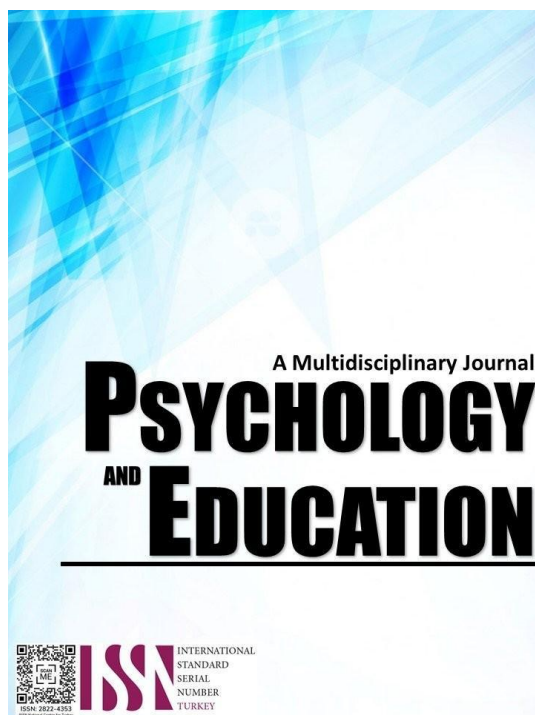


PIONEERING COHORT IN ACTION RESEARCH PUBLICATION: NARRATIVES OF EDUCATION GRADUATES



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Pioneering Cohort in Action Research Publication: Narratives of Education Graduates

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to explore the challenges faced by education graduates in conducting action research, how they navigated these challenges, and the valuable insights they gained from their research journey. The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform pedagogical approaches, curriculum development, and research mentorship in teacher education programs. To answer the research questions, a phenomenological research approach was employed. The participants were education graduates who had engaged in action research as part of their academic and professional training. The main research results revealed a range of experiences among participants, including shifting perspectives on action research, grappling with academic and personal responsibilities, and facing both internal and external pressures. Coping mechanisms varied, including practicing stress management techniques, drawing strength from an external support system, using personal aspirations and students' learning as motivation, and viewing setbacks as a learning opportunity. Insights gained by participants include considering the essential factors for successful action research, embracing personal growth and collaboration in research, understanding the impact that action research can offer, and recognizing the importance of research in delivering effective teaching. The implications of this study are significant for both teacher education and academic research, emphasizing the need for stronger support systems in action research publication. Ultimately, this study contributes valuable insights into the experiences, coping strategies, and transformative learning of education graduates engaged in action research, paving the way for a more research-oriented teaching profession.

Keywords: *education graduates, action research, transformative learning, qualitative-phenomenological, research publication*

Introduction

Action research is recognized as a valuable and critically reflective research strategy for enhancing explicit teaching and learning, particularly in an era where educators are increasingly expected to demonstrate their impact. The foundations of action research and reflective practice in educational environments are examined from a historical standpoint. A review of the methods and strategies that can be employed is provided, along with an explanation of how collegial peer observation is integrated to enhance applicability. The method outlined is encapsulated in an action research model that demonstrates how instructors can engage in critically reflective practice and support their work with an evidence base (Crawford, 2022).

In the global setting, a study conducted in the United States reveals that, despite the increasing emphasis on action research in teacher education, many educators struggle with publishing their findings. This study highlights that while action research enables teachers to improve their instructional practices, a disconnect persists between conducting research and disseminating it effectively. The lack of structured support for novice researchers and the complexity of academic writing are key barriers to publication (Messikh, 2020).

In the Philippines, specifically at the University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD), there is a clear need for more structured support for action research publication. Many faculty members acknowledge that while students engage in valuable research during their coursework, the translation of these studies into publishable work remains an underdeveloped area. The lack of clear mentoring pathways and dedicated resources for novice researchers is seen as a primary barrier to publication. These challenges highlight the need for providing research training and institutional support to bridge the gap between research production and publication (Santiago, 2021).

As education systems continue to evolve, there is an increasing demand for innovative teaching methods, research practices, and evidence-based solutions. This study aims to capture the experiences of the pioneering cohort, which can provide insights into the challenges and successes of integrating action research into educational practices. Additionally, understanding these experiences will inform future initiatives in teacher training programs, ensuring that education graduates are better equipped for real-world research and problem-solving in educational settings. The narratives of these graduates are vital for addressing gaps in the application of education research. By documenting and analyzing their experiences, this study can help shape policies that support research-driven educational practices, thus enhancing the overall quality of education. This research also highlights the challenges faced by educators in conducting action research, which may impact future curriculum development and pedagogical approaches.

Despite the growing body of research on action research in teacher education, a significant gap remains in understanding the experiences of BSEd English graduates as they transition from conducting research to publishing their work. Although a previous inquiry entitled "The Role of Action Research in Pre-Service English Teachers' Professional Development" by Garcia and Reyes (2021) explored how pre-service teachers use action research to enhance their teaching, their study did not examine the challenges associated with publishing research findings. Similarly, the study by Punzalan and Salazar (2020), entitled "Building Research Capacity in Philippine Universities:

Barriers and Pathways," identified institutional barriers to research publication in Philippine universities, but focused mainly on faculty and experienced researchers, overlooking novice education graduates. Moreover, the study by Parsons et al. (2022), entitled "The Barriers and Pathways to Teacher Research Publication," analyzed the barriers to teacher research publication in Western contexts but did not explore the specific experiences of Filipino BSEd English graduates. This study fills these gaps by investigating the narratives of education graduates who are pioneering action research publications, shedding light on their challenges, motivations, and coping strategies. Unlike previous studies that focus on teacher action research in the classroom or institutional barriers to publication, this research provides a localized and narrative-based perspective, capturing the lived experiences of beginner researchers in the Philippine education system. The findings will contribute to the development of more effective institutional support systems, research mentorship programs, and policies that empower future educators to publish and disseminate their action research more efficiently.

To ensure the research findings reach relevant stakeholders, the results of this study will be shared through multiple platforms. These include presenting at education research conferences and teacher training seminars, publishing in peer-reviewed academic journals and university research repositories, and conducting research utilization forums in partner teacher education institutions. Additionally, a summary of the findings will be distributed to education policymakers, research coordinators, and school administrators to inform the development of support mechanisms for novice teacher-researchers.

Research Questions

This study was to explore the experiences of education graduates as pioneers in action research publication at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of education graduates involved in the pioneering cohort in the action research publication?
2. How do education graduates, as a pioneering cohort, cope with the challenges they encounter during the action research publication process?
3. What insights do education graduates acquire from participating in the action research publication?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing a phenomenological approach, to gain a deeper understanding of the informants' experiences. This approach was tailored for qualitative researchers seeking to conduct in-depth studies, focusing on small groups of individuals to inform and bolster the construction of hypotheses. Qualitative research results tended to be descriptive rather than predictive (Creswell, 2017).

As such, qualitative research was employed in this study to gain an in-depth understanding of the narratives of education graduates who participated in the action research publication. Data were gathered through participant interviews, allowing the researcher to capture rich, detailed accounts of their experiences. Unlike quantitative research, which relied on survey questionnaires and numerical data, this study emphasized personal insights and lived experiences.

A phenomenological research approach was employed to gain insight into the fundamental nature of this phenomenon by examining the perspectives of individuals. This method delved into real-life experiences, broadened our understanding of how people reflect on their journeys, and enhanced our knowledge of a particular topic. The primary objective of this approach was to investigate people's experiences, shedding light on their challenges, successes, and personal viewpoints regarding action research publication. Additionally, phenomenology involved accurately articulating these lived experiences while reflecting on the themes that emerged in relation to relevant theories (Delve & Limpaecher, 2022).

In the context of this study, a phenomenological approach was employed to explore the experiences of English education graduates who participated in the action research publication. Through this approach, the researcher aimed to uncover the essence of how these graduates navigated the process of conducting and publishing action research. This involved describing their experiences, highlighting the challenges they faced, and uncovering unique insights into their journey. By doing so, this study provided a deeper understanding of their perspectives, motivations, and reflections, ultimately contributing to the discourse on action research in teacher education.

Participants

The participants in the study were BSEd graduates in English who were part of the pioneering cohort in action research publication at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology. To ensure that only those who could provide relevant and meaningful insights were included, the researcher employed purposive sampling, selecting participants who had direct experience with action research publication. These individuals were best suited to share authentic narratives about the research topics. According to the study's criteria, fourteen (14) participants were selected from BSEd English graduates. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD) with these fourteen (14) individuals.

This determined number was in adherence to the suggestion of Ray (1994) that the ideal number of participants in a qualitative study, such as phenomenology, ranges from 8 to 14 people. By including this specific group of participants in the qualitative study, the data-

gathering process reached a point of data saturation, yielding comprehensive and sufficient data that supported the study's conclusion.

The criteria specified by the researcher were appropriate for the study. The following criteria were used to choose the participants: they must have been BSEd English graduates who were part of the pioneering cohort in action research publication during their academic journey at Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology in Maniki, Kapalong, Davao del Norte. Participants could be male or female, as long as they were willing to participate in the study and met the previous criterion.

Procedure

In this study, the researchers created interview questionnaires. The researchers then consulted the research adviser and experts for the validation of the interview questionnaire. After validating the research instruments, the researchers obtained permission letters to conduct the study. Following the confirmation of the research instruments, the researchers obtained letters of authorization to carry out the investigation. After confirmation, to protect the respondents from harm and any unintended consequences, they ensured that the participants had the freedom of choice to participate in this study. The respondents were guided by the researchers throughout the procedure, and their concerns were addressed. After the respondents completed the interviews, the researcher collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data accordingly.

The researcher had to understand the nature of the research and its purpose to properly introduce the study and request permission from participants to participate in the process. The following phases were used to collect the necessary data for the study: first, a permission letter was prepared and submitted to the college president of Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology for approval to conduct the study within the institution. Then, the approved letter was forwarded to the program head of the Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English, informing them that the study is being conducted under their supervision, focusing on the experiences of education graduates in an action research publication.

After this, a purposive sampling technique was employed to identify the study's participants. When the researcher successfully selected the participants, they were asked to read and comprehend the permission and agreement forms before signing them. These forms included a condition stating that the informants' involvement was voluntary and that they were willing to provide information that was essential to the study's success.

Next, the participants were fully informed about the study's objectives. The orientation began with an introductory phase, during which the researcher explained the purpose of the interview, its duration, and the confidentiality policy. It was also considered that the participants would benefit from participating. It was necessary to conduct in-depth interviews with all the participants. Furthermore, both the participants and the researcher gained from the research. The participants were allowed to unload their perceptions based on their experiences, which was a significant component in making this study successful. Lastly, the engaged participants became research partners, assisting the researcher in disseminating the research findings for academic purposes.

Additionally, data from participants' answers were recorded using smartphones during the interviews. The researcher transcribed the recorded data before converting it from raw language to Standard English. Following data translation, the researcher retrieved emergent themes using thematic analysis approaches. Finally, the extracted themes were presented to a data analyst whose expertise was aligned with the concept of language research for validation and approval. Essential devices were utilized throughout the study, including a camera, smartphone, and audio recorder, which served as practical tools for providing strong evidence of the informants' standpoints. The camera was one of the commonly used devices utilized in the interview, as it provided a factual set of knowledge that served as support for the research, particularly highlighting the strong points in the interview process. Moreover, a video camera was used for close observation of the interview; similarly, it provides essential information on the informants based on how they presented their responses.

Furthermore, a voice recorder was a very highly effective tool that was utilized in the discussion. Although it cannot provide a picture or capture the participants' facial expressions, it provided a clear audio record, which was crucial in the study. All three instruments were utilized in the study's completion, as indicated above; thus, this research, along with photographs and projections of emotions and expressions, supported the study. Interview data were discussed, transcribed, and analyzed. Based on the study's issues, the information was assessed, studied, and addressed. The results were supported by relevant research and literature to clarify the theory. As a result, the validity and trustworthiness of developing themes and other relevant data were examined.

Data Analysis

The most essential element of any research is data analysis. Data analysis was the method used to analyze the gathered information. It entailed analyzing data acquired using analytical and logical reasoning to identify patterns, correlations, or themes. The collected and gathered data were analyzed using content and topic analysis in this study. In data analysis, the two most frequent methodologies were content analysis and thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that involves searching across a dataset to identify, analyze, and report recurring patterns. A Thematic analysis sought to uncover recurring themes within the interview data. One of the advantages of thematic analysis is its flexibility; it is used both in exploratory studies, where researchers do not have a clear idea of what patterns they are looking for, and in more deductive studies, where they know exactly what they are interested in. Data analysis was often the most

complex phase of qualitative research and one that received the least detailed discussion in the literature. However, when conducted systematically, data analysis could be communicated transparently to others.

Furthermore, the qualitative researcher often omitted a detailed description of how the analysis was conducted within published research reports. However, many have argued that researchers need to be clear about what they are doing, why they are doing it, and include a clear description of their analysis methods. As previously stated, the thematic analysis consisted of three linked stages: data reduction, data display, and data conclusions, all of which helped the researcher generate and confirm the data obtained (Mortensen, 2020).

The process of selecting, emphasizing, clarifying, abstracting, and transforming data that occurred in field notes and transcriptions was referred to as data reduction. It enabled the researcher to arrange and reduce the large amount of data in a meaningful way, making the data more manageable. Moreover, data reduction often requires decisions about whether parts of the acquired data should be emphasized, minimized, or set aside entirely to highlight the themes at hand. Using this strategy, the researcher enlisted the assistance of an expert, a data analyst specializing in processing, sorting, and organizing large volumes of qualitative data to efficiently combine, manage, sort, and categorize the information.

Ethical Considerations

The protection of human subjects through the application of appropriate ethical principles is important in any research study. Considering the nature of qualitative studies, the interaction between the researcher and participants can be ethically challenging for the researcher, as they are personally involved in various stages of the study. Therefore, the formulation of specific ethical guidelines in this regard seems essential. As a result, it was the researcher's primary responsibility to ensure their safety and provide them with complete protection, so that they would not lose interest. The researcher also adhered to ethical criteria in their research, which included respect for individuals, beneficence, justice, informed consent, and privacy (Sanjari, 2014).

Respect for persons was the researcher's responsibility when using the study participants' vulnerabilities. The researcher's identity was kept confidential to preserve participant confidence, trust, and camaraderie.

The researcher ensured a safe and inclusive environment by selecting an accessible location and refraining from using offensive language during the interviews. This demonstrated respect for participants' autonomy and dignity (Beauchamp & Childress, 2013).

The identified respondents were asked verbally by the researcher if they were willing to share their experiences and participate in the study as interviewees prior to the start of the interviews. The researcher scheduled the interviews in advance as a consequence. This was done to make sure that the participants would not use the researcher as an excuse to delay, reschedule, or cancel crucial tasks. Additionally, the researcher obtained consent from the research participants prior to conducting the interview procedure, asking them to grant permission for the researcher to record the entire conversation. The researcher accepted the participants' disapproval if they expressed it.

Beneficence can roughly be understood to mean having the interests of research participants in mind. Researchers worked to mitigate participation risks and maximize benefits for both participants and society, guided by the principle of beneficence.

For instance, the beneficence principle led the researcher to inquire about alternative methods of obtaining the same information at a lesser risk to the participants when conceiving a research design. Because participants were always protected, no information files were ever overlooked or exposed to unauthorized access. To prevent participant identity from being revealed, the researcher used pseudonyms to conceal the origins of comments and responses (Msalganik, 2014).

In this study, risks were minimized by ensuring a safe and comfortable environment for participants. The interviews were conducted in an accessible location on the ground floor, making it easier for individuals with physical challenges to participate. Additionally, the researcher ensured that the interview process did not contain any degrading, discriminatory, or unacceptable language that would be offensive to any of the respondents involved in this study. Furthermore, the study's results were beneficial to the community members, as they provided a voice for the concerned authorities, particularly regarding their safety and security. This helped them express their concerns and conundrums, which authorities can use as a point of reference in crafting and planning programs intended for them.

Consent was one of the founding principles of research ethics. It was intended that human subjects would be able to freely (voluntarily) participate in research after being fully informed about the implications of their participation and having given their agreement in advance of the study's start. Participants' consent is obtained before they enter into the research (prospectively), and it is not coerced in any way. The participants had to understand the nature of the research and what they were consenting to, in order for their assent to be considered informed.

Informed consent is fundamental to ethical research, ensuring that participants are fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits. It protects their autonomy by allowing them to voluntarily agree or decline participation without coercion, thereby upholding their dignity and rights throughout the research process (Kimmel, 2015).

Each participant was given an informed consent form prior to the scheduled day and time of the in-depth interview in this study. The interviewees were questioned about their availability for an interview and the location of their choice for a free-flowing exchange of

thoughts and insights regarding the research. Seven participants took part in an in-depth interview (IDI) after providing their consent, while the other seven participated in a focus group discussion (FGD). The results and conclusions of the investigation were eventually communicated to them.

Furthermore, concerning the participants' consent, they were advised that the researcher respected their right to withdraw from the study at any time during the interview process. Additionally, individuals have the freedom and right to choose not to respond to sensitive inquiries or ones they feel uncomfortable answering. They also have the right to ask questions at any time they have questions or need clarification. Finally, upon completion of the study, participants received information regarding the findings and were advised that they were entitled to a copy of the study, in either hard copy or soft copy.

Confidentiality refers to a condition in which the researcher knows the identity of a research subject but takes steps to protect that identity from being discovered by others. The privacy of all information and participants, along with the confidentiality of the results and recommendations, was assured.

Confidentiality is a fundamental ethical requirement in research that protects participants' privacy by ensuring that their personal information and identities are not disclosed without their consent. Maintaining confidentiality helps build trust between researchers and participants, encouraging honest and open communication while safeguarding sensitive data from unauthorized access or misuse (Sieber & Tolich, 2013).

Pseudonyms were used in the coding scheme of the study in order to protect the participants' identities. As previously said, all materials that withheld important information from participants, such as notes, videotapes, encrypted transcripts, and other items, were destroyed once the data was evaluated to ensure that no other parties, including authorities, could access the private data.

Justice was an equal share and fairness. One of the crucial and distinctive features of this principle was avoiding the exploitation and abuse of participants. According to the study's findings, justice necessitated a proper allocation of risks and benefits. As a result, the efforts of all respondents were appreciated, as they were an essential aspect of the study's success. They were given credit for all of their efforts.

The principle of justice in research ethics emphasizes fairness in distributing both the risks and benefits of participation, ensuring that no group is exploited or unfairly burdened. Recognizing and compensating participants for their time and effort fosters respect and acknowledges their valuable contributions to the study's success (Resnik, 2018).

In this study, the researcher provided the respondents with the necessary amount to spend throughout the interview. Furthermore, the researcher provided snacks and meals, ensuring they were well catered to. Sensible tokens were handed to them to compensate for and appreciate their efforts in realizing the study. The researcher hopes that by participating in this study, they were set free from any unpleasant experiences they encountered throughout the study and were able to preserve a good reputation for the beneficial contributions they made in this study (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

Results and Discussion

In this section, the information acquired throughout this investigation was important to achieving the intended results. The information was collected through focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and recordings made on mobile devices.

This section was divided into four parts: part one discussed the participant data from which the qualitative data were gathered; part two covered the data analysis processes and the steps in categorizing the emergent themes as a result of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions; part three dealt with the answers to the interview and FGD questions under each research problem; and part four contained a summary of the responses.

Participants

The participants of this study were BSEd English graduates who were part of the pioneering cohort in action research publication during their academic journey at KCAST. Seven (7) participants took part in the focus group discussion, while another seven (7) participated in in-depth interviews, making a total of fourteen (14) participants, as shown in Table 1. All participants were education graduates who had engaged in action research as part of their academic requirements.

Key Participants. The observations from the in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) provided a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences in conducting and publishing action research during their undergraduate studies. These narratives enriched the study's findings and contributed to a deeper phenomenological analysis of the pioneering cohort's journey, highlighting their motivations, challenges, and the impact of institutional support on their research engagement. Following Bernal's (2014) methodology, each informant in the in-depth interviews was assigned a pseudonym based on their distinctive traits and personalities observed during the interview sessions.

In-depth Interview. For instance, Zeus was given to the participant who demonstrated strong leadership qualities, while Hera was given to the participant who exhibited confidence and a commanding presence. Hades was named after the participant who had a mysterious and reserved personality. Poseidon was assigned to the participant with a calm yet powerful presence. Demeter was assigned to the

participant who showed nurturing and caring traits. Hestia was named for the participant who maintained a peaceful and composed demeanor. At the same time, Gaea was the name given to the participant who had a deep connection with knowledge and wisdom.

Focus Group Discussion. Similarly, pseudonyms were assigned to the seven participants of the focus group discussion based on their personalities. Artemis was given to the participant who displayed independence and a strong sense of determination. Athena was assigned to the participant known for their wisdom and strategic thinking. Aphrodite was given to the participant who radiated charm and confidence. Persephone was named after the participant who had a gentle and kind nature. Rhea was given to the participant known for their nurturing and protective instincts. Hephaestus was given to the participant known for their creativity and dedication to hard work. Lastly, Hermes was named for the participant who was highly expressive and a natural communicator.

Both groups answered the same set of questions. The participants were selected based on their experiences as students engaged in action research publication. They were selected and recognized according to the research study's criteria, and their participation was confirmed through their personal declaration.

Both in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were done through face-to-face interviews that were convenient for each informant. The participants' data were recorded by the researcher using smartphones, which was a crucial step in ensuring the study's validity and reliability.

Categorization of Data

The categorization of data in this study involved a systematic and rigorous process to ensure that the findings were robust, reliable, and meaningful. The initial step in this process was the coding of the data, which involved breaking down the collected information into manageable segments. Each segment was then assigned a code that represented a specific theme or concept. This process began with open coding, where initial codes were generated based on the raw data. As the analysis progressed, these codes were refined through axial coding, where connections between the initial codes were identified and grouped into higher-order categories. This coding process allowed for the organization of data into coherent themes that accurately reflected the participants' experiences as pioneering graduates navigating the challenges and triumphs of conducting and publishing action research.

The thematic analysis was conducted following the coding process. This involved identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes within the data. Each theme represented a significant aspect of the participants' experiences and was supported by detailed excerpts from the interviews and focus group discussions.

Table 1. *Participants of the Study*

| <i>In-Depth Interview (Pseudonyms)</i> | <i>Age</i> | <i>Gender</i> | <i>Code</i> |
|--|------------|---------------|-------------|
| Zeus | 24 | Male | IDI-01 |
| Hera | 22 | Female | IDI-02 |
| Hades | 22 | Male | IDI-03 |
| Poseidon | 22 | Male | IDI-04 |
| Demeter | 23 | Female | IDI-05 |
| Hestia | 22 | Female | IDI-06 |
| Gaea | 24 | Female | IDI-07 |
| Total - 7 | | | |
| <i>Focus-Group Discussion (Pseudonyms)</i> | <i>Age</i> | <i>Gender</i> | <i>Code</i> |
| Artemis | 22 | Female | FGD-01 |
| Athena | 22 | Female | FGD-02 |
| Aphrodite | 22 | Female | FGD-03 |
| Persephone | 22 | Female | FGD-04 |
| Rhea | 23 | Female | FGD-05 |
| Hephaestus | 22 | Male | FGD-06 |
| Hermes | 23 | Male | FGD-07 |
| Total - 7 | | | |
| Grand Total -14 | | | |

The thematic analysis was iterative, involving multiple rounds of review and refinement to ensure that the themes were comprehensive and accurately represented the data. The themes were then compared to identify overarching patterns and unique insights. This method enabled a deep understanding of the participants' experiences and provided a structured approach to presenting the findings.

Also, triangulation was employed to enhance the credibility of the study. This involved using multiple data sources and methods to cross-verify the findings. In this study, triangulation was achieved through the combination of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. By comparing the data from these different sources, the researcher could confirm the consistency of the findings and ensure that they were not biased or skewed. Additionally, member checking was employed to validate the findings further. Participants were allowed to review and provide feedback on the interpretations of their interviews. This process ensured that the participants'

perspectives were accurately represented and that any discrepancies were addressed.

Moreover, to establish the trustworthiness of the study, several constructs were meticulously considered. Credibility was ensured through prolonged engagement with the data and participants, allowing for an in-depth understanding of their experiences. Dependability was addressed by maintaining a detailed audit trail, which documented every step of the research process, including data collection, coding, and analysis. This audit trail provided a clear record of how the data were handled, ensuring that other researchers could replicate the study. Transferability was considered by providing rich, thick descriptions of the participants' experiences and the context in which the study was conducted. These detailed descriptions enable other researchers to determine the applicability of the findings to similar contexts. Confirmability was achieved through reflexive journaling and peer debriefing, ensuring that the findings were shaped by the participants' experiences rather than the researcher's biases.

Lastly, member checking played a crucial role in verifying the accuracy and authenticity of the data interpretation. Participants were involved in reviewing the findings to confirm that their experiences were accurately captured and represented. This process not only enhanced the credibility of the study but also empowered participants by validating their contributions. The audit trail, on the other hand, provided a systematic and transparent account of the research process. It included detailed records of data collection methods, coding decisions, thematic development, and reflective notes. This comprehensive documentation ensured that the study's findings were grounded in the data and that the research process was transparent and accountable.

Research Question No. 1: What are the experiences of education graduates involved in the pioneering cohort in the action research publication?

The major themes and supporting statements for Research Question 1 are presented in Table 2. Participants had their responses to their own experiences. From the participants' answers, three major themes emerged: shifting perspectives on action research, balancing academic and personal responsibilities, and facing internal and external pressures.

Table 2. *Experiences of Education Graduates in the Pioneering Cohort of Action Research Publication*

| Emerging Themes | Supporting Statements |
|--|---|
| Shifting Perspectives on Action Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "At first, I saw action research as just an academic requirement focused on theories rather than real classroom issues. But when I applied it to classroom management, I realized it is about finding practical solutions, such as using interactive activities to engage my students." -IDI-01 • "I thought action research would be difficult, especially getting students to participate. I carefully planned interactive strategies that included student feedback. Over time, I noticed that small changes in my teaching methods improved student engagement." -IDI-03 • "My expectation is to focus on students, as they are the core of the curriculum. As a future educator, I am responsible for providing them with the best teaching and learning experiences. I also expected to gain hands-on experience in conducting action research to inform my teaching practice. I hoped to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges my students face and identify effective strategies to address them." -IDI-07 • "I believed that action research would provide instant results. I thought that once I applied a new teaching strategy, I would immediately see improvements in student performance. When I did not see quick results, I became frustrated at first. But I learned that real change takes time, and I had to be patient and observe my approach multiple times." -FGD-03 • "I expected collecting data from students and teachers to be easy, assuming they would openly share their insights. However, when some were hesitant, the thing that came to my mind is that I really need to build their trust first, I to improved my communication skills, to make my participants feel comfortable in sharing their feedback." -FGD-05 • "Balancing research with teaching practicum and personal responsibilities was overwhelming. I often found myself running out of time and drained to complete necessary revisions and meet deadlines." -IDI-02 |
| Battling with Academic and Personal Responsibilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "One of my biggest struggles was finding relevant literature that directly supported my research topic. Many studies that I found were either outdated or focused on different contexts and I know that I am not the only one who experienced it, so I had to spend extra time searching for reliable sources." - IDI-03 • "I found it difficult to organize my ideas and felt pressured at the same time because we are the batch who involved first in action research publication. I struggled with structuring my arguments and avoiding plagiarism especially on properly citing sources. I often had to revise multiple times to meet the required structure." -IDI-04 • "Research and publication were more expensive than I expected since at that time, we were financially unstable, which made me feel pressured and stressed. There are times when I feel like giving up because of all the expenses." -FGD-05 |
| Facing Internal and External Pressure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I felt pressured if I could handle everything like balancing research, practicum, and other academic requirements and also, I am a working student too, it was really challenging for me. There were many deadlines to meet, and it was difficult to manage my time effectively. I needed to avoid worrying about unimportant things because it only makes me feel more stressed. the important thing that I need to do is to improve my time management skills by planning ahead so |

that I could complete my tasks on time.” -IDI-02

- “For me, being part of the first group to publish action research was challenging because there was no clear roadmap to follow, so we had to figure things out along the way.” -IDI-04
- “At first, I doubted whether my research ideas were good enough. But going through the action research process and then seeing my work published boosted my confidence. Now, I trust my ability since I have no confidence in myself before, I always thought that I was not good at anything.” -IDI-06
- “Since we were the first batch to undergo this process, as myself I really do not know what to do first or what is the correct process and what to do next and it is because resources and guidance were limited. I had to find ways to gather relevant information like to ask my friends, classmates and especially to seek support from mentors.” -FGD-03
- “There were times when I felt unsure and overwhelmed doing my research paper and publication process because there are many things to do. The pressure to succeed was strong, and there were moments of frustration when things did not go as planned. However, being determined and keep moving forward, no matter how difficult the challenges were.” -FGD-05

Shifting Perspectives on Action Research

The study explores how education graduates initially perceived action research and how their perspectives evolved through practical application. Many participants initially viewed action research as a theoretical requirement rather than a practical tool for addressing real classroom challenges. However, their views shifted as they engaged in the research process and applied findings to improve their teaching methods.

Zeus (pseudonym) initially viewed action research as merely an academic requirement centered on theories rather than real classroom challenges. However, his perspective shifted when he applied it to classroom management, realizing its practical value in finding effective solutions. He discovered that incorporating interactive activities not only engaged his students but also enhanced his teaching strategies. He said:

“Una pa lang, makita nako ang action research as requirement nga naga focus more on theories kaysa mga isyu sa classroom. Pero kadtong na apply nako ni sulod classroom, I learned that it is about finding practical solutions, pareho anang paggamit og interactive activities para ma engage ang mga students.” (IDI-01)

(At first, I saw action research as just an academic requirement focused on theories rather than real classroom issues. However, when I applied it to classroom management, I realized it is about finding practical solutions, such as using interactive activities to engage my students.)

Hades (pseudonym) found action research challenging, especially in getting students to participate. By using interactive strategies and considering student feedback, he gradually refined her teaching methods, resulting in improved student engagement. He said:

“Abi nako lisod ang action research, labi na ang pagkuha sa kanang participation sa mga estudyante sulod sa klase, maong giplano nako og tarong akong

lessons nga naay interactive activities unya kanang naay feedback sa mga studyante. Mao to, nabantayan nako nga naay kausaban akong pamaagi sa pagtudlo kay ni improve man ang engagement sa mga studyante.” (IDI-03)

(I thought action research would be difficult, especially getting students to participate. I carefully planned interactive strategies that included student feedback. Over time, I noticed that small changes in my teaching methods improved student engagement.)

Gaea (pseudonym) emphasized the importance of focusing on students as the core of the curriculum. As a future educator, she aimed to provide meaningful learning experiences while gaining hands-on experience in action research. Through this process, she sought to gain a deeper understanding of student challenges and develop effective teaching strategies. She said:

“I expected nga mag focus ni sya sa mga students since sila man jud ang target sa curriculum. As a future educator, it is my responsibility nga ihatag nako akong best sa pagtudlo. Then nag expect pud ko nga maka gain og hands-on experience sa pag conduct og action research aron makabalo unsay sakto nga way sa pagtudlo.” (IDI-07)

(My expectation is to focus on students, as they are the core of the curriculum. As a future educator, I am responsible for providing them with the best teaching and learning experiences. I also expected to gain hands-on experience in conducting action research to inform my teaching practice. I hoped to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges my students face and identify effective strategies to address them.)

Hermes (pseudonym) expected action research to yield immediate results. He believed that implementing a new teaching strategy would quickly enhance student performance. However, when the outcomes were not instant, he felt frustrated. Over time, he realized that meaningful change requires patience, continuous observation, and refinement of his approach. He said:

“Nagtuo ko nga ang action research kay naa dayon mahatag nga resulta. Abi nako nga once iapply ni sa akong bag-o nga strategy

makita dayon nako ang improvement sa mga bata, pero dili diay ing-ana ka dali makita ang outcome, Nabalaka jud atong una. Pero na realized nako nga need diay ni og panahon, kinahanglan nako taas-taasan akong pasensya og obserbahan akong way sa pagtudlo permente.” (FGD-03)

(I believed that action research would provide instant results. I thought that once I applied a new teaching strategy, I would immediately see improvements in student performance. When I did not see quick results, I became frustrated at first. However, I learned that real change takes time, and I had to be patient and observe my approach multiple times.)

Rhea (pseudonym) assumed that collecting data from students and teachers would be straightforward, expecting them to share their insights openly. However, when some participants hesitated, she realized the importance of building trust first. This experience led her to enhance her communication skills, creating a more comfortable environment for participants to express their thoughts. She said:

“Nag expect ko nga ang pag collect og data sa mga studyante og teachers’ kay dali lang, unya kanang ready dayon sila mag share sa ilang mga pagsabot. Pero naay uban nga hesitant, naka huna-huna ko nga dapat diay makuha nako ilang trust una. Kailangan nga ma improve nako akong communication skills para akong participants kay komportable sa pagshare sa ilang mga tubag.” (FGD-05)

(I expected collecting data from students and teachers to be easy, assuming they would openly share their insights. However, when some were hesitant, the thing that came to my mind is that I really need to build their trust first, I to improved my communication skills, to make my participants feel comfortable in sharing their feedback.)

Battling with Academic and Personal Responsibilities

The study's results explore the various challenges encountered by education graduates as they navigated the rigorous process of action research publication, balancing academic and personal responsibilities. It highlights the struggles they faced, including time constraints, difficulties in finding relevant literature, structuring arguments, financial burdens, and the pressure of being part of the pioneering batch in action research. Through their experiences, the study reveals the emotional, intellectual, and financial toll of the research process, highlighting the resilience and perseverance required to overcome these challenges.

Hera (pseudonym) shared the challenges of balancing research, teaching practicum, and personal responsibilities. She expressed feeling overwhelmed and exhausted, often struggling to meet deadlines and complete necessary revisions on time. She said:

“Lisod ang pagbalance sa research, teaching practicum og personal responsibilities. Kanang feeling nga wala na koy enough time unya naay need pa irevise then deadlines.” (IDI-02)

(Balancing research with teaching practicum and personal responsibilities was overwhelming. I often found myself running out of time and drained to complete necessary revisions and meet deadlines.)

Hades (pseudonym) highlighted the difficulty of finding relevant literature to support his research topic. He encountered challenges with outdated studies and research that differed in context, requiring him to invest extra time in searching for reliable sources. He said:

“sa sa akong pinaka struggle kay ang mangita og relevant literature gyud nga mo support sa akong research topic. Daghan man kog studies nga makita, pero kanang daan na or naga focus sa lahi nga context, kabalo ko nga dili lang ako ang naka experienced ani, maong kailangan nako mo spend og extra time to search for reliable sources.” (IDI-03)

(One of my biggest struggles was finding relevant literature that directly supported my research topic. Many studies that I found were either outdated or focused on different contexts and I know that I am not the only one who experienced it, so I had to spend extra time searching for reliable sources.)

Poseidon (pseudonym) faced difficulties in organizing his ideas while feeling the pressure of being part of the first batch involved in action research publication. He struggled with structuring arguments and ensuring proper citation to avoid plagiarism. To meet the required structure, he had to go through multiple revisions. He said:

"Naglisod ko paghan-ay sa akong mga ideas og napressure ko kay kami nga batch ang first na involved sa action research publication. Nag struggle ko pag form og structure sa akong mga arguments og paglikay sa plagiarism especially ang pag-cite og sources. Magsige kog revise para lang jud makuha ang tama nga structure." (IDI-04)

(I found it difficult to organize my ideas and felt pressured at the same time because we are the batch who involved first in action research publication. I struggled with structuring my arguments and avoiding plagiarism, especially in properly citing sources. I often had to revise multiple times to meet the required structure.)

Rhea (pseudonym) found research and publication to be more costly than she had anticipated, especially during a period of financial instability. The financial burden caused her significant stress and pressure, leading to moments of frustration where she felt like giving up due to the overwhelming expenses. She said:

"Ang research og publication process kay hago unya gasto, of course expected jud na, kadto nga mga panahon kay financially unstable jud mi, na pressure og na stress ko. Naay times nga kaundangon nako kay daghan kaayo og bayrunon." (FGD-05)

(Research and publication were more expensive than I expected since at that time, we were financially unstable, which made me feel pressured and stressed. There are times when I feel like giving up because of all the expenses.)

Facing Internal and External Pressure

The study's results examine the experiences of education graduates who were among the first to publish action research, highlighting the internal and external pressures they encountered. Internally, they struggled with self-doubt, fear of failure, and uncertainty about their abilities. Externally, they faced a lack of structured guidance, limited access to resources, and the challenge of managing multiple academic demands. Despite these obstacles, the findings reveal that persistence, strategic time management, and reliance on peer and mentor support played a crucial role in helping them overcome difficulties and achieve success in their research and publication efforts.

"I felt pressured if makaya ba nako og handle ang tanan like ang pagbalace sa research, practicum, og sa uban nga academic requirements, og working student sad ko mao nang challenging ni para sa akoo. Naay mga deadlines nga kinahanglan apason, naglisod na kog manage sa akong time. Need nako likayan ang mga butang nga dili importante unya dapat nga imanage nako akong time like naka plano dayun para mahoman akong mga task on time." (IDI-02)

(I felt pressured if I could handle everything like balancing research, practicum, and other academic requirements and also, I am a working student too, it was really challenging for me. There were many deadlines to meet, and it was difficult to manage my time effectively. I needed to avoid worrying about unimportant things because it only makes me feel more stressed. the important thing that I need to do is to improve my time management skills by planning ahead so that I could complete my tasks on time.)

Poseidon (pseudonym) described the challenges of being part of the first group to publish action research, emphasizing the uncertainty of the process. Without a clear roadmap to follow, he and his peers had to navigate the journey independently, learning through trial and error as they worked toward publication. He said:

"Para sa ako, lisod ang pagkaapil sa unang grupo nga nag-publish og action research kay wala'y sakto nga guide para ifollow namo, maong kinahanglan namo nga mahibal-an ang proseso samtang ga padayon mi." (IDI-04)

(For me, being part of the first group to publish action research was challenging because there was no clear roadmap to follow, so we had to figure things out along the way.)

Hestia (pseudonym) doubted the value of her research ideas and lacked confidence in her abilities. However, as she progressed through the action research process and saw her work published, her self-belief grew. The experience transformed her perspective, helping her recognize her capabilities and overcome her previous self-doubt. She said:

"Kadtong una, nagduha-duha ko sa akong research ideas kung sakto lang ba. Samtang ga-agi ko sa proseso sa akong action research unya kadtong pagkakita nako nga na published na kay ni taas jud akong kumpyansa sa sarili. Karon, mas nagtuo nako sa akong kaugalingon kay sauna wala koy salig jud sa akong sarili, magsige kog hunahuna nga wala koy nindot nga nahimo." (IDI-06)

(At first, I doubted whether my research ideas were good enough. But going through the action research process and then seeing my work published boosted my confidence. Now, I trust my ability since I have no confidence in myself before, I always thought that I was not good at anything.)

Aphrodite (pseudonym) shared the struggles of being part of the first batch to undergo the action research publication process. With limited resources and guidance, she initially felt uncertain about the correct steps to take. To overcome these challenges, she reached out for support from friends, classmates, and mentors, finding ways to gather relevant information and navigate the process effectively. She said:

"Kay kami man nga batch ang una nga ni agi ani na process, wala jud ko kabalo unsay unahon, unsay tama nga pamaagi og unsay sunod buhaton kay siguro akong resources og guidance kay limitado lang. Nangita ko og way para makakita og mga relevant information like mangutana sa akong mga friends, classmates og mangayog support sa adviser." (FGD-03)

(Since we were the first batch to undergo this process, as myself I really do not know what to do first or what is the correct process and what to do next and it is because resources and guidance were limited. I had to find ways to gather relevant information like to ask my friends, classmates and especially to seek support from mentors.)

Rhea (pseudonym) admitted feeling unsure and overwhelmed during the research and publication process due to the numerous tasks involved. The pressure to succeed was intense, leading to moments of frustration when things did not go as planned. However, she remained determined and kept moving forward, overcoming challenges through perseverance and resilience. She said:

"Naay mga panahon maka feel kog walay kasiguruhan og kabug-at sa paghimo sa akong research paper og ang publication process tungod sa kadaghat buhatonon. Grabe ang pressure bago ma-achieve ang success, unya naay moments nga mapungot ko kung dili mahimo ang giplano. Pero pinaagi sa akong determinasyon, nagpadayon ko sa paglihok, bisan pa man sa kalisod." (FGD-05)

(There were times when I felt unsure and overwhelmed doing my research paper and publication process because there are many things to do. The pressure to succeed was strong, and there were moments of frustration when things did not go as planned. However, being

determined and keep moving forward, no matter how difficult the challenges were.)

Research Question No. 2: How do education graduates as pioneering cohort cope with the challenges they encounter during the action research publication process?

The major themes and supporting statements for research question number 2 were presented in Table 3. Participants had their responses towards their own coping mechanism. From the answers of the participants, four major themes emerged: doing stress management techniques, drawing strength from external support system, taking personal aspiration and students' learning as motivation, seeing setbacks as learning opportunity.

Table 3. Coping Strategies of Education Graduates as a Pioneering Cohort in Action Research Publication

| <i>Emerging Themes</i> | <i>Supporting Statements</i> |
|---|---|
| Doing Stress Management Techniques | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I actually used a planner to write down my tasks and their deadlines like focusing on the most urgent and important tasks first, with that I avoided feeling too overwhelmed and was able to complete my work step by step." -IDI-03 • "During stressful moments, every morning I go jogging to lessen my stress. I also made sure to get enough rest and eat well so I could stay focused and productive." -IDI-04 • "Challenges are a normal part of learning, so I did not lose hope easily. Instead of seeing difficulties as obstacles, I treated them as chances to learn and become better at research." -FGD-01 • "Sometimes, I thought about quitting my studies because of how difficult it was and because I lacked knowledge in this area... Thinking about my goal motivated me to keep going and not give up, even when the research process was challenging." -FGD-05 • "When I felt stressed and struggled with my research, I asked my adviser and classmates for advice. Talking to people who understood my situation helped me find solutions and made the process easier to handle." -IDI-02 • "The encouragement of my family, friends and classmates gave me the strength to continue. Whenever I faced challenges, their support reminded me that I was not alone in this journey." -IDI-03 |
| Drawing Strength from External Support System | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My family's sacrifices inspired me to keep going. I wanted to make them proud and prove to myself that I could complete the research despite the challenges." -IDI-04 • "It is important to ask for feedback from your adviser early instead of waiting until the last minute. Getting their advice helped me improve my research step by step, making revisions easier. It also reduced my stress because I had enough time to make changes before the submission deadlines." -FGD-02 • "Seeing small improvements in my students' learning because of my research motivated me. It showed me that my efforts were making a difference, which pushed me to complete the study and share my findings." -IDI-05 |
| Taking Personal Aspiration and Students' Learning as Motivation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I was really confused at that time. However, it also motivated me to keep going. I wanted to prove that we could successfully complete and publish our research despite being the first batch to go through this process." -FGD-01 • "Sometimes I wonder if all my struggles will lead somewhere. sometimes, I do not even know if I should continue because I am losing motivation for everything, but my passion for teaching and helping students to learn kept me going. I knew that quitting would mean giving up on my dreams." -FGD-05 • "When I got feedback on my research paper, it was really difficult for me. I had to rewrite certain parts over and over again. I thought I had done my best, but there are still many things to improve. I treated each revision as an opportunity to enhance my work. It was tiring, but in the end, it was worth it." -IDI-03 |
| Seeing Setbacks as Learning Opportunity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Aside from financial struggles, I also had a hard time understanding some concepts because I am a slow learner. It took me longer to analyse and write my paper compared to others. So, I took extra time to study, and practiced patience with myself." -IDI-05 • "Taking breaks and getting enough rest helped me stay focused. When I was too tired, I could not think clearly. But after resting, I felt refreshed and could continue working with a clear mind." -FGD-01 |

Doing Stress Management Techniques

The study's results examine the various coping strategies employed by education graduates to manage the pressures of conducting and publishing action research. It highlights how they adopted practical strategies such as using planners to stay organized, engaging in physical activities to reduce stress, maintaining healthy habits, and cultivating a positive mindset. By exploring these strategies, the study provides insights into how proactive time management, self-care practices, and strong personal motivation contributed to their perseverance and overall success in the research process.

Hades (pseudonym) managed his research workload by using a planner to organize tasks and deadlines. By prioritizing the most urgent

and important tasks, he prevented feeling overwhelmed and was able to complete his work systematically. He said:

“Naggamit ko og planner aron isulat akong mga buhatonon ug ilang mga deadlines, pareho anang ipriority ang pinaka urgent ug importante nga task. Tungod ani, nalikayan nako ang feeling nga grabe kapressure ug nakahoman ko sa akong trabaho hinay-hinay.” (IDI-03)

(I actually used a planner to write down my tasks and their deadlines like focusing on the most urgent and important tasks first, with that I avoided feeling too overwhelmed and was able to complete my work step by step.)

Poseidon (pseudonym) coped with stress by jogging every morning, which helped him stay balanced and focused. He also prioritized rest and proper nutrition to maintain productivity throughout the research process. He said:

“Sa panahon nga stress ko, kada buntag kay mag jogging ko aron mabawas-bawasan akong stress. Gina-siguro pud nako nga makapahulay ko og tarong unya mo kaon pud og tarong para mas maka focused og productive.” (IDI-04)

(During stressful moments, every morning I go jogging to lessen my stress. I also made sure to get enough rest and eat well so I could stay focused and productive.)

Artemis (pseudonym) viewed challenges as a natural part of the learning process. Rather than seeing difficulties as obstacles, she embraced them as opportunities to grow and improve her research skills. He said:

“kini nga mga challenges kay normal part rani sa atong pagkahibalo, maong wala ko nawad-an og paglaom. Imbes nga tan-awon nako ang kalisod as hindrance, gina tan-aw nako ni as chances nga maka learn og ma hawd sa research.” (FGD-01)

(Challenges are a normal part of learning, so I did not lose hope easily. Instead of seeing difficulties as obstacles, I treated them as chances to learn and become better at research.)

Rhea (pseudonym) admitted that there were moments when she considered quitting her studies due to the overwhelming challenges and her lack of knowledge in the field. However, reflecting on her parents' sacrifices and her purpose of contributing to education reignited her determination. Keeping her goals in mind motivated her to persevere despite the difficulties she faced in the research process. She said:

“Usahay, nakahuna-huna ko nga mo undang na lang sa pag-eskwela tungod sa kalisod ug kakulang sa kahibalo ani nga butang. Pero, naka hinumdom ko sa akong ginikanan sa ilang sacrifices para sa akong edukasyon. Ang paghunahuna nako sa akong tumong nagahatag nako og kusog nga magpadayon og dili mo give up, bisan pa man sa mga pagsulay aning research.” (FGD-05)

(Sometimes, I thought about quitting my studies because of how difficult it was and because I lacked knowledge in this area. But then, I also thought about my parents and their sacrifices for my education. I reminded myself of my purpose to help improve education. Thinking about my goal motivated me to keep going and not give up, even when the research process was challenging.)

Drawing Strength from an External Support System

The study's results reveal the significant role of external support in helping education graduates overcome the challenges of publishing action research. It highlights how seeking guidance from advisers, receiving encouragement from loved ones, and drawing motivation from their families' sacrifices strengthened their perseverance. By examining the impact of these support systems, the study provides insights into how mentorship, emotional encouragement, and a strong sense of purpose contribute to students' resilience and determination in completing their research journey.

Hera (pseudonym) acknowledged that research challenges caused her stress, but seeking advice from her adviser and classmates helped her navigate the process. Engaging with people who understood her struggles allowed her to find solutions and manage her research more effectively. She said:

“Na stressed ko then naglisod sa akong research, nangutana ko sa akong adviser og mga classmates for advice. Ang pakig estorya nako sa mga tao nga nakasabot sa akong sitwasyon kay naka tabang sa ako nga makakita og solusyon unya nakabuhat sa proseso nga mas dali atubangon.” (IDI-02)

(When I felt stressed and struggled with my research, I asked my adviser and classmates for advice. Talking to people who understood my situation helped me find solutions and made the process easier to handle.)

Hades (pseudonym) shared that the unwavering encouragement from his family, friends, and classmates gave him the strength to push forward. During challenging moments, their support reassured him that he was not alone in his journey, motivating him to continue despite the obstacles he encountered. He said:

“Ang encouragement sa akong pamilya, friends, og mga classmates nakahatag nako og kusog nga magpadayon. Every challenge nga akong maatubang, naa ilang suporta naga remind nako nga wala ko nag inusara ani nga journey.” (IDI-03)

(The encouragement of my family, friends and classmates gave me the strength to continue. Whenever I faced challenges, their support

reminded me that I was not alone in this journey.)

Poseidon (pseudonym) expressed that his family's sacrifices served as a powerful source of motivation for him to persevere. He was determined to make them proud and prove to himself that he could complete his research despite the challenges he faced. He said:

"Ang sakripisyo sa akong pamilya naga pa dasig sa ako nga magpadayon. Gusto ko nga mapasigarbo nila ug maprove akong kaugalingon nga makompleto og mahoman nako ang research maski lisod." (IDI-04)

(My family's sacrifices inspired me to keep going. I wanted to make them proud and prove to myself that I could complete the research despite the challenges.)

Athena (pseudonym) emphasized the importance of seeking feedback from advisers early rather than waiting until the last minute. She found that their guidance helped her refine her research gradually, making revisions more manageable. This approach also reduced her stress, as it allowed her ample time to make necessary changes before submission deadlines. She said:

"Importante nga mangayo og feedback gikan sa imong adviser kanang sayu pa kaysa maghulat hangtod sa kanus-a nimo lihokon. Ang mga tambag nila kay nakatabang sa pag improve sa akong research hinay-hinay, unya mas napadali og buhat sa mga revisions. Naka bawas pud sya og stress kay naa man koy enough time nga mag revise bago ang submission sa deadlines." (FGD-02)

(It is important to ask for feedback from your adviser early instead of waiting until the last minute. Getting their advice helped me improve my research step by step, making revisions easier. It also reduced my stress because I had enough time to make changes before the submission deadlines.)

Taking Personal Aspiration and Students' Learning as Motivation

The study delves into how education graduates draw on their personal aspirations and intrinsic motivation to overcome the challenges of conducting and publishing action research. It examines how their commitment to making a meaningful impact, proving their capabilities, and staying true to their passion for teaching served as driving forces in completing their research despite difficulties. By highlighting the role of resilience, determination, and purpose, the study provides valuable insights into how perseverance sustains researchers through obstacles and ultimately contributes to their growth and success in academic and professional endeavors.

Demeter (pseudonym) shared that witnessing small improvements in her students' learning as a result of her research served as a strong motivator. Seeing the positive impact of her efforts reassured her that she was making a difference, which encouraged her to complete the study and share her findings. She said:

"Makita nako bisag gamay nga improvements sa akong mga estudyante nga makatuon kay lagi tungod sa akong research kay motivate sa ako. Ginapakita ani nga akong pagpaningkamot kay naay epekto, nga nahimo nako nga magpa ka strong aron ma homan akong research study." (IDI-05)

(Seeing small improvements in my students' learning because of my research motivated me. It showed me that my efforts were making a difference, which pushed me to complete the study and share my findings.)

Artemis (pseudonym) expressed that despite feeling confused during the process, she found motivation in the challenge. Her determination to complete and publish their research, as the pioneering batch, pushed her to persevere and prove that they could navigate the unfamiliar journey. She said:

"Naglibog ko ato nga time. Pero, na motivate ko nga mopadayon. Gusto nako iprove nga kaya namo ni homanon og maka publish mi sa among action research bisan kami ang una nga batch naka experience ani na proseso." (FGD-01)

(I was really confused at that time. However, it also motivated me to keep going. I wanted to prove that we could successfully complete and publish our research despite being the first batch to go through this process.)

Rhea (pseudonym) reflected on the moments of doubt and exhaustion she experienced throughout the research process. There were times when she questioned whether her struggles would amount to anything meaningful and felt her motivation slipping away.

However, her deep passion for teaching and her commitment to helping students learn reignited her determination. She realized that giving up would mean abandoning her dreams, so she chose to persevere despite the difficulties. She said:

"Usahay, makahuna-huna ko kung kani ba tanan akong pagpaningkamot kay naa bay kapadulngan. Usahay, dili na gani ko sigurado kung dapat pa ba ko magpadayon kay murag nawad-an nako og gana sa tanan. Pero, ang akong love sa pagtudlo ug pagtabang sa mga students nga makatuon maoy nakapadayon sa ako. kahibaw ko nga kung moundang ko, meaning gibuy-an nako akong mga pangandoy." (FGD-05)

(Sometimes I wonder if all my struggles will lead somewhere. sometimes, I do not even know if I should continue because I am losing motivation for everything, but my passion for teaching and helping students to learn kept me going. I knew that quitting would mean giving up on my dreams.)

Seeing Setbacks as a Learning Opportunity

The study examines how education graduates perceive setbacks as valuable opportunities for growth, using action research as a method. It explores how overcoming difficulties such as revising research work, managing financial constraints, and improving comprehension contributes to their academic and personal development. By highlighting the significance of perseverance, adaptability, and self-care, the study provides insights into how embracing obstacles as learning experiences fosters resilience and enhances research capabilities.

Hades (pseudonym) emphasized that he found it frustrating to receive feedback on his research paper, as it meant revising and rewriting multiple times. Despite thinking he had done his best, he realized there was always room for improvement. Instead of feeling discouraged, he embraced each revision as an opportunity to refine his work. Though the process was exhausting, he knew that the effort was worthwhile in the end. He said:

“kadtong naka received ko og feedback sa akong research paper sauna, naglisod gyud ko. Kailangan nako usbon ang uban parts nga mali, nagpabalik-balik ko ato na time. Abi nako nga nabuhat na nako akong best, pero daghan pa diay butang nga dapat ma okay. Gina treat nako ang mga revisions as an opportunity nga ma enhance akong trabaho. Kapoy pero sa ulahi kay, worth it.” (IDI-03)

(When I got feedback on my research paper, it was really difficult for me. I had to rewrite certain parts multiple times. I thought I had done my best, but there are still many areas for improvement. I treated each revision as an opportunity to enhance my work. It was tiring, but in the end, it was worth it.)

Demeter (pseudonym) faced not only financial struggles but also difficulties in grasping certain concepts, as learning took her more time compared to others. Analyzing and writing her research paper was a slow process, but instead of feeling discouraged, she dedicated extra time to studying and remained patient with herself. Through perseverance and determination, she gradually improved and overcame the challenges she encountered. She said:

“Aside sa kalisod sa pinansyal, naglisod sab ko sa pag sabot sa mga concepts kay hinay ko makakat-on. Dugay nako ma-analyze ug masulat akong papel kumpara sa uban. Maong naggahin ko og extra time sa pagstudy ug nagpraktis og taas nga pasensya sa sarili.” (IDI-05)

(Aside from financial struggles, I also had a hard time understanding some concepts because I am a slow learner. It took me longer to analyze and write my paper compared to others. So, I took extra time to study, and practiced patience with myself.)

Artemis (pseudonym) recognized the importance of taking breaks and getting enough rest to maintain focus. Whenever exhaustion clouded her thoughts, she stepped back to recharge. After resting, she felt refreshed and ready to continue working with a clear mind, allowing her to approach her research with renewed energy and determination. She said:

“Ang pagpahulay ug pagkuha og tamang pagtulog nakatabang sa ako nga mo stay focused. Kung kanang gikapoy na kaayo ko, dili ko makahunahuna og tarong. Pero if makapahuway ko, I felt refreshed and maka start og work nga hayag og panghuna-huna.” (FGD-01)

(Taking breaks and getting enough rest helped me stay focused. When I was too tired, I could not think clearly. But after resting, I felt refreshed and could continue working with a clear mind.)

Research Question No. 3: What insights do education graduates acquire from participating in the action research publication?

The major themes and supporting statements for Research Question 3 are presented in Table 4. Participants had their responses to their own insights. From the participants' answers, four major themes emerged: considering the essential factors for successful action research, embracing personal growth and collaboration in research, understanding the impact that action research can offer, and the importance of research in delivering effective teaching.

Table 4. *Insights Gained by Education Graduates from Participating in Action Research Publication*

| <i>Emerging Themes</i> | <i>Supporting Statements</i> |
|---|--|
| Consider the Essential Factors for Successful Action Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “As what I have experienced, time management is the key. Balancing research with other academic responsibilities, along with financial challenges, was difficult. So, I made a schedule for each stage to avoid cramming.” -IDI-02 “It is really important to have a clear research problem. When I started, my topic was too broad, and I felt lost because there was too much information to handle. It made my study more complicated. But when I narrowed it down and focused on a specific issue, everything became clearer and easier to manage.” -IDI-07 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Data collection should be planned well and it is best to start your research study as early as possible. I thought it would be easy, but some participants were hesitant to answer and others chose not to participate. I had to take the time to gain their trust and clearly explain how their responses would contribute to my research.” -FGD-02 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Patience is really important in conducting action research because it is not easy to do. I had to try different strategies and wait to see if they actually worked. Even small changes can lead to big improvements if I keep going.” -FGD-05 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “During my research, I learned how to work independently. My adviser was there to guide me, |
| Embrace Personal Growth and | |

| | |
|--|---|
| Collaboration in Research | <p>but at the end of the day, it was my responsibility to finish my study.” -IDI-01</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Research was something you had to do alone, but I learned that collaboration makes a huge difference. Working with my classmates and getting feedback from my adviser helped me improve my study. I saw how valuable it is to listen to different perspectives and learn from others.” -IDI-02 • “I had to learn how to explain my research in a way that made sense to other people. Whether it was talking to my participants, I became more confident in how I communicated my ideas.” -FGD-03 • “This process taught me a lot about patience. Sometimes I felt like my research was not going anywhere. And also, I always think that progress takes time, and every step, even the small ones, mattered.” -FGD-05 • “I used to think that only experienced educators could contribute to improving education. But after publishing my research, I realized that even as a new teacher, my insights and findings could help make a difference.” -IDI-03 • “I learned that education is not one-size-fits-all. Through my research, I saw how students respond differently to teaching methods, and I became more open to adapting my strategies to fit their needs.” -IDI-05 |
| View the Impact Action Research can Offer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This experience changed how I see challenges in education. Instead of just complaining about problems, I try to go with the flow and focus on finding solutions.” -IDI-07 • “The publication process taught me patience and persistence. I used to think that teaching improvements happened instantly, but I now understand that meaningful change takes time, effort, and continuous research.” -FGD-05 • “One of the lessons I learned is that teaching is not just about delivering lessons, it is about understanding how students learn. Each student has a different learning ability, so I need to be more patient and flexible in my teaching methods to meet their needs.” -IDI-01 • “Teaching is not just about delivering content; it is also about building relationships in the classroom. Showing understanding toward my students makes a big difference in their learning experience.” -IDI-02 |
| The Importance of Research in the Delivery of Effective Teaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Being a good teacher means being approachable. When students feel comfortable asking questions and expressing their struggles, it makes learning more effective.” -IDI-04 • “Building strong relationships with students helped me understand their individual learning needs better. If a teacher is not flexible, it can be difficult to keep students engaged in the lesson. That is why it is important to adjust teaching strategies to better support students and make learning more effective.” -FGD-02 • “Trust and respect between teachers and students create a more productive learning environment. When students feel that their opinions matter, they become more confident in expressing their thoughts. Before, most of my students never participated in class, which was one of the challenges I faced in conducting my lessons.” -FGD-03 |

Consider the Essential Factors for Successful Action Research

The study's results examine the essential factors that contribute to the successful completion of action research among education graduates. It highlights key elements such as effective time management, clearly defined research problems, well-planned data collection, and the importance of patience throughout the process. By examining these factors, the study offers valuable insights into strategies that enhance the research experience, thereby ensuring a more structured and manageable approach to conducting action research.

Hera (pseudonym) emphasized that time management was the key to overcoming challenges. Balancing research with other academic responsibilities, along with financial struggles, proved to be challenging. To stay on track and avoid cramming, she created a schedule for each stage of the research process, allowing her to manage her tasks efficiently. She said:

“Base sa akong naexperienced, time management is the key jud. Lisod ang pagbalance sa research og uban nga academic responsibilities, labi na sa kalisod pud sa financial. Pero, naghimo ko og schedule for each stage para malikayan ang cramming.” (IDI-02)

(As what I have experienced, time management is the key. Balancing research with other academic responsibilities, along with financial challenges, was difficult. So, I made a schedule for each stage to avoid cramming.)

Gaea (pseudonym) emphasized the importance of having a clear research problem. Initially, her topic was too broad, making her feel overwhelmed by the vast amount of information available. This complexity made her study more challenging. However, when she narrowed it down and focused on a specific issue, everything became more transparent and more manageable. She said:

“Importante gyud nga klaro ang problema sa imong research study. Sa pagsugod nako, ang topic sa akong study kay broad, unya naka feel ko og kalibog kay daghan kaayong information nga kinahanglan atimanon. Nakapalisod gyud ni sa akong pagtuon. Pero, gikubos nako ni og nag focus sa specific issue, mas naklaro og mas dali imanage.” (IDI-07)

(It's really important to have a clear research problem. When I started, my topic was too broad, and I felt lost because there was too much information to handle. It made my study more complicated. But when I narrowed it down and focused on a specific issue, everything became clearer and easier to manage.)

Athena (pseudonym) emphasized the importance of careful planning in data collection and starting the research process early. Initially, she thought it would be easy, but she encountered challenges as some participants were hesitant to respond, while others refused to participate. To overcome this, she took the time to build trust and clearly explained how their responses would contribute to her research, ensuring a more effective data-gathering process. She said:

“Ang pagkuha og data kay need planohan og tarong, ug mas maayo kung magsugod og sayu sa imong research. Abi nako og sayon ra pero naa diay uban participants nga dili mo sugot dayun unya naay uban

pud nga dili mo participate. Need nako nga maghatag og panahon aron makuha ilang pagsalig nako ug ipasabot pag-ayo kung giunsa nga ang ilang mga tubag makatabang sa akong research.” (FGD-02)

(Data collection should be planned well and it is best to start your research study as early as possible. I thought it would be easy, but some participants were hesitant to answer, and others chose not to participate. I had to take the time to gain their trust and clearly explain how their responses would contribute to my research.)

Rhea (pseudonym) highlighted the importance of patience in conducting action research, acknowledging that the process was not easy. She had to experiment with different strategies and wait to see if they were effective. However, she realized that even small changes could lead to significant improvements as long as she remained persistent and committed to the research. She said:

“Ang pasensya kay importante jud sya sa paghimo og action research kay dili ni sayon buhaton. Kinahanglan nako sulayan ang lain-laing mga pamaagi og maghulat aron makita kung effective ba jud sila. Bisan ang gagmay nga kausaban maglead sya og dagko nga improvement kung magpadayon lang jud ko.” (FGD-05)

(Patience is really important in conducting action research because it is not easy to do. I had to try different strategies and wait to see if they actually worked. Even small changes can lead to big improvements if I keep going.)

Embrace Personal Growth and Collaboration in Research

The study's results examine how education graduates engage in personal growth and collaboration throughout the action research process. It examines how independent work, collaborative learning, effective communication, and patience contribute to their research journey. By analyzing these experiences, the study provides insights into the transformative impact of research on personal and professional development, highlighting the importance of teamwork, resilience, and adaptability in conducting meaningful educational research.

Zeus (pseudonym) emphasized that conducting research taught him the value of working independently. While his adviser provided guidance, he understood that the responsibility of completing the study ultimately rested with him. This experience strengthened his sense of accountability and perseverance. He said:

“Sa akong pag research, nakabalo ko mo trabaho independently. Actually, naa man gyud tay adviser nga mo guide, but at the end of the day, responsibilidad gihapon nako nga mahoman ang akong research study.” (IDI-01)

(During my research, I learned how to work independently. My adviser was there to guide me, but at the end of the day, it was my responsibility to finish my study.)

Hera (pseudonym) realized that while research often feels like an individual task, collaboration plays a crucial role in success. Engaging with her classmates and receiving feedback from her adviser allowed her to refine her study. She recognized the importance of listening to different perspectives and learning from others to enhance her research. She said:

“Ang research kay usa ka butang nga need buhaton nga mag-inusara lang ka, pero na learn nako nga naa jud kalahian if makipag collaborate ka, so kauban akong mga classmates nakatabang ni nako sa pagimprove sa akong pagstudy. Nakita nako kung unsa ka valuable kung maminaw ka sa lain-laing mga perspectives ug learnings gikan sa uban.” (IDI-02)

(Research was something you had to do alone, but I learned that collaboration makes a huge difference. Working with my classmates and getting feedback from my adviser helped me improve my study. I saw how valuable it is to listen to different perspectives and learn from others.)

Aphrodite (pseudonym) learned the importance of clearly articulating her research to others. Engaging with her participants helped her develop confidence in communicating her ideas effectively, ensuring that her study was understood and appreciated. She said:

“Kinahanglan nako nga makatuon sa pagpasabot sa akong research in a way nga masabtan sa ubang tao. Kung nagstorya man ko sa akong mga participants, mas nagsalig ko sa akong kaugalingon og mas ni taas akong kumpiyansa sa pagshare sa akong mga ideas.” (FGD-03)

(I had to learn how to explain my research in a way that made sense to other people. Whether it was talking to my participants, I became more confident in how I communicated my ideas.)

Rhea (pseudonym) realized that patience was essential throughout the research process. There were moments when she felt stuck, but she reminded herself that progress takes time. She learned to appreciate even the smallest steps, knowing that each one brought her closer to completing her study. She said:

“Kani nga proseso nagtudlo nako about patience. Usahay, mafeel nako nga mura ug walay padulngan akong research. I remind myself nga ang proseso kay kailangan pud ug panahon, and every step, bisan pag gamay, it matters.” (FGD-05)

(This process taught me a lot about patience. Sometimes I felt like my research was not going anywhere. And also, I always think that progress takes time, and every step, even the small ones, mattered.)

View the Impact Action Research Can Offer

The study's results examine the transformative impact of action research on education graduates, emphasizing how the research process reshapes their perspectives on teaching and learning. It explores how engaging in action research enhances their adaptability, problem-solving skills, and commitment to continuous improvement in education. By analyzing their experiences, the study offers insights into how action research enables educators to become proactive change agents, promoting meaningful and sustainable improvements in teaching practices.

Hades (pseudonym) believed that only seasoned educators could influence the field of education. However, after publishing his research, he realized that even as a new teacher, his insights and findings had the potential to create meaningful change and contribute to educational improvement. He said:

“Sa una, na sulod sa akong huna-huna nga kadtong lang naka experience nga teachers ang makahatag og kontribusyon para ma improve ang edukasyon. Kadtong pagkahoman sa pagpublish sa akong action research, nasabtan nako nga bisan og bag-o ang teacher, ang akong mga panan-aw og nadiscover kay makahatag og kausaban.” (IDI-03)

(I used to think that only experienced educators could contribute to improving education. But after publishing my research, I realized that even as a new teacher, my insights and findings could help make a difference.)

Demeter (pseudonym) realized that education is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Through her research, she observed how students respond differently to teaching methods, which made her more open to adapting her strategies to meet their individual needs better. He said:

“Nakat-unan nako nga ang edukasyon dili parehas tanan. Pinaagi sa akong research, nakita nako ang lain-lain nga reaksyon sa mga estudyante tungod sa akong teaching method, og mas nangandam ko sa akong pamaagi aron akong strategies kay mag fit sa ilang needs.” (IDI-05)

(I learned that education is not one-size-fits-all. Through my research, I saw how students respond differently to teaching methods, and I became more open to adapting my strategies to fit their needs.)

Gaea (pseudonym) transformed her perspective on educational challenges. Instead of merely complaining about problems, she learned to adapt, go with the flow, and focus on finding meaningful solutions. She said:

“Kini nga experience nakapa bag-o sa kung unsa akong pagtan-aw sa edukasyon. Imbes nga magsigeg kog reklamo sa mga problema, ni go with the flow ra jud ko unya magfocus lna jud og pangitag solusyon.” (IDI-07)

(This experience changed how I see challenges in education. Instead of just complaining about problems, I try to go with the flow and focus on finding solutions.)

Rhea (pseudonym) realized that the publication process required patience and persistence. She once believed that teaching improvements happened instantly, but she now understands that meaningful change takes time, effort, and continuous research. She said:

"Ang publication process kay nagtudlo nako og patience and perseverance. Akong huna-huna nga makita dayun ang improvements kung magtudlo ka, pero kabalo nakasabot nako." (FGD-05)

(The publication process taught me patience and persistence. I used to think that teaching improvements happened instantly, but I now understand that meaningful change takes time, effort, and continuous research.)

The Importance of Research in the Delivery of Effective Teaching

The study's results examine the crucial role of research in enhancing effective teaching practices. It explores how education graduates recognize the importance of understanding students' diverse learning needs, building strong teacher-student relationships, and adapting instructional strategies based on research findings. By emphasizing the impact of research-driven teaching, the study underscores how

educators can refine their methods to create more engaging, student-centered learning environments that cultivate academic success.

Zeus (pseudonym) discovered that teaching goes beyond simply delivering lessons; it is about understanding how students learn. Recognizing that each student has a unique learning ability, he learned to be more patient and flexible in his teaching methods to meet their needs better. He said:

“Isa sa mga lessons nga akong natun-an kay ang pagtudlo dili lang kay paghatag og lessons, kundi sab ang pagsabot kung giunsa pagkat-on sa mga students. Ang matag estudyante kay naay lain-laing abilidad sa pagkatuon, pero kinahanglan nga mas mapailob ug mas flexible ko sa akong teaching methods aron matubag ang ilang mga needs.” (IDI-01)

(One of the lessons I learned is that teaching is not just about delivering lessons, it is about understanding how students learn. Each student has a different learning ability, so I need to be more patient and flexible in my teaching methods to meet their needs.)

Hera (pseudonym) recognized that teaching is not just about delivering content, but also about fostering meaningful relationships in the classroom. She found that showing understanding and empathy toward her students made a significant difference in their learning experience. She said:

“Ang pagtudlo dili lang ni sya sa pagprovide og lessons, it is also about building relationships in the classroom. Ang pagpakita og pagsabot sa akong mga estudyante kay makahatag sya og dako nga changes sa ilang experience sa pagkabalo.” (IDI-02)

(Teaching is not just about delivering content, it is also about building relationships in the classroom. Showing understanding toward my students makes a big difference in their learning experience.)

Poseidon (pseudonym) recognized that being a good teacher means being approachable. When students feel comfortable asking questions and sharing their struggles, it creates a supportive learning environment that enhances their learning experience. He said:

“Ang nindot og personality nga teacher kay dali maduolan. Kung ang mga estudyante komportable sa pagpangutana ug pagexpress sa ilang mga kalisod, mas mahimong effective ang ilang makat-onan.” (IDI-04)

(Being a good teacher means being approachable. When students feel comfortable asking questions and expressing their struggles, it makes learning more effective.)

Athena (pseudonym) realized that building strong relationships with students enabled her to understand their individual learning needs better. She recognized that flexibility in teaching is essential, as rigid methods can make it challenging to keep students engaged. By adjusting her strategies, she was able to support her students better and enhance their learning experience. She said:

“Ang pagbuild og lig-on nga relasyon sa mga students nakatabang sa ako, mas masabtan nako ang ilang tagsa-tagsa nga kailangan sa pagtuon. Kung ang teacher dili flexible, maglisod jud og kuha sa interes sa mga students sa klase. Mao na nga importante ang strategies sa mga pamaagi sa pagtudlo aron mas masuportahan ang mga estudyante ug mas effective ang ilang pagkat-on.” (FGD-02)

(Building strong relationships with students helped me understand their individual learning needs better. If a teacher is not flexible, it can be difficult to keep students engaged in the lesson. That is why it is important to adjust teaching strategies to better support students and make learning more effective.)

Aphrodite (pseudonym) discovered that trust and respect between teachers and students play a vital role in creating a productive learning environment. She noticed that when students felt their opinions were valued, they became more confident in expressing their thoughts. Previously, many of her students had hesitated to participate in class, making it a challenge for her to conduct her lessons effectively. She said:

“Ang pagsalig og pagrespeto sa teacher og students kay mabuhat og productive learning environment. Kay ang mga students kung maka feel nga ang ilang opinion nag matter, ma confident sila mo express sa ilang mga thoughts.” (FGD-03)

(Trust and respect between teachers and students create a more productive learning environment. When students feel that their opinions matter, they become more confident in expressing their thoughts. Before, most of my students never participated in class, which was one of the challenges I faced in conducting my lessons.)

The discussion of each set of findings is presented in this section. The study specifically focused on the experiences of education graduates in action research publication, the challenges they encountered, and the strategies they employed to navigate the publication process.

Experiences of Education Graduates in the Pioneering Cohort of Action Research Publication

The first research question of the study examined the lived experiences of education graduates who were part of the pioneering cohort, as reported in an action research publication. To get an answer to this question, focus group discussion and in-depth interviews was conducted among the research participants and informants. Their responses were transcribed, translated, and then analyzed to identify the essential themes required for the study. After the analysis, four (4) primary themes have emerged: (1) shifting perspectives on action research; (2) battling with academic and personal responsibilities; (3) and facing internal and external pressure.

The theme of shifting perspectives on action research emerged prominently from the narratives of education graduates. Initially, many graduates viewed action research as merely a course requirement or an administrative obligation. However, as they engaged more deeply in the research process, they began to recognize its transformative potential in enhancing teaching practices and fostering professional growth.

This shift aligns with Mezirow's (2009) Transformative Learning Theory, which suggests that critical reflection and engagement lead to profound changes in an individual's perspectives and professional identity. Through this process, education graduates not only develop deeper self-awareness but also reshape their understanding of their roles as researchers and educators, leading to lasting growth and transformation.

The said theme aligns with Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2020), who stated that a shift in perception occurs as educators transition from viewing research as an academic exercise to embracing it as a meaningful tool for inquiry and classroom improvement. This transformation is particularly evident in the pioneering cohort of action research publications, where graduates initially struggled with research methodologies but eventually gained confidence in their ability to contribute to educational knowledge.

Furthermore, this aligns with the study by Zeichner and Noffke (2021), which states that educators engaging in action research often experience a deeper connection to their professional practice, as the process encourages critical self-reflection and evidence-based decision-making. The narratives from education graduates reflected this shift, with many expressing initial resistance or uncertainty, only to later find fulfillment in the impact of their research on student learning and educational policies.

Moreover, in agreement with Kemmis et al. (2022), action research emphasized a cycle of continuous learning, wherein educators not only generate knowledge but also refine their teaching practices through iterative reflection and experimentation. The experiences of the pioneering cohort highlight this dynamic process, emphasizing how engagement in research publication leads to increased agency, confidence, and a stronger professional identity.

The theme of battling with academic and personal responsibilities is a significant challenge faced by education graduates engaged in action research publication. The rigorous demands of conducting research, writing manuscripts, and navigating the publication process often coincide with their professional responsibilities and personal commitments.

This struggle aligns with the Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988), which posits that individuals face difficulties when they are overwhelmed with excessive cognitive demands. According to Leisyte and Westerheijden (2020), balancing academic and professional responsibilities often leads to stress and burnout, especially for novice researchers who must simultaneously fulfill teaching duties.

As noted by Smith and Flores (2021), early-career researchers often experience pressure to meet publication standards while adapting to the expectations of the academic community. Many education graduates find it challenging to allocate time for research while managing classroom teaching, administrative tasks, and personal obligations. This strain can lead to mental and emotional exhaustion, which in turn can hinder productivity and motivation.

Moreover, research by Kamler and Thomson (2022) highlights the emotional toll of academic writing, emphasizing that novice researchers often experience self-doubt and anxiety regarding the quality and acceptance of their work. The process of submitting to journals, receiving critical feedback, and revising manuscripts can be daunting, further intensifying the burden on education graduates.

In line with the findings of Jones and Hardt (2023), personal challenges such as financial constraints, family responsibilities, and lack of institutional support contribute to the difficulties experienced in research publication. Without adequate mentorship and resources, many education graduates struggle to sustain their research efforts, leading to delays or discontinuation of their publication journey.

The narratives of education graduates in action research publications illustrate the delicate balance between academic rigor, personal obligations, and professional responsibilities. Despite these challenges, resilience and institutional support play crucial roles in overcoming these burdens, allowing graduates to contribute valuable insights to the field of education.

The theme of facing internal and external pressure reflects the psychological and emotional challenges that researchers face when navigating new academic territories. This struggle aligns with existing literature on academic stress, self-doubt, and the pressures stemming from both personal insecurities and external expectations.

According to Holloway and Todres (2022), qualitative researchers, particularly those adopting non-traditional approaches, often struggle with self-doubt regarding the validity and acceptance of their work. The challenge of disseminating findings in innovative ways, such as action research, adds to the pressure of ensuring academic rigor and legitimacy. This resonates with the experiences of pioneering action researchers who may feel uncertain about how their work will be perceived within the academic community.

Moreover, Pascoe et al. (2021) highlight that academic stress and anxiety are significant factors affecting students' confidence, particularly those engaging in rigorous or unfamiliar research processes. The fear of making mistakes, combined with the responsibility of producing high-quality research, often leads to self-doubt and a decline in motivation. This is especially true for pioneers in action research, who lack precedents to follow and must navigate academic expectations independently.

Additionally, Duvnjak et al. (2022) discuss how researchers in emerging fields often struggle with resource limitations, unclear

methodological guidelines, and the pressure to justify their contributions. These challenges are central to action researchers who may feel isolated in their work, further intensifying their self-doubt.

Coping Strategies of Education Graduates as a Pioneering Cohort in Action Research Publication

The second research question of the study explored the coping strategies of education graduates who were part of the pioneering cohort in action research publication. To get an answer to this question, focus group discussion and in-depth interviews was conducted among the research participants and informants. Their responses were transcribed, translated, and then analyzed to identify the essential themes required for the study. After the analysis, four (4) primary themes have emerged: (1) doing stress management techniques; (2) drawing strength from an external support system; (3) taking personal aspiration and students' learning as motivation; and (4) seeing setbacks as a learning opportunity.

Doing stress management techniques is a widely recognized strategy for managing stress and maintaining well-being in various professional and academic settings. Whether in research, education, or other demanding fields, individuals often experience high levels of pressure due to deadlines, workload, and performance expectations. To cope, many turn to extracurricular activities such as physical exercise, creative hobbies, mindfulness practices, and social interactions. These activities serve as effective outlets for reducing stress, enhancing focus, and promoting overall mental health.

The balance between academic workload and personal well-being is crucial, as Kulikowski et al. (2021) found in their study on early-career researchers. Their research indicates that individuals who dedicate time to relaxation and mindfulness activities are more likely to sustain long-term productivity. This aligns with the experiences of education graduates in action research, where many participants reported that participating in recreational activities, such as sports or creative hobbies, helped them regain focus and motivation for their research work.

Additionally, Darabi et al. (2022) highlight that stress management techniques, including structured breaks, meditation, and engaging in non-academic interests, contribute to increased well-being among graduate students. Their findings suggest that incorporating stress-relief activities into daily routines not only mitigates exhaustion but also enhances cognitive functioning, enabling students to approach their research with renewed energy and clarity.

Beyond personal activities, social engagement also plays a pivotal role in easing academic pressure. McAlpine and Amundsen (2020) stress that informal academic discussions, peer mentoring, and participation in professional networks significantly reduce stress levels. Education graduates involved in action research publication often relied on support from their peers and mentors, which provided emotional reassurance and practical guidance in navigating the complexities of academic writing and publication.

Drawing strength from an external support system is essential for education graduates navigating the challenges of publishing action research. According to Witherup and Verrecchia (2019), strong support networks contribute to students' academic perseverance by providing emotional encouragement and intellectual guidance. The presence of mentors who foster a sense of confidence and direction enables graduates to overcome obstacles, refine their research, and persist in the scholarly writing process. Family members also play a crucial role in sustaining motivation by offering reassurance and a sense of belonging, which helps students maintain their commitment to research endeavors.

In line with Ayawan et al. (2022), mentor support fosters a structured learning environment where education graduates receive personalized feedback and motivation. These interactions contribute to their professional development and enhance their ability to navigate the complexities of research publication. Likewise, familial encouragement acts as an emotional anchor, reinforcing students' resilience during moments of self-doubt and academic stress. The continuous reinforcement from both mentors and family members nurtures a strong foundation for overcoming research-related pressures.

Furthermore, Asuncion (2019) highlights the role of mentor-mentee relationships in facilitating academic success. Education graduates who actively engage with mentors gain not only technical research skills but also the confidence to tackle publication challenges. This mentorship, combined with family support, strengthens their capacity to persevere in action research, demonstrating the vital role of social connections in academic achievement.

Taking personal aspiration and students' learning as motivation is a crucial coping strategy for education graduates who are part of the pioneering cohort, as highlighted in an action research publication. This theme highlights how a strong sense of purpose, such as the desire to make a meaningful impact on student learning and to grow professionally, drives researchers to persist through the demanding stages of the research process. The rigorous process of action research requires continuous refinement of methodologies, data collection, and revision of findings, making perseverance a key factor in achieving research success.

According to Villegas et al. (2022), persistence in academic research is developed through resilience and motivation, enabling students to persist despite encountering difficulties such as time constraints, research complexities, and the pressure to produce quality publications. The experiences of education graduates resonate with this perspective, as they demonstrate perseverance by continuously improving their research, addressing feedback, and staying committed to their academic goals.

Furthermore, in consonance with Sadiki and Steyn (2020), who explored the significance of self-regulated learning and perseverance

in research productivity, education graduates develop strategies such as goal setting, seeking mentorship, and utilizing time management techniques to navigate the challenges of action research. By maintaining a structured approach and sustaining their determination, they enhance their ability to cope with research pressures and remain focused on completing their studies successfully. The persistence required in conducting action research is not only an academic necessity but also a professional skill that strengthens one's capacity for lifelong learning.

Moreover, as Nicolaescu (2021) highlighted in the context of academic resilience, perseverance plays a fundamental role in overcoming setbacks in research-intensive environments. Education graduates engaging in action research often encounter moments of frustration and exhaustion. Yet, their ability to push forward, leveraging peer support, mentor guidance, and problem-solving skills, allows them to complete their scholarly work with confidence. The theme of utilizing perseverance in conducting action research underscores the vital role of resilience in academic achievement, highlighting how education graduates navigate the challenges of research publication through dedication, adaptability, and an unwavering commitment to contributing to educational knowledge.

Seeing setbacks as a learning opportunity is a crucial coping strategy for education graduates navigating the complexities of publishing action research. The iterative nature of research presents various challenges, including difficulties in data collection, manuscript revisions, and academic scrutiny.

According to Agasisti et al. (2018), academic resilience plays a key role in helping students adapt to challenges by fostering persistence and perseverance in scholarly endeavors. This aligns with the experiences of education graduates who, despite encountering setbacks such as time constraints, feedback revisions, and methodological adjustments, embrace these difficulties as part of the learning process.

Furthermore, in consonance with Gleeson et al. (2023), who explored research engagement among educators, seeing obstacles as learning opportunities fosters adaptability and resilience. Education graduates engaged in action research often refine their problem-solving skills, develop critical thinking, and adjust their research methodologies in response to constructive feedback. Rather than being discouraged by challenges, they utilize setbacks as stepping stones to enhance their research quality and academic development.

Moreover, the concept of academic resilience, as discussed by Eriksen (2022), emphasizes that individuals who perceive challenges as integral to learning demonstrate higher perseverance and improved academic outcomes. Education graduates involved in action research publication resonate with this notion, as they continually adapt to research demands, seek mentorship, and implement innovative approaches to overcome research-related hurdles. By embracing a mindset that views obstacles as opportunities for improvement, they enhance their ability to contribute meaningful insights to educational research.

Insights Gained by Education Graduates from Participating in an Action Research Publication

The third research question of the study explored the insights of education graduates regarding their participation in action research publication. To get an answer to this question, focus group discussion and in-depth interviews was conducted among the research participants and informants. Their responses were transcribed, translated, and then analyzed to identify the essential themes required for the study. After the analysis, four (4) primary themes have emerged: (1) consider the essential factors for successful action research; (2) embrace personal growth and collaboration in research; (3) view the impact action research can offer; and (4) the importance of research in the delivery of effective teaching.

The key insight from the experiences of education graduates in the action research publication is the consideration of essential factors for successful research. Action research requires continuous engagement in research training, mentorship, and methodological refinement. Education graduates recognize that research workshops and academic discussions play a critical role in enhancing their research competencies, allowing them to improve their writing, analysis, and interpretation skills. Their participation in research-focused seminars provides opportunities to learn best practices, address research challenges, and strengthen their scholarly contributions.

This aligns with the study of Smith et al. (2020), which highlights that participation in research training and professional development programs significantly improves the research capabilities of graduate students. The study revealed that structured research programs enhance academic writing, methodological precision, and analytical skills, equipping students with the necessary tools to produce high-quality research publications.

Similarly, the findings of Garcia and Bennett (2021) support the notion that research mentorship and collaborative learning nurture a deeper understanding of research processes and methodologies. Their study emphasizes that working with experienced researchers and engaging in scholarly discussions enables education graduates to refine their research frameworks and adapt to the evolving demands of academic research.

Furthermore, the study of Chen and Lee (2022) discusses how participation in research conferences and academic discourse strengthens a researcher's ability to engage critically with their field of study. Their research indicates that education graduates who actively participate in research events gain confidence in presenting their findings, responding to academic critiques, and developing a professional research identity.

The second theme that emerged in this study emphasizes that embracing personal growth and collaboration in research significantly

contributes to the professional development of education graduates, strengthening their ability to conduct meaningful action research. Education graduates recognize that engaging in collaborative research fosters critical thinking, enhances their methodological expertise, and prepares them for future academic and professional pursuits. Their participation in research communities enables them to refine their analytical skills, share knowledge with peers, and develop confidence in scholarly writing and presentation.

This aligns with the study of Johnson and Martinez (2021), which highlighted the importance of research collaboration in developing graduate students' academic and professional competencies. Their study revealed that engaging in collaborative research enhances researchers' problem-solving abilities and fosters a culture of continuous learning and intellectual curiosity.

Furthermore, according to Lee et al. (2023), research mentorship plays a vital role in helping graduate students navigate the complexities of academic publishing. Their study emphasized that mentorship provides students with essential guidance on research design, data analysis, and manuscript development, ultimately increasing their chances of successfully publishing their work.

Additionally, the findings of Carter and Nguyen (2020) support the notion that professional development programs and academic research opportunities significantly improve graduate students' research capabilities. Their study found that students who actively participate in research projects demonstrate higher levels of academic engagement, resilience, and motivation, resulting in greater success in scholarly publications.

The third theme that emerged from the findings emphasizes the significance of recognizing the impact that action research can offer in fostering academic growth and professional development among education graduates. Engaging in action research enables graduates to develop a deeper understanding of educational challenges, refine their instructional methodologies, and contribute to the body of knowledge in their respective fields. The ability to document and analyze real-world educational issues enhances their research capabilities and strengthens their professional expertise.

This finding aligns with the research conducted by Thompson and Richards (2020), which highlights the importance of action research in promoting reflective practice and driving continuous improvement in education. Their study revealed that through systematic inquiry, education graduates gain critical insights into pedagogical effectiveness, allowing them to implement evidence-based interventions that improve student learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the study of Garcia et al. (2023) highlighted that action research not only enhances educators' problem-solving skills but also encourages collaboration within academic communities. Their research demonstrated that educators engaged in action research contribute to the development of innovative teaching strategies, leading to improved classroom practices and a more comprehensive understanding of educational dynamics.

In connection, Lee and Paterson (2021) emphasized that action research serves as a tool for professional empowerment, enabling education graduates to take an active role in shaping educational policies and instructional approaches. Their study revealed that educators who actively engage in research are more likely to adopt a growth mindset, embrace lifelong learning, and influence positive change in their academic and professional environments.

The fourth theme that emerged from the findings highlights the importance of research in delivering effective teaching. The participants emphasized that conducting action research enables them to refine instructional strategies, improve student engagement, and contribute to the broader academic community. They expressed that their institutions could further support their growth by integrating research opportunities within the curriculum, fostering a culture of inquiry-based teaching and learning.

This finding aligns with the study by Schuck et al. (2021), which emphasized that action research serves as a powerful tool for educators to critically evaluate their practices, implement data-driven improvements, and develop professionally. Their research highlights that education graduates who engage in action research are better equipped to address classroom challenges, adapt to diverse learning environments, and contribute to the body of educational knowledge.

Additionally, Toom et al. (2020) underscored the role of teacher-researchers in bridging the gap between theory and practice. Their study found that educators who actively engage in research cultivate reflective teaching practices, enhance their problem-solving abilities, and become more confident in implementing innovative pedagogies. This perspective aligns with the narratives of education graduates who recognize the value of conducting research in refining their teaching methodologies and ensuring effective student learning outcomes.

Furthermore, Kennedy and Laurillard (2019) highlighted that research-informed teaching leads to sustained professional growth among educators. Their study demonstrated that action research not only improves instructional effectiveness but also strengthens educators' ability to contribute to institutional development and policy-making. Education graduates who have participated in action research publication express a deeper understanding of their subject matter, improved research competencies, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Conclusions

The concluding remarks of this study encapsulate the essential insights drawn from the experiences, coping strategies, and reflections

of education graduates as a pioneering cohort in an action research publication. The narratives and findings highlight the transformative nature of engaging in action research and emphasize its significance in shaping the professional growth and scholarly development of future educators.

One of the key takeaways from this study is the importance of recognizing the diverse experiences of education graduates in their journey, as presented in an action research publication. These experiences, ranging from initial challenges to moments of realization and achievement, contribute to shaping their identity as reflective practitioners and researchers. Acknowledging these experiences enables the development of research support systems that cater to diverse needs, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and empowering research culture.

Furthermore, the study underscores the resilience and adaptability demonstrated by education graduates in navigating the complexities of action research publication. Their coping mechanisms, whether through collaborative learning, mentorship, or self-directed problem-solving, illustrate a proactive approach to overcoming obstacles and thriving in academic research. Understanding and nurturing these coping strategies can help institutions create a more supportive research environment that encourages continuous scholarly engagement.

Moreover, the insights gained from this study provide valuable guidance for refining action research methodologies and strengthening institutional research frameworks. The recognition of research as a tool for professional development, the integration of mentorship and peer support, and the alignment of research practices with real-world educational challenges are crucial considerations for enhancing research engagement among education graduates. These insights also underscore the need for sustained efforts in promoting research literacy, methodological rigor, and scholarly collaboration in teacher education programs.

In conclusion, the findings of this study reaffirm the dynamic and evolving nature of action research in education. By valuing the diverse experiences of education graduates, fostering resilience, and leveraging key insights, educational institutions and stakeholders can play a significant role in equipping future educators with the research competencies needed to contribute meaningfully to the field. The ongoing pursuit of excellence in research publication will not only advance professional practice but also enhance the overall impact of action research in shaping educational innovations and reforms.

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