International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR)
E-ISSN: 2582-2160 ● Website: www.ijfmr.com ● Email: editor@ijfmr.com

Work Immersion Experience of TVL Home Economics Students: A Phenomenology

Ian Keith C. Clarion[1], Ester Jean U. Pelayo[2]

[1]Junior High School Academic Coordinator, Davao Central College, Davao City, Philippines; Graduate Student, Master of Arts in Education major in Technology and Livelihood Education, University of Mindanao

[2]Program Head, Diploma in Technology and Livelihood Education, Career Colleges of Mati, Inc.; Partime Graduate School Instructor, University of Mindanao; Master of Arts in Teaching Home Economics (1991) and Doctor of Education major in Educational Management (2007), University of Mindanao; Member, Philippine Association for Teachers and Educators (PAFTE)

ABSTRACT

The gap between school-based preparation and industry practice remains a critical challenge in the Philippine Senior High School Work Immersion Program. This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of 16 purposively selected Grade 12 TVL-Home Economics students from private institutions in Davao City. Using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions analyzed thematically, the study examined students' challenges, coping strategies, and insights during workplace immersion. Anchored in Experiential, Situated, and Social Cognitive learning theories, thematic analysis yielded 16 themes and 98 core ideas: five challenge themes reflecting structural misalignments and operational unpreparedness; five coping themes demonstrating adaptive, self-directed learning through mentoring and peer collaboration; and six insight themes encompassing technical growth, professional discipline, and career realization. Findings confirm that authentic workplace exposure produces meaningful professional formation, yet persistent gaps in pre-immersion readiness and school-industry coordination limit learning depth. This study offers curriculum developers, educators, and policymakers a student-centered qualitative foundation for strengthening immersion implementation and aligning vocational education with industry standards.

Keywords: Work Immersion, Technical Vocational Livelihood Home Economics, Phenomenology, School-to-Work Transition, Senior High School, Lived Experiences, Davao City SDG 4-Quality Education and SDG-8 Decent Work and Economic Growth

INTRODUCTION

Despite the work immersion program that is mandated to prepare Grade 12 Technical Vocational Livelihood (TVL) Home Economics students by the Philippines Department of Education, which prepares students for real work and workplace demand, there is a clear and persistent gap between what the students learn in school and what the industry expects from them during the immersion program. The gap between what the students learn from school and the industry has significantly affected students' overall work immersion learning and experience, resulting in students' underperformance compared to the standard of the industry to which they were deployed. Common and persistent problems like insufficient training, the

lack of pre-deployment orientation, and a misalignment of what Technical Vocational Livelihood Home Economics immersion students are expected to perform.

Students themselves report that school-based training is insufficient (Ligawad Jr., 2025) [24], that placement sites are scarce and often misaligned with their specialization (Ligawad Jr., 2025; Guadalupe, 2024) [13, 24], and those assigned tasks bear little connection to their area of study (Guadalupe, 2024) [13]. At the policy level, systemic misalignments between academic strands and immersion placements continue to limit the program's effectiveness (Tengco, 2025) [35], while implementation reviews confirm that insufficient supervision and curriculum-workplace inconsistencies remain unresolved (DepEd, 2022; Alawin-Ligwang, 2025) [3, 12].

These compounding issues reveal that the problem is not isolated to individual students or public schools; it is structural and embedded in the program's current design and implementation. Globally, scholars affirm that when school instruction and workplace practice diverge, students are left to navigate a gap for which they are neither adequately prepared nor sufficiently supported (Billett, 2020; Jackson, 2021; OECD, 2023) [6, 19, 30]. The issue, then, is not merely that a gap exists, but that it is experienced silently and persistently by the very students the program is meant to serve, with consequences for their confidence and professional formation that existing studies have yet to fully illuminate.

It is precisely because of this documented yet underexplored gap that studying the lived experiences of Grade 12 TVL-Home Economics students during work immersion is both timely and necessary. While existing research has examined the program through employer assessments, policy analyses, and curriculum audits, how students themselves feel, interpret, and make meaning of the gap remains the least documented dimension of the immersion experience (DepEd, 2022; Alawin-Ligwang, 2025) [3, 12]. Understanding how they encounter challenges, cope with unfamiliar workplace demands, and derive insights from immersion is the most direct evidence available for designing reforms genuinely responsive to students' realities (Billett, 2020; Jackson, 2021) [6, 19], moving the inquiry beyond performance metrics and into the deeper human dimensions of a program that shapes students' competencies, professional identities, and workforce readiness (Ligawad Jr., 2025; Guadalupe, 2024; Tengco, 2025) [13, 24, 35].

Existing empirical studies affirm that work immersion generally improves students' technical skills, self-confidence, and employability; however, these benefits are not experienced uniformly, as outcomes vary with the quality of workplace exposure and the alignment between school instruction and industry practice (OECD, 2023; Pacaña & Pantaleon, 2025) [30, 31]. Philippine-based research consistently reveals that students face difficulty adapting to workplace culture, unfamiliar tools, and performance standards (Guadalupe, 2024; Tengco, 2025) [13, 35]. These patterns are well explained by two complementary theoretical frameworks. Experiential Learning Theory posits that meaningful learning occurs when learners engage in real experiences, reflect on them, and apply resulting insights to future action, a cycle disrupted when students are inadequately prepared for the experiential demands of the workplace (Kolb & Kolb, 2020; Smith & Kolb, 2020) [21, 34]. Building on this, Situated Learning Theory argues that knowledge and skills are most effectively developed through authentic participation in real social and professional contexts, where learners interact with experienced practitioners and gradually assume greater responsibility (Billett, 2020; Herrera, 2025) [6, 17]. Together, these frameworks explain why misalignments between classroom instruction and workplace realities constrain students' confidence, competence, and overall learning during immersion.

Complementing these perspectives, Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) [4] offers further insight into the relational and motivational dimensions of workplace learning. In immersion settings,

industry mentors function as behavioral models whose skills students observe and gradually internalize, a process heavily mediated by self-efficacy, or students' belief in their capacity to perform required tasks. Lent and Brown (2020) [23] confirm that strong self-efficacy predicts better workplace adjustment and performance, while students who enter immersion with significant skill gaps tend to exhibit lower confidence and reduced engagement. This dynamic is compounded by reciprocal determinism: as Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) [33] explain, early difficulties arising from limited preparation can reduce the mentoring supervisors offer, narrowing learning opportunities and deepening the training gap, a self-reinforcing cycle that underscores the importance of adequate pre-immersion preparation.

Extending the situated learning framework to vocational contexts, Guile and Unwin (2020) [14] emphasize that the school-to-workplace transition is a pivotal learning stage where the quality of mentoring, the authenticity of assigned tasks, and students' sense of belonging collectively determine learning depth. Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] corroborate this in the Philippine TVL context, finding that students given progressively complex, well-supervised tasks developed stronger competence and engagement than those confined to repetitive work, implicating how industry partners structure the immersion experience itself. Documented Philippine implementation challenges reinforce these concerns: De Guzman and Cristobal (2021) [9] found that TVL-Home Economics graduates frequently entered the workforce with underdeveloped competencies traceable to limited pre-immersion preparation and weak school-industry coordination, while Tengco (2025) [35] attributed persistent placement mismatches to fragmented monitoring systems and insufficient industry incentives. Tengco (2025) [35] further attributed the training gap to insufficient laboratory equipment, curriculum-industry misalignment, and the constrained 80-hour immersion requirement mandated under DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017 (Department of Education, 2017) [11].

The training gap observed in Philippine work immersion reflects a broader global phenomenon documented across TVET systems. Cedefop (2020) [7] identified three recurring dimensions of skill mismatch in vocational education, technical, soft-skill, and adaptive gaps, all of which are evident in the Philippine immersion context. Ogilvie, Quosigk, and Gartmeier (2021) [29] found that vocational students commonly experience initial disorientation upon entering workplace learning environments, but those who receive structured mentoring adapt significantly faster than those left to learn through observation alone. In the ASEAN context, Tran and Nguyen (2021) [36] reported that while technical skill gaps exist, employers are more concerned with soft-skill deficiencies, particularly in communication, adaptability, and problem-solving under pressure. These patterns are acutely present for TVL-Home Economics students in the Philippines: students in cookery and food-service specializations frequently report feeling underprepared for commercial kitchen environments given limited exposure to industrial equipment and the fast-paced demands of real service operations, a form of acute competency shock that defines the first immersion week (Barcibal & Chavez, 2025; De Guzman & Cristobal, 2021) [5, 9].

Qualitative studies provide rich evidence of how these gaps are lived and navigated from the student's perspective. Ador et al. (2023) [2] identified initial unfamiliarity, gradual skill development, and personal growth as recurring narrative patterns among Philippine SHS immersion students, while Guimba (2019) [15] found that self-efficacy and confidence grew meaningfully as students gained practical exposure, even amid initial anxiety. Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] further established that overcoming immersion difficulties was associated with stronger competence, engagement, and vocational commitment among TVL students. From the industry side, Dela Cruz and Permejo (2020) [10] found that industry partners, while valuing the program, consistently identified gaps in workplace skills and professional competencies

among immersion students, a pattern corroborated by Barcibal and Chavez (2025) [5], who reported that engaged, well-instructed learners demonstrated greater accuracy, consistency, and professional readiness, suggesting that the immersion gap is as dispositional as it is technical.

Within the Home Economics strand specifically, research underscores both the potential and the persistent limitations of the current immersion model. De Guzman and Cristobal (2021) [9] found that many TVL-Home Economics graduates enter the labor market without fully industry-ready competencies, underscoring the need for stronger curriculum-labor market alignment, while Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] demonstrated that structured, well-supervised immersion placements were associated with stronger competence, engagement, and job readiness than placements lacking such support. Despite these growing insights, policy-based evaluations continue to reveal insufficient qualitative documentation of students' lived immersion experiences, particularly those of Technical Vocational Livelihood Home Economics students, with most existing studies focused on performance outcomes, employer feedback, or policy compliance rather than students' personal meaning making (DepEd, 2022; Alawin-Ligwang, 2025) [3, 12].

International literature affirms that understanding students' workplace learning experiences from their own perspective is essential for improving curriculum relevance, teaching approaches, and school-industry collaboration (Jackson, 2021; OECD, 2023) [19, 30], providing a compelling rationale for the present phenomenological study that centers on students' challenges, coping strategies, and insights as its primary subject of inquiry.

Though extensive literature exists on work immersion and work-integrated learning, there remains a noticeable lack of phenomenological studies that examine students' lived experiences, particularly within the Philippine TVL Home Economics context (Jackson, 2021; OECD, 2023) [19, 30]. Existing research largely emphasizes measurable outcomes and policy compliance, leaving students' subjective learning processes insufficiently explored.

More importantly, most available studies and policy-based evaluations are concentrated on public senior high schools, where work immersion programs are more widely documented and monitored. There is limited qualitative evidence that captures the experiences of TVL Home Economics students from private schools, despite differences in resources, industry partnerships, supervision practices, and curriculum implementation that may significantly shape immersion experiences (DepEd, 2022; Tengco, 2025) [12, 35]. This imbalance in the literature suggests that findings from public school settings may not fully represent the realities of students in private institutions.

The urgency of this study is driven by the growing demand for work-ready graduates and the need to continuously enhance TVL program implementation. Gaining a deeper understanding of students' experiences can provide timely and relevant evidence to address misalignment between school instruction and workplace practice, especially in local industries where TVL Home Economics students are placed (DepEd, 2022; Tengco, 2025) [12, 35].

This study aims to explore and describe the lived work immersion experiences of Grade 12 Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Home Economics students in a private school, with particular focus on the learning and training gap between school-based preparation and authentic industry practice, a dimension of the phenomenon that remains especially underexamined within private-school settings. Anchored in a phenomenological approach, the study does not seek to evaluate student performance but to illuminate the meaning and essential structures of the immersion experience as students themselves live it (van Manen, 1990; Adams & van Manen, 2023) [1, 40]. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the primary question: What challenges do TVL-Home Economics students encounter in applying school-based learning in

workplace settings during immersion? These challenges are recognized as both technical, rooted in gaps between school-simulated competency and industry-standard practice, and relational, arising from the social, emotional, and cultural demands of professional environments that schools cannot fully replicate (Billett, 2020; De Guzman & Cristobal, 2021) [6, 9].

Equally, the study pursues two interconnected objectives that move beyond the diagnosis of difficulty toward understanding how students respond and grow. It seeks to answer how TVL-Home Economics students cope with workplace demands and learning difficulties during immersion, recognizing coping not merely as survival but as an active, agentic dimension of workplace learning in which students draw on observation, mentoring relationships, and personal resilience to adapt to professional environments (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021; Ogilvie, Quosigk, & Gartmeier, 2021) [29, 33]. Finally, the study asks what insights or lessons TVL-Home Economics students gain from their work immersion experiences, attending to the realizations about professional identity, vocational commitment, and the realities of their chosen field that authentic industry exposure uniquely makes possible (Reyes & Abulencia, 2024; Guimba, 2019) [15, 32]. Together, these three objectives, understanding challenges, examining coping, and articulating insights, constitute a comprehensive phenomenological account of what it means to be a Grade 12 TVL-Home Economics student navigating the distance between school preparation and professional reality.

To authentically capture the essence of how Grade 12 TVL-Home Economics students experience their work immersion, this study adopts a qualitative phenomenological research design, which prioritizes the depth and lived reality of experience over statistical measurement (Creswell & Poth, 2021; van Manen, 1990) [8, 40]. This approach is particularly fitting because the study is concerned not with what students objectively performed during immersion but with how they subjectively perceived, interpreted, and were shaped by it. Data will be gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews and reflective journals from purposively selected TVL-Home Economics students who have completed their immersion placement, with interviews providing space for students to narrate their experiences in their own words while journals capture the ongoing, reflective dimensions of their meaning-making. The data from both instruments will then be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and essential meanings related to the challenges students encountered, the coping strategies they employed, and the professional insights they gained from the immersion experience (Smith & Kolb, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2021) [8, 34].

This study contributes to the global literature on work-integrated learning by providing qualitative, phenomenological insights into how students in developing educational contexts experience the school-to-workplace transition, a dimension that large-scale quantitative studies have consistently underrepresented (Jackson, 2021; OECD, 2023) [19, 30]. It further aligns with SDG 4 on Quality Education (United Nations Development Programme, 2023a) [38] and SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth (United Nations Development Programme, 2023b) [39], which call for vocational education that is relevant, equitable, and labor-market responsive (United Nations, 2015) [37]. Beyond academic contribution, the study affirms the social value of vocational education as a pathway to professional identity, personal dignity, and meaningful community participation.

At the local level, the findings offer evidence-based insights for schools, TVL teachers, curriculum developers, and industry partners to strengthen work immersion implementation and close the gap between school-taught competencies and industry expectations (DepEd, 2022; Guadalupe, 2024) [12, 13]. For policymakers, the study provides phenomenological depth to support a substantive review of the program's

design, duration, and quality standards. It also lays a qualitative foundation for future researchers exploring TVL education, work immersion effectiveness, and the school-to-work transition experiences of Senior High School learners in the Philippines.

METHOD

This section outlines the methodological framework that guided the study, covering the research design, participant selection, data collection procedures, and strategies for analysis and validation. The methodological decisions made were not chosen arbitrarily but were deliberately aligned with the nature of the research problem, the need to understand the work immersion experiences of Grade 12 Technical Vocational Livelihood Home Economics students, not through numbers and statistics, but through the personal accounts and lived realities of the students themselves.

Participants

The study included sixteen participants, six of whom took part in individual in-depth interviews (IDI) and ten in a focus group discussion (FGD). All participants were 18 years old at the time of data collection. Respondents are from the 3 different private schools in Davao City that offer the Technical Vocational Livelihood track and a strand of Home Economics. Among the IDI participants, two were female students from one private school, and two female and two male participants were from a second private school. The FGD, by contrast, was composed entirely of Grade 12 students from a third private school, with six female and four male participants. This composition reflected a purposive sampling approach that captured the lived experiences of both male and female Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Home Economics students across three private schools in Davao City, thereby providing a broader and more varied perspective on their work immersion experiences.

To gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, a total of 16 participants were purposively selected. This sample size is appropriate for phenomenological research, which emphasizes depth, richness, and meaning of lived experience rather than statistical generalization (Creswell & Poth, 2021; van Manen, 1990) [8, 40]. Because all participants are 18 years old and above, participants were given an informed consent form, which they signed, and only those who voluntarily agree to participate will be included in the study.

This study employed homogeneous purposive sampling to ensure that participants could provide rich, relevant, and experience-grounded accounts of the phenomenon under investigation. Homogeneous purposive sampling is appropriate in phenomenological research because it deliberately selects individuals who have direct personal experience with the phenomenon being studied, prioritizing informational depth over statistical representation (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Billett, 2020) [6, 8].

Participants were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) they are Grade 12 students enrolled in the TVL-Home Economics strand; (2) they have completed their required work immersion placement; (3) they are 18 years old and above; and (4) they voluntarily agree to participate. Students who have not completed immersion, are below 18 years old, or are enrolled in strands outside TVL-Home Economics were excluded.

To protect voluntariness and prevent undue influence in the school setting, recruitment was not conducted by teachers, advisers, immersion coordinators, or any person with authority over the students' grades, immersion evaluation, or school standing. Recruitment will be assisted by a non-teaching contact person recommended by the Research Coordinator. After approval from the school administration, the Research Coordinator or a designated non-teaching contact person may assist only in distributing the invitation letter

and study information sheet to eligible students. Interested students will then contact the researcher directly. This process is intended to ensure that no school authority will know who agreed, declined, or withdrew from participation.

Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The individual semi-structured interviews were conducted using a researcher-made interview guide based on the study's research questions and were evaluated by four panel validators who are experts in this study. After an evaluation and validation, the interview guide scored an overall average of 9 and a good rating to conduct the study. This method provides participants with a private and confidential space to narrate their personal experiences, challenges, coping strategies, and insights without peer influence and allows the researcher to gather rich, focused, and deeply personal phenomenological data.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) bring together small groups of participants, composed of 10, engaged in guided collective dialogue about their shared work immersion experiences. This method is particularly valuable in phenomenological inquiry as it allows participants to validate, expand upon, and nuance one another's experiences through social interaction, potentially surfacing collective meanings, common patterns, and shared insights that may not fully emerge in one-on-one interview settings (Kitzinger, 1995; Morgan, 1997) [20, 27].

Both the individual semi-structured interviews and the focus group discussions were conducted within the school premises, specifically in the school library or a quiet, inclusive room designated for the purpose. These venues have been selected to ensure a comfortable, accessible, and distraction-free environment for participants while remaining logistically feasible within the school setting. Although the data collection was take place on school grounds, measures will be taken to ensure that no school authority figure, including teachers, advisers, or immersion coordinators, will be present during or privy to the content of any interview or FGD session. This boundary is essential to preserving the psychological safety and expressive freedom of participants, enabling them to speak openly and honestly about their work immersion experiences without fear of academic or evaluative repercussions.

To further maintain the integrity and voluntariness of participation, participants were reminded of their right to withdraw at any point without consequence. All sessions were audio-recorded with the explicit informed consent of participants, and recordings were used solely for transcription and data analysis purposes. The identities of all participants were protected through the use of pseudonyms or coding systems throughout the entire research process, from data collection through to the final written report.

Materials and Instruments

Data were collected using a researcher-made, semi-structured interview guide, which was validated by four internal panel members and one external validator with expertise in the field and context. The instrument obtained an average rating of 9, described as good, indicating that the interview guide was suitable and ready for administration to the participants. The interview guide contains open-ended questions based on the study's research questions. It is designed to explore the participants' lived work immersion experiences, the challenges they encountered in applying school-based learning in workplace settings, the coping strategies they used, and the insights they gained from the experience (Jackson, 2021; OECD, 2023) [19, 30].

The instrument was developed through a careful review of related literature and was refined through consultation with three individuals knowledgeable in qualitative research and educational inquiry. Their feedback was used to improve the clarity, relevance, and alignment of the questions with the study's

objectives. Field notes were also maintained during interviews to document nonverbal cues and contextual observations that support data interpretation.

Design and Procedure

Qualitative research is used and applied in a form of inquiry that seeks to understand and interpret the meanings individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human phenomenon, focusing on the depth and richness of human experience within its natural context rather than numerical measurement (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) [8, 26]. Within this tradition, phenomenology stands as a distinct design rooted in the philosophical works of Husserl (1970) [18], who introduced the concept of returning "to the things themselves" to uncover the essence of human consciousness and experience, and later expanded by Heidegger (1962) [16] through the interpretive, or hermeneutic, dimension of lived experience. Building on these foundations, van Manen (1990) [40] developed phenomenology as a research methodology that describes the essential structures and meanings of a phenomenon as directly experienced by those who live it.

In this phenomenological study, the researcher served as the primary instrument of data collection, responsible for conducting the interviews and focus group discussion, facilitating the interactions, and interpreting the meanings embedded in participants' narratives (Creswell & Poth, 2021) [8]. As a graduate student and educator with professional ties to the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood track, the researcher acknowledged the potential for personal assumptions and prior experiences to influence the interpretation of data, and therefore practiced epoché, or bracketing, by consciously setting aside preconceived notions and biases in order to remain open to the participants' lived experiences as they were actually described (Husserl, 1970; van Manen, 1990) [18, 40]. Throughout the data gathering and analysis process, the researcher-maintained reflexivity by keeping a research journal to document personal reactions, assumptions, and decisions made during the study, thereby ensuring that the participants' voices, rather than the researcher's own perspectives, remained central to the findings. The researcher also upheld ethical responsibility by building rapport and trust with participants, ensuring their comfort and willingness to share honestly, while safeguarding their rights, confidentiality, and welfare throughout the research process.

Before data collection, permission was secured from the selected private school in Davao City, and ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC). All participants in the study are 18 years old or older, meaning they are not minors and can provide their own informed consent. The researcher explained the study in clear and understandable language, and participants were informed that participation was entirely voluntary. It was also explained to the participants that they may refuse and withdraw from participation without penalty, that it will not affect their grades, immersion evaluation, school standing, or relationship with the school.

Recruitment was conducted through a non-coercive process, with no teacher, adviser, immersion coordinator, or school personnel holding authority over participants involved in recruitment; instead, an approved school contact designated by the Research Coordinator, who did not exercise academic or evaluative authority, distributed invitation letters and information sheets to eligible students, and eligibility was confirmed only after students voluntarily expressed interest, thereby protecting their privacy and reducing perceived pressure to participate. Interviews were conducted in a quiet and private room within the school to ensure participants' comfort and safety, lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes each and conducted in English, Filipino/Tagalog, or the local vernacular depending on the participant's preferred language; with informed consent, interviews were audio-recorded for transcription accuracy, and

participants were informed that they could decline to answer any question, request a pause, reschedule, or discontinue participation at any time.

In this study, the researcher was responsible for the data collection process. This involved conducting the audio-recorded interviews with the participants, transcribing the recordings verbatim, and organizing the transcripts into a secure digital format. Once completed, the researcher submitted the prepared transcripts to the independent data analyst for thematic analysis.

The independent data analyst was responsible for analyzing the transcribed data using thematic analysis informed by phenomenological inquiry. This involved reading and rereading the transcripts to gain familiarity with the participants' accounts, identifying significant statements, generating initial codes, and clustering related meanings into themes. These themes were then developed into a coherent description of the participants' lived experiences, challenges, coping strategies, and insights during work immersion.

To ensure trustworthiness, the study observed the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Credibility was supported through member checking, wherein participants were invited to review summaries or interpretations of their responses to ensure accuracy. Dependability was strengthened through careful documentation of research procedures, coding processes, and theme development. Confirmability was supported through the maintenance of an audit trail and reflexive notes to monitor the researcher's assumptions and potential biases.

Transferability was addressed through rich and contextualized descriptions of the participants, setting, and findings, enabling readers to assess the applicability of the results to similar educational contexts. Before every interview began, participants were informed that if they felt uncomfortable, embarrassed, or experienced emotional distress during the session, the interview would immediately be paused, and they could choose to continue, skip the question, reschedule, or withdraw. If needed, the participant would have been referred to the school guidance office or another appropriate support service. Throughout the interviews conducted with all participants across the different schools, no distress incidents or adverse events occurred during the sessions.

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the study: all participants were 18 years old and above, ensuring no minors were involved, and written informed consent was obtained directly from each participant before data collection, with recruitment conducted independently of teachers, advisers, or any person with authority over participants' grades or immersion evaluation to safeguard voluntariness, and students were assured that participation would not affect their academic or immersion records. Privacy and confidentiality were maintained through the use of pseudonyms or code numbers, with real names of students, teachers, supervisors, schools, and partner establishments withheld from all transcripts, field notes, and the final manuscript, while identifying details were generalized or masked to minimize the risk of deductive identification given the small sample and localized setting. All data were securely stored in password-protected and, where possible, encrypted files accessible only to the researcher and research adviser, with audio recordings deleted following transcription verification and member checking, and anonymized records retained for five years in accordance with institutional policy before secure destruction.

Although the study posed minimal risk, participants could experience emotional discomfort or embarrassment when recounting immersion experiences, which was mitigated through private interviews, the freedom to skip questions or withdraw, and referral to the school guidance office as needed; the researcher held no teaching, supervisory, or evaluative authority over the participants, and any institutional relationship with the study site was disclosed to prevent coercion or undue influence. Ethical clearance

was secured from the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) under UMERC Approval No. 2026-256, and data collection commenced only after official approval had been granted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study, organized around three research questions: the challenges encountered by Grade 12 TVL–Home Economics students in applying school-based learning during work immersion, the coping strategies they employed, and the insights and lessons they derived from the experience. Thematic analysis of the IDI and FGD transcripts, conducted independently by a professional data analyst, generated 16 themes and 98 core ideas: five themes with 27 core ideas for Research Question 1 on the challenges, five themes with 33 core ideas for Research Question 2 on the Coping Mechanisms of the TVL Home Economics immersion students, and six themes with 38 core ideas for Research Question 3 on their Insights and Lessons they learned from their immersion program, with Workplace Staff Support (9 core ideas) and Personal Growth and Career Realization (8 core ideas) emerging as the most elaborated themes.

Table 1

Challenges of Technical Vocational Livelihood–Home Economics Students in Applying School-Based Learning During Work Immersion.

These findings addressed Research Question 1, which examined the challenges experienced by TVL-Home Economics students during their work immersion. Analysis of the participants' responses yielded five (5) major themes and twenty-seven (27) core ideas, as presented in the table below, followed by a discussion supported by the respondents' actual statements during the interviews.

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
Gap Between School Learning and Workplace Reality	Limited classroom exposure and practice	"Amm natudlo man po to pero kanang gamay lang limited lang ang time sa pag bed making." (FGD P1)
	Surface-level teaching compared to real workplace application	"Actually it was taught to us, but it was more on surface level lang na pagturo and pagdating ko sa workplace is parang nahirapan ako kasi hindi masyado akong knowledgeable." (FGD P3)
	Difference between simulation and real hotel standards	"Na orient man sa school but wala lang ko nag expect na sa hotel man gud namo kay duvet lang diay then abi nakog nay traditional… didto na realize nako na lahi jud diay sa hotel jud kaysa kanang ginatudlo sa school." (IDI P2)
	Lack of repeated hands-on exposure	"Natudlo sya sir more on makita lang nimo sya… naa syay hands on pero dili kaau permi ma practice sya." (FGD P4)
	Unfamiliar housekeeping procedures	"Akoang challenges didtoa sir kay unsaon pag proper beddings, unsaon pag proper ano sa walls unsaon pag mop." (IDI P5)
	Insufficient immersion duration	"Feeling nako dili enough ang 15 days." (IDI P4)
Technical and Operational Task Difficulties	Difficulty operating workplace machines	"Ako na assign man jud ko sa laundryshop tas wala koy experience kung unsaon pag operate sa mga machine." (IDI P3)

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
	Confusion in using laundry materials and machine settings	"Pag operate sa machine og sa pag butang sa sabon… naa may cup lahi2x butanganan sa downy og sabon." (IDI P6)
	Difficulty balancing trays and serving food	"Maglisud kag balance kay usually nay mga soup… lisud sya e balance kay isa ka hand and paspas among lihok." (FGD P7)
	Difficulty taking multiple customer orders	"Maglibog kinsay unahon sa ilaha." (FGD P7)
	Problems with bread and pastry production techniques	"Some techniques na dili tinuturo sa school at doon ko pa nalaman sa workplace." (FGD P3)
	Difficulty checking swimming pool pH level	"Ang pag check sa water sir sa swimming pool po kay wala pud sya na orient sa amoa." (FGD P5)
Adjustment to Workplace Pressure and Demands	Heavy workload and physical exhaustion	"Sa hotel kay murag bug at kaau sya trabahuon since bug at man pud ang mga beddings." (IDI P1)
	Pressure to work quickly	"Lisud sya kay kailangan paspas gud ang lihok." (FGD P2)
	Pressure from supervisors and senior staff	"Naay mga leader2x na mag tan aw sa imo mag bed making tas ma pressure ka." (FGD P5)
	Stress during rush hours	"Labaw na pag rush hour na daghan jud magsulod so paspas jud dapat ana." (FGD P7)
	Difficulty adapting to unfamiliar workplace systems	"At first wala ko kabalo… dili kaau ko familiar didto sa hotel." (IDI P1)
Communication and Customer Service Challenges	Difficulty communicating with guests	"Ang sa pagdawat sa guest, specially sa mga international guest." (FGD P2)
	Language barriers with foreign customers	"Ang uban costumer dili kabalo mo English so language barrier sir." (FGD P3)
	Shyness and lack of confidence when talking to customers	"Naglisud jud kog dish out… hinay akong tingog kay maulaw ko." (IDI P4)
	Nervousness in handling people and customers	"Ang ilahang personality kung amoa ba sila inga to murag dili pa namo siya ma handle." (FGD P9)
	Difficulty handling complaints and angry customers	"Labi na'y mga complaints sir kang suko na jud kaayo siya." (FGD P8)
	Feeling emotionally affected by customer comments	"Kami gihapoy ma-dutan… sakit man gud ang gina ingun, insult basa akoa lang." (FGD P8)
	Lack of orientation regarding actual tasks	"Wala pud sya na orient sa amoa." (FGD P5)

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
Lack of Readiness and Workplace Orientation	Students not fully prepared for assigned tasks	"Murag eready ang mga students… tagaan nilag readiness ang mga students ba." (IDI P3)
	Shock and adjustment upon entering workplace	"Pag sulod nako didto sa restaurant is wala jud ko kabalo sa akong buhaton." (IDI P4)
	Feeling pressured because assignments were unclear	"Kung wala sila mag ingun asa sila ma assign murag ma pressure sila." (IDI P4)

Gap Between School Learning and Workplace Reality. The most pervasive challenge reported by participants was the marked discrepancy between school-simulated instruction and the actual standards of professional practice. Students consistently described their classroom preparation as limited in scope and insufficient in depth. Participant encapsulated this tension and stated:

> "Actually, it was taught to us, but it was more on surface level > lang na pagturo and pagdating ko sa workplace is parang nahirapan ako > kasi hindi masyado akong knowledgeable" (FGD P3). > > Actually, it was taught to us, but it was more on a surface level of > teaching, and when I got to the workplace, I found it difficult > because I wasn't very knowledgeable" (FGD P3). > > "Na orient man sa school but wala lang ko nag expect na sa hotel man > gud namo kay duvet lang diay... didto na realize nako na lahi jud diay > sa hotel jud kaysa kanang ginatudlo sa school" (IDI P2). > > We were oriented in school, but I didn't expect that in the hotel, it > was just duvets... it was there that I realized it was really > different from what was being taught in school (IDI P2). > > "Feeling nako dili enough ang 15 days" (IDI P4). > > I feel like 15 days wasn't enough (IDI P4).

These findings resonate strongly with Experiential Learning Theory, which posits that meaningful competency development requires not merely exposure to concepts but sustained, cyclical engagement with authentic experiential tasks, a process that is disrupted when school instruction remains at the level of simulation rather than practice (Kolb & Kolb, 2020; Morris, 2020) [21, 28]. From a situated learning perspective, Billett (2020) [6] similarly argues that vocational knowledge is most effectively developed through authentic participation in real professional communities of practice, where learners engage with actual tools, standards, and social expectations. The gap documented here is consistent with Philippine-based findings by Guadalupe (2024) [13], who identified curriculum-workplace misalignment as a persistent and structural barrier in SHS work immersion, and with Tengco (2025) [35], whose policy analysis attributed continuing training gaps to the constrained 80-hour immersion requirement under DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017. Internationally, the OECD (2023) [30] has documented analogous patterns across TVET systems, noting that workplace learning outcomes are significantly diminished when the conditions of school-based practice fail to approximate the complexity and authenticity of professional environments.

Technical and Operational Task Difficulties. Participants reported substantial difficulties with the technical demands of their assigned immersion tasks. These included unfamiliarity with industrial laundry machines, as one participant stated:

> "Ako na assign man jud ko sa laundryshop tas wala koy experience > kung unsaon pag operate sa mga machine" (IDI P3), > > I was actually assigned to the laundry shop, but I had no experience > on how to operate the machines (IDI P3).

as well as challenges with tray-balancing in food service, bread and pastry production techniques not covered in school, and swimming pool pH-level monitoring. The specificity and breadth of these task-level difficulties suggest that the gap is not only conceptual but deeply operational, extending to the tools, materials, and procedural standards that define actual industry practice.

This pattern reflects what the literature characterizes as "competency shock", the experience of acute unpreparedness that TVL-Home Economics students in food and hospitality specializations report upon entry into commercial workplace environments (Barcibal & Chavez, 2025; De Guzman & Cristobal, 2021) [5, 9]. Cedefop (2020) [7] similarly identified technical skill gaps as one of three recurring dimensions of skill mismatch in vocational education systems, noting that these gaps are particularly acute where laboratory equipment in schools fails to approximate industry-standard machinery. Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] further demonstrated that task-level unpreparedness is consequential for learning: students assigned technically complex tasks for which they lack foundational competency tend to develop lower-order skills and reduced engagement compared to those who receive graduated task complexity aligned with their current level of preparation. The findings here affirm that technical task gaps are not merely inconveniences but structural impediments to the depth and quality of workplace learning.

Adjustment to Workplace Pressure and Demands. students described the intensity of workplace demands, in terms of pace, physical effort, and hierarchical pressure, as a significant source of stress and difficulty. Representative accounts include:

> "Sa hotel kay murag bug at kaau sya trabahuon since bug at man pud > ang mga beddings" (IDI P1); > > "In the hotel, the work felt quite heavy since the beddings were also > heavy" (IDI P1); > > "Labaw na pag rush hour na daghan jud magsulod so paspas jud dapat > ana" (FGD P7); > > Especially during rush hour when a lot of customers/guests come in, so > you really need to be fast (FGD P7); > > "Naay mga leader2x na mag tan aw sa imo mag bed making tas ma > pressure ka" (FGD P5). > > Some leaders watch over you while you're doing bed making, so you > feel pressured (FGD P5).

These accounts illustrate a form of contextual dislocation, students encountering, for the first time, the embodied, time-pressured, and socially supervised nature of professional work environments. Ogilvie et al. (2021) [29] documented that initial disorientation upon entering workplace learning environments is common among vocational students, but that structured mentoring significantly accelerates adaptation. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) [4], as operationalized by Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) [33], offers further insight: students who enter immersion with limited preparation and encounter early performance difficulties tend to experience reduced self-efficacy, which in turn diminishes the quality of attention and mentoring they receive from supervisors, a self-reinforcing cycle that narrows learning opportunities precisely when they are most needed. The pressure experiences described by participants are consistent with Tran and Nguyen's (2021) [36] ASEAN-wide finding that adaptability under pressure constitutes one of the most significant soft-skill deficits among TVET graduates, pointing to a systemic gap in pre-immersion preparation for the psychosocial demands of professional environments.

Communication and Customer Service Challenges. A fourth cluster of challenges centered on communication, particularly with guests in hospitality settings. Students articulated difficulties that were simultaneously linguistic, emotional, and interpersonal. Language barriers with foreign customers were prominently reported, Social anxiety compounded these difficulties, and most poignantly, students described the emotional toll of negative customer interactions. Respondents responds accordingly:

"Ang uban costumer dili kabalo mo English so language barrier sir" (FGD P3).

Some customers didn't know how to speak English, so there was a language barrier, sir (FGD P3).
"Naglisud jud kog dish out... hinay akong tingog kay maulaw ko" (IDI P4).
I really had a hard time with dish out... my voice was soft because I was shy (IDI P4).
"Kami gihapoy ma-dutan... sakit man gud ang gina ingun, insult basa akoa lang" (FGD P8).
"We were always the ones getting blamed... what was said was hurtful, it felt like an insult to me" (FGD P8).

These findings affirm the relational and affective dimensions of workplace learning documented in Philippine immersion research more broadly, namely, that the school-to-workplace gap is experienced not only as a technical deficit but as emotional and social dislocation within unfamiliar professional cultures (Ligawad Jr., 2025) [24]. Barcibal and Chavez (2025) [5] similarly found that industry supervisors prioritize professional readiness, including communication competence and composure under pressure, alongside technical proficiency, suggesting that the communication challenges documented here carry significant consequences for students' perceived readiness from an employer's perspective. Given the predominantly female enrollment profile of Home Economics programs, these customer-facing demands may carry particular salience for how students in this strand experience and cope with immersion.

Lack of Readiness and Workplace Orientation. Participants also reported feeling inadequately oriented to the specific tasks and expectations of their assigned workplaces. Accounts such as:
"Pag sulod nako didto sa restaurant is wala jud ko kabalo sa akong buhaton" (IDI P4)
When I entered the restaurant, I really didn't know what to do. (IDI P4)
"Kung wala sila mag ingun asa sila ma assign murag ma pressure sila" (IDI P4)
If they don't tell them where they will be assigned, it seems they get pressured. (IDI P4)

Illustrate that students often entered their placements without a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities, or the operational context in which they would be working. One participant called explicitly for improved pre-immersion readiness:
"Murag eready ang mga students... tagaan nilag readiness ang mga students ba" (IDI P3).
It's like the students should be made ready... they need to give the students readiness. (IDI P3)

These accounts are consistent with De Guzman and Cristobal (2021) [9], who identified weak school-industry coordination and insufficient pre-immersion preparation as persistent barriers for TVL-Home Economics graduates, and with Tengco (2025) [35], who found that fragmented placement and monitoring systems leave students without adequate onboarding at their assigned sites. Guile and Unwin (2020) [14] argue that workplace orientation is not merely logistical but pedagogically foundational: the sense of belonging and role clarity that adequate orientation provides is a prerequisite for the quality of participation through which genuine workplace learning occurs. The absence of systematic orientation documented here represents a critical gap in both school-side preparation and industry-side reception of immersion students.

Across the five themes, the challenges experienced by Grade 12 TVL-Home Economics students converge on a single underlying reality: the school-to-workplace transition exposes a multidimensional gap that is simultaneously curricular, technical, psychosocial, and relational. Consistent with Experiential and Situated Learning Theory, students' difficulties intensified wherever school-based instruction stopped at simulation rather than authentic practice (Kolb & Kolb, 2020; Billett, 2020) [6, 21], while the pressure, communication, and orientation gaps documented here reflect the self-efficacy and reciprocal-determinism dynamics that Bandura's (1986) [4] Social Cognitive Theory predicts will emerge when learners enter demanding environments underprepared (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021) [33]. Taken

together, these themes indicate that the immersion gap is not attributable to any single deficiency but to a structural misalignment between school preparation and industry reality that manifests differently depending on task, workplace, and student, a pattern consistent with prior Philippine and international TVET research (Tengco, 2025; Cedefop, 2020; OECD, 2023) [7, 30, 35].

Table 2

Summary of Themes and Core Ideas on How TVL-HE Immersion Students Coped with Workplace Demands and Learning Difficulties.

These findings addressed Research Question 2, which examined how TVL-Home Economics students coped with workplace demands and learning difficulties during their work immersion. Analysis of the participants' responses yielded five (5) major themes and thirty-three (33) core ideas, as presented in the table below, followed by a discussion supported by the respondents' actual statements during the interviews.

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
Managing Time and Workplace Demands	Completing tasks within strict time requirements	"Kailangan jud sya himuon jud sya on time kay kung pag ma out natong guest kailangan najud to sya limpyuhan para ang next guest kay mag stay napud sya." (IDI P1)
	Need for fast work performance	"On time.. then dapat dali dapat buhaton ang trabaho." (IDI P2)
	Handling large workloads with limited workers	"21 ka guest na out sa villa Carmelita sir then gamay rami ato nga nag immersion." (FGD P3)
	Pressure from simultaneous customer demands	"Mahuman mig serve sa isa naa napuy padulong isa." (FGD P7)
	Adapting to physically demanding and continuous work	"100 pcs juice tas upat rami ka members ato… magdinali jud ka, paspas ang lihok." (FGD P1)
	Coping with time pressure during housekeeping tasks	"15 ka rooms among gilimpyohan… duha lang mi so mag pinaspasay jud." (FGD P5)
Learning Through Observation and Adaptation	Observing workers and supervisors to learn tasks	"Mag observe sa mga workers." (IDI P1)
	Learning proper workplace procedures through observation	"Mag observe po sa ilang ginabuhat para makabalo ko sa proper way sa bed making." (FGD P2)
	Gradual adaptation through repeated exposure	"While observing maghimo ko sa butang na ilang ginahimo then padugay og padugay makasabot naman ko." (IDI P7)
	Using observation to improve technical skills	"Observe how the main baker makes the pandesal." (FGD P4)
	Applying learned techniques independently	"Observe permi para kung ikaw nalang isa magbuhat ana nga thing kabalo ka unsaon pagbuhat." (FGD P10)

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
Workplace Staff Support	Asking staff or supervisors for help	"Nag ask mig help sa isa ka staff didtoa." (IDI P3)
	Seeking clarification to avoid mistakes	"Mag ask ko sa staff kung unsaon ba na para ma sanay nako sya." (IDI P4)
	Learning correct procedures from supervisors	"Nag ask mi didto sa staff or supervisor." (IDI P5)
	Receiving direct guidance during tasks	"Kung naa miy mali na mabuhat iyaha ming guide kung unsaon jud ang tama." (IDI P5)
	Depending on experienced staff for support	"Staff lang jud po." (IDI P3)
	Asking for critiques and feedback	"Naga ask ako og opinions or help kung need nako og critiques sa ako ginabuhat." (FGD P4)
	Guidance from workplace staff	"Ang mga staff po kay sila man guy kabalo unsay buhaton namo." (FGD P1)
	Continuous supervision and mentoring	"Naa jud miy kauban na staff." (IDI P5)
	Support from supervisors during difficult tasks	"Kung maglisud ko maka reach out ko sa iyaha then ginatabangan dayun ko niya." (FGD P6)
Peer and Teacher Support	Working together to complete tasks faster	"Teamwork og faster lang jud ka sa imong lihok." (FGD P1)
	Helping each other during demanding situations	"Kami nalang tulo mag uban… naga tinabangay mi." (FGD P5)
	Peer collaboration in service tasks	"Kung mag serve ko dapat katong kauban nako kay padulong na sya para paspas ang phase sa pag serve." (FGD P7)
	Learning from classmates and co-immersion students	"Mangutana sa ila based pud sa ilang experience from other areas." (FGD P5)
	Support from teammates and colleagues	"Ang team mates ang amo kauban kay kami man jud magtinabangay didto." (FGD P9)
	Learning support from workplace colleagues	"Mga colleagues nako sa workplace… dako kaau sila'g tabang." (FGD P5)
	Assistance from immersion teachers and major subject teachers	"Ang gitudlo sa among major teacher." (IDI P2)
Confidence, Motivation, and Self-Discipline	Becoming more focused and disciplined	"Gi focus nako akong sarili naa ko sa work immersion and need po e on time nako akong sarili." (IDI P2)
	Building confidence through practice and repetition	"I had at least 50 tries para ma perfect ang pag make sa pandesal." (FGD P4)

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
	Becoming independent in performing tasks	"Para dili nako mag ask nilag help kay makabalo nako unsay buhaton." (IDI P4)
	Using initiative and common sense	"Dala common sense na lang po para dili sige pangutana." (FGD P9)
	Desire to show responsibility and adaptability	"Gusto jud nako mapakita sa gi immersion na responsible jud ko na kaya nako mag adapt." (IDI P7)
	Self-motivation and personal effort	"Akong kaugalingon rapud kay easy raman sya nga challenge." (FGD P8)

The first theme is Managing Time and Workplace Demands. Students developed practical strategies to cope with the fast-paced and physically demanding nature of their placements. Managing time and completing tasks within strict operational requirements emerged as a primary adaptation. Participants described adjusting their pace to meet workplace rhythms:

"On time.. then dapat dali dapat buhaton ang trabaho" (IDI P2)

On time... then the work should be done quickly." (IDI P2)

"Magdinali jud ka, paspas ang lihok" (FGD P1).

You really have to hurry; your movements must be fast. (FGD P1)

Students also found ways to distribute labor efficiently under resource constraints: "15 ka rooms among gilimpyohan... duha lang mi so mag pinaspasay jud" (FGD P5).

We cleaned 15 rooms... there were only two of us, so we really had to work fast. (FGD P5)

This dimension of coping reflects what Morris (2020) [28] and Kolb and Kolb (2020) [21] describe as the active experimentation phase of experiential, translating accumulated observations and corrections into deliberate behavioral adjustments. It also reflects the kind of productive agency that Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) [33] associate with growing self-efficacy: as students developed greater familiarity with the operational demands of their placements, their sense of control over their performance improved, enabling them to engage more strategically with the pace and volume of work required.

Learning Through Observation and Adaptation. Observation emerged as a central and self-directed learning strategy. Students described watching supervisors and experienced workers carefully to acquire skills that were not formally taught:

"Mag observe sa mga workers" (IDI P1)

"Observing the workers." (IDI P1)

"While observing maghimo ko sa butang na ilang ginahimo then padugay og padugay makasabot naman ko" (IDI P7).

While observing, I do the things that they do, then little by little I come to understand. (IDI P7)

This observational learning was progressive, with students initially watching, then imitating, and eventually applying skills independently:

"Observe permi para kung ikaw nalang isa magbuhat ana nga thing kabalo ka unsaon pagbuhat" (FGD P10).

Always observe so that when you're the one doing that thing by yourself, you'll know how to do it. (FGD P10)

This coping strategy is directly explained by Bandura's (1986) [4] social cognitive framework, which identifies observational learning, the acquisition of behaviors by watching and internalizing the actions of models as a fundamental mechanism of skill development in social contexts. Ogilvie et al. (2021) [29] corroborate this, finding that vocational students who actively engaged in structured observation during placement adapted significantly more rapidly than those who did not. Billett (2020) [6] further theorizes that legitimate peripheral participation, the gradual movement from observation to autonomous performance within communities of practice, is the core process through which workplace learning deepens. The observation-based coping documented here thus reflects a sophisticated, if informal, learning strategy that students developed in response to the absence of more explicit scaffolding.

Workplace Staff Support. Seeking assistance from supervisors and experienced workplace staff was a widely reported and highly valued coping strategy. Students consistently described turning to staff when uncertain or struggling:

"Nag ask mig help sa isa ka staff didtoa" (IDI P3)

We asked for help from one of the staff there. (IDI P3)

"Kung naa miy mali na mabuhat iyaha ming guide kung unsaon jud ang tama" (IDIP5)

If we made a mistake, they would guide us on how to do it correctly. (IDI P5)

"Kung maglisud ko maka reach out ko sa iyaha then ginatabangan dayun ko niya"(FGD P6).

If I have difficulty, I can reach out to them, and then they help me right away. (FGD P6)

The availability and responsiveness of workplace mentors emerged as a critical factor in whether students were able to learn from and through their difficulties.

These findings align with Guile and Unwin's (2020) [14] argument that the quality of mentoring, defined not only by its formal provision but by its accessibility, responsiveness, and task-specificity, is among the most significant determinants of vocational learning depth during workplace placements. Guimba (2019) [15] similarly found that self-efficacy and confidence grew through the combined effect of practical exposure and social support among immersion students, mirroring the mediating role mentor support played between initial feelings of competency inadequacy and the gradual growth of confidence reported here. Dela Cruz and Permejo (2020) [10] documented the complementary perspective from the industry side, noting that when students arrive with significant skill gaps, the supervisory burden falls disproportionately on workplace staff, a dynamic that underscores the importance of improving pre-immersion preparation to enable more productive mentoring relationships.

Peer and Teacher Support. Collaboration with co-immersion peers emerged as another significant coping resource. Students described relying on teamwork to manage workloads and sharing experiential knowledge across different placement areas, and the role of subject teachers was also acknowledged

"Teamwork og faster lang jud ka sa imong lihok" (FGD P1)

Teamwork, your movements really become faster. (FGD P1)

"Mangutana sa ila based pud sa ilang experience from other areas" (FGD P5).

I ask them, based also on their experience from other areas. (FGD P5)

"Ang gitudlo sa among major teacher" (IDI P2)

The teaching from our major teacher. (IDI P2)

Suggesting that school-based instruction functioned as a latent resource that students drew upon during immersion, even when its direct applicability was limited.

Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] identified peer collaboration as a recurring and consequential coping resource in TVL immersion narratives, linking it to both emotional resilience and the consolidation of vocational identity. Wenger's (1998) [41] community of practice framework provides a theoretical basis for understanding this dynamic: co-immersion peers constitute an informal community within the workplace learning environment, through which shared experiences are processed, competencies are cross-validated, and collective meaning-making occurs. These informal learning communities are particularly consequential in contexts where formal mentoring is inconsistent or insufficient, functioning as a compensatory resource that sustains engagement and reduces isolation.

Confidence, Motivation, and Self-Discipline. Internally driven coping strategies, including self-motivation, self-discipline, and the deliberate cultivation of independence, were consistently reported by participants. Students described consciously working to build confidence through repetition and initiative:

"I had at least 50 tries para ma perfect ang pag make sa pandesal" (FGD P4)

I had at least 50 tries to perfect the making of pandesal. (FGD P4)

"Gusto jud nako mapakita sa gi immersion na responsible jud ko na kaya nako mag adapt" (IDI P7).

I really wanted to show at the immersion site that I am responsible and capable of adapting." (IDI P7)

One participant articulated a commitment to reducing dependence on > others: > > "Para dili nako mag ask nilag help kay makabalo nako unsay > buhaton" (IDI P4) > > So that I wouldn't have to ask them for help, because I would know > what to do. (IDI P4)

These strategies reflect the agentic dimension of workplace learning that Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) [33] associate with self-regulated learning and growing self-efficacy. Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] found that TVL students who overcame immersion challenges through sustained personal effort demonstrated stronger post-immersion vocational commitment and engagement, suggesting that the process of coping itself, when motivated by genuine professional aspiration, constitutes a formative experience that deepens occupational identity. This finding has direct implications for pre-immersion programming: interventions that cultivate self-efficacy and professional motivation prior to placement may significantly enhance students' capacity to activate internal coping strategies when workplace demands intensify.

Across the five coping themes, a consistent pattern emerges: TVL-Home Economics students respond to the immersion gap not as passive recipients of difficulty but as active, resourceful learners who draw on time-management strategies, observational learning, workplace mentoring, peer solidarity, and internally driven motivation to bridge what school preparation left incomplete. This agentic profile aligns with the active-experimentation phase of Kolb and Kolb's (2020) [21] experiential learning cycle and with Bandura's (1986) [4] emphasis on observational learning and self-efficacy as engines of skill acquisition, while the centrality of staff and peer support reflects Billett's (2020) [6] and Wenger's (1998) [41] accounts of learning as participation within a community of practice. That students were able to construct these coping strategies largely on their own initiative, rather than through structured school- or industry-provided scaffolding, underscores both their resilience and the continuing need for more deliberate pre-immersion and in-placement support systems.

Table 3

Summary of Themes and Core Ideas on Insights and Lessons Gained by TVL- HE Immersion Students from Their Work Immersion Experiences

These findings addressed Research Question 3, which examined the insights and lessons TVL-Home Economics students gained from their work immersion experiences. Analysis of the participants' responses

yielded six (6) major themes and thirty-three (33) core ideas, as presented in the table below, followed by a discussion supported by the respondents' actual statements during the interviews.

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
Reality of Work Life	Real life and work are tiring	"Mas kapoy jud ang kuan kung makalingkawas naka or maka graduate naka… mas kapoy jud diay ang real-life." (IDI P1)
	Work is different from expectations	"Lahi diay akong expectations before sa work og kanang naa na diay ka sa industry." (IDI P3)
	Nothing is easy in life and work	"Wala juy sayon sa kinabuhi… lisud jud diay sya, dili sya lalim na trabaho." (FGD P4)
	Behind good service is hard work	"Didto na open akong eye nga ing ato jud diay ka lisud behind sa gwapo nimo nga experience." (FGD P5)
	Reality of work can be exhausting	"Didto na hit ko sa realidad nga grabe jud diay kakapoy ang kinabuhi." (FGD P9)
Work Discipline and Time Management	Importance of being serious at work	"Dapat sa work seryoso ra jud, like magtarong jud since lahi ra jud ang trabaho." (IDI P2)
	Learning time management and hard work	"Unsaon nimo pag manage sa imong time bago ka mag OJT… kay magamit man gud na nimo sa imuhang pag work soon." (IDI P4)
	Being on time to avoid disappointing customers	"Be on time lang jud… once dili nimo na makuan murag ma disappoint imong customer." (FGD P1)
	Patience in doing difficult work	"Be patient jud always… permi man ka mamali… pasensya lang jud." (FGD P2)
	Patience during rush hour and many customers	"Need jud nimo og patience maskin unsa pa kalisud, maskin unsa pa kadaghan ang customers." (FGD P7)
Technical Skills and Workplace Learning	Learning proper bed making	"Ang na learn jud nako sir nhu, is unsaon jud pag proper beddings sa room sir." (IDI P5)
	Learning folding and machine operation	"Sa pagpilo og sa pag operate sa machine, sa among balay lahi man magpilo, lahi pud sila didtoa." (IDI P6)
	Improved knowledge in major field	"Mas nidaghan jud akong alam sa akong major." (IDI P1)
	Improved baking and bed-making skills	"Naging knowledgeable po ako ana nga stuff kay nag-improve po akong skills sa pag-bake and sa pag-bed-making po." (FGD P2)
	Learning workplace systems through experience	"Sa sige nakog kuan didto, like naanad napud ko didto." (FGD P8)
Communication and Help-Seeking	Asking help is important	"Kung dili ka makig communicate sa lain sir labi nag kinahanglan nimog tabang sir, louy jud ka sa tinuod na kinabuhi." (FGD P3)

Themes	Core Ideas	Actual Answers with Participant Codes
	Do not be shy to ask questions	"Dili maulaw para makasabot gani ka sa tanan." (IDI P2)
	Seeking help when struggling	"Dapat mag seek jud kag help kung kinsay maduolan nimo, duol jud, ayaw kaulaw." (IDI P3)
	Asking help is not a weakness	"You really have to ask or really reach out to people… and it's not a weakness when asking for help." (FGD P4)
	Guidance is needed to avoid mistakes	"Lisud jud diay pag walay mag guide sa imuha, kailangan jud nimo guide para tarong imong pag trabaho and walay mali." (FGD P6)
Workplace Perspective and Customer Service	Learning how to talk to customers	"Unsaon nako pag talk sa customer, unsaon pag serve… ayaw mo kaulaw kay magamit man gihapon na ninyo." (IDI P4)
	Understanding different customer personalities	"Mas na experience sa skills sa akong pag-communicate sa customers nga lahi-lahi og ugali ang mga customers." (IDI P6)
	Handling customers with patience	"Naka encounter ko customer nga murag highbloodon… akong gibuhat lang is magpataas og pasensya." (FGD P8)
	Workplace staff may be different from first impressions	"Abi nakog stricto po ang mga staff… pero after ato na realize nako na dili diay sila ing ato." (FGD P10)
	Communication between staff and manager is needed	"Need jud diay og communication between the staff and the manager po." (FGD P7)
Personal Growth and Career Realization	Increased confidence	"Nag-grow sa akoa, sir, kay akong confidence, especially nagamit nako siya." (FGD P3)
	Trusting oneself	"Nag grow… pag trust sa akoang sarili, pag trust jud sa akong sarili." (FGD P1)
	Becoming more independent and punctual	"Na change pud nako, ma independent po at the same time and be on time at the workplace." (IDI P2)
	Improved attitude and accountability	"I learned how to ask help… learned to be more sociable… I also learned how to take accountability." (FGD P4)
	Learning kindness and confidence	"Dapat maging kind jud ka every person na imo makit-an… then isa pa is confident sa the way ka muatubang sa tao." (FGD P9)
	Clarifying future career plans	"Makaingon ka nga dili siya for introvert… if mag-ulaw2x ka ma-close kag opportunity." (FGD P5)
	Pursuing the chosen field	"Gusto pa nako e-pursue og e-go jud akoang…" (IDI P2)
	Realizing another career path	"Sa akong future makita nako na dili jud para sa akoa… ang gusto jud nako, kato jud ang future na career." (IDI P5)

Reality of Work Life. A foundational insight shared across participants was a deepened and often sobering understanding of professional life. Students reflected that work was substantially more demanding than their pre-immersion expectations had suggested:

"Lahi diay akong expectations before sa work og kanang naa na diay ka sa industry" (IDI P3)

My expectations about work were really different once I was already in the industry. (IDI P3)

"Wala juy sayon sa kinabuhi... lisud jud diay sya, dili sya lalim na trabaho" (FGD P4).

Nothing is really easy in life... It's truly difficult; work is not easy. (FGD P4)

Several participants articulated what one described as a critical consciousness of the labor behind professional service:

"Didto na open akong eye nga ing ato jud diay ka lisud behind sa gwapo nimo nga experience" (FGD P5).

That's when my eyes were opened to how difficult it really is behind your seemingly beautiful experience. (FGD P5)

This awakening to the realities of work is consistent with the pattern of vocational identity formation documented in Philippine TVL immersion research more broadly (Ligawad Jr., 2025; Reyes & Abulencia, 2024) [24, 32], specifically, the movement from an idealized or abstract conception of professional practice toward an embodied, experientially grounded understanding of what work in one's chosen field actually involves. Jackson (2021) [19] argues that this kind of reality-testing is one of the most distinctive and irreplaceable contributions of work-integrated learning: it produces a form of professional knowledge, the knowledge of what professional practice is actually like, that no amount of classroom instruction can substitute.

Work Discipline and Time Management. Participants consistently articulated the centrality of discipline, punctuality, and patience as professional values that immersion had concretized for them. Participants noted:

"Dapat sa work seryoso ra jud, like magtarong jud since lahi ra jud ang trabaho" (IDI P2)

At work, you really have to be serious, like doing things properly, since work is really different. (IDI P2)

"Need jud nimo og patience maskin unsa pa kalisud, maskin unsa pa kadaghan ang customers" (FGD P7).

You really need patience no matter how difficult it gets, no matter how many customers there are. (FGD P7)

These were not merely behavioral lessons but dispositional shifts, recognitions that professional competency is as much a matter of character and attitude as of technical skill.

Barcibal and Chavez (2025) [5] documented that industry supervisors in food service and hospitality rank professional readiness, encompassing punctuality, work ethic, and positive attitude, alongside technical proficiency, when evaluating immersion students. The internalization of these dispositional values during immersion thus represents precisely the kind of formation that employers most value, and that is least replicable through school-based instruction alone. Guile and Unwin (2020) [14] theorize that the authentic stakes and social accountability of workplace participation are what make dispositional learning possible: students behave professionally not merely because they are instructed to but because professional behavior is functionally required for survival and acceptance within the workplace community.

Technical Skills and Workplace Learning. Despite initial difficulties, participants reported significant technical skill development across their immersion specializations. Students documented learning proper bed-making procedures, laundry machine operation, bakery techniques, and workplace systems:

"Naging knowledgeable po ako ana nga stuff kay nag-improve po akong skills sa pag-bake and sa pag-bed-making po" (FGD P2)

I became knowledgeable about those things because my skills in baking and bed- making improved. (FGD P2)

"Sa sige nakog kuan didto, like naanad napud ko didto" (FGD P8).

"From doing it repeatedly there, I eventually got used to it." (FGD P8)

This progression, from initial unpreparedness to functional competency, illustrates the transformative potential of sustained workplace exposure when students are allowed to engage with tasks repeatedly over time.

Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] demonstrated that graduates who experienced structured, mentoring-rich immersion placements achieved significantly higher competence and job-readiness ratings than those who did not, underscoring the long-term labor market consequences of immersion quality. Kolb and Kolb (2020) [21] explain this progression through the experiential learning cycle: meaningful skill development occurs as students move iteratively through concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, a cycle that is activated and sustained precisely by the authentic, consequence-laden nature of workplace learning environments.

Communication and Help-Seeking. A striking and recurring insight concerned the importance of actively seeking help and communicating openly with supervisors and colleagues. Students reflected that overcoming the initial reluctance to ask questions was a critical turning point in their immersion experience:

"Kung dili ka makig communicate sa lain sir labi nag kinahanglan nimog tabang sir, louy jud ka sa tinuod na kinabuhi" (FGD P3)

If you don't communicate with others, especially when you need help, you'll really struggle in real life. (FGD P3)

"You really have to ask or really reach out to people... and it's not a weakness when asking for help" (FGD P4).

These reflections signal a meaningful cognitive reframing, from perceiving help-seeking as a marker of incompetence to recognizing it as a professional competency in its own right.

This insight aligns with Ogilvie et al.'s (2021) [29] finding that students who actively seek mentoring during workplace placement adapt significantly faster than those who learn through observation alone. Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] similarly documented that competence and confidence grew most meaningfully among immersion students who developed the social competency to engage with supervisors and peers as learning resources. From a social cognitive standpoint, Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) [33] argue that help-seeking is a self-regulated learning strategy, one that reflects not weakness but metacognitive awareness of one's own learning needs. The cultivation of this competency during immersion has implications not only for workplace performance but for lifelong professional development.

Workplace Perspective and Customer Service. Participants emerged from immersion with a more nuanced understanding of customer service as a complex, socially situated, and emotionally demanding professional domain. They described learning to handle difficult customers with patience, developing awareness of diverse customer personalities, and recognizing the importance of staff-management communication. The following are the participants' responses:

"Naka encounter ko customer nga murag highbloodon... akong gibuhat lang is magpataas og pasensya" (FGD P8)

I encountered a customer who seemed like they had high blood pressure [was easily angered]... what I did was just increase my patience. (FGD P8)

"Mas na experience sa skills sa akong pag-communicate sa customers nga lahilahi og ugali ang mga customers" (IDI P6)

I gained more experience in my skills in communicating with customers, since customers have different personalities. (IDI P6)

"Need jud diay og communication between the staff and the manager po" (FGD P7).

There really needs to be communication between the staff and the manager. (FGD P7)

These insights reflect the relational learning dimension that Billett (2020) [6] identifies as central to vocational formation, the recognition that professional competency is enacted not merely through technical skill but through the navigation of complex interpersonal and organizational relationships. Tran and Nguyen (2021) [36] documented that employer across ASEAN consistently identify communication and customer-handling adaptability as among the most critical and most frequently deficient competencies among TVET graduates, lending particular practical significance to the gains reported here. The fact that students derived these insights from direct experience with challenging customer interactions, rather than through classroom role-play, further affirms the irreplaceable pedagogical value of authentic workplace exposure.

Personal Growth and Career Realization. Perhaps the most consequential insights concerned participants' own sense of self and professional identity. Students described growth in confidence, independence, accountability, and social openness. Immersion also prompted meaningful career reflection, with some students reaffirming their vocational direction and others reconsidering theirs:

"Nag-grow sa akoa, sir, kay akong confidence, especially nagamit nako siya" (FGD P3)

It grew in me, sir, my confidence, especially since I got to use it. (FGD P3)

"I learned how to ask help... learned to be more sociable... I also learned how to take accountability" (FGD P4).

"Gusto pa nako e-pursue og e-go jud akoang..." (IDI P2),

I still want to pursue and really go for my... (IDI P2)

"Sa akong future makita nako na dili jud para sa akoa... ang gusto jud nako, kato jud ang future na career" (IDI P5).

For my future, I see that it's really not for me... what I really want is a future career [for me]. (IDI P5)

Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] documented that students who overcame immersion challenges demonstrated stronger vocational commitment and engagement, while Guimba (2019) [15] found that confidence and self-efficacy grew most substantially through the combined effect of practical exposure and social support. Given the predominantly female composition of the present study's participant group, these confidence and commitment gains may carry particular significance for a strand in which enrollment skews female. Collectively, these growth trajectories affirm Jackson's (2021) [19] argument that work-integrated learning is not merely a mechanism for skill transfer but a formative experience that shapes professional identity, dispositional readiness, and career conviction in ways that no other educational modality can replicate. The career reorientation reported by some participants further illustrates the program's role in enabling informed vocational decision-making, a function that has direct implications for reducing occupational mismatch and improving long-term labor market outcomes.

Together, the six insight themes reveal that the immersion experience, despite the difficulties it exposes, produces a distinctive and durable form of learning that classroom instruction alone cannot replicate.

Students emerged with a more realistic understanding of work-life, stronger work discipline and time-management habits, tangible technical skill gains, a reframed view of help-seeking as a professional competency rather than a weakness, a more mature grasp of customer service as relational labor, and, most consequentially, measurable growth in confidence, independence, and vocational clarity. This progression mirrors the full arc of Kolb and Kolb's (2020) [21] experiential learning cycle, from concrete experience through reflection to active application, and confirms Jackson's (2021) [19] contention that authentic work-integrated learning shapes professional identity in ways that performance metrics alone cannot capture. Read together with the challenges and coping mechanisms reported under RQ1 and RQ2, these insights indicate that the same immersion gap that produces difficulty is also the mechanism through which meaningful professional formation occurs, provided that students receive at least some baseline mentoring and orientation.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The implications drawn from the study's findings on the work immersion experiences of Grade 12 TVL-Home Economics students situating these implications within the study's guiding theoretical framework of Experiential Learning Theory, Situated Learning Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory. This discusses the practical significance of the results for schools and TVL teachers, industry partners, and policymakers, followed by recommendations for future research directions that could widen and extend the scope and methodological reach of the present study. The concluding remarks reflect on the broader meaning of the study's findings for the improvement of the work immersion program.

Implications for Practice

The challenges, coping mechanisms, and insights reported under RQ1 through RQ3 carry direct implications for the stakeholders responsible for designing and delivering the TVL-Home Economics work immersion program. For schools and TVL teachers, the findings underscore the urgent need for enhanced pre-immersion preparation that goes beyond surface-level skill instruction to include sustained hands-on practice, industry-standard equipment exposure, and explicit development of communication and help-seeking competencies. For industry partners, they highlight the importance of structured workplace orientation, accessible mentoring, and graduated task complexity as conditions that determine whether immersion produces genuine professional formation or merely routine task performance.

For policymakers, they provide phenomenological depth to support a substantive review of the program's duration, quality standards, and school-industry coordination mechanisms, particularly the 80-hour minimum requirement, which multiple participants and aligned studies (Tengco, 2025) [35] have identified as insufficient for meaningful competency development. Taken together, these practice-level implications affirm that closing the immersion gap is not a matter of eliminating difficulty but of ensuring students enter it adequately prepared, are supported through it by responsive mentoring, and are given enough time and structure to convert difficulty into durable professional learning. These implications follow directly from the study's theoretical framework: Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb & Kolb, 2020) [21] implies that schools must supply authentic, reflection-rich practice rather than simulation alone; Situated Learning Theory (Billett, 2020; Lave & Wenger, 1991) [6, 22] implies that industry partners must provide legitimate participation and graduated task complexity within real communities of practice; and Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021) [4, 33] implies that both schools

and workplaces share responsibility for protecting students' self-efficacy through early, well-scaffolded success rather than premature exposure to tasks beyond their competency.

The present study offers a productive foundation for subsequent inquiry, yet it also delineates clear boundaries that future researchers are well-positioned to extend. As a phenomenological study conducted within a single private school in Davao City, its findings illuminate the depth of lived experience within a specific institutional and geographic context but do not claim statistical representativeness across the broader population of TVL-Home Economics students. Future researchers are therefore encouraged to pursue mixed-methods designs that integrate the phenomenological depth demonstrated here with large-scale quantitative measurement of immersion quality, competency outcomes, and labor market transitions, an approach that would enable both the testing of the thematic patterns identified in this study and the generation of findings with greater cross-contextual applicability (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Jackson, 2021) [8, 19].

Comparative studies are particularly warranted. Research that systematically contrasts the immersion experiences of students across public and private schools, across urban and rural placement sites, and across different TVL specializations within the Home Economics strand would substantially enrich the existing literature, which has thus far disproportionately documented public-school contexts (DepEd, 2022; Tengco, 2025) [12, 35]. Gendered analyses also merit deliberate attention: the present study's predominantly female participant profile is consistent with national enrollment patterns in Home Economics programs, yet the gendered dimensions of immersion experience, particularly around confidence, anxiety, and customer-facing labor, remain undertheorized in the Philippine context and warrant dedicated inquiry. Future researchers might also examine the long-term consequences of immersion quality on post-school employment trajectories through longitudinal tracer studies, building on the work of Reyes and Abulencia (2024) [32] and responding to the OECD's (2023) [30] call for stronger evidence linking work-based learning experiences to sustainable labor market outcomes.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study has operationalized Experiential Learning Theory, Situated Learning Theory, and Social Cognitive Theory as complementary lenses for understanding the immersion gap. Future researchers may consider extending this theoretical architecture by integrating Identity Theory or Holland's Career Development Theory to more fully account for the vocational identity formation and career reorientation processes that participants described. Additionally, studies that adopt a multi-stakeholder phenomenological design, gathering simultaneous accounts from students, supervisors, and immersion coordinators, would generate a richer, triangulated understanding of the same immersion encounter from multiple subject positions, yielding insights that single-perspective studies cannot produce (Ogilvie et al., 2021; Guile & Unwin, 2020) [14, 29]. Finally, action research designs that test the effectiveness of specific pre-immersion interventions such as industry-aligned simulation labs, structured mentoring protocols, or communication-focused preparatory modules in reducing the challenges documented here would constitute a logical and high-impact next step in the progressive development of this research program.

Concluding Remarks

This phenomenological study has foregrounded the voices and lived realities of Grade 12 TVL-Home Economics students as they navigated the work immersion experience in a private school in Davao City. What stands out most from this journey is the resilience these young people carry, encountering technical, relational, and psychosocial demands they were only partially prepared for, and yet finding ways, through

observation, collaboration, help-seeking, and sheer personal effort, to learn and grow within those very difficulties. This duality, immersion as both challenge and crucible, is something I believe program designers, educators, and policymakers must hold onto when thinking about how to improve the work immersion experience. Improving the program does not mean removing its challenges; it means making sure students enter those challenges better prepared, navigate them with real support close at hand, and come out the other side with the competencies, confidence, and clarity about their vocation that genuine professional growth demands.

Reflecting on this study, I have come to see the TVL–Home Economics work immersion program as one of the most direct and meaningful bridges between the classroom and the world of work available in Senior High School today. Because of that, improving it is not simply about making the program run more smoothly, it is about fairness, about making sure that every student, regardless of background, whether from a public or private school, from the city or the province, gets an immersion experience that truly prepares them, genuinely supports them, and leaves them transformed. This study is my own small contribution toward that goal, an honest, student-centered look at what the program is like today and what it could become. I offer it in the belief that any effort to improve work immersion means little unless it starts with, and stays true to, the actual experiences of the students it is meant to serve.

REFERENCES

1. C. Adams, M. van Manen, 2023, Phenomenological research and writing. SAGE Publications.
2. Z.I. Ador, H.A.C. Banaag, C.A.M. Bombio, D.N.A. Consignado, M.A.V. Quinay, J.L.C. Santos, 2023, Exploring the work immersion experiences of Grade 12 STEM students in a local science integrated high school: A narrative research. East Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 2(7), 3053–3078. https://doi.org/10.55927/eajmr.v2i7.4989
3. M.M. Alawin-Ligwang, 2025, Work immersion performance of Senior High School students: A foundation for enhancing implementation. Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science, 38(4), 93–104. https://doi.org/10.9734/jesbs/2025/v38i41403
4. A. Bandura, 1986, Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory. Prentice-Hall.
5. H.E.A. Barcibal, J.C. Chavez, 2025, Enhancing cookery performance: A correlational study of pedagogy and students' engagement in the TVL–Cookery track. Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 3(12).
6. S. Billett, 2020, Vocational education and the individual. In D. Guile & L. Unwin (Eds.), The Wiley handbook of vocational education and training (pp. 241–258). John Wiley & Sons. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119098713.ch13
7. Cedefop, 2020, Skill mismatch in TVET: Measurement, causes, and responses. European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. https://doi.org/10.2801/315485
8. J.W. Creswell, C.N. Poth, 2021, Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
9. M.P.V. De Guzman, E.C. Cristobal, 2021, Work readiness of technical vocational livelihood–home economics graduates. International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research, 10(9), 4–9.
10. J.N. Dela Cruz, M.M. Permejo, 2020, Workplace skills and competencies: An industry partners' appraisal on work immersion program among senior high school learners. Journal of Business and Management Studies, 2(3), 41–55.

11. Department of Education, 2017, Policy guidelines on work immersion (DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017). Department of Education, Republic of the Philippines.
12. Department of Education, 2022, Work immersion guidelines for Senior High School Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track. https://www.deped.gov.ph
13. M. Guadalupe, 2024, Work immersion experiences of Senior High School students in a national high school as basis for work immersion intervention program. Pacific International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 3(4), 102–110. https://doi.org/10.69651/pijhss030404
14. D. Guile, L. Unwin, 2020, The Wiley handbook of vocational education and training. John Wiley & Sons. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119098713
15. G.A.F. Guimba, 2019, Work-related self-efficacy and work immersion satisfaction among Grade 12 General Academic Strand students of Trece Martires City Senior High School SY 2017–2018. Ascendens Asia Journal of Multidisciplinary Research Abstracts, 3(2N).
16. M. Heidegger, 1962, Being and time (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans.). Harper & Row. (Original work published 1927)
17. S.P.M. Herrera, 2025, Situated learning theory: Core concepts and community of practice. In Theoretical models for teaching and research. OpenText WSU. https://opentext.wsu.edu/theoreticalmodelsforteachingandresearch/chapter/situated-learningtheory
18. E. Husserl, 1970, The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology: An introduction to phenomenological philosophy (D. Carr, Trans.). Northwestern University Press. (Original work published 1936)
19. D. Jackson, 2021, Developing graduate employability through work-integrated learning: A systematic review. Higher Education Research & Development, 40(6), 1112–1127. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2021.1872900
20. J. Kitzinger, 1995, Qualitative research: Introducing focus groups. British Medical Journal, 311(7000), 299–302. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.311.7000.299
21. A.Y. Kolb, D.A. Kolb, 2020, Experiential learning theory as a guide for experiential educators in higher education. Journal of Experiential Learning, 43(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1053825920909333
22. J. Lave, E. Wenger, 1991, Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation. Cambridge University Press.
23. R.W. Lent, S.D. Brown, 2020, Career decision making, fast and slow: Toward an integrative model of intervention for sustainable career choice. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 120, 103448. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103448
24. R.B. Ligawad Jr., 2025, Real world experience: Insights of Home Economics students' engagement in work immersion. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/393655381
25. Y.S. Lincoln, E.G. Guba, 1985, Naturalistic inquiry. SAGE Publications.
26. S.B. Merriam, E.J. Tisdell, 2016, Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
27. D.L. Morgan, 1997, Focus groups as qualitative research (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
28. T.H. Morris, 2020, Experiential learning: A systematic review and revision of Kolb's model. Interactive Learning Environments, 28(8), 1064–1077. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2019.1570279

29. G. Ogilvie, A. Quosigk, M. Gartmeier, 2021, Transition from school to workplace learning in vocational education: Disorientation, adaptation, and the role of mentoring. Empirical Research in Vocational Education and Training, 13(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40461-021-00113-x
30. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2023, Education at a glance 2023: OECD indicators. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/e13bef63-en
31. M.M.P. Pacaña, A.T. Pantaleon, 2025, Work immersion footprints: Impact on the job readiness and skills development of Senior High School TVL students. Pantao: The International Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences.
32. M.P. Reyes, A.C. Abulencia, 2024, Competence and engagement of technical-vocational-livelihood students in work immersion program. International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research for Innovation, Sustainability and Excellence, 2(1), 1–13.
33. D.H. Schunk, M.K. DiBenedetto, 2021, Self-efficacy and human motivation. In A. J. Elliot (Ed.), Advances in motivation science (Vol. 8, pp. 153–179). Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.adms.2020.10.001
34. M.K. Smith, D.A. Kolb, 2020, Experiential learning in professional education: A review and synthesis. Studies in Continuing Education, 42(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2020.1727921
35. V.Y. Tengco, 2025, Policy gaps in SHS work immersion and employability. International Journal of Research Studies in Education, 14(14), 197–208. https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrse.2025.25245
36. L.T. Tran, H.T. Nguyen, 2021, TVET graduate employability in ASEAN: Technical competency and soft skill gaps as perceived by Vietnamese employers. Journal of Vocational Education & Training, 73(4), 626–647. https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2020.1763537
37. United Nations, 2015, Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development (A/RES/70/1). United Nations General Assembly. https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1
38. United Nations Development Programme, 2023a, Sustainable development goals: Goal 4 — Quality education. UNDP. https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/quality-education
39. United Nations Development Programme, 2023b, Sustainable development goals: Goal 8 — Decent work and economic growth. UNDP. https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/decent-work-and-economic-growth
40. M. van Manen, 1990, Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy. State University of New York Press.
41. E. Wenger, 1998, Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity. Cambridge University Press.