

Unveiling the In-Depth Narratives of Higher Education Graduates in Business Education

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Abstract

Tertiary education is important in equipping individuals to be ready in facing the competitive international job market. This study explored the in-depth narratives of higher education in business education among business graduates. This study utilized a qualitative approach using an appreciative inquiry. This study took place in one of the higher education institutions in Misamis Occidental, Philippines. There were 14 participants who were chosen through purposive sampling technique among BSBA alumni who graduated from 2019 to 2024. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, and thematic analysis revealed five key themes: harnessing practical skills, critical thinking, and entrepreneurial mindsets from BSBA education; envisioning growth, community leadership, enterprise, and impact; purpose-driven persistence: aligning personal values with professional growth; empowering success through critical thinking, collaboration, time management, and integrity; and, continuous growth and innovation in advancing the business landscape. The findings highlight the role of the BSBA program in fostering adaptable, resourceful, and ethical leaders. Thus, a quantitative approach is recommended to further explore the impact of these activities to the specific industries as well as the role of entrepreneurial education and mentorship programs in shaping future business leaders.

Keywords: Critical Thinking, Community Leadership, Continuous Growth, Personal Values, Professional Growth

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education is crucial in equipping individuals for the challenges of a competitive international job market (Arnhold & Bassett, 2021). Globally, business education is acknowledged as a vital route to jobs, entrepreneurship, and leadership across diverse sectors (Belchior-Rocha et al., 2022). As the world advances economically and technologically, different universities concentrate on aligning their curricula to meet real-world demands, ensuring the success and adaptability of their graduates (Catacutan et al., 2023). In advanced nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom, research has emphasized the influence of business degree programs on the career advancement of graduates (Petrychenko et al., 2023). It indicated that alumni from business disciplines frequently obtain jobs within six months and are more inclined to assume leadership positions in their organizations (Aithal & Maiya, 2023).

The Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) is one of the esteemed programs worldwide for training graduates to be capable in diverse business operations (Taneja, 2021). The key business fields like marketing, management, finance, operations, and entrepreneurship provide a clear overview of the

business operations (Jaboob et al., 2024). In advanced nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, BSBA programs consistently emphasize improving practical skills, solving real-world issues, and developing soft skills such as leadership and communication (Saonoy & Banay, 2024). Graduates holding business degrees frequently secure relevant jobs shortly after graduation and rapidly attain leadership or entrepreneurial positions (Killingberg et al., 2022).

The significance of business education is clearly apparent throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Nations such as Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea are actively aligning their business programs with global standards to satisfy both domestic and international job market needs (Taneja, 2021). These nations prioritize a holistic approach to education, integrating technical skills with emotional intelligence, ethical principles, and innovation (Aithal & Aithal, 2023). With globalization furthering international business connections, universities in this area acknowledge the demand for graduates who possess not just expertise but also flexibility and cultural sensitivity (Karimova et al., 2024).

The pursuit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) drives a global initiative to utilize education as a force for beneficial transformation (Saxena et al., 2021). The pursuit of SDG 4 encourages cooperation among governments, universities, and industry stakeholders to improve curricula, digital access, and skills that support employment, entrepreneurship, and innovation (Omotosho et al., 2023). The implementation of outcome-oriented learning, internship collaborations, service-learning initiatives, and entrepreneurship incubators allow universities worldwide to adopt an Outcome-Based Education framework that emphasizes the practical significance of a BSBA degree (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021). In this vein, graduate's career opportunities are enhanced while fostering sustainable economic growth, social fairness, and strong communities (Fukuda-Parr, 2023).

Furthermore, the main objectives of SDG 4 are to guarantee that higher education provides students with the necessary skills for employment, respectable jobs, and entrepreneurial endeavors (Leal Filho et al., 2024). The global quest to comprehend and enhance the practical significance of higher education help in fostering productive, ethical, and socially accountable citizens through the success narratives of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) graduates (Hallsago & Taja-on, 2023). In nations such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, there is a strong push for SDG 4 through the improvement of business programs aimed at promoting hands-on learning, leadership skills, and industry-relevant training (Aggarwal & Mishra, 2024). They include service learning, internships, cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary projects, and entrepreneurship incubation programs to prepare students not only for employment but also for innovation, sustainability, and leadership roles in society (Ravichandran & Dixit, 2024).

In the Asian countries like Singapore, South Korea, and Malaysia, the quality of business education is strengthened by developing curricula that meet global standards, incorporating soft skills, and promoting ethical leadership (Lee & Thien, 2021). Their comprehensive approach in education streamlined national competitiveness and sustainable growth. In the Philippines, higher education institutions (HEIs) have progressively adopted initiatives to fulfill national objectives and international obligations under the SDGs (Ponce & Escuadra, 2024). The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), via memoranda like CMO No. 17, s. 2017, it requires business schools to adopt Outcome-Based Education (OBE) models that guarantee students gain both theoretical knowledge as well as critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and entrepreneurial skills (Pepito, 2019). In response, universities have implemented internship programs, case-based learning, community initiatives, and innovation competitions as teaching methods that enhance the job readiness and societal impact of BSBA graduates (Rivera et al., 2019).

Accordingly, Filipino BSBA graduates are becoming more competitive globally (David & Aquino, 2023). They are valued not only for their academic knowledge but also for their adaptability, creativity, and strong interpersonal skills (Liwanag & Lunarb, 2023). Filipino graduates often demonstrate a unique ability to thrive in multicultural environments and display resilience in overcoming economic and social challenges (Briones et al., 2021). Many have found opportunities in fields such as digital marketing, human resources, finance, and start-up entrepreneurship both locally and abroad (Aguilar & Torres, 2023).

Most of the research conducted in the Philippine context still focuses primarily on quantitative aspects, such as employment rates, income brackets, and industry placements. Tracer studies and institutional reports, while important, tend to reduce graduate success to numbers and percentages (Ponce & Escudra, 2024). These studies often overlook the deeper narratives that encompass the actual stories of transformation, perseverance, and breakthrough that many BSBA graduates live through after completing their degrees.

Although there is growing recognition of the value of alumni narratives in evaluating the true effectiveness of higher education (Sanchez et al., 2024), there remains a significant literature gap. Few studies in the Philippines have captured the success stories of BSBA alumni using a narrative or qualitative approach. Most available data provided only a surface-level view of graduate outcomes, without examining how academic preparation, institutional support, and personal values interact to shape long-term success.

The qualitative dimension of graduate success offers a more holistic perspective on how education shapes not only professional achievements but also personal growth and community impact.

Alumni stories reveal how graduates apply what they have learned, adapt to change, and contribute to both economic and societal development. By capturing these narratives, the study aimed to uncover the lived realities and reflections of graduates. This study sought to explore the inspiring stories of BSBA alumni from 2019 to 2024. By doing so, it offers valuable insights into how these individuals have turned their education into real-world impact and how their journeys reflect the evolving role of business education in the modern world. The college instructors, who also served as the alumni coordinators for this study, were prompted to conduct this research based on their dual role as educators and mentors to BSBA graduates. They have witnessed firsthand how the graduates of the Business Administration program have leveraged their education in dealing both personal and professional challenges. These instructors, deeply involved in the alumni network, observed that while traditional research often highlights statistical data like employment rates and income brackets, it failed to capture the individual stories of perseverance, growth, and societal contributions made by the graduates.

Driven by a desire to give a voice to these alumni narratives, the instructors conducted this study to explore how BSBA alumni from 2019 to 2024 have translated their academic experiences into real-world impact. Through capturing these personal stories, the research aimed to uncover how these graduates applied their knowledge, adapted to change, and contributed to economic and societal development. Thus, the study, provided valuable insights into the evolving role of business education and its transformative power, offering actionable recommendations for academic institutions, educators, and policymakers on how to better support meaningful graduate outcomes that go beyond mere statistics.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on two theories namely: the Human Capital Theory by Becker (1964) and Hard Luck Theory by Merton (1938).

The Human Capital theory posits that investments in education and training enhance an individual's productivity and economic value. Within this framework, higher education is viewed as a strategic investment in human potential, contributing to the individual career success and national economic development. Human capital consists of knowledge, skills, health, and values acquired through education and experience that enhance a person's productivity (Becker, 1964). Schultz (1961) initially introduced the concept, asserting that education is the most crucial investment in human capital, as it increases both individual earnings and societal progress. These foundational views emphasized that returns on educational investment are realized through increased job opportunities, higher wages, and better socio-economic outcomes that transforms the role of education.

In the context of this study, Human Capital Theory provides a suitable lens to explore the success stories of BSBA alumni. The academic training, internships, research outputs, and leadership experiences gained during the BSBA program are forms of human capital investment. Their post-graduation achievements including employment, promotions, entrepreneurial ventures, and contributions to society are viewed as outcomes of these investments. This theory justifies the qualitative exploration of how academic preparation translates into real-world accomplishments, validating education as a key to professional success and societal impact.

Human Capital Theory continues to be extensively applied in contemporary research assessing the outcomes of higher education, particularly in measuring the return on investment through graduate success and employment. The global returns to investment in education assert that tertiary education yields the highest private returns, averaging 17% per year (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2018). Accordingly, graduates of business, economics, and law programs tend to experience significantly higher employability and income levels, particularly in emerging economies, due to the transferable and in-demand nature of their skillsets.

In the Southeast Asian context, Human Capital Theory aid in evaluating the alignment of university programs with labor market needs in Malaysia and Singapore (Tan & Gopinathan, 2020). They found that when curricula are tailored toward practical competencies and industry needs, graduates demonstrate greater job readiness and long-term career growth. I this vein, well-designed academic programs significantly enhance human capital development and workforce integration.

In the Philippine setting, David and Aquino (2023) applied Human Capital Theory to explore the post-graduation outcomes of BSBA students across selected private universities. Filipino graduates are becoming globally competitive not only due to their formal training but because of their resilience, adaptability, and entrepreneurial competencies. These qualities are direct outcomes of targeted investments in business education, aligning well with the principles of human capital accumulation.

Furthermore, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED, 2022) conducted a national tracer study across multiple academic disciplines, including business administration. Grounded in Human Capital Theory, the study analyzed how reforms such as the implementation of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) and industry-academic linkages improved employability rates, with over 80% of BSBA graduates gaining employment within one year of graduation. The report emphasized that institutions which embedded practical business experiences such as internships, feasibility studies, and entrepreneurial simulations had higher graduate success rates, thus confirming the effectiveness of human capital investments.

Finally, Barone and Van de Werfhorst (2022) extended Human Capital Theory in their cross-country study of European graduates, concluding that individuals with degrees closely aligned to labor market needs particularly in business and management consistently performed better in terms of income, employment

stability, and career progression. The enduring relevance of the theory aids in analyzing how educational pathways influence life outcomes in diverse cultural and economic contexts.

Meanwhile, the Hard Luck Theory reflects that individuals or groups may face persistent misfortune due to factors beyond their control, such as societal inequalities, systemic barriers, or structural disadvantages (Merton, 1938). Merton argued that people who experience such hard luck may resort to unconventional or deviant behavior as a way of coping with the challenges created by these external forces. The theory emphasizes how structural factors like poverty or discrimination limit opportunities, making social or economic success harder to achieve.

In this study, the theory ascertains that adversity can spark creativity, resilience, and market awareness. The qualities of resilience and passion are keys to overcoming challenges where the theory postulates that hardships encourage entrepreneurs to find adaptive solutions and innovative approaches. The frugal innovations and reframing challenges served as opportunities that can fuel creative business practices. Entrepreneurs often use limitations to inspire new ideas and solutions. Additionally, the theory's emphasis on ethical awareness and creating businesses with social impact connects by placing emphasis on ethical leadership and integrity. Adversity-driven entrepreneurs may develop a stronger sense of ethics, prioritizing community welfare and inclusive growth, which form part in long-term success.

The Hard Luck Theory has been used in various research fields to explore how structural inequalities impact people's lives. Studies on poverty, unemployment, and social mobility often use this theory to explain how external disadvantages can hinder success (Aiston & Walraven, 2024). In higher education, the theory has been particularly helpful in examining how students from lower-income or marginalized backgrounds face barriers that prevent them from reaching their academic or career goals (Zengilowski et al., 2023). Research has shown that educational achievement is not just about individual effort; it is also heavily influenced by the structural conditions that shape students' opportunities (Bushnell, 2021). This shows how the Hard Luck Theory is a useful way to understand the challenges students face, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and how these factors can shape the outcomes of their educational journeys.

Conceptual Framework

The framework of this study was based on five key themes, each representing a critical aspect of the influence that BSBA education has on students' professional development. These include: Harnessing Practical Skills, Critical Thinking, and Entrepreneurial Mindsets; Envisioning Growth, Community Leadership, Enterprise, and Impact; Purpose-Driven Persistence: Aligning Personal Values with Professional Growth; Empowering Success through Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Time Management, and Integrity. These themes serve as the foundation for understanding how academic experiences help prepare students for the challenges and demands of the business world.

Harnessing Practical Skills, Critical Thinking, and Entrepreneurial Mindsets. The importance of practical competencies, such as financial management, marketing, and strategic planning, that students develop through hands-on experiences. Critical thinking enables students to analyze complex problems and make informed decisions, which is essential for leadership in the business field (Karimova et al., 2024). Additionally, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset that is characterized by risk-taking and creativity encourages students to identify opportunities and drive innovation. BSBA programs integrate these elements by offering real-world projects, case studies, and internships that help students apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, preparing them for dynamic business environments.

Envisioning Growth, Community Leadership, Enterprise, and Impact. It emphasizes the value of personal and professional development through education. It encourages students to take on leadership roles within both businesses and their communities. Through exposure to community-oriented projects, BSBA students learn how to lead with a focus on creating positive societal impact and sustainable business ventures. They are prepared to contribute to the economy by fostering growth, whether through innovation or by addressing community needs. They become influential in dealing with change and lead ethically within society.

Purpose-Driven Persistence: Aligning Personal Values with Professional Growth. It discusses the importance of aligning personal values with professional goals. Purpose-driven persistence motivates students to pursue their business objectives while staying true to their core beliefs. This alignment enhances resilience, enabling students to face challenges with determination. BSBA education incorporates ethical frameworks and models of corporate social responsibility, guiding students to make decisions that reflect both their professional ambitions and their values. As a result, students develop a strong sense of purpose, which contributes to both their personal growth and societal progress.

Empowering Success through Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Time Management, and Integrity. It addresses the development of essential competencies that empower students to succeed in the business world. Critical thinking, collaboration, time management, and integrity are foundational skills that BSBA students acquire throughout their education. By working in diverse teams, managing tasks efficiently, and maintaining ethical standards, students are prepared to deal business challenges with professionalism and confidence. These skills are integral in making sound decisions, meeting deadlines, and fostering trust in leadership positions.

Finally, the theme of **Continuous Growth and Innovation in Advancing the Business Landscape** explores how BSBA education fosters a mindset of lifelong learning and adaptation to change. With the rapid evolution of technology, economics, and societal demands, businesses must innovate to remain competitive. In this vein, BSBA students are encouraged to continuously grow by engaging with new ideas, methods, and technologies, for becoming adept in transformative industries. The relevance of nurturing an innovative mindset that can drive both personal success and broader organizational advancements, ensure that students are not only prepared for today's business landscape but also for the future. Thus, BSBA education plays an important role in making the students prepared in the business world. The substantial knowledge and practical skills acquired in the BSBA Program served as a foundation for future business leaders to thrive and make a lasting impact on their communities and industries. An illustrative conceptual framework is presented below.

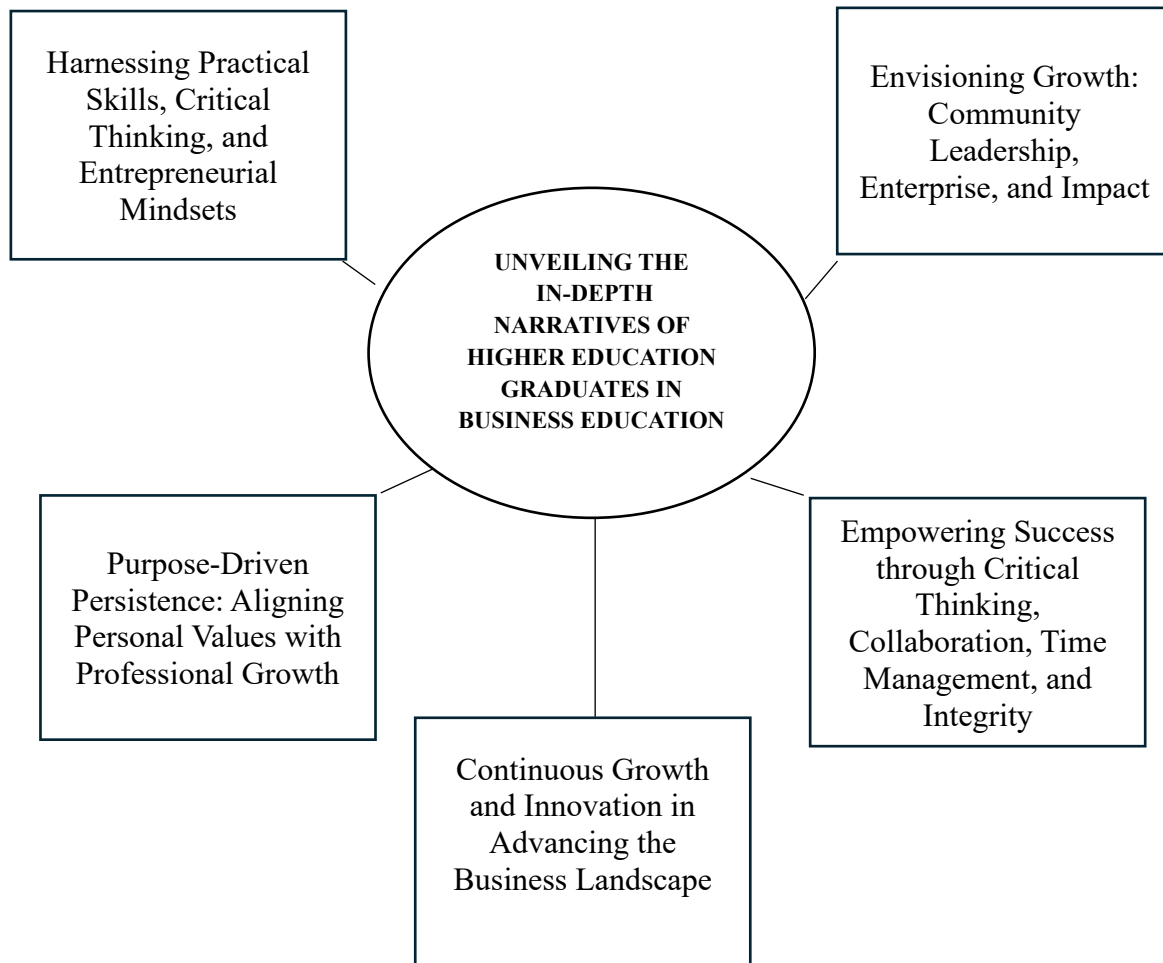


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Statement of the Problem

This study explored the in-depth narratives of higher education in business education among business graduates. Specifically, the study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. What strengths, skills, or values are developed during their business education that contributed to their success?
2. How does the graduate envision their continued contribution to their field, organization, or community?
3. What personal strategies or decisions helped the graduate stay focused and on track toward their goals?
4. What advice or guiding principles would the graduate share with current Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) students who aspire to succeed?
5. How does the Business graduates plan to sustain or expand their success in moving forward?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach using Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to explore the experiences of BSBA alumni from 2019 to 2024, aiming to highlight their strengths and success stories. The research was conducted at a higher education institution in Misamis Occidental, aligned with Outcome-Based Education (OBE) to foster academic and personal growth. There were 14 participants who were purposively selected

based on their success in employment, entrepreneurship, or leadership, and were interviewed using open-ended questions to capture detailed narratives. Ethical considerations included voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants. The data analysis followed the 4D model of AI which encompasses: Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny. It focuses on uncovering successes, envisioning future possibilities, and co-creating actionable outcomes. This approach, centered on positive inquiry, was appropriate for exploring the meaningful contributions of BSBA alumni to their communities and careers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Harnessing Practical Skills, Critical Thinking, and Entrepreneurial Mindsets from BSBA Education

This theme emphasizes how the BSBA program gave graduates a strong and solid base to start their careers. Through their studies, they did not just learn theories but also gained real-life skills like how to manage money, lead a team, plan a business, and solve problems. They also developed important values such as hard work, responsibility, and confidence in their abilities. These things helped them become more prepared for the real world whether they chose to work in a company or start their own business. As this foundation is calibrated, they were not easily shaken by challenges. Instead, they knew how to find solutions, work with others, and keep growing. Their BSBA education became the strong starting point for their personal and professional success. Below are some of the participants' responses:

"Learning how to think critically and manage finances gave me a strong foundation. I can now confidently handle budgets and propose cost-saving initiatives (P1)."

Communication, teamwork, and the ability to analyze business cases helped me a lot. These gave me confidence when I started handling clients and making business decisions (P2)."

"One of the biggest things I got from the BSBA program was learning how to think strategically. We did not just memorize terms, we were taught how to look at a business problem, break it down, and find smart ways to solve it. That skill has helped me a lot in managing operations and making quick but thoughtful decisions (P6)."

Based from the participants' responses, Participant 1 asserted the value of critical thinking combined with financial literacy as a cornerstone of professional competence. The ability to manage budgets and propose cost-saving initiatives emphasized not just technical skill, but also a deeper sense of responsibility and resourcefulness in decision-making. This reflects a strong internalization of practical business skills aimed at sustainable growth. On the other hand, Participant 2 (P2) emphasized the significance of communication and teamwork, coupled with case analysis, which collectively built her confidence in real-world business interactions. Her insight points to the deeper role of relational intelligence and analytical reasoning postulating that the BSBA program helped her become more decisive and articulate, especially in client-facing situations which are critical for business leadership and consultancy.

Meanwhile, P6 placed strong emphasis on strategic thinking as a transformative skill gained from the BSBA program. Rather than usual memorization, what stood out was the training to dissect complex problems and create smart, structured solutions. This indicates a shift from theory to application, showing how the program nurtured an agile mindset and operational leadership, especially beneficial in fast-paced community.

"I learned the importance of adaptability and being open to change. In our business courses, we often did case studies that showed how fast markets can shift. Because of that, I became more

flexible and confident in handling unpredictable situations, especially when I launched my small food business during the pandemic (P7)."

"Teamwork and leadership were big lessons for me. Group projects and school organizations taught me how to lead and also how to listen. Now that I manage a team in a logistics company, I use those skills every day to keep things running smoothly and to keep my team motivated (P8)."

"I picked up basic accounting, marketing, and customer service skills that I now use daily in my online business. The hands-on activities in class, like pitching a business plan or simulating sales calls, really gave me the confidence to handle real customers and make good decisions (P10)."

The experiences of Participants 7, 8, and 10 show how the BSBA program laid a solid foundation for facing real-life work situations. Participant 7 emphasized the importance of adaptability, which was developed through case study discussions that exposed them how business environments quickly change. Their ability to adjust became crucial when they started their food business during the pandemic where full of uncertainty and risk are present. The classroom learning experiences they gained prepared them mentally and strategically to make quick decisions under pressure, a quality that not all entrepreneurs develop easily without that kind of academic exposure.

Participant 8 and 10, on the other hand, gave value to teamwork, leadership, and everyday business operations. Participant 8 reflected on how school activities and group projects taught them not just how to lead, but also how to listen. Listening and doing are two essential skills for managing people and operations in a logistics company. Meanwhile, Participant 10 highlighted how practical lessons like making sales pitches, doing accounting, and handling mock customer service situations helped them gain the confidence needed to run an online business. These reflections show that the BSBA program is not just about academic theory it is about preparing students to be capable, confident, and action-oriented in their professional roles.

"The BSBA program helped me develop an entrepreneurial mindset. We were always encouraged to innovate, be resourceful, and not fear of failure. Those lessons helped me push through setbacks when I was starting my own convenience store which is (Seven Eleven) 7 11 (P11)."

"I think it was the combination of analytical thinking and ethical decision-making. Our professors made us think deeply about the 'why' behind every business move. That helped me become a more responsible manager who does not just focus on profit, but also considers long-term impact (P12)."

The strong claims were reinforced with the participants' responses as Participant 11 emphasized how the BSBA program helped them build an entrepreneurial mindset. The innovative ideas and creative thinking from those activities encouraged the students to become resilient in facing failure. These lessons made a big difference when they started their own convenience store with three branches. Because they learned how to be resourceful and open to challenges, they were able to overcome difficulties during the early stages of their business.

Meanwhile, Participant 12 focused on the importance of thinking critically and making ethical choices. During their college years, their professors often pushed them to ask deeper questions about business decisions like why a certain action is taken and its outcome. This helped them grow into a manager who does not just think about earning money but also about the long-term impact of every decision. In this vein, BSBA program helped shape them into a more thoughtful and responsible leader.

"Time management and being self-disciplined are the biggest takeaways for me. Juggling school, projects, and my internship taught me how to manage my time wisely. That's something I carry with me now as a full-time employee and part-time graduate student (P13)."

“What stuck with me most was how to turn ideas into action. We did not just dream of businesses we were pushed to plan, validate, and pitch them. That process trained me to take initiative and gave me the courage to finally start my own digital marketing agency (P14).”

The BSBA program helped in strengthening students’ capabilities to become well-rounded. Participant 13 emphasized how important time management and self-discipline were during college years. Balancing school, projects, and an internship was not easy, but it helped them build good habits. They said that learning to manage their time wisely has helped them now as a full-time employee and a part-time graduate student. Meanwhile, Participant 14 focused on taking initiative and being action oriented. What made the biggest impact on them was learning how to turn business ideas into actual plans. They highlighted how the process of planning, validating, and pitching a business idea taught them to move from just dreaming to doing. Because of this, they had the confidence to start their own digital marketing business.

The findings of the study corroborate with pieces of literature emphasizing on the significance of business education throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Nations such as Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea are actively aligning their business programs with global standards to satisfy both domestic and international job market needs (Taneja, 2021). These nations prioritize a holistic approach to education, integrating technical skills with emotional intelligence, ethical principles, and innovation (Aithal & Aithal, 2023). With globalization furthering international business connections, universities in this area acknowledge the demand for graduates who possess not just expertise but also flexibility and cultural sensitivity (Karimova et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, the pursuit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) drives a global initiative to utilize education as a force for beneficial transformation (Saxena et al., 2021). The pursuit of SDG 4 encourages cooperation among governments, universities, and industry stakeholders to improve curricula, digital access, and skills that support employment, entrepreneurship, and innovation (Omotosho et al., 2023). The implementation of outcome-oriented learning, internship collaborations, service-learning initiatives, and entrepreneurship incubators allow universities worldwide to adopt an Outcome-Based Education framework that emphasizes the practical significance of a BSBA degree (Chankseliani & McCowan, 2021). In this vein, graduate's career opportunities are enhanced while also fostering sustainable economic growth, social fairness, and strong communities (Fukuda-Parr, 2023).

Furthermore, the higher education institutions provide students with the necessary skills for employment, respectable jobs, and entrepreneurial endeavors (Leal Filho et al., 2024). The comprehensive and practical significance of higher education in their comprehensive curriculum help in fostering productive, ethical, and socially accountable citizens through the success narratives of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) graduates (Hallsago & Taja-on, 2023). In the Philippine context, the inclusion of service learning, internships, cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary projects, and entrepreneurship incubation programs across different universities prepare students not only for employment but also for innovation, sustainability, and leadership roles in society (Ravichandran & Dixit, 2024).

One theory that supports this study is the Human Capital Theory. It affirms that time management, self-discipline, and initiative developed by BSBA alumni are outcomes of strategic educational investments. These approaches enhance individual productivity and career success. As reflected in the participants’ experiences such as balancing academics and internships or transforming ideas into business ventures, the knowledge, skills, and habits gained during their education increased their value in the workforce. This aligns with Becker’s (1964) and Schultz’s (1961) views that education yields measurable returns through

improved job performance, entrepreneurial success, and societal contribution, thus reinforcing the transformative role of business education in shaping capable, goal-driven professionals.

Thus, it can be inferred that the educational program offered by the institution in the field of business goes beyond theoretical knowledge. It ensures to cultivate essential professional skills such as critical thinking, strategic planning, financial literacy, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, ethical reasoning, and initiative. These competencies are highly relevant in today's fast-changing business environment, especially as graduates face real-world challenges in entrepreneurship, corporate management, and community leadership. When business education integrates hands-on experiences, it could develop practical skills, confidence, and character. The BSBA programs may continuously enhance experiential learning opportunities, embed real-world problem-solving in the curriculum, and maintain a strong focus on values-driven leadership. Nevertheless, faculty may also encourage active student engagement through collaborative and reflective activities that simulate business realities to support a proactive, responsible, and resilient business graduates in the community.

Envisioning Growth, Community Leadership Enterprise, and Impact

This theme reflects how graduates, empowered by their educational and professional experiences as they envision their continued contribution not only through personal career advancement (e.g., promotions, business growth, leadership roles) but also through meaningful impact. They aspire to mentor, teach, create job opportunities while becoming social advocates in their respective communities. Ideally, it drives to build on past successes and pursue future aspirations with purpose and community-centered leadership.

Below are some of the participants' responses:

"The moment I got promoted to team leader just one year after joining the company was fulfilling. It showed me that my hard work, discipline, and the things I learned in college really paid off (P9)."

"I felt fulfilled when my business hit its first six-digit monthly income. It was proof that all my late nights and hard decisions were worth it (P10)."

Leading a product launch campaign that resulted in a 35% increase in our company's quarterly sales. I felt empowered and appreciated (P11)"Z

"My biggest accomplishment is establishing a sustainable small business from scratch. Today, it provides jobs to five people in my community (P12)".

From the participants' responses, Participant 9 expressed deep fulfillment upon being promoted to team leader just one year after joining the company. This milestone became a validation of the discipline, resilience, and competencies developed during college. It served not only as a reward for individual effort but also as motivation to continue growing as a leader who inspires excellence and collaboration in the workplace. The participant envisions continuing to foster a positive work culture and contributing to the organization's long-term goals through effective team management.

On the other hand, Participant 10 expressed the success borne out of perseverance, strategic decision-making, and personal sacrifices through the income generated. Building on this success, the participant intends to further scale the business, create more jobs, and become a model of entrepreneurial resilience and innovation in their industry. Meanwhile, Participant 11 considered leading a product launch campaign with a 35% sales increase as evidenced for professional achievement. The experience empowered them and affirmed their capacity for impactful leadership. Moving forward, they aspire to play a greater role in

strategic marketing initiatives, mentor junior team members, and drive sustainable growth within the company through creativity and data-driven decision-making.

Subsequently, Participant 12 identified their proudest accomplishment as starting a sustainable small business from the ground up, which now provides employment to five individuals in the local community. This achievement reflects not only entrepreneurial success but also social responsibility. The participant envisions expanding this venture while continuing to uplift others by creating inclusive opportunities for livelihood and community development.

“I aim to become a regional manager within my company. I also want to explore setting up a second business that caters to tech services for small entrepreneurs (P3).”

“I hope to teach part-time in a college or university while continuing to grow my company. I want to give back through education (P4).”

“I would love to build a mentorship center in rural areas to train young entrepreneurs and provide them with tools to start small businesses (P5).”

I’d scale my business to the national level and offer scholarships to students who want to pursue business but lack financial support (P14).”

Participant 3 shared a clear and ambitious vision for the future in advancing as the role of regional manager within the current company. This aspiration reflects a deep commitment to professional growth and leadership development. The participant recognizes the value of climbing the corporate ladder to gain greater influence and contribute to the company's success. In addition, the motivational pursuit for entrepreneurial ventures is an ideal way to set up a second business that will uplift the status quo of his community. This dual-focus vision highlights the participant's desire to not only succeed in the corporate world but also help other small business owners by providing them with the digital tools and services needed to grow and thrive in an increasingly technology-driven landscape.

Participant 4 shared their desire to balance the growth of their own business with a meaningful contribution to education. They hope to teach part-time at a college or university while continuing to build their company. For this participant, teaching is a way to give back to the community and share their valuable experience and insights with the next generation of business leaders. The desire to teach part-time aligns with their goal of contributing to the development of young professionals, equipping them with the practical knowledge that cannot always be gained through textbooks alone. This reflects their belief in the importance of providing students with real-world business perspectives while remaining active in the entrepreneurial world.

Participant 5 expressed a strong commitment to fostering entrepreneurship in underserved communities. They envision building a mentorship center in rural areas, where aspiring young entrepreneurs can receive training and support in starting their own businesses. This participant's passion for helping others reflects a deep desire to empower individuals who may lack access to resources and guidance. By providing mentorship and the necessary tools to succeed in business, this vision aligns with their belief in the transformative power of entrepreneurship as a vehicle for personal and economic development in rural areas. Their goal is to help these young entrepreneurs build the confidence and skills needed to succeed and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Participant 14 has a vision for scaling their business beyond local boundaries, aiming to expand it to a national level. They also aspire to establish a scholarship program to assist students who want to pursue business degrees but lack the financial means. This vision combines professional ambition with social responsibility. Expanding their business nationwide reflects their confidence in their entrepreneurial

capabilities and desire for growth, while the scholarship initiative reflects a deep commitment to giving back and providing opportunities for others. By offering financial support to students, this participant hopes to remove barriers to education, enabling future business leaders to thrive and contribute to the economy, much like they have. Their focus on both business growth and education emphasizes their belief in the importance of investing in the next generation.

The findings of the study corroborate with pieces of literature emphasizing the importance of leadership development programs and mentorship that could strongly enhance career progression and organizational outcomes (Whalley et al., 2024). These initiatives significantly improve leadership skills and empower employees to advance professionally (Saleh, 2022). Educational research indicates that entrepreneurship education especially when combined with exposure to innovation and technology shapes students' career aspirations and equips them to establish new ventures (Al Balushi et al., 2023). The outcomes of entrepreneurship education provides practical application and ecosystem-building among aspiring entrepreneurs (Ioannou & Retalis, 2025). Meanwhile, the effectiveness of fostering ethical, adaptable, and future-ready leaders within academic and community contexts enable positive community-building outcomes (Ahmad et al., 2023). In this vein, programs that integrate experiential elements like coaching, global engagement, or scholarships are found to significantly enhance social impact and educational access. This purports the value of mentoring and internship support during the student-to-professional transition where graduate coaching fosters professional identity and growth (Catacutan et al., 2023).

Accordingly, Filipino BSBA graduates are becoming more competitive globally (David & Aquino, 2023). They are valued not only for their academic knowledge but also for their adaptability, creativity, and strong interpersonal skills (Liwanag & Lunarb, 2023). Filipino graduates often demonstrate a unique ability to thrive in multicultural environments and display resilience in overcoming economic and social challenges (Briones et al., 2021). Many have found opportunities in fields such as digital marketing, human resources, finance, and start-up entrepreneurship both locally and abroad (Aguilar & Torres, 2023).

One theory that supports this study is the Human Capital theory. It purports that individuals who invest in education, skills, and experience enhance their productivity and value in the workforce. The participants' goals whether pursuing leadership roles, growing businesses, mentoring others, or supporting education reflect the belief that their acquired knowledge and competencies are essential assets for success. Their visions of giving back to communities, training future entrepreneurs, and creating opportunities for others further illustrate how human capital extends beyond personal gain to broader economic and social development. This aligns with the theory's core idea that human investment leads to both individual advancement and societal progress.

Thus, business graduates are not only driven by personal success but are also deeply committed to leadership, community development, and social responsibility. Their visions reflect a balance between career advancement, entrepreneurial growth, and the desire to uplift others through mentorship, education, and job creation. These aspirations highlight how practical experience, resilience, and values developed during college can lead to meaningful contributions in both the corporate world and broader society. It also shows how modern professionals aim to create impact by combining business innovation with purpose-driven goals.

Purpose-Driven Persistence: Aligning Personal Values with Professional Growth

This theme emphasizes that true success comes from having a strong personal reason or purpose that motivates an individual to stay focused and determined, even when faced with challenges. For the BSBA

graduates, this purpose often stemmed from meaningful life experiences such as growing up in a business-minded family, wanting to improve their community, or having the dream of running their own business. Their persistence was not just about working hard for money or titles, but about staying committed to goals that aligned with their values, like leadership, social responsibility, sustainability, or helping others succeed. They made thoughtful career decisions that matched their beliefs and long-term vision, which made their work more fulfilling and impactful. By staying true to their values while applying the knowledge and skills they gained in their BSBA program, these graduates were able to grow professionally in a way that felt right and meaningful to them. This alignment between personal purpose and professional development became the driving force behind their continued focus, resilience, and success. Below are some of the participants' responses:

"As the owner of a pastries and cake shop, I'm passionate about creating delightful treats that bring joy to people's lives. I started this venture to share my love for baking and offer high-quality, homemade pastries for every occasion. My business background helps me manage operations, but it's my dedication to fresh, delicious products that keeps me motivated, even through challenges (P7)."

"As a house dealer, I'm passionate about helping families find their perfect home. I approach every client with empathy, honesty, and dedication, guiding them through life-changing decisions. My commitment to ethical, client-first principles drives me to promote homes that truly align with their needs (P3)."

Based on the participants' responses, Participant 7 (P7) emphasized that their passion for baking and creating delightful treats is at the heart of every business. P7 expressed a strong commitment to delivering high-quality, homemade pastries that bring joy to people's lives, showcasing her love for baking as the driving force behind her venture. P7 highlighted her business background as crucial for managing operations, yet it is her dedication to producing fresh, delicious products that keeps her motivated, even when challenges arise.

On the other hand, Participant 3 (P3) emphasized her passion for helping families find their perfect home. P3 mentioned the importance of empathy, honesty, and dedication when guiding clients through life-changing decisions. P3 stressed that the commitment to ethical, client-first principles is central to their work, ensuring that the homes they promote truly align with the clients' needs. It further reflects a deep desire to make a positive, meaningful impact in the lives of the families they work with. Both participants emphasize a strong personal connection to their work whether it is through the quality of their products (P7) or ethically guiding clients through major decisions (P3). The values of dedication, passion, and customer satisfaction, with a shared focus on creating a positive experience contribute to their meaningful experiences. Other participants' also expressed their relative experiences:

"Managing our family's growing business is more than a job. It is a legacy. I persist because I have seen my parents' sacrifices, and I want to build on that with the right systems, innovation, and people-centered leadership. My BSBA education gave me tools, but it is my personal connection to the business that gives my work deeper meaning (P4)."

In Human Resource, I found my calling in creating fair, inclusive, and growth-oriented workplaces. I'm persistent in improving policies, supporting employee well-being, and aligning people with roles where they can thrive. My work reflects my values of respect, empathy, and continuous learning, all of which guide my professional decisions daily (P5)."

Participant 4 (P4) emphasized that managing the family business is not just a professional responsibility but a personal legacy. P4 expressed that the commitment to continuing the work of their parents, highlight the importance of innovation, right systems, and people-centered leadership in ensuring the business's growth and sustainability. P4's personal connection to the business, combined with their BSBA education, enables them to give their work deeper meaning, fueled with persistence in overcoming challenges. This reflects a strong sense of responsibility and emotional investment in the family's success.

Meanwhile, Participant 5 (P5) emphasized their passion for Human Resources and their dedication to creating fair, inclusive, and growth-oriented workplaces. P5 highlighted their persistent efforts in improving policies, promoting employee well-being, and ensuring alignment between roles and individual potential. The professional decisions are consistently guided by values of respect, empathy, and continuous learning, showing how these principles shape their approach to their work. P5's focus on fostering positive work environments reflects their deep commitment to employee satisfaction and organizational development. Both participants emphasize their strong personal values and deep connections to their respective fields. P4 is driven by a legacy to honor their family's business, while P5 is motivated by a commitment to fairness and growth in the workplace. Both participants emphasized that their persistence in their work comes from a combination of personal connections and a desire to create a lasting impact.

The findings of the study are well-supported by a substantial body of literature that postulates the importance of entrepreneurial passion in driving business success. Entrepreneurial passion has been shown to be a critical motivator, sustaining individuals through both successes and setbacks (Carpio, 2023). Accordingly, entrepreneurs who consistently exhibit passion are better able to maintain focus and commitment even in the face of challenge (Newman et al., 2021). Passion fuels resilience and inspires others within the organization that create a positive feedback loop that strengthens the business operations. This sustained passion can lead to enhanced decision-making, creativity, and innovation which are essential for overcoming obstacles and driving growth (Adomako & Ahsan, 2022).

In the context of family businesses, succession planning is a vital component for ensuring long-term sustainability and success (Carpio, 2023). Effective succession planning not only prepares the next generation with the necessary skills but also ensures alignment between family dynamics, ownership, and the business's strategic goals (Valencia & Patama, 2024). The importance of aligning these three critical areas such as: family, ownership, and business cannot be overstated, as failure to do so can jeopardize the business's future (Amanquah, 2021). The family businesses as a personal legacy resonates strongly in the emotional and familial connections that shape business decisions and leadership styles (Aladejebi, 2021). However, nearly two-thirds of family businesses lack a formal succession plan, which poses significant risks to their continuity. Businesses with a documented succession plan are better equipped to deal the transition of leadership which preserve the legacy and fostering business stability in the long run (Ikechukwu & Enudu, 2022).

Employee well-being served as a critical factor for organizational success. It encompasses mental, emotional, and social dimensions which play a fundamental role in enhancing engagement and performance at work (Bella, 2023). Well-being initiatives that focus on these areas are associated with higher productivity, increased job satisfaction, and reduced turnover (Chang, 2024). Organizations that prioritize these aspects of well-being create a supportive and resilient workforce which improves organizational outcomes (Elufioye et al., 2024). When employees feel valued and supported, their emotional and social connections to the workplace deepen that could foster a positive organizational culture and fostering employee loyalty (Che et al., 2022).

Thus, it can be inferred that passion, commitment, and ethical values drive both individual and organizational success. When entrepreneurs, leaders, or professionals are deeply connected to their work, whether through product quality, ethical principles, or family legacies, they are more likely to create meaningful and lasting impacts. In this vein, organizations may prioritize aligning core values with customer or employee needs, emphasizing ethical leadership, and fostering personal investment in their respective fields. Nevertheless, businesses may focus on building a strong organizational culture through inclusive policies, employee well-being, and continuous learning, as these factors contribute to long-term sustainability, resilience, and positive customer or employee experiences.

Empowering Success Through Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Time Management, and Integrity

This theme emphasizes the core skills that are crucial for achieving success in both business and professional life. It starts with the idea that success begins with a critical mindset, encouraging individuals to become critical thinkers. By adopting a logical and innovative approach to problems, individuals are empowered to make informed decisions and effectively address challenges. The ability to think critically allows one to not only solve issues but also to explore new opportunities and approaches, ensuring progress in an ever-evolving professional environment. In addition to critical thinking, collaboration plays a pivotal role in success. The ability to work well with others fosters an environment of knowledge sharing, where diverse perspectives contribute to more effective solutions. By building strong relationships through teamwork, individuals can create opportunities for growth and better outcomes, underscoring the importance of a collective effort in achieving shared goals.

While critical thinking and collaboration are important, time management is equally essential. The ability to prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and focus on what truly matters is key to maximizing productivity and reducing unnecessary stress. Time management helps individuals balance competing responsibilities, ensuring they stay on track with their objectives and remain organized. Lastly, integrity is the foundation that supports all other skills, as it establishes trust and credibility. Upholding ethical standards, making honest decisions, and maintaining transparency in all dealings are vital to building lasting professional relationships and reputations. Integrity ensures that success is not only achieved but sustained, as it cultivates respect and confidence from colleagues, clients, and peers. These principles are comprehensive guide to thriving in any professional or business setting, enabling individuals to deal challenges, achieve their goals, and build meaningful, long-term success. Below are some of the participants' responses:

"Success in business is not just about having the right knowledge at the start but about your ability to learn and adapt. Always stay curious, seek out new opportunities for learning, and don't be afraid to adjust your approach when challenges arise. The business world is constantly evolving, and the most successful individuals are those who can grow with it (P1)."

"No matter what industry you go into, building strong relationships with peers, mentors, and clients is essential. Take time to network and establish connections. Your network will often be a source of opportunities, support, and valuable insights. Remember, success is not just about what you know, but also about who you know and how you interact with them (P2)."

"Passion is a driving force behind success. Find what excites you, and commit to it with all your heart. However, with passion comes the inevitable obstacles, and resilience is key. Don't be discouraged by failures or setbacks; see them as learning experiences that will help you grow. Success comes to those who persist, even when things seem tough(P3)."

"In business, it's easy to focus on profits and competition, but the foundation of long-term success lies in ethical leadership and integrity. Always conduct business with honesty and transparency. The trust you build with others will be far more valuable than short-term gains, and it will set you up for lasting success and respect in your field (P4)"

Based on the participants' responses, Participant 1 (P1) emphasized that success in business is not solely about having initial knowledge but about the ability to adapt and learn continuously. P1 stressed the importance of staying curious, seeking new learning opportunities, and being flexible when facing challenges. This reflects a belief that the most successful individuals are those who can evolve alongside the changing business landscape. Participant 2 (P2) highlighted the significance of building strong relationships with peers, mentors, and clients. According to P2, networking is crucial for creating opportunities and gaining valuable insights. It indicates that success is not only dependent on what you know, but also on who you know and how you interact with them. In this vein, business connection and collaboration are essential in advancing one's career or business.

Meanwhile, Participant 3 (P3) emphasized passion as the driving force behind success. It is essential to find something that excites a person and to commit to it fully. However, P3 also acknowledged that obstacles are inevitable and that resilience is key. The message conveyed that being persistent is a key even though setbacks are apparent as they are mechanisms toward success. Challenges should be viewed as learning experiences that contribute to personal and professional growth. Participant 4 (P4) pointed out the importance of ethical leadership and integrity in business. P4 argued that while profits and competition are often the focus, the foundation for long-term success lies in conducting business with honesty and transparency. Building trust through ethical actions is seen as more valuable than short-term gains, establishing a reputation that leads to lasting success and respect in the field.

The findings of the study corroborate with relevant literature emphasizing that success in business is influenced by a combination of adaptability, networking, passion, resilience, and ethical leadership (Askew, 2023). These factors are recognized as essential for long-term growth and sustainability (Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022). Continuous learning is crucial in today's rapidly evolving business environment (Addy et al., 2024). Those who engage in lifelong learning and adaptability are better equipped to make informed decisions and overcome challenges (Salas-Vallina et al., 2022). Entrepreneurial leaders who prioritize continuous learning are more likely to stay ahead of industry shifts and remain competitive (Shan & Tian, 2022). On the other hand, networking is another key factor since it enables individuals to create new business opportunities and gain guidance from peers, mentors, and clients, facilitating both career advancement and business growth (Akkas, 2023).

Meanwhile, passion is identified as a driving force behind entrepreneurial success since it fuels the energy needed to persist through setbacks, while resilience allows the individuals to recover from failure when dealing with challenges (Dewi, 2024). Resilience also helps entrepreneurs reframe obstacles as learning opportunities that foster personal and business growth (Alinasab, 2025). Additionally, ethical leadership and integrity are foundational for long-term success, as leaders who uphold ethics and transparency foster a culture of trust leads to higher employee satisfaction and organizational success (Ughulu, 2024). Ethical businesses build lasting relationships with stakeholders and maintain a strong reputation which contributes to their long-term sustainability (Carpio, 2023).

One theory that supports this study is the Hard Luck Theory. It helps explains how passion, resilience, and ethical leadership drive business success (Fisher, 2011). The theory suggests that adversity can spark creativity, resilience, and market awareness, qualities that the participants highlighted. Just as the study

emphasizes resilience and passion as keys to overcoming challenges, the theory argues that hardships encourage entrepreneurs to find adaptive solutions and innovative approaches.

The theory's focus on frugal innovations and reframing challenges as opportunities ties into the participants' findings about how resilience and passion can fuel creative business practices. Entrepreneurs often use limitations to inspire new ideas and solutions. Additionally, the theory's emphasis on ethical awareness and creating businesses with social impact connects with the participants' emphasis on ethical leadership and integrity. Adversity-driven entrepreneurs develop a stronger sense of ethics, prioritizing community welfare and inclusive growth, which the participants identified as key to long-term success. Thus, business success is not solely reliant on initial knowledge, but rather on continuous learning, adaptability, strong relationships, resilience, and ethical leadership. Continuous learning and the ability to adapt to new challenges are crucial in staying competitive in an ever-changing business landscape. Aspiring entrepreneurs may invest in training and development programs that encourage employees to remain curious and adaptable. They could build strong networks and cultivate relationships with peers, mentors, and clients through collaboration as it opens doors to new opportunities and insights. They may also foster environments that encourage networking and partnership-building with consistent passion and resilience in overcoming setbacks and grow from challenges. Finally, ethical leadership should be prioritized, with businesses committing to transparency and honesty in their operations. Organizations that emphasize ethical practices will build trust and long-term respect, leading to sustainable success.

Continuous Growth and Innovation in Advancing the Business Landscape

This theme pertains to the ongoing process of improving and evolving a business to meet changing market demands, incorporate new technologies, and stay ahead of competition. It emphasizes the importance of adaptability, creativity, and learning as essential elements for business success. By investing in professional development, building strong networks, and diversifying offerings, businesses can expand their reach and resilience. The theme highlights how innovation not only drives new opportunities but also strengthens business operations, positioning companies to thrive in an ever-changing environment. Businesses may continually evolve, embrace new strategies, and foster a culture of growth to remain relevant. Below are some of the participants' responses:

"I plan to invest in continuous learning by attending workshops, pursuing advanced certifications, and staying updated on industry trends. This will allow me to remain adaptable and innovative, ensuring I can continue to meet evolving market demands (P4)".

"I aim to expand my network further by engaging with industry professionals, mentors, and peers. By strengthening these relationships and collaborating more, I can open up new opportunities for growth, partnerships, and gaining insights into potential market shifts (P14)".

"To grow my business, I plan to scale operations by expanding our product or service offerings, improving efficiency, and exploring new markets. Diversifying our portfolio will help attract a broader customer base and reduce dependency on a single stream of income (P7)".

"I will continue to lead with integrity, focusing on building trust with my clients and stakeholders. Transparency in decision-making and maintaining ethical practices will ensure long-term success, reinforcing my business's reputation and creating a loyal customer base (P5)".

Based from the participants' responses, Participant 4 (P4) emphasized the importance of continuous learning and professional development as key to sustaining and expanding business success. P4 plans to stay adaptable and innovative through making a strong commitment in attending workshops, pursuing

advanced certifications, and staying updated on industry trends. This could contribute in remaining competitive and ensuring to meet evolving market demands. Meanwhile, Participant 14 (P14) emphasized the significance of networking and building strong relationships with industry professionals, mentors, and peers. P14 recognizes that expanding their network will open up new growth opportunities and provide valuable insights into potential market shifts. This focus on collaboration and relationship-building postulates the importance of strategic connections in advancing business success.

On the other hand, participant 7 (P7) emphasized the need to scale operations and diversify product or service offerings as a strategy for growth. The importance of improving operational efficiency and exploring new markets could attract a broader customer base and reduce dependency on a single revenue stream. This approach reflects a proactive effort to expand and adapt the business for long-term success. Finally, Participant 5 (P5) stressed the importance of ethical leadership and transparency in ensuring long-term success. Building trust with clients and stakeholders could strengthen the business's reputation and foster customer loyalty. This commitment to ethical business practices highlights how leadership and trust can play a critical role in the sustained success of a business.

Sustaining and expanding business success requires a multifaceted approach that includes continuous learning, networking, operational scalability, and ethical leadership (Shan & Tian, 2022). Continuous learning is vital for staying competitive, as it enables businesses to adapt to market changes (Valencia & Pratama, 2024). Engaging in professional development activities, such as attending workshops, obtaining certifications, and staying updated on industry trends, helps businesses maintain innovation and respond to evolving demands (Carpio, 2023).

Lifelong learning fosters a culture of improvement, leading to enhanced productivity and creativity, particularly in industries with rapid technological advancements and shifting consumer expectations (Whalley et al., 2024). Additionally, networking and relationship-building are essential for creating growth opportunities and staying ahead of trends (Ughulu, 2024). Businesses with strong professional networks gain better access to funding, partnerships, and market insights, helping them remain agile and innovative. Meanwhile, scaling operations and diversifying product offerings are also critical strategies for business growth (Taneja, 2021). The adoption of market expansion and introducing new products help capture a broader customer base, mitigate risks, and increase profit margins.

The efficient operations allow organizational flexibility and capacity making the business to respond quickly to consumer demands and market shifts (Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022). However, leaders who prioritize ethics and transparency create a culture of trust within organizations which employee satisfaction, retention, and external relationships with customers and investors. Ethical businesses not only cultivate loyalty but also align their practices with broader societal values, which contributes to sustainable growth and reputation (Carpio, 2023).

Thus, sustaining and expanding business success relies on a combination of continuous learning, networking, operational scalability, and ethical leadership. To stay competitive, aspiring business leaders may prioritize professional development and adapt to market trends by encouraging employees to engage in continuous learning and certifications. Additionally, building and nurturing strategic relationships can open up valuable growth opportunities and provide insights into potential market shifts. Scaling operations and diversifying offerings will help businesses reduce risks associated with relying on a single revenue stream, while ensuring operational efficiency and exploring new markets. Furthermore, businesses may uphold ethical leadership and transparency to build trust with customers and stakeholders, ensuring long-

term loyalty and a positive reputation. Companies may focus on integrating these strategies to foster sustainable growth and adapt effectively to future challenges.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Sustaining and expanding business success, as shown by BSBA graduates, requires a combination of continuous learning, networking, scaling operations, and ethical leadership. The BSBA program equips graduates to stay adaptable and competitive through lifelong learning and professional development. Networking builds valuable relationships that open growth opportunities and insights. Scaling operations and diversifying offerings help mitigate risks and drive sustainable growth. Ethical leadership, grounded in transparency and integrity, fosters trust and loyalty, strengthening reputation. By integrating these strategies, BSBA graduates are well-prepared to overcome challenges, maintain relevance, and achieve long-term success in a dynamic business environment.

Future studies could explore how specific industries apply the strategies of continuous learning, networking, and ethical leadership to sustain success. Research could focus on the impact of entrepreneurial education and real-world experience on the long-term success of BSBA graduates, particularly in startups or small businesses. Additionally, further studies could examine the role of technology adoption in scaling operations and diversifying offerings, as well as how these factors influence competitiveness and business resilience. Exploring the effects of mentorship programs and business incubators on BSBA graduates' career progression would also provide valuable insights into fostering the next generation of business leaders.

Aspiring business leaders may prioritize continuous professional development, build strong networks, and actively pursue operational scalability and product diversification. Additionally, businesses may uphold ethical leadership to build trust, ensuring long-term success and a positive organizational reputation. These strategies will create a resilient and adaptable business, capable of thriving in the competitive landscape.

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