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Sweeping toward success: Exploring the career readiness of senior high school housekeeping learners in the hospitality industry

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Abstract

This phenomenological qualitative study examined the career readiness of Grade 12 Housekeeping NC II learners in Tagum City, with emphasis on their technical competencies and lived experiences during hotel work immersion. Anchored in interpretive phenomenology, data were gathered from purposively selected participants through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, and analyzed thematically. Findings revealed three major challenges: limited access to training facilities and equipment, inconsistent supervision during immersion, and misalignment between classroom instruction and hotel standards. Learners addressed these difficulties through peer collaboration, mentorship, and reflective practice, which fostered confidence, adaptability, and resilience. The study underscores the critical role of experiential learning, adequate resources, and strong school–industry partnerships in bridging the gap between technical training and workplace expectations. Moreover, it highlights that coping strategies, alongside technical mastery, collectively shape learners' readiness for employment in the hospitality sector. In conclusion, strengthened curriculum implementation, improved immersion practices, and sustained collaboration with hospitality establishments are essential to ensure that Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) graduates meet industry standards. These insights provide valuable input for educators, administrators, and policymakers in enhancing TVL programs and supporting the growing tourism workforce in Tagum City.

Keywords: Career readiness; Housekeeping NC II; Phenomenology; work immersion; Hospitality industry; TVL education

1. Introduction

Housekeeping NC II is a Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) specialization that equips senior high school learners with competencies such as guest-room preparation, public-area cleaning, and laundry services required in the hospitality industry [13]. However, questions remain about whether Grade 12 housekeeping learners who completed work immersion are fully prepared for hotel housekeeping jobs [24]. In Tagum City, this study examined whether the skills and knowledge taught in the Housekeeping NC II curriculum effectively translate into workplace readiness among these learners.

Globally, vocational education programs emphasize aligning training with industry needs. Studies show that hospitality graduates require not only technical skills but also employability competencies to succeed in hotel operations [14]. International organizations also highlight Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as essential in developing a skilled workforce and strengthening industry collaboration to bridge skill gaps [32].

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In the Philippines, Housekeeping NC II is part of the Senior High School Home Economics curriculum [13]. Despite its inclusion, challenges remain in its implementation. Some studies report that many SHS graduates struggle to secure employment due to limited industry trust and gaps in school resources, immersion supervision, and partnerships with hospitality establishments [24][7]. These issues suggest that the intended technical competencies of the curriculum may not always translate into full career readiness.

In Tagum City, addressing this concern is particularly important as the local government continues to invest in technical-vocational facilities to better prepare learners for the growing labor market and expanding hospitality sector [28]. With new hotels and tourism opportunities emerging, ensuring that Grade 12 housekeeping learners meet industry standards is critical for both workforce development and local economic growth.

Despite the growing importance of work immersion in vocational education, limited research focuses specifically on the career readiness of active Senior High School housekeeping learners. Existing literature highlights a lack of scholarly studies examining the work preparedness of learners in Home Economics programs [24]. Although previous research in Cebu found that work immersion improves learners' confidence and practical skills, it also identified gaps in resources and curriculum implementation [7]. These findings indicate a need for further investigation into how effectively housekeeping training prepares learners for actual hospitality work environments.

This study holds significant value as it aims to bridge the gap between classroom instruction and the skill demands of the hospitality industry. By assessing the technical readiness of Grade 12 housekeeping learners, the findings can guide educators and policymakers in improving the implementation of Housekeeping NC II and work immersion programs [7]. The results may also contribute to enhancing training quality and employability, thereby supporting the development of a skilled workforce for Tagum City's expanding tourism and hospitality sector [32].

This phenomenological qualitative study aimed to explore the lived experiences of Grade 12 Housekeeping NC II learners during their work immersion in hotel housekeeping at School A in Tagum City. At this stage in the research, the lived experiences were generally defined as the challenges, coping strategies, and skill development encountered by learners while performing immersion tasks in real hotel settings. By focusing on these experiences, the study sought to provide insights into how immersion shaped learners' readiness, resilience, and competence for future employment in the hospitality industry.

2. Theoretical Lens

This study is primarily grounded in Experiential Learning Theory [19], which explains that knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. In this study, work immersion serves as an experiential platform where learners engage in housekeeping tasks, reflect on their performance, and apply feedback to improve their technical and interpersonal skills. This process helps strengthen learners' career readiness by connecting classroom learning with real hospitality work environments [36]

Supporting this perspective, Human Capital Theory by [3] states that education and skills training enhance individuals' productivity and employability. In this context, the Housekeeping NC II program serves as an investment in learners' human capital by equipping them with industry-relevant competencies. These skills increase learners' potential for employment and career advancement in the hospitality industry [41].

Finally, Sociocultural Theory [24] emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and guided support. During immersion, learners develop skills through mentorship from supervisors and collaboration with coworkers. Such interactions help strengthen learners' confidence, adaptability, and professional identity in the workplace [39].

2.1. Research Questions

This study explored the career readiness of Grade 12 Housekeeping NC II learners by examining their immersion experiences in the hospitality industry, focusing on the challenges they encountered, the coping strategies they employed, and the insights they gained about the value of technical housekeeping skills in real hotel settings, the researchers sought to ask the following research questions:

- What challenges do senior high school housekeeping learners encounter during their immersion in the hospitality industry?
- In what ways do these learners cope with the difficulties they face throughout their immersion experience?

- What insights do the learners gain regarding the significance of technical housekeeping skills in preparing for success in the hospitality industry?

3. Methodology

This section presented the research design, research participants, role of the researcher, data source, data collection procedure, trustworthiness of the study, ethical consideration, and data analysis used in the study.

3.1. Research Design

Qualitative research is a methodological approach that seeks to understand human experiences by exploring them in-depth through non-numerical data such as interviews, observations, and narratives. It emphasizes the “why” and “how” behind actions and perceptions, offering rich, contextual insights that quantitative methods may overlook. According to [4], qualitative research is particularly suited for investigating concepts, opinions, or lived experiences, making it ideal for studies in education, sociology, and hospitality. In the context of the study, this approach is highly appropriate. It allows researchers to delve into the nuanced perspectives of housekeeping learners, capturing their expectations, preparedness, and personal interpretations of industry demands. By prioritizing over breadth, qualitative inquiry facilitates a comprehensive understanding of readiness that is shaped by individual experiences and institutional contexts, insights that are crucial for informing curriculum development and industry alignment.

Phenomenological research is a qualitative approach that seeks to understand and describe individuals’ lived experiences of a particular phenomenon, emphasizing the meanings they attach to those experiences. Rooted in the philosophical traditions of Husserl and Heidegger, phenomenology aims to uncover the essence of human experiences by setting aside preconceived notions and focusing on participants’ subjective realities [9]. In the context of the study, phenomenological research is particularly appropriate. It allows for an in-depth exploration of how housekeeping learners perceive their preparedness and what expectations they hold as they transition into the professional hospitality environment.

The most suitable type of phenomenology for this study is interpretive phenomenology, also known as hermeneutic phenomenology. This approach, grounded in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, emphasized understanding and interpreting the meanings individuals assign to their lived experiences within specific contexts [16]. Unlike descriptive phenomenology, which seeks to bracket out researcher bias and present experiences in their pure form, interpretive phenomenology acknowledged that meaning is co-constructed through the interaction between researcher and participant. This made it especially appropriate for exploring how housekeeping learners perceive their readiness and expectations, as these are shaped by personal, educational, and cultural factors. As [16] explains, interpretive phenomenology is well-suited for research that aims to uncover deeper insights into how individuals make sense of complex transitions such as entering the hospitality workforce, making it a powerful lens for this inquiry.

3.2. Research Participants

The participants for this qualitative study were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on Grade 12 learners enrolled in the Housekeeping strand under the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track at School A in Tagum City for the school year 2025–2026. To qualify, students must (a) be officially enrolled in the said program, (b) have completed or be actively engaged in activities involving real housekeeping tasks, and (c) demonstrate the ability and willingness to articulate their experiences. A sample size of 12 participants was anticipated, consistent with phenomenological research standards that aimed for data saturation while preserving depth of analysis [9]. These participants contributed to a deeper understanding of how vocational education prepares learners for the hospitality industry, particularly in terms of skills, confidence, and workplace expectations.

3.3. Role of the Researchers

In the quest of coming up quality output and valid and reliable data the following role was expected to be done by the researchers. The proponents of this study were the interviewers itself.

- Interviewers. The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to gather learners’ perceptions, expectations, and lived experiences during their housekeeping immersion. Carefully designed questions allowed participants to share authentic narratives reflecting their emotional preparedness, technical skills, and career aspirations.

- Encoders. All responses were manually encoded into digital format to enable systematic and organized analysis. The data were securely stored in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring both integrity and participant confidentiality.
- Transcribers. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim using computer-assisted tools to capture the nuances of learners' narratives. This process ensured accuracy and provided a reliable textual basis for phenomenological data analysis.
- Analysts. The researchers applied phenomenological data analysis to identify patterns linking learners' experiences to their perceived career readiness. Themes emerged around emotional resilience, mentorship, and curriculum relevance, highlighting key aspects of immersion learning.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

This study systematically collected data to explore the lived experiences of Grade 12 housekeeping learners regarding their career readiness in the hospitality industry. Ethical compliance and participant comfort were prioritized throughout the process. Each step was designed to ensure credible and trustworthy results.

- Seeking Permission to Conduct the Study. The researchers requested formal approval from the school principal and relevant authorities at School A in Tagum City. This ensured proper authorization and institutional support. It also reinforced adherence to ethical standards.
- Obtaining Informed Consent. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights, including voluntary participation and withdrawal. Written consent was secured before data collection began. This process protected participants and ensured they were fully informed.
- Orienting Participants. An orientation session explained the study's objectives, significance, and methods. Participants were encouraged to ask questions and clarify concerns. This helped build trust and comfort before data collection.
- Conducting In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). Semi-structured interviews were held in quiet, comfortable settings with selected learners. Guides explored perceptions of training, emotional preparedness, and career expectations. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.
- Conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). A focus group discussion captured shared experiences, challenges, and coping strategies. Open-ended questions encouraged participants to share diverse perspectives. Recordings were transcribed to reflect group dynamics and consensus.

3.5. Data Analysis

This study used phenomenological data analysis following [9], which emphasizes identifying significant statements and clustering them into themes to describe the essence of lived experiences. Consequently, this method allowed the researchers to capture how immersion shaped the career readiness of Grade 12 housekeeping learners. By applying this approach, the findings reflected both individual voices and shared patterns.

- Organizing and Preparing Data. The first step in phenomenological analysis involves organizing and preparing data through transcription and systematic arrangement to ensure accurate interpretation. In this study, all interview and focus group recordings were transcribed verbatim to preserve the authenticity of participants' responses. Moreover, identification codes were assigned to participants to maintain confidentiality and ensure organized tracking of data [9].
- Familiarization with Data. Researchers must repeatedly read transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences and identify initial meanings [9]. Accordingly, the researchers reviewed the transcripts several times to deeply understand the learners' perspectives. Important statements were highlighted and preliminary interpretations were recorded to capture recurring ideas and patterns.
- Identifying Themes. Phenomenological analysis involves extracting significant statements and grouping them into themes that represent shared experiences [9]. In this study, recurring responses related to challenges, coping strategies, and career readiness were carefully examined. These statements were then clustered into themes such as emotional preparedness, technical competence, and workplace adaptation to guide interpretation.
- Developing Textural and Structural Descriptions. After identifying themes, researchers construct textural and structural descriptions to explain what participants experienced and how the experiences occurred [9]. In this study, textural descriptions highlighted the learners' experiences during housekeeping immersion, including their challenges and coping strategies. Meanwhile, structural descriptions explained the conditions and contexts that shaped these experiences.

- Describing the Essence of the Experience. The final step in phenomenological analysis is synthesizing textural and structural descriptions into a statement that captures the essence of the experience [9]. In this research, the essence illustrated how immersion prepared learners for careers in the hospitality industry. It emphasized that immersion strengthened resilience, competence, and self-awareness while connecting classroom learning with real-world housekeeping tasks.

3.6. Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness in qualitative research ensures that findings are credible, reliable, and grounded in participants' real experiences [20]. In this study, credibility was strengthened through member checking, peer debriefing, and triangulation of data sources. Meanwhile, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were ensured through rich contextual descriptions, an audit trail, and interpretations supported by participants' statements.

Credibility refers to the accuracy and truthfulness of findings, ensuring that interpretations genuinely reflect participants' experiences [9]. In this study, member checking allowed participants to review and confirm the accuracy of their responses. Peer debriefing and triangulation through interviews and focus group discussions further strengthened the validity of the findings.

Transferability refers to the extent to which research findings can be applied to similar contexts through detailed descriptions of the research setting and participants [20]. In this study, rich descriptions of the school environment, learners, and immersion practices were provided. These details allow readers and educators to determine whether the findings are applicable to similar educational settings.

Dependability emphasizes the consistency and reliability of the research process across all stages of the study [20]. To ensure this, the researchers maintained a detailed audit trail documenting procedures, interview guides, and coding strategies. This systematic record strengthened the transparency and reliability of the research process.

Confirmability ensures that research findings are based on participants' data rather than researcher bias [20]. In this study, interpretations were grounded in participants' direct statements and experiences. Peer review and triangulation between interviews and focus group discussions further confirmed that the findings accurately reflected participants' perspectives.

3.7. Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations ensure that participants are respected, protected, and treated fairly throughout qualitative research. These frameworks emphasize principles such as respect for persons, beneficence, justice, transparency, and confidentiality. In this study, ethical practices were observed from recruitment to data management to ensure responsible and credible research [42].

3.8. Informed Consent

Informed consent ensures that participants understand the study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits before agreeing to participate [40]. In this study, participants were fully briefed about the research objectives and their rights, including voluntary participation and withdrawal. Written consent was obtained in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring transparency and autonomy.

3.9. Privacy and Confidentiality

Researchers must protect participants' identities and personal information to maintain confidentiality and trust. In this study, identification codes replaced participants' real names to maintain anonymity. Additionally, transcripts and digital files were securely stored to prevent unauthorized access.

3.10. Beneficence

Beneficence requires researchers to maximize benefits while minimizing potential harm to participants. In this study, interviews and discussions were conducted in safe and comfortable settings. Participants were encouraged to share their experiences freely without fear of judgment or harm.

3.11. Respect for Persons

Respect for persons involves recognizing participants' dignity, rights, and autonomy in the research process. In this study, participants were treated with fairness and their contributions were valued. They were also given opportunities to ask questions and clarify concerns throughout the study.

3.12. Fair Treatment

Fair treatment requires equitable recruitment and equal participation opportunities in research. In this study, participants were purposively selected based on their enrollment in the Housekeeping strand and completion of immersion. All participants were given equal opportunities to share their experiences without discrimination.

3.13. Data Handling

Ethical research requires responsible collection, storage, and analysis of data to protect participants and maintain integrity. In this study, responses were digitally encoded and securely stored. Access to the data was limited only to the researchers to ensure confidentiality.

3.14. Avoiding Bias

Impartiality is essential to ensure that findings reflect participants' experiences rather than researcher bias. In this study, interpretations were grounded in participants' statements and validated through member checking. Peer debriefing was also conducted to ensure that conclusions remained consistent with the data.

3.15. Conflicts of Interest

Transparency in declaring conflicts of interest ensures that research remains objective and credible. In this study, the researchers confirmed that no conflicts of interest were present. Neutrality and transparency were maintained throughout the research process.

3.16. Transparency

Transparency requires clear disclosure of research procedures, funding sources, and methodological decisions. In this study, all procedures were carefully documented and the absence of external funding was disclosed. This openness strengthened accountability and trust in the findings.

3.17. Plagiarism and Integrity

Maintaining originality and proper citation is essential to uphold academic integrity. In this study, all sources were properly cited and originality was maintained throughout the research process. The researchers ensured that findings were reported accurately and without misrepresentation.

3.18. Safety Measures

Ensuring participants' safety during research is a fundamental ethical responsibility. In this study, interviews and discussions were conducted in safe and accessible environments. Participants were assured that their well-being was prioritized throughout the research process.

3.19. Reporting Results

Accurate reporting of findings is necessary to maintain credibility and transparency in research. In this study, results were presented truthfully to reflect both individual and collective perspectives. Conclusions were grounded in participants' actual responses rather than researcher assumptions.

4. Result and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the career readiness of Senior High School learners specializing in Housekeeping NC II during their industry immersion. Verbatim responses from in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) were transcribed and analyzed to ensure authenticity. Thematic analysis involved repeated data review and coding to identify patterns, categorize challenges, and highlight factors shaping learners' readiness for hospitality work.

4.1. Problems Faced by Grade 12 Housekeeping Learners During Work Immersion

This section presents the findings related to the first research question on the challenges faced by Grade 12 housekeeping learners during immersion. The results identify several key difficulties encountered while adapting to professional hotel environments. It highlights categories such as (1) workload exhaustion, (2) reach out difficulties, (3) utilities and materials shortage, and (4) interpersonal dynamics and logistical disputes. These themes illustrate how immersion tested not only learners' technical skills but also their adaptability, resilience, and readiness to meet industry expectations.

Table 1 Problems Faced by Grade 12 Housekeeping Learners During Work Immersion

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Workload Exhaustion	Learners felt overwhelmed by heavy tasks, such as cleaning up to 15 rooms In one day.(IDI-03) Physical exhaustion was a common struggle during Immersion. (FGD-02) Understaffing increased the workload and pressure on learners. (IDI-03) Learners described Immersion as tiring and difficult to manage. (IDI-01) Transportation costs added to the strain of daily Immersion.. (FGD-03)
Reach Out Difficulties	Nervousness and lack of confidence were common when interacting with coworkers. (IDI-02) Shyness and language barriers made guest communication difficult. (IDI-06) Learners struggled to adjust professional standards and Intimidated by experienced staff. (FGD-05) Some learners relied on supervisors to mediate unclear guest instructions. (IDI-06) Confidence issues emerged when handling sudden guest requests. (IDI-02)
Utilities and Materials Shortage	Electricity interruptions and water shortages disrupted Immersion tasks. (IDI-05) Lack of water was a recurring Issue in the hotel environment. (FGD-01) Shortages of cleaning supplies affected service quality. (FGD-06) Learners often borrowed tools from other departments due to limited resources. (IDI-06) Stock shortages caused stress and delays In completing tasks. (IDI-05)
Interpersonal Dynamics and Logistical Disputes	Encountering interpersonal conflicts and nervousness when Interacting with hotel coworkers. (IDI-02) Managing dissatisfaction and negative emotional responses from hotel guests. (IDI-03) Financial strain caused by high daily transportation expenses to the immersion site. (FGD-03)

4.1.1. Workload Exhaustion

Learners described housekeeping immersion as physically demanding, involving long hours, repetitive tasks, and heavy workloads that tested their endurance. These experiences exposed them to the labor-intensive realities of hospitality work and required them to develop resilience and effective coping strategies. The findings highlight the need for training programs to support both technical skills and learners' stamina, efficiency, and well-being in real-world settings.

IDI-03 described immersion as physically exhausting due to workloads that exceeded school-based practice, making the experience feel more like professional employment than training.

(You're expected to handle about 15 rooms in one day, sometimes alone or with just one coworker.) IDI-03

FGD-02 highlighted that repetitive and demanding tasks during immersion caused physical exhaustion, revealing learners' lack of preparedness for the required stamina.

(My only struggle was the tiredness and hard work.) FGD-02

IDI-01 described immersion as overall exhausting and difficult to balance with personal routines, making it hard to sustain.

(For me, during our immersion, it was overwhelming because housekeeping is not really my major. It felt like simple household chores, but in reality, it was tiring and difficult to manage.) IDI-01

FGD-03 noted that additional challenges such as daily transportation costs increased financial strain, further intensifying learners' physical exhaustion.

(And then, um... also, the transportation fare was expensive.) FGD-03

The demanding nature of housekeeping immersion aligns with prior studies that emphasize the physical strain of hospitality work. [25] reported that immersion students often experienced fatigue and frustration due to heavy workloads, reinforcing the idea that immersion is not only a training exercise but also a test of endurance. Similarly, [17] highlighted that learners struggled to manage exhaustion while maintaining professionalism, underscoring the importance of stamina and resilience in preparing for the realities of hotel operations. Together, these findings contextualize how immersion exposed students to the labor-intensive side of hospitality service, making workload and physical strain a critical dimension of career readiness.

4.1.2. Reach Out Difficulties

Learners highlighted that immersion helped them overcome shyness and improve communication skills through direct guest interaction and practice. This experience built their confidence and enhanced their ability to act professionally in hospitality settings. The findings show that immersion develops not only technical skills but also essential interpersonal abilities needed for guest satisfaction and service quality.

IDI-02 admitted that the unfamiliar environment created anxiety, showing how lack of exposure to professional settings can affect performance.

(During immersion, the problems I encountered were mostly with coworkers. I also felt nervous since it was my first time in the industry.) IDI-02

IDI-06 highlights how personal traits, such as being reserved, can hinder effective guest interaction and confidence in service delivery.

(Based on my challenges in dealing with guests, because of language barriers and also, there are times when I can't understand the guest or myself. Because I'm also shy as a person, I don't just talk to each other, I communicate but only slightly, but sometimes especially our immersion is a bit slow, I'm probably busy, it seems like I'm suddenly going to have to work next time, that's just it, that's just it, that's just it, that's just it, that's all I have to do there, confidence.) IDI-06

FGD-05 explained that adjusting to professional standards was intimidating. This shows how learners recognized the gap between their student identity and the expectations of seasoned hotel staff.

(For me, I had a hard time adjusting to the industry because I know that the people we deal with there are not just ordinary people. They are professionals or experienced workers, especially in Big 8, where the workers have been there since it was first established. At the same time, it was also okay for us because they guided us.) FGD-05

IDI-06 explained when guest instructions were unclear, learners often depended on supervisors for guidance.

(Oh, about what the experience was like, the guest didn't make a request, then his request was not at the hotel and sometimes his instructions were like that, we just had them, especially now that we are immersion students, like that, we also didn't have the time to do things like hard tasks and that, we also had the time to do them, we just didn't have

the instructions, but, all we did was talk to the supervisor to inform him of what the request was and instruct the guests)
IDI-06

IDI-02 shared learners also struggled with confidence when faced with unexpected guest demands.

(Yes, I encountered problems because I didn't know the building well, so I didn't know where to go when guests asked me.) IDI-02

The importance of confidence and communication in hospitality immersion is well-documented in related studies. [21] found that Grade 12 TVL students often struggled with nervousness and anxiety during immersion, particularly when exposed to professional environments for the first time, underscoring the need for orientation and confidence-building activities. Likewise, [15] emphasized that learners faced communication barriers when interacting with hotel staff and guests, noting that shyness and lack of exposure hindered effective service delivery. These findings support the present study's results, showing that immersion not only enhanced technical skills but also shaped interpersonal abilities, preparing learners to handle guest interactions with assurance, politeness, and professionalism.

4.1.3. Utilities and Materials Shortage

Learners encountered challenges with limited resources and environmental constraints during immersion, often requiring improvisation and adaptation. These experiences reflected real hotel conditions and pushed learners to develop problem-solving skills, resilience, and efficiency. The findings highlight the importance of preparing students to maintain professionalism despite resource limitations.

IDI-05 recalled that technical issues such as unstable electricity and water shortages made it difficult to complete housekeeping duties, showing how external factors can directly affect immersion quality.

(The electricity at Big 8 kept going on and off, and the comfort room had little water.) IDI-05

FGD-01 emphasized the lack of water as a recurring issue. This reflects how basic facility limitations can hinder both learning and service delivery.

(First, the water—we had a hard time because there was no water.) FGD-01

FGD-06 added that stock shortages were common, which caused delays and stress in completing tasks.

(And then also, lack of stock.) FGD-06

IDI-06 explained that they often had to borrow tools from other departments, showing how limited resources forced them to improvise.

(The equipment in other departments or let's check it out in engineering where I'm from. I don't have any equipment in my trolley. I'll look for equipment in housekeeping, maybe they have it there. Sometimes, if there's no equipment there, I'll look in other departments.) IDI-06

IDI-05 shared how the lack of stock directly affected their ability to complete tasks on time.

(It's really a big problem because you can't complete the job if equipment is lacking.) IDI-05

The environmental and resource challenges encountered by learners during immersion mirror findings in hospitality education research. [15] emphasized that shortages of materials and logistical constraints often disrupted immersion tasks, requiring students to improvise and adapt to maintain service quality. Likewise, [25] noted that unstable facilities and limited resources tested learners' resilience, underscoring the importance of preparing students to manage environmental limitations in real hotel operations. These studies reinforce the present findings, showing that immersion exposed learners to the realities of resource management and environmental conditions, which are critical for sustaining professionalism and efficiency in the hospitality industry.

4.1.4. *Interpersonal Dynamics and Logistical Disputes*

This theme emphasizes the social and external challenges learners face beyond technical skills, including workplace interactions and personal constraints like finances. It shows how navigating these factors influences their comfort and success in a professional setting.

IDI-02 noted that their primary struggles involved dealing with regular employees.

(During immersion, the problems I encountered were mostly with coworkers. I also felt nervous since it was my first time in the industry.) IDI-02

IDI-03 described dealing with demanding or upset guests as highly challenging, with pressure intensifying when guests became impatient.

(When the guest gets angry because what they want can't be provided right away, that's basically it.) IDI-03

FGD-03 highlighted that daily transportation costs created a financial burden, adding to the difficulties of attending immersion.

(And then, um... also, the transportation fare was expensive.) FGD-03

IDI-06 expressed feeling overwhelmed by the complexity of hotel operations, causing anxiety when managing multiple tasks.

(...I multitask, I get a lot of anxiety, which is also quite difficult, sometimes I'm also afraid of forgetting the guest's requests...) IDI-06

IDI-01 described the physical and mental demands of hotel work as exceeding school-based training, making the experience more difficult than expected.

(...it was overwhelming because housekeeping is not really my major. It felt like simple household chores, but in reality, it was tiring and difficult to manage.) IDI-01

Interpersonal Dynamics and Logistical Disputes emerged as a critical theme, highlighting how learners struggled not only with technical tasks but also with navigating workplace hierarchies, guest interactions, and personal constraints. Participants reported stress when adjusting to professional social dynamics and handling demanding guests, which often led to workplace anxiety and pressure [7][24]. Moreover, logistical burdens such as commuting costs and the overwhelming pace of hotel operations further tested learners' resilience, reflecting broader challenges noted in TVL programs where limited resources and training fail to fully prepare students for industry realities [6][2][27].

4.2. Strategies Used by Grade 12 Housekeeping Learners to Deal with Work Immersion Problems

This section presents the findings on how Grade 12 housekeeping learners cope with challenges during their immersion in hotel environments. It highlights categories such as (1) need for mentorship assistance and support system, (2) interpersonal development skills, (3) improvement of resources and schedules, and (4) adaption of mechanisms in the workplace. These themes illustrate how immersion encouraged learners to build resilience, strengthen interpersonal skills, and develop problem-solving abilities that prepared them for the demands of the hospitality industry.

Table 2 Strategies Used by Grade 12 Housekeeping Learners to Deal with Work Immersion Problems

Major Theme	Core Ideal
Need for Mentorship Assistance and Support System	<p>Learners relied on supervisors to clarify guest Instructions and mediate unclear requests. (IDI-06)</p> <p>FGDs emphasized asking permission from hotel staff before fulfilling guest requests. (FGD-03)</p> <p>Guidance from experienced workers helped learners adjust to professional standards. (FGD-05)</p> <p>Learners sought help from coworkers when tasks became overwhelming. (IDI-05)</p> <p>Support systems reduced nervousness and built confidence In handling tasks.(IDI-02)</p>
Interpersonal Development Skills	<p>Learners aimed to respond to guest requests professionally despite nervousness. (IDI #1)</p> <p>Some learners practiced politeness even under pressure, recognizing its importance for hotel reputation. (IDI-05)</p> <p>Shy learners gradually Improved communication by forcing themselves to Interact with guests. (IDI-06)</p> <p>FGDs noted that learners tried to tay calm and respectful even when guests complained. (FGD-01)</p> <p>Confidence grew through repeated exposure to guest interactions and tasks. (IDI-03)</p>
Improvement of Resources and Schedules	<p>Learners borrowed tools from other departments when supplies were lacking.(IDI-06)</p> <p>FGDs emphasized Improvising with available resources to continue tasks. (FGD-06)</p> <p>Learners adjusted cleaning schedules to avoid disturbing guests. (IDI-04)</p> <p>Some learners used resourcefulness, such as reusing or sharing equipment, to complete tasks.(IDI-02)</p> <p>Shortages were managed by prioritizing essential tasks and delaying non-urgent ones. (IDI-05)</p>
Adaption of Mechanisms in the Workplace	<p>Overcoming nervousness and workplace Intimidation by initiating communication with coworkers. (IDI-02)</p> <p>Utilizing patience and emotional restraint when handling dissatisfied or angry hotel guests. (IDI-03)</p> <p>Practicing financial discipline and resourcefulness to sustain daily transportation costs. (FGD-03)</p> <p>Developing mental discipline sustain focus and daily and organizational techniques to prevent forgetting guest requests. (IDI-06)</p> <p>Cultivating psychological resilience and grit to push through the reality shock of physical exhaustion. (IDI-01)</p>

4.2.1. Need for Mentorship Assistance and Support System

Learners emphasized the vital role of supervisors, mentors, and hotel staff in helping them navigate challenges during immersion. Their guidance supported students in managing tasks, overcoming nervousness, and adapting to professional standards. These experiences highlight that mentorship is essential in developing both technical competence and interpersonal resilience in hospitality work.

IDI-06 explained that learners relied on supervisors and coworkers to manage overwhelming tasks, with guidance helping clarify instructions and build confidence.

(Oh, about the experience, when the guest made a request that was not available in the hotel and sometimes the instructions were unclear... what we did was talk to the supervisor to inform him of the request so he could instruct the guests.) IDI-06

FGD-03 noted that learners consistently sought permission from hotel staff before fulfilling guest requests, showing their awareness of proper procedures.

(We usually ask permission from the hotel staff whenever there's something assigned to us.) FGD-03

FGD-05 emphasized that guidance from experienced workers helped learners adjust to professional standards and expectations.

(It was okay for us because they guided us.) FGD-05

IDI-05 described how collaboration with coworkers was necessary to manage heavy workloads beyond individual capacity.

(Teamwork with co-workers was necessary so tasks are finished faster.) IDI-05

IDI-02 highlighted that support systems from supervisors and peers helped learners overcome nervousness and gradually build confidence.

(We communicated with supervisors whenever we had problems, asking questions so they could fix things quickly since we were still unfamiliar.) IDI-02

The reliance of learners on supervisors, mentors, and coworkers during immersion is strongly supported by hospitality education literature.[21] emphasized that guidance from experienced staff is essential in helping students overcome nervousness and unfamiliarity with professional environments, noting that mentorship builds confidence and ensures proper adherence to industry standards. Likewise, [17] highlighted that learners often depend on supervisors and coworkers to clarify guest instructions and manage overwhelming tasks, showing that support systems are critical for easing the transition from classroom learning to workplace practice. These findings align with the present study, where learners described how supervisors mediated unclear requests, coworkers provided teamwork to complete tasks, and mentors guided them through professional expectations. Together, these experiences underscore that immersion is not solely about independent performance but also about collaborative learning, where mentorship and assistance shape both technical competence and interpersonal resilience.

4.2.2. Interpersonal Development Skills

Learners emphasized that immersion helped them overcome nervousness and build confidence through direct exposure to real hotel operations. These experiences strengthened not only their technical skills but also their professionalism, communication, and self-assurance. The findings show that immersion plays a key role in transforming students into confident and competent service providers in the hospitality industry.

IDI-01 explained that learners coped with nervousness by striving to respond properly to guest requests, using professionalism as a strategy.

(The main goal during immersion was to provide what the guest needed and respond properly.)

IDI-05 emphasized maintaining politeness under pressure, recognizing its role in upholding the hotel's reputation.

(It was difficult to stay kind under pressure, but politeness was needed because the hotel's reputation could be affected.)

IDI-06 highlighted that shy learners overcame hesitation by gradually interacting with guests, which helped build confidence.

(I'm shy as a person, but I fought through it with confidence.)

IDI-03 noted that learners' confidence developed progressively through repeated exposure to guest interactions and daily responsibilities.

(You become skilled in the tasks. By doing them repeatedly, you know what to do, what not to do, and how to solve problems in the tasks.)

The development of self-assurance and professionalism among learners during immersion reflects a transformative process in hospitality education, as exposure to real workplace interactions helps them overcome nervousness and improve communication skills [21]. Professionalism, demonstrated through politeness, composure, and adherence to guest service standards, serves as a key coping mechanism for managing pressure and maintaining the establishment's reputation [21]. Consistent engagement with daily responsibilities and guest interactions enables learners to internalize industry expectations, enhancing both their technical competence and workplace conduct while fostering confidence in their role as service providers.

4.2.3. Improvement of Resources and Schedules

Learners often faced shortages of supplies, tools, or materials during immersion, requiring them to improvise and adapt to maintain service quality. These challenges allowed students to apply technical knowledge and problem-solving skills to prioritize tasks, substitute materials, or adjust procedures. Consequently, resource limitations became opportunities for developing resilience, adaptability, and practical decision-making—key competencies for efficiency and professionalism in hospitality work.

IDI-06 explained that they borrowed tools from other departments when supplies were lacking, showing resourcefulness in completing tasks.

(The equipment in other departments or let's check it out in engineering where I'm from. I don't have any equipment in my trolley. I'll look for equipment In housekeeping, maybe they have it there. Sometimes, if there's no equipment there, I'll look in other departments.)

FGD-06 explained that they had to continue tasks despite limited stock, showing how they prioritized and adapted.

(And then also, lack of stock.)

IDI-04 explained that they adjusted cleaning schedules to avoid disturbing guests, showing flexibility in managing tasks.

(There is no guest when we are cleaning the rooms. I mean, no guests, as long as we say no guests at all, we can't do that because we're just doing immersion but anyway, we're with the RA staff there but we've never encountered a guest.)

IDI-05 explained that they focused on essential tasks first and delayed non-urgent ones, showing practical problem-solving skills.

(It's really a big problem because you can't complete the job if equipment is lacking.)

The resourcefulness and operational flexibility shown by learners during immersion reflect a critical aspect of hospitality education, as students often improvise, adapt procedures, and prioritize tasks to manage shortages and sustain service quality [15][25]. Learners in the present study coped with limited supplies by borrowing tools, adjusting schedules to avoid guest disruption, and focusing on urgent tasks, demonstrating practical problem-solving and adaptability. These experiences highlight how immersion transforms resource challenges into opportunities for developing resilience, decision-making, and professionalism essential for effective hospitality work.

4.2.4. Adaption of Mechanisms in the Workplace

This theme explores the various ways learners actively managed the social and logistical pressures of the hotel environment. Rather than being passive recipients of stress, the learners developed specific behavioral and mental strategies to maintain their professional standing. This theme is crucial to answering the second research question because it highlights the "soft skills" such as resilience, patience, and initiative that learners utilized to bridge the gap between their student status and the demands of a professional workforce.

IDI-02 explained that they engaged verbally with seasoned professionals despite initial fear, showing active social integration.

(In immersion, problems were with coworkers... there was nervousness because it was my first time... [but] you really need to talk to them)

IDI-03 explained that they maintained composure when dealing with impatient guests, showing emotional regulation and service recovery.

(When the guest gets angry... just have a lot of patience.)

FGD-03 explained that they managed the burden of transport costs by persisting, showing practical financial management.

And then... the fare was expensive [but] you really have to work hard for it)

IDI-06 explained that they focused on tasks to avoid panic while multitasking, showing cognitive strategies to stay organized.

(...I get panicked... [but] I try my best to list down or keep in mind the guest's requests)

IDI-01 explained that they confronted exhaustion to complete tasks, showing mental toughness in handling the physical demands of housekeeping.

(...you get overwhelmed... [but] you really have to face the struggle because it is literally exhausting)

Social Navigation and Adaptive Coping emerged as a key theme, with learners employing proactive communication, emotional regulation, and practical budgeting to manage social and logistical pressures during immersion [7][24][6][2][27]. These strategies demonstrate how resilience, emotional labor, metacognition, and grit function as essential soft skills, enabling learners to bridge the gap between classroom training and the demands of professional hotel operations. Consequently, adaptive coping not only supports task completion but also fosters the personal and professional growth necessary for success in the hospitality industry.

4.3. Learners' Understanding of the Importance of Technical Skills in Work Immersion

This section addressed the third research question on learners' understanding of the importance of technical skills in hotel housekeeping, revealing that Grade 12 learners perceive technical competence as essential for professional performance. It highlights categories such as (1) mastery of technical skills and confidence, (2) confidence in the performance of tasks, (3) resilience and adaptability in handling tools, and (4) career readiness and professional evaluation.

Table 3 Learners' Understanding of the Importance of Technical Skills in Work Immersion

Major Theme	Core Ideas
Mastery of Technical Skills and Confidence	Learners technical recognized that mastering skills ensures rooms are cleaned to professional standards. (IDI-01) Proper handling of tools and equipment was seen as essential for efficiency and accuracy. (IDI-02) Learners understood that technical skills reduce mistakes and Improve guest satisfaction.(FGD-01) Technical competence was viewed as the basis for meeting hotel expectations.(IDI-03) FGDs emphasized that without technical skills, service quality would be Inconsistent. (FGD-02)
Confidence in the Performance of Tasks	Learners believed technical skills"build confidence when performing tasks independently. (IDI-04) Proficiency reduces nervousness when Interacting with guests. (IDI-05) FGDs noted that technical competence allowed learners to adapt more easily to industry standards. (FGD-03) Confidence is seen as preparation for future employment opportunities. (IDI-06)

	Confidence in ability Is linked to professionalism and workplace credibility. (FGD-04)
Resilience and Adaptability In Handling Tools	Resourcefulness helps learners improvise when materials are limited. (IDI-02) FGDs emphasized that knowing proper procedures allowed them to adjust to unexpected guest requests. (FGD-05) Resourcefulness was seen as a tool for 'olving problems quickly and effectively. (IDI-03) Learners recognized that adaptability comes from mastering housekeeping techniques. (IDI-01) Resilience enables learners to handle Immersion challenges effectively. (FGD-06)
Career Readiness and Professional Evaluation	Recognizing that confidence In competence helps overcome workplace nervousness.(IDI-2) Valuing mastery of procedures as a tool for ensuring guest satisfaction and professional success.(IDI-03) Realizing that proficiency Is a long-term investment for future employment and high-salary opportunities.(IDI-05) Understanding that competence In housekeeping tasks reduces work-related anxiety and multitasking stress.(IDI-06) Perceiving technical skills as essential "life tools" that translate from school simulations to real-world career excellence. (FGD-05)

4.3.1. Mastery of Technical Skills and Confidence

Learners consistently highlighted that mastering technical skills forms the foundation of professional housekeeping, as immersion experiences showed that knowledge of cleaning procedures, tool handling, and hotel standards enables efficient task completion and meets guest expectations. Technical competence underpins quality service, fostering learners' confidence, adaptability, and career readiness. Overall, these skills are essential not only for maintaining cleanliness and order but also for developing professionalism, resilience, and guest satisfaction, making them central to success in the hospitality industry.

IDI-01 explained that mastering technical skills ensures rooms are cleaned properly and meet hotel standards, showing that learners view these skills as the basis of professional housekeeping.

(If you already know the technical skills, the result of the work is cleaner and meets standards.)

IDI-02 explained that proper handling of tools and equipment is essential for efficiency, showing that learners understand technical competence reduces mistakes and enhances guest satisfaction.

(It's important to know how to use the tools because you can finish the work faster and correctly.)

The emphasis learners placed on technical skills as the basis of quality housekeeping service is well supported in hospitality education literature. [38] argued that mastery of cleaning procedures, equipment handling, and adherence to hotel standards directly impacts service efficiency and guest satisfaction, making technical competence the backbone of professional housekeeping. Likewise, [37] highlighted that technical skills must be paired with accuracy and consistency, as these qualities ensure that tasks meet industry benchmarks and reinforce the reputation of the establishment. These perspectives align with the present findings, where learners explained that knowing technical skills resulted in cleaner, more standardized outcomes and that proper tool handling improved efficiency and reduced mistakes. Together, these insights underscore that technical competence not only sustains cleanliness and order but also builds confidence, adaptability, and professionalism—cornerstones of success in the hospitality industry.

4.3.2. Confidence in the Performance of Tasks

Learners reported that immersion experiences helped them overcome nervousness and build confidence, as acting professionally in real hotel operations enhanced both technical competence and personal growth. Exposure to guest interactions and workplace expectations strengthened their composure, politeness, and ability to meet industry

standards. Overall, immersion played a transformative role in developing confidence and professionalism, preparing learners for future employment in the hospitality industry.

IDI-04 explained that mastering technical skills reduced nervousness and enabled them to perform tasks professionally, showing that learners associate skills with confidence.

(If you know how to do it, you won't be afraid anymore and you'll be more confident in your work.)

IDI-06 explained that technical competence prepared them for future employment, showing that learners link immersion training to career readiness.

(Technical skills are what you'll use in the future because they are the basis of hotel work.)

[17] highlighted that immersion strengthened students' technical competencies, which served as a foundation for employability in the hospitality industry. Likewise, [7] stressed that mastery of technical skills during immersion directly contributed to career readiness, as these competencies aligned with the expectations of hotel employers.

4.3.3. Resilience and Adaptability In Handling Tools

Learners reported that immersion challenged them to think critically and adapt to unexpected situations, fostering quick decision-making in guest service, resource management, and time-sensitive tasks. By modifying procedures, improvising materials, and prioritizing work, they developed adaptability and problem-solving skills. Overall, immersion enhanced learners' flexibility, resourcefulness, and professionalism beyond technical competence, preparing them for dynamic hospitality environments.

IDI-02 explained that knowing proper procedures allowed them to improvise and complete tasks, showing that learners see technical skills as essential for adapting to limited resources.

(If you know the procedure, even if resources are lacking, you can still find a way.)

FGD-05 explained that technical knowledge helped them handle unexpected guest requests, showing that learners view technical skills as a tool for problem-solving.

(If you already know the technical skills, whatever the guest requests, you can handle it.)

The emphasis learners placed on technical skills as the foundation of quality housekeeping is supported by hospitality education research, which shows that mastery of procedures and equipment improves service outcomes and confidence [29][2]. In the present study, learners explained that technical skills ensured cleaner, standardized results and that proper tool handling enhanced efficiency and reduced errors. Collectively, these findings highlight that technical competence underpins cleanliness, adaptability, and professionalism, serving as a cornerstone for success in the hospitality industry.

4.3.4. Career Readiness and Professional Evaluation

This theme shows that learners came to see technical skills not just as manual tasks but as essential for their professional growth, shifting from viewing housekeeping as simple chores to recognizing it as a specialized discipline. Through immersion, they understood that technical proficiency drives their confidence, employability, and readiness to meet the demands of the hospitality industry.

IDI-02 explained that possessing the right skills helped them overcome workplace anxiety and integrate into the industry.

(...it really helps... the technical skills we learned will still be useful in the future.)

IDI-03 explained that performing technical tasks to a high standard is key to success in the industry.

(You can use these in the future, maybe they will help you become successful.)

IDI-05 explained that mastering their specialization connects training to financial and professional career benefits.

(It's a big help, it's advanced, the salary is high, so it's really a big help for you.)

IDI-06 explained that technical mastery helps mitigate stress in a fast-paced environment and supports future self-improvement.

(...I'll be able to use these skills in the future... even if the improvement is small, I'll just keep going.)

FGD-05 explained that immersion transformed their perspective on the hospitality industry, highlighting its professional demands and opportunities.

(I can see my future excelling in the hospitality industry... my knowledge about that future will advance.)

Career Readiness and Professional Evaluation emerged as a key theme, with learners recognizing that technical skills in housekeeping extend beyond routine tasks and serve as crucial assets for their professional future. Through immersion, they shifted from viewing housekeeping as simple chores to seeing it as a specialized discipline that builds confidence, employability, and resilience in demanding environments. These findings align with [7][24][2][14] and Luzon (2025), who emphasize that technical mastery combined with perseverance and adaptability equips learners with the competence and professional identity necessary to succeed in the hospitality industry.

5. Summary, implications, and concluding remarks

This chapter offers a detailed summary, implications, and concluding thoughts based on the previous chapters. It consolidates the key points covered in the study, emphasizing the importance of the research findings and their possible influence on the field.

5.1. Summary of Findings

To begin, this study employed a qualitative, phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of Grade 12 Housekeeping NC II learners during their hotel immersion in Tagum City. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted to capture challenges, coping strategies, and insights about technical housekeeping skills. Interpretive phenomenology was applied to co-construct meanings between participants and researchers, ensuring that findings reflected both personal realities and contextual influences. Data were analyzed thematically, with codes clustered into major themes aligned with the research questions. This methodology provided rich, contextualized insights into learners' readiness and professional identity formation.

With regard to the first research question, "What challenges did senior high school housekeeping learners encounter during their immersion in the hospitality industry?", the themes in Table 2 highlighted workload and physical strain, confidence and communication, and environmental and resource challenges. These findings demonstrated that immersion tested learners' adaptability, resilience, and technical competence beyond classroom simulations. The results underscore the importance of strengthening pre-immersion preparation and resource support to reduce anxiety, physical exhaustion, and workplace adjustment difficulties.

Moving to the second research question, "In what ways did these learners cope with the difficulties they faced throughout their immersion experience?", the themes in Table 3 emphasized social navigation, adaptive coping, and resourcefulness in managing logistical burdens. Learners developed strategies such as proactive communication, patience with guests, financial budgeting, and cognitive organization to handle multitasking. These outcomes show that immersion fosters soft skills—resilience, initiative, and emotional regulation—that complement technical training and prepare learners for the interpersonal and operational realities of hotel housekeeping.

Finally, concerning the third research question, "What insights did the learners gain regarding the significance of technical housekeeping skills in preparing for success in the hospitality industry?", the themes in Table 4 revealed career readiness, professional evaluation, and recognition of technical competence. Learners realized that technical mastery was not merely about completing tasks but about building confidence, employability, and long-term career vision in the hospitality sector. The findings highlight that immersion transforms learners' perception of housekeeping from household chores into a specialized discipline, reinforcing that technical skills serve as the foundation for professional success and industry competitiveness.

5.2. Implications

The findings for the first research question revealed that learners encountered challenges such as workload and physical strain, confidence and communication barriers, and environmental and resource limitations. These results highlight the importance of strengthening pre-immersion preparation, ensuring adequate facilities, and providing psychosocial support to reduce stress and anxiety. Schools and industry partners must collaborate more closely to create supportive environments that allow learners to adapt effectively to the demands of hotel housekeeping.

For the second research question, the coping strategies identified included social navigation, adaptive coping, and resourcefulness in managing logistical burdens. Learners demonstrated resilience through proactive communication, patience with guests, financial budgeting, and cognitive organization when multitasking. These outcomes emphasize that immersion not only develops technical skills but also cultivates soft skills such as emotional regulation, initiative, and adaptability, which are essential for long-term success in the hospitality industry.

Regarding the third research question, learners gained insights into the significance of technical housekeeping skills as foundations for career readiness, professional evaluation, and recognition of competence. They realized that technical mastery builds confidence, employability, and vision for future career paths in the hospitality sector. This transformation underscores that immersion shifts learners' perception of housekeeping from household chores to a specialized discipline, reinforcing the value of technical skills as the bedrock of professional identity and industry competitiveness.

Studies demonstrated that gaps in resources, supervision, and industry linkages weaken learners' readiness, often leaving them underprepared for real hotel operations. Meanwhile, studies highlighted that resilience plays a critical role in helping students cope with shortages of materials and logistical constraints, showing that coping strategies are as important as technical training. Building on these findings, future investigations should expand qualitative inquiries to other regions to capture diverse immersion practices and challenges, while longitudinal studies could track learners beyond graduation to assess how technical and soft skills evolve over time. Such approaches would provide richer insights into the long-term impact of immersion, ensuring that TVL programs remain responsive to industry demands and capable of producing graduates who are both technically competent and professionally adaptable.

Concluding Remarks

The study revealed key themes that shaped the lived experiences of Grade 12 Housekeeping NC II learners during their immersion, including workload and physical strain, confidence and communication, environmental and resource challenges, coping strategies, and recognition of technical competence. These themes captured the essence of learners' readiness, showing how immersion tested not only their technical skills but also their resilience, adaptability, and professional identity.

From these findings, important insights emerged about how learners navigated the transition from classroom training to real hotel operations. Their reflections highlighted the significance of coping strategies such as patience, communication, and resourcefulness, while also underscoring the central role of technical mastery in building confidence and employability. These insights shed light on the research questions by demonstrating that readiness is a holistic process shaped by both technical and soft skills.

The broader relevance of this study lies in its contribution to improving TVL programs and hospitality education. By identifying gaps in resources, supervision, and industry linkages, the findings can guide educators, administrators, and policymakers in strengthening immersion practices, upgrading facilities, and fostering stronger school-industry partnerships. Such changes have the potential to enhance learners' preparedness and ensure that graduates meet the rigorous standards of the hospitality sector.

Reflecting on the research journey, the study encountered challenges such as limited participant scope and contextual differences in immersion practices. Yet these challenges also opened opportunities for deeper exploration, particularly through longitudinal and regional studies that can track how learners' technical and soft skills evolve over time. Future research can build on these findings to ensure that TVL programs remain responsive to industry demands and capable of producing globally competitive graduates.

Finally, this study would not have been possible without the valuable contributions of the learners, whose voices provided authentic insights into the realities of immersion. Their experiences enriched the research and offered a clearer picture of the challenges and opportunities in hospitality education. As a closing thought, the journey of

“sweeping toward success” reflects not only the learners’ pursuit of technical competence but also their resilience and determination to transform challenges into pathways for professional growth.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

We, Pauline M. Jayectin*, Jhay S. Ambito, Erika T. Sanchez, Angelita B. Guzon, Geyca A. Toling, Lance Klie R. Alconera, and John Loui B. Mampang, declare that we have no conflicts of interest or competing interests to disclose regarding the publication of this manuscript or any institution, product, or entity mentioned within. Furthermore, we have no affiliations or financial interests in products or organizations that could influence the study outcomes presented or compete with those discussed in the manuscript.

Statement of ethical approval

All ethical standards were strictly followed in the conduct of this study. All sources and authors referenced in the manuscript were properly cited in accordance with academic and ethical guidelines.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation in the study.

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