and family. Lastly, stay flexible, I remain adaptable and willing to adjust my schedule as needed to accommodate unexpected events." (IDI-R3)

Asking Friends and Families for Support

Intrinsic motivation and assistance coming from love ones are really help us to cope easily towards our difficulty. Asking families assistance is our strength to learn everyday due to their inspiring and memorable support and assistance. Ultimately, this strong network of support not only enhances our ability to face challenges but also enriches our relationships and overall well-being.

Jane emphasize the importance of seeking guidance whenever making decisions, relying on the unwavering support of her family who serve as her biggest champions. Their constant encouragement provides her with the inspiration and motivation needed to strive towards achieving her goals. She admitted that:

"Whenever I make decisions in life I always involve my family with it and consider their views from it. My family is always supportive to my plans and that motivate me to pursue things. They always believe that I can do it so am I. I can also see some life long learner like me abled to success so that motivate me to study for me to study to unlock what future holds for me." (IDI-R1)

On the other hand, the informants emphasized the vital role of family presence, highlighting their unwavering support during times of distress and stress.

ED-ED relies on her family not only for emotional encouragement but also for financial assistance. She acknowledges their consistent availability and affirms that their support serves as a crucial pillar of strength in her life, enabling her to navigate challenges with greater resilience and confidence. She shared that:

"They supported me out financially and emotionally wherever I was down and stressed." (IDI-R2)

Moreover, Shane expressed heartfelt gratitude for her family's unwavering support in her pursuit of dreams, highlighting their emotional and financial backing as essential pillars that empower her to chase her goals with confidence and determination. She emphasized that this encouragement not only nurtures her ambitions but also instills a profound sense of security, allowing her to navigate challenges with resilience.

The steadfast belief her family has in her potential serves as a constant reminder that she is not alone in her journey; their sacrifices and commitment create a foundation upon which she can build her aspirations. This dynamic fosters an environment where she feels free to explore her passions, knowing that she has a solid support system cheering her on every step of the way. She said that:

"My family give full encouragement to pursue my goals. They help me with financial assistant to pay other expenses that associated with my study. Pursuing education is challenging my family and community likely provide emotional support during times of stress." (IDI-R3)

Research Question No. 3: What are their insights gained after earning education units that they can share to other and in general?

After in-depth conversations with the informants, the researcher identified the following emerging themes – Understanding the Different Pedagogical Approaches, Building Confidence and Creativity, Advice to all Future Education Earner's

Table 4. *Insights of KCAST Alumni upon Earning Education Units*

<i>Emerging Themes</i>	<i>Supporting Statements</i>
Understand the Different Pedagogical Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That in order to teach well, we must know and understand the different pedagogical approaches, theories and child development processes in order to understand the child's / learner's diversity and learn how to handle learners learning difficulties. A teacher is facilitator of child's learning so she needs to be knowledgeable, skillful, creative and a good model of good value towards his/her student." (IDI-R1) • As a future educator, it is important to comprehend various teaching methods, theories of education, and stages of child development. This knowledge helped us appreciate the diversity among students and equips us to address their learning challenges effectively." (IDI-R3)
Build Confidence and Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I abled to practice and enhance my confidence, my technical skills, editing skills and become creative on my presentations. (IDI-R1) • I think the significant skills I have developed throughout my journey in earning education units is building confidence to teach in the nearest future. (IDI-R2) • Through consistent practice, I honed my skills and saw a notable improvement in my confidence levels. This newfound confidence became a catalyst for nurturing creativity, infusing my presentations with innovation and flair. As a result, I found myself delivering more engaging and impactful speeches. (IDI-R3)
Chase dreams with faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not be afraid to pursue your dreams because nothing is impossible as long as it is accompanied by effort and the help of our almighty. Remember to always keep learning, growing and chase your dreams. (IDI-R2) • Just continue their dreams and keep on learning is process of reaching your goals. Through consistent practice, I honed my skills. (IDI-R3)

Understanding the Different Pedagogical Approaches

As we took the stage for the interview, both participants generously shared valuable insights drawn from their personal journeys in pursuing further education, illuminating the myriad benefits and challenges they encountered along the way. Their reflections revealed not only the intellectual growth and expanded opportunities that further education can provide but also the emotional and financial hurdles that often accompany such endeavors. Through their candid discussions, they painted a comprehensive picture of the transformative power of education while acknowledging the realities that can make the journey both rewarding and daunting. This rich exchange of experiences deepened our understanding of the multifaceted nature of educational aspirations and the resilience required to achieve them.

Jane (pseudonym) stating that understanding the different pedagogical approaches is crucial for effective teaching. These pedagogical approaches help educators tailor their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of their students, ultimately leading to more effective and engaging instruction. She shared that:

"That in order to teach well, we must know and understand the different pedagogical approaches, theories and child development processes in order to understand the child's / learner's diversity and learn how to handle learners learning difficulties. A teacher is facilitator of child's learning so she needs to be knowledgeable, skillful, creative and a good model of good value towards his/her student." (IDI-R1)

In addition, Shane (pseudonym) also agreed that understanding various teaching methods are crucial for effective teaching. By adopting these strategies, educators can create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that supports the diverse needs of their students. She shared that:

"As a future educator, it is important to comprehend various teaching methods, theories of education, and stages of child development. This knowledge helped us appreciate the diversity among students and equips us to address their learning challenges effectively." (IDI-R3)

Building Confidence and Creativity

Over the course of accumulating education units, a multiple of changes and enhancement have taken place. Numerous skills have evolved and been greatly improved, fostering confidence in teaching and encouraging creativity in all aspects of effective teaching and learning.

In addition, Jane (pseudonym) shared that during earning education units she able to practice and enhance her skills and confidence. Through the process of acquiring educational units over time, numerous changes and improvements have occurred. Her skills have evolved and been greatly enhanced, instilling in her. The confidence to teach and employ creativity in all aspects of effective teaching and learning. She said that:

"I abled to practice and enhance my confidence, my technical skills, editing skills and become creative on my presentations." (IDI-

R1)

Moreover, ED-ED (pseudonym) also supported the answer of Jane (pseudonym) that while she was earning education units she developed her confidence to teach children. becoming an effective teacher requires a combination of dedication, continuous learning and the development of various skills. She said that:

“I think the significant skills I have developed throughout my journey in earning education units is building confidence to teach in the nearest.” (IDI-R2)

Furthermore, from the cases of Jane and ED-ED (pseudonym) it was supported by Shane and said that with this confidence, she will be able to encourage her students to explore their ideas freely, without fear of judgment. She believed that fostering creativity is essential for their growth, both academically and personally. She said that:

“Through consistent practice, I honed my skills and saw a notable improvement in my confidence levels. This newfound confidence became a catalyst for nurturing creativity, infusing my presentations with innovation and flair. As a result, I found myself delivering more engaging and impactful speeches.” (IDI-R3)

Chase dreams with faith

In life, we deal so many problems that always mouthed us here in our respective lives. Jane emphasized about the importance of continuous learning and personal growth for future educators. She shared that:

“Just continue their dreams and keep on learning because learning is part of teaching.” (IDI-R1)

Moreover, ED-ED (pseudonym) also highlights that learning is not a one-time event but rather an ongoing process that is essential for teaching and making a positive impact on students' lives. She shared that:

“Do not be afraid to pursue your dreams because nothing is impossible as long as it is accompanied by effort and the help of our almighty. Remember to always keep learning, growing and chase your dreams.” (IDI-R2)

Conclusions

The lived experiences of individuals earning education units and transitioning to academic roles have significant implications for their personal and professional development. One key implication is the shift from a corporate background to a academic setting, which can be challenging due to the different expectations and requirements of each environment. For instance, a study on the experiences of industry workers who earn education units and teach Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) subjects found that they often struggled to adapt to the new academic setting, citing difficulties in managing classroom dynamics and dealing with student expectations.

Another important implication is the impact of prior work experiences on teaching practices. Research has shown that second-career teachers, who have transitioned from other professions, bring valuable skills and perspectives to the classroom. For example, a study on the lived experiences of second-career beginning teachers found that they often drew upon their prior work experiences to inform their teaching methods and engage students more effectively. This highlights the importance of recognizing and valuing the diverse backgrounds and experiences that teachers bring to the profession.

The transition to an academic role also has implications for the emotional and psychological well-being of individuals earning education units. A study on the experiences of academic who participated in a professional development program found that their experiences were shaped by their own hopes, frustrations, intentions, and histories, emphasizing the importance of considering the individual's context and circumstances in understanding their professional development journey. This underscores the need for supportive environments and resources to help teachers navigate the challenges of their new roles.

Finally, the implications of academic practice on the lived experiences of individuals earning education units also extend to the broader education community. By understanding the experiences and perspective of second-career teachers, educators can better support these teachers and leverage their unique strengths to improve student learning outcomes. For instance, a study on the lived experiences of instructors in the College of Business and Management found that they brought valuable practical knowledge and skills to the classroom, which can enhance student engagement and learning. Overall, recognizing the implications of academic practice on the lived experiences of individuals earning educational units can help create more effective and supportive learning environments.

Clearly, this research study was effective in achieving its primary goal, which was to investigate the experiences of Education students at the chosen research site. The fact that important themes developed from this project were able to effectively give information and explanation on the same phenomena is the evidence of this.

Regardless, it should be emphasized that this research study is not the apex of all studies on the subject. This indicates that I sincerely acknowledged that the findings of this study are only descriptions and not generalizations. This is because I only polled 3 Education students who had firsthand experience in earning education units. Following this line of reasoning, I concluded that there are still uncharted territory and chances for future research.

Other researchers may replicate this research study in their own contexts where earning education units occurs, according to the recommendations in this section. They are highly welcome to use the same research approach or perhaps attempt alternative approaches to verify or dispute the data obtained in this study. Other researchers may explore expanding the number of participants in order to saturate more significant lived experiences from Education earners when it comes to the number of study participants. Future researchers may redo the study using other research sites in order to triangulate and provide more reliable and reputable research results.

Finally, it is proposed that future studies focus more on evaluating the created ideas upon choosing the program. Experts from diverse areas have been entrusted with indulging the evaluation, huge assessment and further contemplation. More significantly, it is a good idea to incorporate student input into the evaluative research. Using the knowledge gained from these future studies, existing towards education programs might be improved.

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