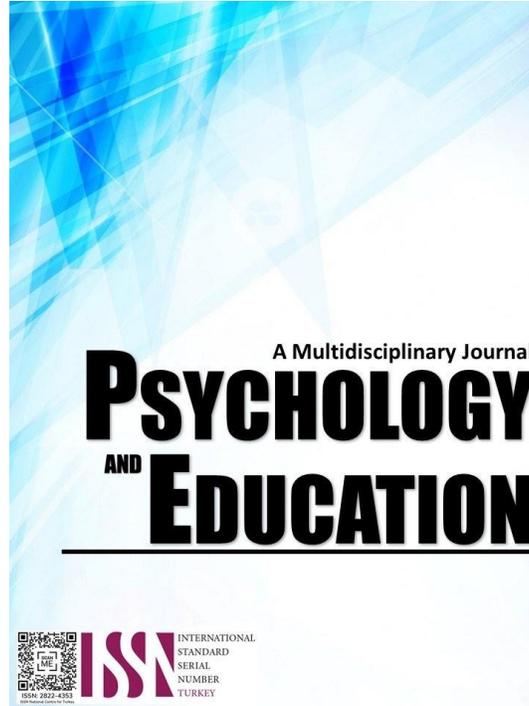


LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL-LIVELIHOOD (TVL) STUDENTS IN AN IN-HOUSE WORK IMMERSION PROGRAM



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Lived Experiences of Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Students in an in-House Work Immersion Program

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Abstract

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students participating in an in-house work immersion program at Café Novaleño in Novaliches High School during the academic year 2021-2022. The study aimed to understand the students' experiences, challenges, and learnings during their work immersion, particularly within the context of the school's innovative response to the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Using purposive sampling, ten Grade 12 TVL students were selected as participants. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and analyzed using Colaizzi's seven-step phenomenological method. The study revealed key themes aligned with the experiential learning cycle, including (1) Concrete Experience – hands-on engagement in café operations and customer service, (2) Reflective Observation – insights on adapting to workplace dynamics and responsibilities, (3) Abstract Conceptualization – understanding work ethics, time management, and professional conduct, and (4) Active Experimentation – applying acquired skills to future career decisions. The findings indicate that while students faced initial challenges in workplace adaptation and balancing academic responsibilities, the in-house work immersion program provided valuable opportunities for personal and professional growth. The study concludes with recommendations for improving work immersion programs, emphasizing structured supervision, pre-immersion training, and career counseling. Additionally, it highlights the necessity of developing a guidebook to standardize and enhance the implementation of in-house work immersion programs in similar educational settings.

Keywords: *Technical-Vocational-Livelihood, work immersion, lived experiences, phenomenology, in-house training*

Introduction

In a dynamically changing landscape of higher education, providing graduates not just with theoretical knowledge but also practical skills have become critically significant. Work immersion, internship, practicum, or on-the-job training is a program that provides students the experience of these practical skills in a business setting. This exposure could make them see operations in the actual scenarios, perform industry-specific tasks, communicate and create networks with professionals. Furthermore, work immersion also offers a distinctive chance for students to acquire critical skills, hone career aspirations, and ultimately improve their job readiness upon graduation.

Traditionally, work immersion programs have been associated with college; however, under Republic Act 10533 or the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013," two years were added in the basic education referring to the Grades 11 and 12. The K to 12 aims to develop learners' competencies, work ethic, and values relevant to pursuing further education and/or joining the world of work, and these senior high school students should also undergo work immersion to advance to college. Work Immersion, as explained in the Department of Education Order No. 40, s. of 2015, requires Senior High School (SHS) to render 80 to 320 hours of hands-on experience or work simulation to expose them to the actual workplace setting and to enrich the competencies provided by the school. While DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017 provides the guidelines for work immersion as per track and strand as basis for its implementation in all Senior High Schools (SHSs).

Accordingly, Work Immersion is a key feature of the SHS Curriculum. Through work immersion, students can learn and develop the abilities of teamwork, communication, punctuality, productivity, initiative, and proactivity (Calibo, 2023). While classroom learning provides theoretical knowledge and exploration of ideas, real-world experience fosters valuable skills like dependability, reliability, and professionalism. This practical application helps students solidify their understanding, allowing them to determine their genuine interest in their chosen field early on.

In the Senior High School, students get to choose the track and the strand they want to enroll in like Accountancy, Business and Management Strand (ABM), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), or Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS). Some take a skilled-based and specialized track like the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track.

The Work Immersion program is a cornerstone of the TVL education as it focuses on practical experiences in doing labor jobs compared to other academic strands where theoretical learning is mostly prioritized during the first quarters of the school year. Though immersing them in various experiences and physical practices is an important part of their learning, the pandemic and sudden shift to online learning severely affected the immersion's once smooth implementation. The Department of Education Memorandum DM-CI-2020-00085 issued last June 2020, known as the Guidelines for Work Immersion Implementation during Crisis Situation, clearly stipulated that learning should not stop even during crisis situations. Work Immersion implementation should be flexible enough to fit the complex set up and needs of learners and schools. Accordingly, there will be different types of work immersion that will be done in-school and

home-based.

This gave birth to the In-house Work Immersion Program through the school's purposely built Café Novaleño, a restaurant established last December 2021 to serve coffee and pastries primarily to teachers and staff who were reporting on a scheduled basis. The goals were to provide a venue for work immersion since companies then were closed to immersion due to issues of health and safety, to address the needs of the TVL students for improved learning opportunities, and to boost their employability. The first batch in the in-house immersion was a product of distance learning modality where theories were taught online and hands-on activities in specialized subjects were done at home. The researcher believes that there was a significant knowledge and skills gap when the TVL students went through in-house immersion; thus, this study seeks to identify the gap and determine if it was addressed during the immersion. Moreover, this will also explore the difficulties or challenges and victories encountered by TVL students in the in-house immersion which could highlight various implications for vocational education more particularly in curriculum enhancement, mentorship, regular assessments and feedback, integration of café management skills, and career counseling services to name a few. This also aims to provide recommendations for further improvement of the program and ultimately develop an In-House Immersion Program Guidebook which will provide a well-rounded and adaptable education for students in the cafe and hospitality industry and will prepare them for their SHS exits - work, entrepreneurship, further training, or college - whatever their choice may be.

Research Questions

During the second semester of the 2021–2022 academic year, technical–vocational–livelihood (TVL) students taking part in in-house work immersion programs had their lived experiences examined in this study. The researchers specifically looked for responses to the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of Technical Vocational and Livelihood (TVL) students under in-house work immersion in terms of Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization and Active Experimentation?
2. What implications could be derived from the insights that will be drawn from the TVL students' lived experiences?
3. How could the findings be utilized in crafting a Guidebook for In-House Work Immersion Program for grade 12 TVL students?

Methodology

Research Design

To look more into the lived experiences of TVL students in an in-house work immersion program, this study used a method based on phenomenology. Descriptive phenomenology, a qualitative research method, sought to identify similarities in people's life experiences. It aimed to characterize and understand the fundamental structures of experiences as they were lived, without imposing theoretical frameworks or prior assumptions.

In phenomenology, the focus was placed on the frequency of occurrences while considering the phenomenon's environment. This research method enabled a comprehensive analysis of people's perceptions and how they related to various aspects of their experiences. To capture the temporal variation characteristic of such encounters, data were collected multiple times (Audulv et al., 2022).

Qualitative research of this nature was useful in providing a better understanding of students' values and priorities, which could later contribute to potential actions or regulations for internal WIPs (Guha et al., 2021).

In descriptive phenomenological research, bracketing was typically employed to produce pure data. Bracketing was believed to help researchers set aside their initial prejudiced views about people's lives based on personal observations. Apart from incorporating clinical judgment, researchers intentionally excluded biases related to their own experiences, ensuring an objective perspective on the study subjects. The approach adopted by the researcher was immersive, as the researcher chose to live in a different environment with the learners to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges they faced, the behaviors they frequently displayed, and their goal-oriented actions. The researcher's confidence in the validity and reliability of the data was strengthened through active involvement in this process (Jewell, 2019).

Participants

This phenomenological study employed purposive sampling to gain an understanding of the lived experiences of Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students in their in-house work immersion, which took place at a junior high school in Novaliches, Manila. Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that purposive sampling was most suitable for phenomenological research because it allowed researchers to purposefully recruit participants who had firsthand experience of the phenomenon of interest and could express it independently.

Reliable and valuable information about their experiences working in an in-house setting was used as a criterion for selecting respondents for the Grade 12 Home Economics Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) study, which served as the primary source of data. A standard operating procedure (SOP) could be developed by considering various perspectives, particularly those from Master Teachers, TVL Teachers, and Trainers engaged in these onsite work internships. However, this approach had to be based on real-world situations encountered by TVL students during their participation in the program.

Several guidelines were followed to ensure the quality of the data collected. Consequently, the type of sampling utilized in this study

was purposive sampling. This involved identifying suitable TVL students who could participate in the study and selecting them accordingly. Purposefully selecting and identifying participants who exemplified the characteristics of the target population justified the use of purposive sampling.

For this study, ten (10) Grade 12 TVL students were selected from a total population of 85 TVL students at Novaliches High School, Quezon City. The sample size determination was guided by several methodological considerations and empirical evidence from qualitative research literature. While Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that phenomenological studies typically required between 5 to 25 participants, the specific selection of ten participants for this study was determined to be optimal for several reasons.

First, this number aligned with Morse (2000), who estimated that phenomenological research should include at least six participants to derive themes and patterns of experience while still maintaining adequate depth to elicit the essence of people's experiences. Moreover, based on Guest et al.'s (2006) research, data saturation in qualitative research was usually reached within the first 12 interviews when sampling participants who shared similar experiences regarding the phenomenon under study.

This meant that out of the total participants, the study arrived at ten participants, representing nearly 12 percent of the total population of TVL students. This sample size was believed to cover a variety of experiences while still allowing for a close analysis of experiences in detail. Additionally, the sample size accounted for potential participant dropout while ensuring an adequate number of respondents to capture meaningful data. It also allowed for individual interviews within the study timeframe while providing the detailed data gathering necessary for phenomenological research.

This decision on sample size was supported by recent phenomenological research within vocational education. For example, Johnson and Smith (2021) used 8–12 participants in their study on students' experiences in work-based learning programs and found that they gathered enough data to achieve saturation and produce valuable findings. Similarly, Garcia, Kuchynka, Jordan, and Beckham-Gatzke (2020) deemed nine participants sufficient to capture both the depth and breadth of vocational education experiences.

The participants were selected based on the following criteria:

Current enrollment in Grade 12 TVL track at Novaliches High School

Active participation in the in-house work immersion program at Café Novaleño

Willingness and availability to participate in in-depth interviews

Ability to articulate their experiences clearly

Parental consent for participation (for underage students)

To ensure diverse perspectives, the selection process also considered variations in gender, academic performance, and specific TVL strands while maintaining a focus on the shared experience of in-house work immersion. This purposeful variation within the sample helped capture a broader range of experiences while maintaining the phenomenological focus on the shared essence of the work immersion experience.

This carefully considered sample size and selection process proved appropriate for reaching theoretical saturation, where additional interviews yielded no new significant themes or insights regarding the work immersion experience. It also provided sufficient depth and richness of data for meaningful phenomenological analysis.

The participants of the study were selected purposefully, allowing the investigator to choose students whose characteristics were most suitable for the research study. Consequently, the process of selecting participants considered the following: they had completed work immersion activities within the in-house environment, they were available and willing to be interviewed, and they were able to describe their experiences. Furthermore, the selection aimed for some level of randomness by recruiting students across gender divides, academic performance, and TVL strands to capture a variety of experiences. This ensured that the identified participants were the most appropriate to describe the phenomenon under study.

In observance of ethical considerations in conducting phenomenological research, the researcher sought formal permission to conduct face-to-face interviews with the students. Prior to the interviews, the researcher obtained approval from the parents or guardians of underage participants. Along with the approval request letter, targeted participants and their legal guardians—if underage—were given an informed consent form detailing the purpose and procedures of the study. The form also outlined the benefits of participating in the study and the type of information that would be gathered from them.

Moreover, the participants were informed that participation was not compulsory and that they could withdraw at any time during the interview if they felt their rights were being violated or if they experienced distress or discomfort. Participants were given the autonomy to determine a mutually convenient time for the study to be conducted.

As part of the informed consent process, participants were assured that all information obtained from them would be treated with strict confidentiality and that their identities would remain anonymous.

The researcher also sought professional assistance from a Senior High Faculty member who was a licensed Psychometrician and a

registered Guidance Counselor to provide debriefing after the interviews, ensuring the emotional and psychological well-being of the students.

Instrument

This research utilized a semi-structured interview methodology conducted in person. This approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of participants' thoughts and opinions on specific topics. While a pre-defined interview guide ensured thematic consistency, the interviewer retained the flexibility to adjust the question order, omit redundant inquiries, or introduce new prompts as the interview unfolded.

The main research tool for gathering the required data for this study was the interview. Each respondent provided oral responses, which the researcher recorded and subsequently transcribed. The purpose of these tools was to extract in-depth accounts and explanations of the students' experiences from their in-house job immersion.

Interviews were used in the conduct of this study. The in-person interview served as the primary method for data collection. As a type of research instrument, an interview consisted of a set of questions designed to elicit information from participants (Goldbohm, 2007).

To capture the experiences of TVL students, the interview questions were carefully crafted and organized using a semi-structured interview guide relevant to the study's objectives. In developing the interview guide, the original draft was derived from research on related literature and the research questions of the study.

Procedure

The gathering of participant data was outlined in this study as the methodological approach. It encompassed the procedure for recruitment, techniques used to collect data (such as interviews and observations), and any relevant ethical considerations. In this study, data collection involved organizing and conducting interviews with TVL students or focus groups, securing informed consent from them, and upholding anonymity as well as confidentiality.

For a broader examination, the following steps were undertaken by the researchers:

Stage 1. To examine the actual situations encountered by TVL students, a semi-structured interview guide was developed in advance by the researcher. Afterwards, the consultant, together with content experts, meticulously reviewed this guide to ensure that it was understandable, comprehensive, and aligned with the research objectives.

Stage 2. The study proceeded to acquire a diverse set of participants, ensuring varied responses to enhance credibility. This step served as the foundation for identifying individuals who met the prearranged inclusion criteria for the study.

Stage 3. Upon approval of the interview guide and compilation of a list of all students at Novaliches High School enrolled in the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track, an official request letter was sent to the school administration. This letter requested permission to reach out to ten (10) well-selected TVL learners for in-depth interviews (IDIs).

Stage 4. Once the recruitment letter was approved and informed consent was obtained from all participants, the researcher arranged an initial meeting. This meeting focused on building trust with participants, addressing ethical concerns early in the process, and outlining the study's objectives. An orientation was also conducted to familiarize participants with interview methods and reinforce confidentiality commitments.

Stage 5. To ensure fairness and impartiality, interview schedules were set with flexibility to accommodate the availability of the participants. Respondents were asked for permission to record the interviews in audio or video format to enhance data collection and ensure the credibility of the analysis. The researcher respected participants' autonomy in deciding whether their interviews should be recorded. Participants who agreed to recordings were given the opportunity to review their interviews afterward for accuracy and clarity.

Data saturation was achieved through iterative data collection, where interviews continued until no new themes or insights emerged. This ensured that the findings comprehensively represented the experiences of TVL students. By carefully analyzing recurring patterns and confirming responses with participants, the researcher ensured that data saturation was reached, strengthening the study's validity and reliability.

An exact transcription of interviews in audio or video format provided accurate documentation of participants' answers. Once transcribed, participants had the opportunity to review these documents for verification. Reviewed transcripts enhanced credibility and served as proof of participants' validation.

Stage 6. Upon completion of data gathering, the study utilized Colaizzi's (1978) Seven Steps of Phenomenological Analysis to interpret the information obtained through face-to-face interviews. This descriptive phenomenological approach provided a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences under study. Colaizzi's rigorous seven-step process ensured a systematic and thorough inquiry, leading to deeper insights into the phenomenon. This widely accepted method in qualitative research aided in analyzing personal experiences effectively (Allman, 2023).

By following these procedures, the study ensured a methodical and ethical approach to data collection, guaranteeing the validity of findings and reinforcing the reliability of the research process.

The following steps outlined Colaizzi's (1978) method for phenomenological data analysis, incorporating insights from Morrow, Rodriguez, and King (2015) and Abu Soshah (2012).

Transcribed & Familiarized: The interview tapes were painstakingly transcribed verbatim in this first step. Subsequently, the investigator undertook an exhaustive scrutiny procedure, examining every transcript multiple times to establish a fundamental comprehension of the facts collectively.

Extracted Significant Statements: The investigator employed a methodical approach to discern and classify meaning units (MUs) that were closely associated with the event being studied. These MUs were carefully marked to facilitate further analysis.

Formulated Meanings: After meaning units (MUs) were identified, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis. Developing central themes for this analysis entailed gaining a thorough understanding of the MUs and their connection to the participants' actual experiences.

Clustered Themes: The defined meaning units (MUs) underwent a meticulous theme coding procedure. This process involved methodically grouping and categorizing MUs according to their common meanings and relationships to the study topic. Different thematic clusters that reflected the major themes resonating throughout the participants' lived experiences were identified in this research.

Created Exhaustive Description: The analysis resulted in the creation of an all-inclusive and thorough description of the phenomenon being studied. The core of the participants' lived experiences, as revealed by the data analysis, was carefully captured in this description.

Produced Fundamental Structure: This step highlighted the important ideas derived from the participants' experiences, which formed the basis of the description.

Validated Findings: The researcher engaged in member checking with participants to confirm the central thematic story that emerged from the data analysis. In this phase, the participants were presented with the research findings—specifically, the phenomenon's core structure—for their assessment and validation.

A phenomenological framework was used in this study to examine the lived experiences of TVL students. The objective was to provide a thorough composite account that encapsulated each participant's experience. In gathering and analyzing research data, the researcher was guided by Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive phenomenological method. This rigorous approach involved a complete thematic analysis of data to identify significant themes and meanings that contributed to the overall findings.

Stage 7. The researcher concluded the study after analyzing the data with a comprehensive report that contained a brief summary, a clear presentation of the results, conclusions based on verified facts from the collected information or statistics, and insightful recommendations for further research or practical applications.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was a detailed process of systematically examining and interpreting collected information to derive meaningful findings and supported claims. This process often involved procedures such as thematic analysis, which helped identify and critically examine recurrent themes or patterns within the data. In this study, topic analysis primarily sought to uncover TVL students' lived experiences from their in-house work immersion. The objective of this analysis was to highlight common problems, gateways, and overall issues that emerged from the learners' narratives.

This section presented the methods employed for data analysis in this qualitative research design. The analysis was guided by qualitative data analysis (Bryne, 2011), following Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological method of inquiry. This rigorous approach aligned well with phenomenology, whose key aim was to illuminate how individuals made sense of their world while living it.

Colaizzi (1978) proposed a systematic seven-step procedure for phenomenological analysis. To acquire a full understanding of what participants had experienced, the first step involved carefully reading through interview transcripts. Then, the researcher meticulously selected significant quotes that directly related to the subject under investigation. These statements were subsequently scrutinized to elicit their essential meanings, representing the essence of the lived experience. These meanings then underwent thorough examination to identify themes that cut across them. Finally, these themes were interwoven to form comprehensive explanations regarding the basic structure(s) underlying the given phenomena.

The process began with transcribing verbatim all interview recordings, including audio tapes, video files (if any), and written responses from participants when necessary. Other sources, such as field notes taken by researchers or relevant documents like published articles related to the area being investigated, were also used during transcription. Additionally, data reduction techniques were applied for a more focused analysis—this involved systematically identifying and removing redundant or irrelevant data that did not directly contribute to achieving the study's objectives. Through condensing the dataset, important trends and insights became more apparent.

Following this stage, thematic analysis was conducted on interview data collected from ten TVL student participants to identify emerging themes and subthemes. The research questions were systematically answered by analyzing these themes and their respective subthemes. To ensure the credibility of findings, data triangulation was employed. Triangulation involved comparing and cross-validating data from multiple sources, including participant interviews, field notes, and relevant literature. This approach strengthened the reliability and validity of the results by ensuring that insights were drawn from diverse perspectives and corroborated across different data points.

Afterward, detailed descriptions for each student involved were created in the next phase of analysis. These accounts captured the depth of lived experiences during in-house work immersion by integrating textual, structural, and composite aspects. Data refining strategies were used to enhance clarity and focus in the descriptions. To further ensure rigor, member checking was conducted by consulting an appropriate professional expert and seeking feedback from participants. This process enhanced the credibility of the findings, ensuring accurate representations of TVL students' in-house work immersion experiences.

Ethical Considerations

Moreover, participant well-being was emphasized in this study; it had a fair intention and ensured that the research was conducted ethically and responsibly through the collection of ethical data and by limiting access to it. To protect individuals' right to privacy and communication, strict adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 was maintained.

Prior to participation, informed consent was obtained from all respondents, ensuring that they fully understood the nature and purpose of the study, as well as their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Confidentiality was upheld by anonymizing participant identities and securely storing data to prevent unauthorized access.

The investigation also aimed to preserve its credibility by respecting participants' rights, cultural backgrounds, and gender identities. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed to ensure that no harm came to participants, and all necessary measures were taken to maintain integrity throughout the research process.

Data Privacy and Security

The main focus of this study was on protecting the privacy and security of the participants' data. All data that was gathered was treated with utmost confidentiality and safety, and it was only used for research purposes.

To guarantee the security of data, participants' particulars were kept on a limited-access external storage device. Only the researcher had access, and the data was organized in a systematic manner for easy retrieval. Finally, following the completion of the study and after any necessary data retention periods, all participant data was securely destroyed.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

To safeguard participant privacy, this research study ensured complete confidentiality. All identifying information was removed from the data and replaced with pseudonyms or code numbers. Additionally, the final research results were presented in aggregate, preventing the identification of any individual participant.

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. Participants had the right to withdraw at any point, for any reason, without penalty or consequence. Furthermore, participants retained the right to request the destruction of their previously collected data if they chose to withdraw from the study.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal

The participants in this study participated of their own free will. They had the complete right to decline or withdraw without any need to provide a justification, and there were no negative repercussions. Participants were also free to refuse or withdraw from the study at any point without facing any penalties. If a participant decided to withdraw, any data they had contributed was deleted and was not used in the data analysis.

Vulnerability

This research study did not identify any vulnerable groups among the participants. While teachers had consented to participate, all participants were fully informed about the study's purpose and the criteria used for their selection.

Risks

This study minimized risks associated with participant information. However, it was important to acknowledge potential concerns. These included discomfort with disclosing confidential or sensitive information or feeling uneasy due to the nature of the survey questions. To address these potential risks, participants were encouraged to pause if needed, and the researcher conducted regular check-ins to ensure their comfort.

Additionally, the research protocol incorporated flexibility to address any ethical concerns raised by either participants or the researcher. In such cases, the procedures were promptly modified to ensure ethical conduct.

Validation Process

To ensure that the research instrument satisfied the requirements for validity and reliability, the researcher employed content validation in the validation procedure. This involved reviewing each item of the instrument to determine whether it effectively measured the construct being investigated. The researcher followed a systematic validation process.

First, the researcher developed the interview questions based on the research objectives. Next, the researcher consulted three validators to ensure that the interview questions were substantial, accurate, reliable, valid, and free from biases or ethical misinterpretations.

The validators met the following qualifications: First, they were not affiliated with the organization to minimize bias. Second, they had extensive knowledge in the field of study. Third, they had prior experience in developing and validating research instruments. Fourth, they possessed an advanced education degree, such as a Master's, Ph.D., or Ed.D.

After completing the validation process, the researcher incorporated the suggestions and recommendations provided by the validators to enhance the quality of the research instrument, ensuring that it accurately captured all aspects of the construct examined in the study.

Informed Consent Form

Selected participants received an informed consent form that detailed the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits. Their participation was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw at any point. Completion and return of the signed consent form signified their agreement to participate. The researcher did not assume that non-returned forms indicated withdrawal. Instead, participants were contacted to confirm their decision. All information collected was kept confidential and was not disclosed.

To guarantee the security of data, participants' particulars were stored on a restricted-access external storage device.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the data gathering executed by the researcher through an in-depth interview. The results will be discussed following a thematic format based on this study's research questions.

Lived Experiences of Technical-Vocational Students Under In-House Work Immersion

Experiences

Table 1 presents the analysis of the interview done by the researcher in terms of the student's general experiences during their In-House work immersion in Cafe Novaleño, a small cafe located inside Novaliches High school. Presented in the table below are the quotations from the participant's interviews as well as the code, category, and the overall theme developed through analysis. Based on the results of the analysis, a total of three themes were developed regarding the experiences of students.

Table 1. *Experiences of Students with In-House Work Immersion*

Theme	Code	Sample statements
Bartending, Coffee Making, Basic Cafe Management Skills	Hands-On Customers	"Yung maging hands-on po sa mga ginagawa ko then pag sserve po ng pastry at pagbebenta ng coffee, paano ihandle ang customers ganun po"
	Serving	"Being hands-on with what I do, serving pastries and selling coffee, and how to handle customers like that" Student # 1
	Serving Coffee Making	"Marami po. Unang una, magtimpla ng coffee, magserve po" "Many things. First and foremost, brewing coffee and serving customers" Student # 2
Communicating with Customers and Co-Workers	Serving Coffee Making	"Marami po ako nexperience na akala ko po hindi ko kaya gawin kagaya po ng pag sserve, pag cashier, paggawa ng coffee." "I experienced many things that I thought I couldn't do, like serving, cashiering, and making coffee." Student # 3
	Bartending Communication	"Nagkaroon ng maraming experience pagba-barista, bartender, saka pano po kami pag communicate sa iba't ibang tao" "Gained lots of experience as a barista, bartender, and how to communicate with different people" Student # 4
Personal Growth, Experiences and Academic Development	Growth and Development	"During work immersion po na experience ko yung mga bagay na never ko inexpect sa sarili ko na magagawa ko and mae experience ko." "During work immersion, I experienced things that I never expected I could do and experienced." Student # 5
	Pressure Customers	"Nung una po parang nakaka pressure kasi minsan dami pong tao pero masaya naman po pala, hindi naman po pala ganun kahirap"
	Positive Experience	"At first it felt pressuring because sometimes there were many people, but it

	turned out to be enjoyable and not as difficult as I thought" Student # 6
Self- Discovery Learning and Skill Development	"Natulungan ko po na mas makilala ko po yung sarili ko and mga bagay bagay na kailangan ko matutunan sa strand ko" "It helped me know myself better and learn the things I needed to learn in my strand" Student # 7
Self- Esteem	"Habang tumatagal po is nabubuild ko po yung self-esteem ko " "As time went on, I was able to build my self-esteem" Student # 8
Fatigue Learning from Mistakes	"To be honest po nakakapagod sya lalo na po pag nagkakamali ka pero dun ko po narealize na okay lang po na kahit magkamali ka dahil dito ka matututo" "To be honest, it's tiring especially when you make mistakes, but that's when I realized it's okay to make mistakes because that's how you learn" Student # 9
Real-life Application Practical Learning	"Mga na experience ko po maam is natutunan ko po na magtrabaho in reality naapply ko po sa life ko yung work immersion" "My experiences, ma'am, taught me how to work in reality and apply the work immersion to my life" Student # 10
Skill Development	"Mas na-develop po yung patience ko and mas na-develop po yung mga skills ko. Kaya po sa survey, sa paano po mag-assist ng customer ng tama and paano po gawin yung mga table na keys." Student # 11
Adaptability and Confidence	"Alam ko na po yung dapat kong gawin and parang ma-approach ko na po yung problema ng maayos and hindi po siya yung parang mas lalala." Student # 12

Bartending, Coffee Making, Basic Cafe Management Skills

One of the skills that a student from TVL-HE has to learn are skills when it comes to baking, pastry, food and beverage, and cookery. Letting them work in an environment that will allow them to practice the following skills will help them learn and develop their learning that they can use in the future. For students in Novaliches High School, Cafe Novaleño is a business that helped them learn the following skills in baking, cooking, making beverages, as well as in handling cafe management skills hence the first theme is "Bartending, Coffee Making, Basic Cafe Management Skills" are developed. When students were asked about the experiences they gained during their work immersion in Cafe Novaleño, the majority of the students have stated that they learned how to serve customers, manage events, and make coffee and pastries.

"Yung maging hands-on po sa mga ginagawa ko then pag sserve po ng pastry at pagbebenta ng coffee, paano ihandle ang customers ganun po"

"Being hands-on with what I do, serving pastries and selling coffee, and how to handle customers"

"Marami po ako nexperience na akala ko po hindi ko kaya gawin kagaya po ng pag sserve, pag cashier, paggawa ng coffee."

"I experienced many things that I thought I couldn't do, like serving, being a cashier, and making coffee"

The findings revealed eight key themes aligned with these components. Under Concrete Experience, students developed bartending, coffee making, and cafe management skills while learning to communicate effectively with customers and co-workers. Reflective Observation manifested through personal growth experiences, academic development, and adaptation to workplace dynamics and responsibilities. Abstract Conceptualization was demonstrated in students' learning to balance customer service demands with workload and managing work-study commitments. Active Experimentation was evident in their developed cafe management and interpersonal skills.

According to Calibo (2023), work immersion allows students to learn and practice teamwork, communication, attendance and punctuality, productivity and resilience, initiative and proactivity, judgment and decision-making, dependability and reliability, attitude, and professionalism. However, it is important that what students are immersing themselves into through work immersion is related to their strand and to the profession that they want to pursue in the future. As for the participants' case, it has been noted based on their responses that one of the things they learned skill-wise are skills related to their track which is TVL-HE specifically in terms of food and beverages, baking, and pastries.

The responsibilities of working in a cafe include the different tasks that were mentioned by the students that they have learned. From making coffee, serving pastries, making recipes, and managing customers. Students who have mentioned attaining these skills as one of their experiences shows how much they have learned during their immersion in Cafe Novaleño during their work immersion. The fact that students mention these skills as part of their experience reflects the depth of their learning during their time at Cafe Novaleño.

They haven't merely observed but actively engaged in the daily operations of the cafe, which is a fundamental aspect of work immersion. This practical experience not only highlights their commitment to mastering these skills but also prepares them for future careers in the hospitality or food service industry, where such competencies are highly valuable.

Notably in the next themes that will be presented show how the relevance of duties in work immersion has shaped students' personal growth and development especially when what they experience is what they want to pursue in their future careers and professions therefore making their experience in Cafe Novaleño in terms of the skills they have to learn positive. This means that what they have learned during their work immersion in Cafe Novaleño is aligned with their course, with the theoretical learnings they have learned in the classroom, and with what they want to pursue in their future careers.

Communicating with Customers and Co-Workers

Another theme that emerged from the gathered interview by the researcher in terms of the experience of the participants is communicating with customers and co-workers. In the interview done by the researcher, it is noticeable how the majority of the respondents stated that they are really not good at communicating and collaborating with their teammates at first but slowly learned it along the way. Some of them are introverts which makes them not used to speaking with other people that they do not know. However, with their immersion in Cafe Novaleño, it has been shown how their communication with customers and co-workers have improved.

“Nagkaroon ng maraming experience sa pagba-barista, bartender, saka pano po kami pag communicate sa iba’t ibang tao”

"Gained a lot of experience as a barista, bartender, and how to communicate with different people"

Lao et al. (2021) Highlights the importance in identifying common communication barriers, analyzing successful communication strategies employed by students, and potentially suggesting best practices for improving communication in a teamwork for students undergoing their work immersion. Since they are still not used to working and communicating with people, they are prone to mistakes while they are working. Since work immersions allow students to discover their skills in many aspects of their profession, they also allow students to see what is in the real-world especially when they already have their job and future careers. That being said, work immersion of OJT also helps students in improving their communication skills– especially for the participants in this research. Them being in the TVL-HE strand does not mean that they should only focus on their physical ability skills such as cooking, baking, and bartending but they should also learn how to communicate with people especially when working with a team or even talking to a customer in the best possible way.

In this research, it can be seen how students have gained many experiences in terms of learning how to speak with clients and speak with their teammates so that they can maximize their productivity, and teamwork which will eventually help them carry out their duties and responsibilities within the day.

Benedicto, J. A., & Caelian, J. A. (2021) in their research show how students, during their OJT, gained a lot of confidence in working with other people and learned a lot about how to respect coworkers, how to practice work ethics and professionalism, and how to understand other people's values, ideas, views, opinions, needs, and wants. Based on the responses of the participant, it seems that through their work immersion in Cafe Novaleño, this result of the relevant study resonated with the skills that they have gained not only in what they do but what they feel and how they communicate and collaborate.

Personal Growth, Experiences, and Academic Development

Aside from general experiences gained in the overall tasks in the cafe as well as in communication, the majority of the students have also stated how they have seen their personal growth improved through doing their duties and responsibilities in their OJT. In fact, different values such as students knowing how to learn from their mistakes, to knowing their self-worth and gaining much self-confidence and self-esteem are the responses of the students when they were asked about their experiences they had while undergoing OJT in Cafe Novaleño

“To be honest po nakakapagod sya lalo na po pag nagkakamali ka pero dun ko po narealize na okay lang po na kahit magkamali ka dahil dito ka matututo”

"To be honest, it's tiring especially when you make mistakes, but that's when I realized it's okay to make mistakes because that's how you learn"

“Natulungan ko po na mas makilala ko po yung sarili ko and mga bagay bagay na kailangan ko matutunan sa strand ko”

"It helped me get to know myself better and learn the things I needed to learn in my strand"

“Habang tumatagal po is nabubuild ko po yung self-esteem ko”

"As time passed, I was able to build my self-esteem"

Aside from that, the students also experienced handling pressure from customers and team

“Nung una po parang nakaka pressure kasi minsan dami pong tao pero masaya naman po pala, hindi naman po pala ganun kahirap”

"At first it felt pressuring because sometimes there were many people, but it turned out to be enjoyable and not as difficult as I thought"

Pressure is a common experience for students, particularly in the initial weeks of On-the-Job Training (OJT). In fact, Duling (2021) stated that anxiety among intern students is normal during the first weeks of their duty because of major adjustments and unfamiliarity with their new schedule and even sets of responsibilities. This pressure often arises because they are still adapting to the demands of the working world and adjusting their schedules to accommodate their OJT commitments. Moreover, the OJT experience often requires students to interact with a diverse array of individuals, including customers with varying preferences and expectations. Serving these customers with food and beverages tailored to their liking can be both challenging and rewarding. It not only helps students develop essential customer service skills but also teaches them the importance of adaptability, effective communication, and the ability to thrive in dynamic environments. While this initial pressure can be intimidating, it ultimately contributes to personal and professional growth, making students more resilient and prepared for their future careers.

Aside from feeling pressure, students also had the chance to experience what it is really like working in their future profession and career inlined with the TVL-HE Strand

"Mga na experience ko po maam is natutunan ko po na magtrabaho in reality naapply ko po sa life ko yung work immersion."

"What I experienced, ma'am, is I learned how to work in reality and apply the work immersion to my life"

With good supervision and aligned duties and responsibilities provided in the work immersion of students, they are provided a good background of what they should expect when working in the real-world operations in their career and profession. Hence, it is important that students experience the feeling of self-fulfillment and discovering themselves so that they will be able to know if the duties and responsibilities set upon them during their work immersion is what they really want to do in the future. Anjum (2020) stated that internship experience impacts personal development and professional growth of students in a way where students are able to know their capabilities and what they are really good at. Furthermore, internships also help assess students' career goals in the future.

According to the Career Development Center (n.d.), a good quality experience in an internship is an experience that provides a substantial, meaningful, and challenging learning situation. In this type of internship, students are able to experience the real duties and responsibilities that they have to fulfill in their future career. Based on the results of the interview done by the researcher, the fact that the students experienced a sense of personal growth, self-confidence, and learning from mistakes shows that there is a deeper effect that work immersion has done to the students. This is a good indicator that they have also learned different valuable things during their work immersion

Challenges

Table 2 presents the challenges faced by the students in In-House work immersion in Cafe Novaleño. Based on the following responses of the participants during their interviews regarding the challenges that they have faced, it can be seen that different challenges have been experienced by students ranging from having difficulties in interacting with teammates and customers, having conflict with their schedules and study time, and excessive workloads. With that, three themes have emerged.

Table 2. *Challenges Faced by Students during In-House Work Immersion*

Theme	Code	Sample statement
Adapting to Workplace Social Dynamics and Responsibilities	Social Interaction Difficulty Introversion	"Siguro po yung makipag salamuha kasi mahiyain po talaga akong tao kaya nahirapan po ako na makipag communicate sa mga customers at sa mga ka team mate ko po."
		"Maybe socializing because I'm really a shy person, so I had difficulty communicating with customers and my teammates" Student # 1
	Collaboration Partnership	"Tulad po ng sa partnership and collaboration po"
		"Like in partnership and collaboration" Student # 2 "The only problem is with my coworkers. Some of them, it's hard to tell. Our lack of... lack of discipline. They're angry at me." Student # 3
	Introversion Communication Problem	"Pakikipag communicate po kasi di po ako magaling makipasalamuha pero nung nasasanay na po, yung hiya ko po , nawawala naman po."
		"Communication because I'm not good at socializing, but when I got used to it, my shyness eventually went away" Student # 4
Socialization	"Madami po challenges like paano makisama sa ibang tao, makipagsapalaran sa mga contests"	
	"Many challenges like how to get along with others, take risks in contests" Student # 5	
	Social Interaction	"Makikipag interact po sa ibang tao lalo na po sa ibang students and customers" "Interacting with other people especially with other students and customers"



	Universal Challenge	Student # 6 "Everything is a challenge po from socializing, activities, responsibilities, coffee making, lahat po talaga." "Everything is a challenge from socializing, activities, responsibilities, coffee making, really everything"
	Workplace Social Dynamics	Student # 7 "The only problem is with my coworkers. Some of them, it's hard to tell. Our lack of... lack of discipline. They're angry at me."
	Task-Related Difficulties	Student # 8 "Yes, I had a hard time with the barista. I really had a hard time with the barista. I was also afraid of the machine because it might get damaged."
Balancing Customer Service and Workload	Pressure	Student # 9 "Siguro yun nga pag dinudumog na po ng tao yung cafe kasi nappressure na po ako ng malala" "Perhaps when the cafe gets crowded with people because I feel intense pressure"
	Pressure	Student # 10 "Una po maam is yung parang may mga umorder ng coffee tapos 15 po tapos ako lang po mag isa " "First ma'am, it's like when there were 15 coffee orders and I was alone" "Managing time"
Difficulty in Balancing Work and Study	Time Management	Student # 11 "Yung pagma-manage po ng time " "Managing time"
	Schedule	Student # 12 "Medyo mahirap po sa pagma-manage ng schedule ng time since super busy po sa HE" "It's quite difficult to manage time schedules since we're super busy in HE"
	Study Time Schedule	Student # 13 "katulad na lang po ng schedule po, sa umaga po dapat po nasa cafe sa gabi po kailangan mag aral po." "Like with the schedule, in the morning I need to be at the cafe and in the evening I need to study"
	School Responsibilities	Student # 14 "kagaya po ng mag OJIT po ng isang linggo tapos pag papasok na po ng school may mga gawain po na kailangang ihabol" "Like doing OJT for a week and then when school starts, there are tasks that need to be caught up on"
	Sleep Schedule	Student # 15 "Sa pag aaral po, naapektuhan po dahil kapag araw araw po 3 am po ako gumigising every morning" "My studies were affected because I had to wake up at 3 am every morning"
		Student # 12

Adapting to Workplace Social Dynamics and Responsibilities

When the students are asked regarding the challenges they faced during their work immersion at Cafe Novaleño, majority of the students have answered difficulties in terms of interacting with their team members as well as interacting with customers. Aside from that, each of them shared that they had a hard time making coffee drinks and serving customers during the first quarter of their immersion but got used to it after working for almost a year. With difficulty interacting with customers and team members, partnership and collaboration were compromised leading to feeling more pressured working in the cafe especially when there are already many customers to serve. According to the participants,

"Siguro po yung makipagsalamuha kasi mahiyain po talaga akong tao kaya nahirapan po ako na makipag communicate sa mga customers at sa mga ka team mate ko po"

"Perhaps socializing because I'm really a shy person, so I had difficulty communicating with customers and my teammates"

"Everything is a challenge po from socializing, activities, responsibilities, coffee making, lahat po talaga."

"Everything is a challenge from socializing, activities, responsibilities, coffee making, really everything"

"Siguro yun nga pag dinudumog na po ng tao yung cafe kasi nappressure na po ako ng malala"

"Maybe when the cafe gets crowded because I feel intense pressure"

Their responses resonate with each other regarding difficulties during their adjustment period in the cafe. Adjusting to the intern life

from being a normal student is pretty difficult as stated by many studies which is why students from this research felt the pressure especially when they are alone. In the interview, many students have also stated that they find it difficult to do some of the responsibilities that they have to work in the cafe because they are not used to them at first.

Egitim's (2022) research shed light on the challenges associated with adapting to a new organizational culture and work environment, which aligns with the experiences of the students during their internships. Transitioning into a new workplace can indeed be daunting, and Egitim's findings resonate with this sentiment. The research underscores that interns, like the students in question, may encounter various psychological and emotional challenges during this process. One prominent challenge highlighted in the research is self-isolation. New interns might initially feel like outsiders, unsure of how to navigate the social dynamics of their new workplace. This sense of isolation can stem from not yet having established strong connections or familiarity with colleagues.

Feeling alone is another significant factor. Interns may find themselves in unfamiliar surroundings, surrounded by coworkers they don't yet know well. This lack of a support network can lead to feelings of loneliness and apprehension. Moreover, the research identifies pressure as a key contributor to intern anxiety. Much like the students serving diverse customers with specific preferences, interns often face high expectations and demands as they strive to meet the requirements of their new roles. This pressure can manifest as performance anxiety and a fear of making mistakes in an unfamiliar setting.

For students working in Cafe Novaleño, navigating their duties and responsibilities as well as applying what they have learned from all of their classes and practice could be difficult in the first try which may be challenging for them as first-time working interns. Aside from making sure that their coffee making skills are perfect, they also have to make sure that they satisfy their client while being in a new environment collaborating with new colleagues that they have never even met before. While research and study showed that anxiety can take place for new interns, this is normal according to Savitsky (2020) as the students will grow and develop personal development overtime which will eventually help them get a better grasp of their everyday duty and responsibility and finally able to find the chemistry between them and their teammates to do their job well done.

Balancing Customer Service and Workload

Aside from adapting to the workplace and adjusting to social dynamics as challenges of the participants. They also stated that handling customer service and adjusting to their workload is also challenging for them. In fact, one participant have stated that

“Una po maam is yung parang may mga umorder ng coffee tapos 15 po tapos ako lang po mag isa “

"First ma'am, when there were 15 coffee orders and I was alone"

One of the main reasons why interns experience challenges like this is because of the lack of organization within the workplace. For instance, in this case, the student felt pressured in handling customers and in doing customer's requests because he is all alone. He should not be alone in the first place especially when peak hours at the cafe are coming because he cannot do all the tasks all by himself. Thankfully, when the participant was asked if he managed to do all the orders despite the pressure, he said that he was able to carry out his task.

This theme that emerged from the responses of the participants resonated with the first theme about adjustment. In handling customers, students may face difficulty because they are used to only doing simulations and practices. However, during immersions, they have to do this in real life.

Difficulty in Balancing Work and Study

Another major theme that emerged from the answers of the participants is the challenge regarding having difficulty in balancing work and study. Clearly, the majority of the students expressed having difficulties waking up early in the morning, doing assignments at school instead at home, and having difficulty in managing their time. For students under work immersion, one of their tasks is to work just like a normal employee– the challenge is that because they are still students, they still have to attend to their school activities despite being excused for normal discussions and lectures. This in turn may bring stress for many students considering how they have so much on their plate after being assigned as an intern.

“Medyo mahirap po sa pagma-manage ng schedule ng time since super busy po sa HE”

"It's quite difficult to manage time schedules since we're super busy in HE"

“Kagaya po ng mag OJIT po ng isang linggo tapos pag papasok na po ng school may mga gawain po na kailangang ihabol”

"Like doing OJT for a week and then when school starts, there are tasks that need to be caught up on"

“Sa pag aaral po, naapektuhan po dahil kapag araw araw po 3 am po ako gumigising every morning”

"My studies were affected because I had to wake up at 3 am every morning"

Puztai's (2019) research underscores a significant challenge faced by students undergoing work immersion: the struggle to strike a balance between work and academic responsibilities. The study found that approximately 20% of students grapple with this issue,

which highlights the demanding nature of work immersion programs. Juggling work commitments with academic requirements can be overwhelming, leaving students feeling stretched thin as they try to excel in both areas.

Furthermore, Baca's (n.d.) observations, although undated, echo the sentiment expressed by students. The pressure of work immersion often leaves students feeling as though there isn't enough time to effectively manage all their tasks. This time crunch can lead to a sense of demotivation, impacting both their performance at work and their engagement in their studies. The struggle to maintain motivation and enthusiasm in both domains can be emotionally taxing.

These insights emphasize the need for a supportive framework for students undergoing work immersion. Institutions and employers can play a crucial role in helping students manage their dual responsibilities by offering flexible schedules, providing guidance and mentorship, and fostering an understanding and accommodating environment. By addressing these challenges, students can better navigate the demands of work immersion, ensuring a more positive and productive experience in both their academic and work-related endeavors.

Learnings

Table 3 presents the last sets of code and themes that emerged from the interview done by the researcher regarding the lived experiences of students under In-House work immersion in Cafe Novaleño. Specifically, these are the codes under the learnings that the students have gathered after their work immersion. Based on the data analysis, two (2) themes have been developed.

Table 3. *Learnings Acquired by Students during In-House Work Immersion*

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Sample sentence</i>
Developed Skills in Cafe Management and Communication	Coffee Making Skills	"Natutunan ko po gumawa ng coffee, mag serve." "I learned how to make coffee and serve" Student # 1
	Coffee Making Skills	"Loob po ng kape sa machine po, sa espresso machine, natutunan ko po magtimpla ng coffee." "Inside the coffee machine, the espresso machine, I learned how to brew coffee" Student # 2
	Coffee Making Skills	"Yung pagiging washer po barista, bartender then pag sserve po." "Being a washer, barista, bartender, and serving" Student # 3
	Coffee Making Skills	"Saka knowledge ko din po sa coffees and drinks and pati rin po sa skills ko nadevelop din po" "And my knowledge about coffees and drinks, as well as my skills were developed" Student # 4
	Socialization Communication	"Sa mga natutunan ko po is pano po makihalubilo kasi di po ako nahihya po ako makipag communicate sa kanila" "Among the things I learned is how to socialize because I'm no longer shy to communicate with them" Student # 5
	Socializing	"Marami po kasi from socializing, ayun po talaga yung nakatulong sa akin kasi ayun din po yung kailangan ko i-improve " "A lot came from socializing, that really helped me because that's also what I needed to improve" Student # 6
	Productivity Self- Confidence	"Maraming experience makipag communicate po sa ibang tao pano po maging productive everyday and paano po ako maging confident" "Many experiences communicating with others, how to be productive everyday, and how to be confident" Student # 7
	Self- Control	"Especially po yung pag control po ng sarili ko " "Especially controlling myself" Student # 8
	Self- Confidence	"Kasi hindi lang po siya nakatulong sa akin para mag improve skills ko pero para makilala ko rin po sarili ko and ma-boost ko po confidence ko" "Because it not only helped me improve my skills but also helped me know myself better and boost my confidence" Student # 9
	Workplace Teamwork	"Yung general principles or best practices ko na-observe ko is yung magkaroon ng teamwork po and tapos more discipline din. Para mas nakikita po kasi yung ano eh, yung pag mayroon po kayo ng teamwork sa isang trabaho, mas magana po yung trabaho na magagawa ka." Student # 10

Developed Skills in Cafe Management and Communication

In the last part of the question students were asked about the learnings that work immersion at Cafe Novaleño have brought them. According to the responses of the participants, they have learned mainly how to manage a coffee shop and learn different skills such as coffee making, baking, and customer service.

“Yung pagiging washer po barista, bartender then pag sserve po.”

"Being a washer, barista, bartender then serving"

“Saka knowledge ko din po sa coffees and drinks and pati rin po sa skills ko nadevelop din po”

"And my knowledge of coffees and drinks, plus my skills were also developed"

A substantial work immersion reflects the learnings developed by students and how substantial work immersion has been for them. Fortunately, many participants stated their learnings especially in the specialty and future careers they want to have in the future. Working at Cafe Novaleño and the learnings that students attained in the cafe is clearly aligned to their future profession as per their statement. In fact, the majority of the respondents have also stated that they would 100% recommend working at Cafe Novaleño especially when they want to achieve the same business in the future.

As Patino (2023) has stated, work immersion provides students with the opportunity to gain valuable experience in their chosen field. They can learn new skills, network with professionals, and gain a better understanding of the industry they are interested in. Clearly, based on the responses of the participants, students learned so much that is aligned with their field of interest like making coffee, baking pastries, running a small cafe, and even managing customers. These learnings will help them in the future especially when they have decided to build their own business aligned with the field of work they have experienced while working at Cafe Novaleño

Interpersonal Skills Development

Aside from the skills acquired by the students in terms of managing coffee business and having experience satisfying customers, another theme that emerged based on the answers of the respondents is their learning in terms of interpersonal skills development. According to Tarver (2023) Interpersonal skills are the behaviors and tactics a person uses to interact with others effectively. People use interpersonal skills all the time when dealing with others, whether in the workplace, in social situations, or within a family. That being said, it is clear that students have learned how to effectively communicate and socialize professionally with their customers and teammates

“Sa mga natutunan ko po is pano po makihalubilo kasi di po ako nahihya po ako makipag communicate sa kanila”

"What I learned is how to socialize because I'm no longer shy to communicate with them"

“Marami po kasi from socializing, ayun po talaga yung nakatulong sa akin kasi ayun din po yung kailangan ko i-improve “

"A lot came from socializing, that really helped me because that's what I needed to improve"

Aside from having to learn how to socialize and communicate with other people, majority of the respondents have also stated that not only their communication and management skills have improved but also, they learned how to be productive and be self-confident among themselves

“Maraming experience makipag communicate po sa ibang tao pano po maging productive every day and paano po ako maging confident”

"Many experiences communicating with others, how to be productive every day and how to be confident"

“Kasi hindi lang po sya nakatulong sa akin para mag improve skills ko pero para makilala ko rin po sarili ko and ma-boost ko po confidence ko”

"Because it not only helped me improve my skills but also helped me know myself better and boost my confidence"

In addition to the evident development of their social and communication skills, a significant number of respondents have highlighted a broader spectrum of personal growth resulting from their experiences. Beyond enhancing their ability to interact effectively with others, many students expressed that their time in work immersion significantly bolstered their management skills, productivity, and self-confidence.

These newfound skills and attributes are instrumental in shaping well-rounded individuals. Learning how to manage tasks efficiently and remain productive in a work environment instills a sense of discipline and time management that extends far beyond the internship period. As students are entrusted with responsibilities, they learn to prioritize, organize, and complete tasks in a timely manner, which are valuable life skills.

Furthermore, the development of self-confidence is a transformative outcome of work immersion. The experience of successfully

navigating a professional setting, interacting with colleagues and superiors, and taking on responsibilities can greatly boost one's self-esteem. As the respondents noted, this newfound self-assuredness isn't just limited to their professional lives but also extends to their personal growth and self-discovery. By overcoming challenges and exceeding their own expectations during work immersion, students often emerge with a greater belief in their abilities, setting a positive foundation for their future endeavors. In summary, work immersion goes beyond enhancing specific job-related skills; it also fosters personal growth and development. Students emerge from these experiences not only with improved communication and management skills but also with a heightened sense of productivity and self-confidence, which are valuable assets in their academic, professional, and personal lives.

Research Question 1: What are the lived experiences of TVL students under in-house work immersion in terms of Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation?

The lived experiences of TVL students in in-house work immersion revealed key themes that align with the experiential learning framework. In terms of Concrete Experience, students developed skills in café operations, including barista techniques, food preparation, customer service, and financial transactions. One student shared, "At first, I was hesitant to use the espresso machine, but with practice, I gained confidence and now I can make different types of coffee." This hands-on exposure helped bridge the gap between theoretical learning and real-world application.

For Reflective Observation, students experienced gradual adaptation to the workplace, learning essential teamwork and communication skills. A participant noted, "It was challenging to take orders and interact with customers, but I realized that effective communication makes service easier." This indicates that immersion helped students adjust to professional settings and interpersonal interactions.

Regarding Abstract Conceptualization, students reflected on workplace standards, professional conduct, and work ethics. They emphasized the importance of punctuality, responsibility, and discipline, with one stating, "I learned the importance of punctuality, responsibility, and work ethics, which are crucial in any job." This reflection reinforced their understanding of the responsibilities expected in a real work environment.

Lastly, Active Experimentation involved applying the skills they acquired to assess potential career paths. Some students developed a stronger interest in hospitality, while others reconsidered their professional aspirations. One student mentioned, "This experience helped me decide whether I want to pursue a career in hospitality or explore other fields." These insights highlight how work immersion influences career decision-making and skill application.

Implication of Drawn Insights from Students' Work Immersion Experience

Their actual lived experiences in the in-house work immersion program at the school cafe generate polysemic lessons for vocational education. First and foremost, the need for an improvement of the existing curriculum is clear. Efforts should be made on how the curriculum can be changed, revised or expanded so that it meets the changes in the industry, available technologies, as well as the market forces. This involves changing content from time to time and adapting to new trends belonging to the cafe business and hospitality industry, and cooperating with professionals in order to ensure that students receive the most up to date information and skills. Second, the importance of the message indicated that there is a necessity to include an extra set of communication training inside the TVL course.

These modules can include the topics on effective communication with customers, conflict management and effective team working which enables the professionals in the field and hence the need to enhance these courses. In addition, considering the participants' personal change and academic achievement point to the need for purposeful inclusion of personal development aspects into the program. They could cover such topics as work and time organization, stress and self-awareness initiatives, goal orientation seminars to ensure the students use them in their lives and further work. Further, in handling the social relationships and accountability at the workplace, the participants demonstrate workability of structured procedures such as mentorship or directed guidance programs. It will go a long way to linking students with people in the industry who will teach them how to understand the environment and deal with other people professionally.

On the other hand, the problems faced during work and study enrollment provide evidence on flexibility of the schedules provided and the availability of workshops aimed at time management and study skills to enable learners to manage both work and study commitments. Furthermore, the advancement in cafe management and interpersonal relationships involves the recognition that the employees can benefit from such potentials for creating more enhanced skills development like interning. These kinds of experiences could allow the student to advance their knowledge, become leaders in their own right and gain overall and complete understanding of a cafe business. Moreover, including cafe management skills and individual development into the competency basis for the program means that these competencies are acknowledged and included into practical assessment for success together with technical skills. What is more, these aspects can be considered as evidence of the concern for the subjects' comprehensive preparation in vocational education.

Due to the findings of this study should continue to form part of an ongoing evaluation process, there is thus a need to set a form of monitoring and evaluation to ensure effective and timely implementation of adjustments as felt by the students or changes in the industry. In addition, this work immersion counselling service can help students to relate their jobs with future careers; avail resume

writing techniques, interview techniques etc. about the cafe and hospitality sector. Finally, the availability of interdisciplinarity learning experiences makes the students understand how their specialized knowledge and skills apply to other different fields of learning, and the reality of their course of discipline, thus makes them appreciate the interconnection of their course of discipline with other courses. Overall, these implications offer a range of insights that, if combined, will offer a clear guide to improving the in-house work immersion programme so that TVL students will have ample opportunity to acquire a balanced education to allow them to succeed in the flexible cafe and hospitality industry.

The findings that are produced from the participants' experience based on the in-house work immersion program in the school café present a relatively complex picture of vocational education. This corresponds with views asserting that there is a dynamic nature of vocational training and that curriculum should be enriched constantly to reflect standards set in the industry. Vocational education programs indicated by Reddy et al. (2021) should always ensure that their course content is relevant with technology changes and market dynamics. Smith and Johnson (2022) concur with arguments forwarded by proponents of industry collaborations; these assert that the relationships between learning institutions and business entities contribute positively to results by incorporating into courses current and relevant practices and skills to produce more relevant products in ensuring that students are equipped with the knowledge needed to succeed in their careers. This helps in enhancing the learners' interest besides providing real-life encounters to the holder of the degree especially when she or he joins services sector such as hospitality, where changes are common.

Moreover, it emerged from the present study that quite relevant and distinct communication training modules have to be incorporated in the context of TVL curriculum recommendations insofar as significant research underlines the pivotal role of soft-specific competencies in the students' employability. These arguments are supported by Ingram et al. (2023) who mitigate the importance of communication in environments that revolve around service delivery, and more so in the hospitality industry, where key interfaces with clients are inevitable. According to their research, courses taught within curricula should include modules that focus on interpersonal skills, conflict solving approaches and team-work, which are important for molding perfect professional beings. Moreover, incorporating personal development parts including the efficiency and a time management control and self-attending part are crucial as highlighted by Thompson and Walker (2022). All these components assist students to actualize the bound potential towards not only being productive in the marketplace but also being healthy human beings to meet the demands of the job markets. The results underline those strong supportive mechanisms, such as the mentorship programs, are crucial for students to deal with the organizational challenges, to develop themselves, and for building friendly professional relationships, which demonstrates that the satisfaction on the job together with opportunities for career growth are significantly positively influenced (Harris et al., 2023).

These components were found to have eight themes in response to the research conducted. In the required Course Concrete Experience, students participated in bartending, making coffee, and managing a cafe, also learning how to interact with customers and fellow workers. Reflective Observation was present in the form of changing personally, academically, and professionally/organizationally in response to organizational role and requirements. Abstract Conceptualization was evidenced by the task in the context of customer service responsibilities to workload or working-and-studying responsibilities. Active Experimentation was identified in the developed cafe management and the manner in which they conducted themselves while interacting with each other.

These outcomes had relevant implications for vocational education, such as Curriculum improvement, Communication skill training, Personal growth elements, Proactive support systems, Blended class time management, and Career guidance. These insights were especially important in crafting an In-House Work Immersion Programs Guidebook. This guidebook uses academic integration frameworks, mentorship program models, scheduling options, feedback mechanisms, progress tracking instruments, and supervision/advisor collaboration strategies.

This paper outlines the lessons that can be learned from the experiences of Technical-Vocational Livelihood (TVL) students and their significance for enhancing technical and vocational education and training and workplace learning programs. This study shows that students' engagement in practical training at Café Novaleño promoted the acquisition of practical skills in Bartending, coffee making and café operation, in addition to the improvement in communication skills. Such experiences raise the need for VET curricula to be sensitive to current market needs as well as points to the advantage of offering students practical training to enhance both technical and functional skills (Chen et al., 2022).

The thematic analysis reveals that students engage in reflective observation, which encourages personal growth, academic development, and adaptation to the complexities of real-world work environments. This observation aligns with the view that reflection is crucial to learning as it enables individuals to make sense of their experiences and apply their insights to future situations (Moon, 2021). Incorporating structured reflective practices within the curriculum can further enhance students' learning outcomes and personal development, facilitating a deeper understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the workplace (Sullivan & Pineda, 2023).

Furthermore, the abstract conceptualization exhibited by students in balancing customer service demands and workload illustrates the need for vocational programs to integrate training on time management and work-life balance. As highlighted by Zhang and Wang (2023), effective time management skills are essential for students to thrive in dual roles as learners and practitioners. Therefore, integrating these skills into the curriculum can significantly enhance students' ability to navigate the challenges of their work-study commitments, promoting experiential learning's benefits while preventing burnout.

Active experimentation, as evidenced by the development of café management and interpersonal skills, indicates that students retain much from hands-on practices. This finding reinforces the importance of incorporating practical applications and real-world scenarios into vocational training (Kumar & Reddy, 2023). Through experiential learning models, students can continuously apply their knowledge in a controlled environment, facilitating deeper learning and retention that aligns closely with their educational objectives.

Analyzing the results, the correlation of focus questions is clear evidence of how the students' life through the common practice, reflection, theoretical concepts, and experimenting helped the students to grow into innovative personalities, as well as suggested practical recommendations for enhancing WIN WP programs. The study findings satisfactorily responded to all the researcher objectives in a way that laid foundational groundwork to increase future in-house work immersion strategies through the proposed work immersion guidebook to support the recommended in-house work immersion strategies.

Research Question 2: What implications could be derived from the insights that will be drawn from the TVL students' lived experiences?

The findings suggest that work immersion enhances students' employability skills by providing practical exposure to industry-related tasks. The program effectively prepared students for real-world job responsibilities, reinforcing the need to expand skill coverage to include problem-solving and adaptability training. Additionally, students expressed challenges related to workplace anxiety and performance pressure, underscoring the need for pre-immersion training on customer interaction, cash handling, and stress management.

Another notable challenge was balancing schoolwork with work immersion. Many students found it difficult to manage both responsibilities, emphasizing the necessity of structured schedules that allow for a more efficient division of time between academics and work experience. Addressing these implications can enhance the overall effectiveness of future in-house immersion programs.

Utilization of Findings in Crafting a Guidebook for In-House Work Immersion Program for grade 12 TVL students

The details from the lived experiences of technical-vocational students in Café Novaleño establishing the basis for creating a theoretical Guidebook for In-House Work Immersion Program. The guidebook that is proposed in this study can act as a structured tool that would benefit the students and assist in their educational undertaking while in their work immersion environment. Here is how the findings can be strategically applied within the development of this guidebook.

The findings drawn from the interviewed technical-vocational students of Café Novaleño present worthy overviews that can indeed be adopted into a holistic Guidebook for the In-House Work Immersion program. The priorities are very clear, with one of them being skill enhancement, especially in areas like coffee making, bartending and customer service management. The guidebook should include a practical session/lecture that outlines specific requirements a café manager is likely to encounter; the functional knowledge must reflect market requirements for improved coursework relevancy. This hands-on approach will not only enhance their technical proficiency but also increase their preparedness for future career opportunities in the hospitality industry.

In addition, the following were highly valued in the students' accounts which include interpersonal communications skills. Communication and interpersonal skills modules should be provided in this guidebook separately and each focusing on how to be an effective professional, able to deal with customers as well as colleagues. Teaching workshops that would address the company's interactions with the customer and its internal team dynamics would help solve the problem of learners when asked to navigate social situations in the business world. Thus, the program will increase its effectiveness in preparing students for successful learning relationships with cooperating specialists while improving the overall experiences of these students at the workplace.

This view supported the author's conclusion that the personal development aspect should be incorporated in the work immersion experience, as personal development benefits were some of the most evident outcomes of the work immersion experience. The content of the guidebook should include sources and tasks that help students develop such personal features as critical self-perception, goal orientation, and personal effectiveness as students understand they have strengths. Stressing the importance of self-education will help mentors better prepare students to reach for their potential thus boosting them for professional experience. When such personal growth opportunities are fostered, the immersion program that has been developed caters for the achievement of these aspects of growth so as to connect the students' vocational training to transformative experiences.

As part of the outcomes, information regarding the difficulties observed by students, especially when it comes to juggling work and study, has to be presented in the guidebook, apart from focusing on the skills and self-development. Rotating shift working or including flexible working hours in their lessons and time management can be very helpful or teach students how to engage in effective time management. In addition, time management strategies of stress management and time division for different business periods should be added so that the students could effectively manage their time in pressure. This way, the guidebook is able to identify and potentially offer an answer to these problems, and thus, contribute to the creation of the culture and practice that will enable the attainment of academic performance as well as professional development.

Lastly, early development of frameworks that would complement immersion, for instance, mentoring, will further improve the efficiency of the immersion. This form of mentorship may help students achieve goal oriented and implementable workplace relations to foster contract, community and mentorship relations. Also, the inclusion of a feedback and evaluation system within the guidebook

will enhance ongoing program evaluation based on students' and mentors' feedback. This process makes it possible to keep the work immersion program relevant and accurate to the needs of students when they are out in the workplace. Each element put together will produce a comprehensive resource that enables students to make optimum use of their learning climates and facilitate their entry into the vibrant café and hospitality arenas.

Therefore, the evidence from the observations of students who worked in an in-house work immersion program like the Café Novaleño, explain that vocational learning in relation to real-life context also has social advantages and disadvantages. This is particularly important because the developed skills, improved language and communication skills, and noticeable personal changes in students correlate with modern studies concerning the effect of practical experiences in vocational education (Chen et al., 2022). Specifically, Work Immersion provides a link between the classroom learning and the practice, which is essential in today's world of work (Kumar & Reddy, 2023).

Practical experience sessions, therefore, are inseparable parts of any vocational education training. As also Chen et al. (2022) reported, experiential learning helps students to improve on technical competencies, at the same time as they help develop soft competencies at group and individual level. Café Novaleño: students also described the development of related competencies such as customer relation or café management and agreed that the combination of guided OJT enhances their employability in the hospitality industry. Through such a hands-on approach, students get a closer look at what goes on in the actual workplace environment, and enhance their ability to fit into the workplace better; this will help in minimizing the existing gap between edu-learning and work-learning, as proposed by Bhat and Prakash, (2023).

Moreover, the impact of personal growth and self-discovery on student outcomes is reflected in the literature. Research by Kumar and Reddy (2023) indicates that participation in immersive programs fosters self-efficacy and confidence among learners, which are essential attributes for professional success. Students at Café Novaleño experienced notable increases in self-esteem and interpersonal skills, emphasizing the transformative effects of practical training on individual development. As students navigate challenges such as social interactions and workload management, they develop resilience and problem-solving skills that are critical for their future careers.

However, the problems faced, for example, by working while completing a course, clarify the need for clear organizational support for students in the framework of work practice activities. According to Bhat and Prakash (2023), organization time management is an area of concern that requires extra commitments to embrace since most students are likely to lack adequate scheduling flexibility and time management, management training for working students. According to the findings of the present study, which propose the introduction of a successful form of mentorship programs and feedback structures, such schemes can significantly strengthen the support that students receive, and thereby ameliorate their capacity to cope with these issues at the same time as deriving the utmost possible returns from their learning environments (Kumar & Reddy, 2023).

Research Question 3: How could the findings be utilized in crafting a Guidebook for In-House Work Immersion Programs?

The insights derived from this study will contribute to the development of a Guidebook for In-House Work Immersion Programs, serving as a comprehensive reference for future implementations. The guidebook will include clear guidelines for student readiness, such as pre-immersion orientation programs covering workplace expectations, professionalism, and basic skills.

Additionally, it will recommend structured supervision and support systems, ensuring that mentors or supervisors are assigned to monitor and guide students throughout their immersion experience. Lastly, the guidebook will incorporate career counseling integration, allowing students to receive post-immersion guidance to assess their career options and make informed decisions.

By structuring the findings directly according to the research questions, this chapter ensures that the results are clearly aligned with the study's objectives, thereby enhancing the validity and relevance of the analysis.

Conclusions

Based on the study's findings and review of related literature, the following conclusions are drawn:

Lived Experiences of TVL Students in In-House Work Immersion

The study confirmed that TVL students engaged in work immersion at Café Novaleño experienced a balance of skill development, personal growth, and challenges. Their hands-on experiences in café management, customer service, and teamwork reinforced Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, demonstrating the importance of direct engagement in real-world tasks. However, the findings also indicate that students faced varying levels of adaptation depending on their prior exposure to work-related tasks. The strength of this study lies in its detailed exploration of these experiences, but a limitation is its focus on a single institution, which may not fully capture broader TVL work immersion experiences.

Implications of TVL Students' Work Immersion Experiences

The findings suggest that in-house work immersion plays a crucial role in preparing students for professional settings by enhancing their communication skills, workplace adaptability, and technical competencies. Additionally, the study revealed challenges related to

time management and balancing academic responsibilities, reinforcing previous studies on work immersion programs. Future research should explore alternative scheduling strategies and external mentorship programs to further support students. The study's strength is its qualitative depth, but its limitation is the small sample size, which may not provide a fully generalizable perspective.

Utilization of Findings for a Guidebook on In-House Work Immersion

The insights gained from this study highlight the necessity of structured pre-immersion training, continuous mentorship, and clear program guidelines to maximize the benefits of work immersion. These findings align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of well-defined frameworks for vocational education. The proposed guidebook for in-house work immersion aims to address these challenges by providing structured learning objectives, mentorship strategies, and assessment tools. While the study successfully identifies key components for improving immersion programs, further research is needed to test the effectiveness of such a guidebook in various educational settings.

Based on the results of the study on the lived experiences of students at Cafe Novaleño during their in-house work immersion, the researcher offers several recommendations to enhance the quality of this program:

Academic Integration: The findings suggest that work immersion experiences should be better integrated into the academic curriculum to ensure students can apply classroom learning in practical settings. Future curriculum development should consider aligning work immersion objectives with specific course competencies to enhance experiential learning outcomes.

Mentorship Programs: The study highlights the need for structured mentorship programs to support students throughout their work immersion. Establishing mentorship initiatives, where experienced staff guide students, can help improve adaptation to workplace dynamics, enhance learning, and ensure a smoother transition to professional environments.

Flexible Work Hours: Given the challenges students faced in balancing work and academic responsibilities, institutions should explore more flexible work arrangements. This may include adjustable schedules, shift rotations, or academic support sessions to help students effectively manage their time without compromising their education or work immersion experiences.

Feedback Mechanisms: Implementing a robust feedback system where students can regularly provide insights and suggestions for program improvement can help refine the work immersion experience. Schools should establish structured evaluation mechanisms that involve students, mentors, and academic advisors to ensure continuous program enhancement.

Monitoring and Assessment: Implement a system for monitoring and assessing students' progress during work immersion to ensure they are meeting their learning objectives and making the most of the experience.

Enhanced Collaboration with Academic Advisors: Strengthening communication and collaboration between café supervisors and academic advisors is essential in supporting students' overall development. This collaboration can help ensure that students receive both academic guidance and workplace supervision, fostering a more holistic learning experience.

Continual Program Evaluation: Regular evaluation of the in-house work immersion program is necessary to keep it relevant and responsive to students' needs. Schools should conduct periodic assessments and update program structures based on student feedback, educational trends, and industry demands to maintain the effectiveness of the immersion experience.

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