

Evaluation of the Implementation of the Work Immersion Program for Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS Students in Selected Public Senior High Schools in Ilocos Norte

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the implementation of the Work Immersion Program (WIP) for Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS students in public senior high schools under the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte (SDOIN). Specifically, it assessed the pre-immersion activities implemented by the schools, examined the effectiveness of WIP implementation in terms of curriculum compliance, work immersion delivery, progress assessment, and supervision, and determined the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Data were collected using a validated survey questionnaire, while qualitative information was gathered through semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and means, whereas qualitative data were coded systematically to identify themes and categories through thematic analysis.

A total of 226 purposively selected participants took part in the study, including 208 CSS students, 9 immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and 9 school principals/head teachers.

Findings revealed that key pre-immersion activities—particularly career guidance and counseling sessions—were fully implemented (100%), indicating strong institutional support for student career preparation. There was also a high participation rate (91.71%) in agreement signing, partner orientation, mock interviews, résumé workshops, legal briefings, and documentary completion, demonstrating substantial compliance with DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017. However, orientations on immersion guidelines, safety protocols, and professionalism were implemented less consistently (71.43%), partly due to limitations in local partnerships in one school and the non-participation of some students in work immersion. The issuance of work immersion handbooks registered the lowest implementation rate (45.62%), reflecting limited access to essential reference materials.

Despite these gaps, respondents perceived the WIP as highly effective, with an overall mean rating of 3.77. Teachers reported slightly higher satisfaction (3.89) than students (3.65), although both groups expressed strong agreement on most indicators. The lowest-rated indicator (3.42) highlighted the need to strengthen

the alignment between immersion activities and CSS competencies. Student interview data further indicated a mismatch between assigned tasks—often involving basic ICT or clerical work—and the technical skills required in the CSS specialization, such as computer assembly, repair, and networking.

Overall, while the WIP was perceived as effective, the findings underscored the need for improved competency alignment, enhanced orientations on safety and professionalism, and better distribution of program materials to ensure meaningful, industry-relevant, and skill-based immersion experiences for CSS students.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In recent years, there had been a heightened global emphasis on aligning education with industry through work-based learning (WBL) initiatives. International organizations such as the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the World Bank (WB) highlighted the urgent need to bridge the widening skills gap by integrating authentic workplace experiences into educational systems. These organizations asserted that developing learners' practical competencies, digital literacy, adaptability, and lifelong learning skills was essential in a rapidly evolving labor market where many future occupations had yet to emerge (World Economic Forum, 2024; Benveniste, 2025). This global trend had been reflected in various national education reforms worldwide. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the Work Immersion Program (WIP) as part of the Basic Education K–12 curriculum. This program, outlined in DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017, provided students with 80–320 hours of supervised workplace exposure. The program aimed to enhance not only technical skills and workplace readiness but also to instill strong work ethics and values. It was considered crucial for achieving educational relevance aligned with industry and national development goals, as mandated by RA 10533 (DepEd, 2017; DepEd, 2025). By integrating immersion experiences into formal education, students were able to apply their theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, thereby improving their readiness for employment, entrepreneurship, or higher education.

The senior high school WIP operated through three key stages—pre-immersion, immersion, and post-immersion—each integrating structured partnerships, supervision, and evaluation to ensure meaningful learning experiences. During the pre-immersion stage, schools formalized industry partnerships through Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) and conducted orientations on workplace ethics, safety, and documentation. The immersion stage, which served as the core of the program, provided students with hands-on industry experience under the joint supervision of teachers and workplace mentors. For Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL)–Information and Communications Technology (ICT)–Computer Systems Servicing (CSS) students, this typically included computer system setup, troubleshooting, maintenance, and networking, monitored through journals and performance appraisals over approximately 80 hours or more. The post-immersion stage emphasized reflection and evaluation, requiring learners to compile portfolios while teachers assessed both student competencies and partner institution performance to ensure continuous program improvement and alignment with DepEd outcomes, TESDA standards, and national employability goals.

The TVL track and ICT strand were designed to equip SHS students with job-ready skills for immediate employment or entrepreneurship through competency-based, TESDA-aligned programs. Within this strand, the CSS specialization developed practical technical competencies aligned with TESDA NC II certification standards, including installing and configuring computer systems, setting up networks and servers, and performing maintenance and repair tasks. It also developed foundational skills in workplace communication, teamwork, professional conduct, and occupational safety. Industry immersion through the WIP bridged the gap between classroom learning and real-world application, allowing students to apply TESDA competencies in authentic work environments. This experience enhanced technical proficiency,

reinforced workplace readiness, and contributed significantly to employability and certification outcomes.

Empirical studies highlighted the pedagogical significance of work immersion in promoting both academic and professional development. These findings aligned with experiential and social learning theories, which suggested that students acquired technical and social skills through engagement in workplace tasks and interactions with mentors, thereby fostering holistic development and employability. According to Victory Christian International School (2016), as cited by Insorio et al. (2023), work immersion enabled learners to apply academic competencies in authentic work contexts. Similarly, Lozada (2017) found that immersion activities replicated workplace functions, promoted technical skill acquisition, and fostered professional discipline. For students under the TVL track, immersion served as a critical avenue for gaining hands-on experience aligned with their specialization. ICT-CSS students were commonly deployed to environments such as computer shops, IT service centers, ICT laboratories, network and hardware maintenance firms, and government or private offices with ICT units.

Beyond technical competencies, the WIP cultivated soft skills—including communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving—that were indispensable in the ICT sector. Rex Bookstore (2018) emphasized that these non-technical attributes were crucial for navigating workplace dynamics and building professional relationships. Immersion exposed students to organizational structures, workplace culture, and industry expectations, collectively enhancing employability and career preparedness.

Despite its benefits, WIP implementation faced several challenges. Macalintal (2020) identified logistical issues such as scheduling conflicts, limited resources, and transportation difficulties. Establishing sustainable partnerships with industry stakeholders capable of supporting ICT-CSS students was also a concern, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Students encountered personal and contextual challenges, including financial constraints, long commutes, and balancing academic workload with immersion requirements (Salvador, 2018). Davis (2021) further observed that complex workplace tasks and the demand for advanced technical knowledge often resulted in fatigue, absenteeism, and reduced learning outcomes.

Given these conditions, a systematic evaluation of the WIP was necessary to determine its effectiveness, especially for ICT-CSS students. As Lozada (2017) asserted, assessing the impact of immersion on students' readiness for higher education and employment was essential for continuous program improvement. Such evaluation allowed stakeholders to identify best practices, address implementation gaps, and ensure alignment with industry standards and learner needs.

While prior studies examined general outcomes of work immersion, research specifically focusing on ICT-CSS students in rural senior high schools remained limited. Previous works (Jimenez, 2020; Lozada, 2017) documented the benefits of immersion for career preparation but largely overlooked challenges faced by CSS learners, such as limited access to industry partners, specialized facilities, and updated equipment.

Within the Schools Division of Ilocos Norte (SDOIN), public senior high schools offering ICT-CSS implemented the WIP through partnerships with government agencies and private institutions. These collaborations exposed students to ICT-related tasks essential for developing competencies required in the ICT labor market. To date, no study had systematically evaluated the implementation of the WIP for ICT-CSS students in this division.

Hence, this study sought to evaluate the implementation of the WIP among Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS students in selected SHSs within the SDOIN. Specifically, it assessed the pre-immersion activities, the effectiveness of the program, and the strengths and weaknesses of its implementation. The findings were expected to inform program enhancements, address implementation barriers, and contribute to evidence-

based policy development, ultimately ensuring that ICT-CSS students were adequately prepared for success in their chosen fields and the evolving ICT industry.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to evaluate the WIP for Grade 12 CSS students in selected public senior high schools within the SDOIN during the School Year 2023-2024.

Specifically, this research addressed the following questions:

1. What pre-immersion activities are implemented by the selected public senior high schools for Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS students?
2. How effective is the implementation of the WIP in terms of:
 - 2.1 curriculum implementation and compliance;
 - 2.2 work immersion delivery process;
 - 2.3 assessment of learner progress; and
 - 2.4 supervision of work immersion implementation?
3. What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the WIP?
4. What recommendations can be formulated to improve the implementation of the WIP?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study could benefit various stakeholders involved in the implementation of the WIP for Grade 12 CSS students in selected senior high schools within the SDOIN. These stakeholders include currently enrolled and prospective CSS students, immersion teachers and coordinators, school administrators, industry partners, curriculum developers, and future researchers.

For currently enrolled and future Grade 12 CSS students, the results of this study could provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the WIP. By identifying these aspects, students could be better equipped to maximize the opportunities offered by the program, thereby enhancing their preparedness for ICT-related careers and higher education. The study could also help learners develop a deeper appreciation of experiential learning as a pathway to career readiness and professional growth.

For immersion teachers and coordinators, the findings could serve as baseline data for improving the implementation and supervision of the program. Insights derived from the study could help refine curriculum alignment, assessment practices, and logistical management, leading to more efficient and effective delivery of work immersion activities. These improvements could, in turn, ensure a smoother and more meaningful learning experience for students.

For school administrators, including principals and department heads, the study's results could guide informed decision-making regarding resource allocation, teacher training, and the establishment of partnerships with industry stakeholders. This could contribute to the successful execution of the WIP and

strengthen institutional capacity to deliver high-quality experiential learning opportunities.

For industry partners, the study could provide a clearer understanding of their collaborative role in supporting the WIP. By aligning with the program's objectives, industry partners could help students acquire relevant skills and workplace competencies, ensuring that the immersion experience remains meaningful and aligned with current industry standards and practices.

For curriculum designers and policymakers, the results could serve as a foundation for enhancing the alignment of the WIP with ICT career pathways and academic objectives. The findings could support evidence-based curriculum revisions that address existing gaps, promote technical proficiency, and strengthen the relevance of the program to the evolving demands of the labor market.

Finally, for future researchers, this study could serve as a reference for conducting further investigations related to work immersion programs. It could also provide a foundation for more comprehensive studies exploring the relationship between work immersion, employability, and student performance. By contributing to the growing body of research on experiential learning, this study could support the continuous improvement of senior high school education and the development of innovative strategies that promote student success.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study aimed to evaluate the WIP for Grade 12 ICT-CSS students in selected public senior high schools within the SDOIN during School Year 2023–2024. It examined the effectiveness of the program by evaluating its implementation, strengths, and weaknesses. Specifically, the study investigated the pre-immersion activities and the level of implementation of the WIP in terms of curriculum implementation and compliance, delivery process, assessment of student progress, and supervision of work immersion implementation. It also explored the availability of industry partners.

The scope of the study was limited to 208 Grade 12 CSS students, 9 work immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and 9 school heads/department heads from selected public senior high schools in SDOIN, totaling 226 participants. It did not include students from other TVL-ICT specializations or academic tracks, nor did it cover other senior high schools outside the division. Furthermore, the study did not assess the long-term effects of the WIP on graduates' employment outcomes or career trajectories beyond their senior high school experience. The findings were based on self-reported data collected through surveys and interviews, which could be subject to personal perceptions and response biases.

The study utilized descriptive statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means to analyze the quantitative data. Inferential statistical analyses were not employed due to time constraints and the limited duration allotted for the completion of the study; therefore, the findings are confined to descriptive interpretations of the respondents' perceptions and experiences.

Additionally, the study relied primarily on self-reported responses from participants, which may be subject to response bias and social desirability bias. Despite this limitation, measures such as ensuring confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed to encourage honest and accurate responses from the participants.

By focusing on the specific context of public senior high schools offering the TVL-ICT strand with CSS specialization, this study could provide valuable insights into the current implementation of the WIP in both urban and rural school settings. The results could help identify best practices and areas for

improvement to enhance the overall effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability of the WIP in preparing students for real-world professional and academic endeavors.

Definition of Terms

The significant terms are operationally defined here to provide readers with a clearer understanding of each concept:

Assessment of students' progress. This refers to the systematic evaluation of students' skill development, knowledge acquisition, and competency performance during the immersion program. It includes monitoring student outputs based on performance criteria, tracking progress, and identifying areas for improvement through feedback and documentation.

Curriculum implementation and compliance. It pertains to the adherence to the DepEd guidelines for the WIP. It ensures that the curriculum objectives are met, instructional standards are followed, and the program offerings are aligned with community needs and student specializations. Indicators include class schedules, student portfolios, feedback from partner institutions, and alignment between the CSS specialization and partner industries.

Effectiveness. This indicates the degree to which the components, processes, and activities of the WIP are effectively executed. It includes curriculum implementation and compliance, work immersion delivery process, assessment of learner progress, supervision of work immersion implementation, and administrative and operational concerns.

Evaluation. This is a systematic process of assessing the effectiveness, relevance, strengths, weaknesses, and areas of success of the WIP. It involves analyzing key aspects such as the level of implementation of processes and activities, the strengths and weaknesses of the program in terms of industry partnerships and logistical arrangements.

Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS students. These are the official enrolled students in the TVL-CSS of the public SHSs of SDOIN for the school year 2023-2024.

Industry partners. These are external organizations, companies, or agencies that collaborate with schools to provide students with experiential learning opportunities relevant to the TVL-ICT-CSS specialization, offering real-world exposure and hands-on training.

Logistical arrangements. These refer to the coordination of operational aspects essential for the implementation of the WIP, including transportation, scheduling, and other necessary support mechanisms.

Pre-immersion activities. These refer to the comprehensive set of preparatory programs and orientations organized by the school to ensure students' holistic readiness for the work immersion experience. These activities are outlined in DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017 and aims to develop students' understanding of immersion guidelines, workplace safety, and professional conduct while aligning their personal and career goals with the objectives of the program. They include orientations on policies and safety protocols, career guidance and counseling sessions, agreement signing with partner institutions, workshops on professionalism and resume preparation, introduction to partner organizations, goal setting, and briefings on legal aspects-all designed to equip students with the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for a successful and meaningful immersion experience.

Public Senior High Schools. These are the nine government-funded secondary schools under the

jurisdiction of the SDOIN that offer the CSS specialization.

Strengths and weaknesses of the WIP. Strengths refer to the effective practices and positive outcomes of the WIP, such as successful partnerships and efficient program delivery. Weaknesses denote the challenges and limitations encountered, such as logistical difficulties or gaps in student preparation, which indicate areas for improvement.

Supervision of work immersion implementation. This involves the oversight and monitoring activities conducted by school personnel to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of the program. It includes the development of monitoring plans, coordination with industry partners, documentation of site visits and meetings, and the implementation of corrective actions when necessary.

TVL-ICT career paths. These refer to professional fields within the ICT sector that require specialized technical expertise in areas such as computer systems servicing, networking, software development, hardware maintenance, and technical support. These career paths emphasize the application of technological knowledge, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills essential for roles in both local and global ICT industries.

Work immersion delivery process. This is the organized execution of the WIP, encompassing student preparation, task assignment aligned with learning competencies, and coordination with industry partners. It ensures that learning activities are relevant to students' specializations, consistent feedback is provided, and individual learning goals are addressed.

Work Immersion Program (WIP). It is a program of DepEd for all SHS students designed to provide authentic exposure to real industry environments. It aims to develop technical competencies, enhance understanding of ICT-related careers, and prepare learners for future professional and academic challenges.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the literature that supported the conduct of this study, along with discussions on the theoretical bases, conceptual framework, and research paradigm.

Review of Literature and Studies

This section presents the literature and studies that were reviewed by the researcher to provide a solid foundation for the conduct of this study. The materials reviewed include the following: 1) Definition, Goals, and Legal Basis of WIP; 2) Overview of the TVL Track; 3) CSS Specialization and Competencies; 4) Implementation Framework of the WIP; 5) Role of Partnerships in WIP; 6) Effectiveness of WIP; and 7) Challenges in WIP Implementation.

Definition, Goals, and Legal Basis of WIP

The WIP is a required component of the SHS curriculum in the Philippine K-12 Basic Education Program. It is designed to give students hands-on experience in real-world work environments. According to DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017, work immersion is a structured learning experience where Grade 11 and 12 students can apply their learned skills in actual workplace for a minimum of 80 hours, which can be extended up to 320 hours based on the specialization and availability of partner institutions (DepEd, 2017).

The main goals of the program are to improve students' technical skills, prepare them for the workplace, and teach them professional values like discipline, responsibility, and integrity. It also aims to familiarize students with industry standards, bridging the gap between academic learning and job requirements. The Work Immersion Curriculum Guide emphasizes the importance of aligning immersion experiences with students' chosen tracks and strands to ensure relevance and skill development (DepEd, 2019). By integrating work immersion into the formal education system, the program supports the broader goals of Republic Act No. 10533, which promotes a curriculum focused on learners' needs and responsive to the job market and national development.

Overview of the TVL Track

The TVL track is one of the four tracks offered under the SHS program in the K-12 curriculum. It is designed to equip learners with practical skills and competencies that prepare them for immediate employment, entrepreneurship, or further technical education. This track emphasizes hands-on learning and industry-relevant training, making it especially valuable for students who aim to enter the workforce directly after graduation (DepEd, 2016).

The primary goal of the TVL track is to develop job-ready graduates by offering specialized subjects aligned with labor market needs and offers students practical training through four specialized strands: Agri-Fishery Arts (AFA), Home Economics (HE), Industrial Arts (IA), and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Each strand is designed to equip learners with job-ready skills and entrepreneurial competencies that match local and global workforce demands (DepEd, 2020). The AFA focuses on agricultural and aquaculture practices, while HE prepares students for service-oriented careers such as caregiving and culinary arts. Industrial Arts trains learners in trades like carpentry and electrical work, and ICT develops digital skills in areas like programming and computer systems servicing.

A key feature of the TVL track is its alignment with the standards set by TESDA. This alignment ensures that students are trained according to nationally recognized competencies and are eligible to earn National Certificates (NC), such as the CSS NC II for ICT students. These certifications validate the learner's proficiency in specific skill areas and significantly enhance their employability both locally and abroad (TESDA, n.d.). The integration of TESDA standards into the SHS curriculum not only strengthens the credibility of the TVL track but also reinforces the government's commitment to bridging education and employment through competency-based training.

Computer Systems Servicing (CSS) Specialization and Competencies

The CSS specialization within the TVL track is based on a strong foundation of competencies defined by the TESDA. According to TESDA's official training regulations, CSS NC II equips learners with a wide range of technical skills, including installing and configuring computer systems, setting up networks and servers, and performing maintenance and repairs (TESDA, n.d.). These technical skills are complemented by essential workplace competencies such as communication, teamwork, professionalism, and occupational health and safety. This combination ensures that graduates are not only technically proficient but also ready for the and workplace.

Students who complete ICT-CSS training acquire a variety of skills. They gain practical experience in assembling hardware, troubleshooting system issues, configuring software, and managing network setups. In addition to technical tasks, they also develop soft skills essential in professional settings, such as problem-solving, effective communication, and ethical work behavior. These outcomes align well with the requirements of entry-level ICT positions and provide a solid foundation for lifelong learning or entrepreneurial endeavors in technology-driven fields (TESDA, n.d.).

In today's rapidly challenging digital economy, these skills are more valuable than ever. With global industries increasingly dependent on digital systems, there is a high demand for technicians who can build, maintain, and secure network infrastructures. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) both emphasize the growing importance of digital competencies, ranging from basic device handling to advanced skills like data analysis and cybersecurity, as essential across all sectors (ITU, 2020; OECD, 2016). By training students in these areas, the ICT-CSS specialization plays a vital role in connecting the country's workforce with emerging opportunities in the digital age.

Implementation Framework of the WIP

The WIP in the Philippine SHS curriculum follows a structured implementation framework consisting of three key stages: pre-immersion, immersion, and post-immersion. Each stage is designed to guide students through a meaningful learning experience that connects classroom instruction with real-world practice.

During the pre-immersion stage, schools establish partnerships with industries through Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), and students participate in orientation sessions covering workplace ethics, safety protocols, and documentation requirements (DepED, 2017).

The immersion stage is the core of the program, where students are placed in actual work environments to perform tasks aligned with their specialization. For TVL-ICT-CSS students, this typically includes computer system setup, diagnostics, and network configuration, all under the supervision of both teachers and workplace mentors (DepEd, 2019).

The post-immersion stage focuses on reflection and evaluation, where students compile portfolios and receive feedback on their performance. Teachers assess student competencies while also evaluating the effectiveness of partner institutions to ensure continuous improvement. The structured framework for evaluating WIPs is outlined in DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017, under Annex F titled Work Immersion Monitoring and Evaluation Tool. This framework serves as a comprehensive mechanism for monitoring key components of the program, including curriculum compliance, the delivery process of work immersion, assessment of student progress, supervision of implementation, and administrative concerns.

The Curriculum compliance ensures that immersion activities align with students' academic tracks, while supervision and administrative oversight help address operational challenges and maintain program quality. Together, these elements contribute to the overall effectiveness and relevance of WIPs in preparing students for higher education and professional careers.

The success of the WIP depends heavily on the active involvement of key stakeholders. School administrators are responsible for coordinating with industry partners and ensuring program compliance. Teachers play a dual role as facilitators and monitors, guiding students throughout the immersion process. Industry partners, on the other hand, provide the actual work environment and mentorship, helping students gain firsthand experience of professional standards and practices (Mejila & Habla, 2021). To maintain quality and relevance, DepEd emphasizes the use of monitoring tools such as daily journals, supervisor evaluations, and student reflections. These mechanisms help track progress, identify gaps, and inform future improvements in program delivery (DepEd, 2019). When implemented effectively, this framework ensures that work immersion becomes a transformative experience that prepares students for employment, entrepreneurship, or further education.

Role of Partnerships in WIP

Partnerships between educational institutions and industry partners play a crucial role in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and real-world applications, especially in WIP. These partnerships enhance the academic curriculum by providing students with real-world exposure, opportunities to develop critical skills, and access to resources and mentorship, ultimately supporting career readiness. Work immersion programs, as collaborative ventures between schools and industries, offer students hands-on learning experiences, skill development, and a deeper understanding of workplace environments. Dolby and Rahatzad (2018) emphasized that the success of such collaborations depends on the careful selection and preparation of partner organizations. Schools must ensure that industry partners possess the necessary resources and expertise to deliver quality training and mentorship. Alignment between educational objectives and industry expectations is crucial to ensure that students gain meaningful, relevant experiences that enhance their learning.

Structured school-industry partnerships have also been shown to positively impact student performance and engagement. Deloitte (2020) reported that schools collaborating with local businesses demonstrated significantly higher levels of student engagement and improved learning outcomes. Mentorship opportunities provided through these partnerships allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts, deepening their academic understanding and fostering a smoother transition to the workforce upon graduation.

Moreover, Dolby and Rahatzad (2018) documented several instances where school-industry partnerships generated mutual benefits for both students and partner organizations. The study highlighted the importance of mentor training, well-defined roles, and clear communication channels to maximize the effectiveness of the partnership. Professional development programs for teachers involved in these initiatives further enhance instructional quality and enrich student learning experiences.

Despite the documented benefits, gaps remain in the literature, particularly regarding secondary education. Most studies on school-industry partnerships focus on higher education, leaving limited research on high school work immersion programs (Rodríguez, 2011). Additionally, few studies examine the long-term impacts of WIPs on students' career trajectories, highlighting the need for follow-up mechanisms to track progress after program completion. Such longitudinal data could provide valuable insights into the sustained benefits of these partnerships.

The reviewed literature underscores the critical role of partnerships in enhancing the effectiveness of work immersion programs for high school students. Collaborations between schools and industry partners not only provide real-world exposure but also cultivate the competencies necessary for students' academic and professional success.

Effectiveness of WIP

The work immersion for CSS students is expected to enhance students' employability and readiness for higher education and technical careers (DepEd, 2017). For students in the CSS specialization, work immersion provides a pivotal opportunity to translate classroom-based technical instruction-such as hardware maintenance, software installation, and network configuration-into real-world work contexts.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that work immersion significantly contributes to both technical and professional skill development among Grade 12 TVL-ICT students. Chummani, Galima, and Mina (2025) reported that immersion improved students' technical competencies, including hardware assembly and

software installation, while also enhancing entrepreneurial understanding and market awareness. Moreover, students indicated increased career planning capacity and motivation following immersion. However, the study noted gender disparities, with male students reporting higher confidence and technical proficiency than female counterparts, highlighting an area for further intervention.

Broader studies of TVL work immersion reveal positive outcomes for employability and learner readiness. Iban (2019) examined 365 TVL students and 20 partner institutions in Pampanga, Philippines, and found a positive correlation between successful immersion and students' perceived readiness for employment. The study emphasized that alignment between students' specialization and their industry placement significantly affects the relevance and effectiveness of the immersion experience, with misaligned placements limiting skill transfer.

Industry partner feedback further illuminates the impact of immersion on professional behaviors. Anajao, Intano, and Sumaoy (2025) conducted a qualitative study on industry supervisors overseeing TVL Electrical Installation and Maintenance (EIM) students and found that learners exhibited strengths in teamwork and adaptability but struggled with punctuality, technical proficiency, and time management. While the study focused on a different TVL specialization, its implications are relevant for ICT-CSS students: immersion fosters workplace attitudes and readiness in addition to technical skill development.

Several factors moderate the effectiveness of ICT-CSS work immersion. First, the relevance of the placement site is a key determinant of outcomes. When industry partners align with the students' competencies, learners acquire deeper, more transferable skills (Chummani et al., 2025; Tengco, 2025). This is particularly important in ICT-CSS, where access to specialized equipment, software environments, and network infrastructure may not be universally available across partner organizations.

Second, the duration and quality of immersion experiences affect outcomes. The standard 80-hour requirement may be insufficient for ICT-CSS students to meaningfully develop their competencies (DepEd, 2017; Tengco, 2025). Short placements or limited engagement from industry mentors can reduce opportunities for hands-on practice and professional growth.

Third, soft skills and professional behaviors—including communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving—are increasingly recognized as crucial outcomes of immersion (Chummani et al., 2025). Students often report that immersion exposes them to workplace culture, expectations, and professional norms, supporting their transition from school to work or higher education.

Overall, the literature indicates that work immersion positively impacts ICT-CSS students' technical competencies, employability readiness, and professional behaviors. However, the magnitude of these benefits depends on placement relevance, industry partner engagement, duration and quality of immersion, and availability of specialized resources. Notably, there is a lack of studies specifically isolating ICT-CSS students and tracking their post-immersion employment outcomes longitudinally. The present study seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of work immersion for Grade 12 ICT-CSS students in selected public SHS.

Challenges in WIP Implementation

Work Immersion Program (WIP) is a crucial component of the SHS curriculum in the Philippines, aimed at bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world employment experiences. These programs give students the chance to participate in hands-on training within industries that align with their academic tracks, ultimately boosting their employability and career readiness (DepEd, 2017). Despite their significance, the

successful implementation of WIPs often faces various challenges, such as logistical issues inadequate industry partnerships, financial limitations, and safety and ethical concerns.

One major challenge in implementing WIPs is the difficulty in securing and maintaining suitable industry partners. Schools in rural areas, in particular, struggle with limited access to local industries, which limits opportunities for students to engage in meaningful immersion experiences. Vecino (2020) pointed out that the lack of nearby industries often forces students to travel long distances, placing additional financial burdens on families and creating obstacles for students who cannot afford transportation. In urban settings, the high demand for work immersion slots frequently surpasses available capacity, leading to overcrowding and difficulties in accommodating all students (Abella, 2019).

Financial constraints exacerbate these logistical challenges. The costs associated with transportation, meals, and other immersion-related expenses can be prohibitive, especially for students from low-income households (Vecino, 2020). Administrative issues also impact program quality, as insufficient numbers of trained personnel to supervise students during immersion can diminish the learning experience. Additionally, poor coordination between schools and industry partners often results in miscommunication, causing a misalignment between educational objectives and industry expectations (Abella, 2019).

Safety and ethical considerations are crucial in the implementation of WIPs. Schools must ensure that students are protected from physical and emotional harm during immersion, including providing safe working environments, adequate supervision, and compliance with labor laws and ethical standards (Pascua, 2020). Vecino (2020) stressed the importance of enforcing child labor regulations to prevent student exploitation, noting that failures in policy enforcement can jeopardize student well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic introduced further challenges, leading to a shift to virtual or remote immersion formats. While these alternatives helped maintain continuity, they raised concerns about accessibility to digital resources, clarity of guidelines, and the overall effectiveness of virtual immersion experiences (Pascua, 2020).

Specific challenges also arise for TVL-ICT-CSS learners due to the specialized nature of their required industries. These industries are not always available locally, limiting student placement options and potentially diminishing the relevance of tasks performed during immersion (Vecino, 2020). For CSS students, additional challenges include the need for specialized equipment and access to technical environments, which may not be available at all partner institutions, thereby restricting opportunities for practical skill development. Policy analyses suggest that the standard minimum 80-hour immersion requirement may be inadequate for students to gain comprehensive competencies (DepEd, 2025). Other challenges identified include gender disparities in placement and the difficulty of connecting immersion experiences to future tertiary education or career pathways (Chummani, Galima, & Mina, 2025; Necio, Acosta, Arzaga, & Buhalog, 2022).

Despite the numerous studies on work immersion program, there remains a lack of localized studies in SDOIN, particularly those focusing exclusively on ICT-CSS students. Most research addresses general TVL learners or other specializations, leaving gaps in understanding the unique challenges faced by CSS students-such as limited access to technical environments, equipment, and industry-aligned placements. Moreover, there is a need for more stakeholder perspectives, including students and immersion teachers to better evaluate program outcomes and implementation quality.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two foundational learning theories: Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) by David Kolb (1984) and Social Learning Theory (SLT) by Albert Bandura (1977). These theories

collectively provide a comprehensive lens for evaluating the implementation of the WIP for Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS students in selected public senior high schools in Ilocos Norte.

Kolb's ELT posits that learning is a dynamic process grounded in experience, structured through a four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. This model is particularly relevant to the WIP, which places students in real-world ICT environments where they apply classroom-acquired knowledge to practical tasks. The immersion experience allows students to reflect on their performance, conceptualize new insights, and experiment with solutions-thereby deepening their understanding and enhancing their technical competencies.

In the context of the TVL-ICT-CSS strand, where hands-on practice is essential, ELT supports the notion that immersion in actual work settings fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and skill mastery. As Stirling et al. (2016) emphasized, experiential learning enhances students' readiness for employment and further education. Similarly, Dela Cruz and Permejo (2020) highlighted that work immersion provides concrete opportunities for learners to develop industry-relevant competencies and workplace adaptability.

Complementing ELT, Bandura's SLT emphasizes the role of observation, imitation, and modeling in the learning process. In the WIP setting, students interact with professionals-mentors, supervisors, and co-workers-who serve as role models.

These interactions expose learners to workplace norms, communication protocols, and ethical standards prevalent in the ICT industry. According to NU Editorial Contributors (2022), such mentorship and modeling significantly influence students' motivation, confidence, and acquisition of soft skills, shaping their professional identity and career aspirations.

SLT thus provides a framework for understanding how students internalize values and behaviors through social engagement and observational learning during their immersion. The presence of effective mentors and industry practitioners enhances the learning experience by offering tangible examples of professional conduct and workplace expectations.

By integrating ELT and SLT, this study adopts a holistic theoretical framework to evaluate the implementation of the WIP for Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS students in selected public senior high schools in SDOIN.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model, which provides a structured framework for evaluating the implementation and outcomes of the WIP for Grade 12 TVL-ICT-CSS students. The IPO model ensures a logical flow of analysis from the essential components that influence program implementation (inputs), to the procedures and activities undertaken (process), and finally to the resulting effects or outcomes (outputs).

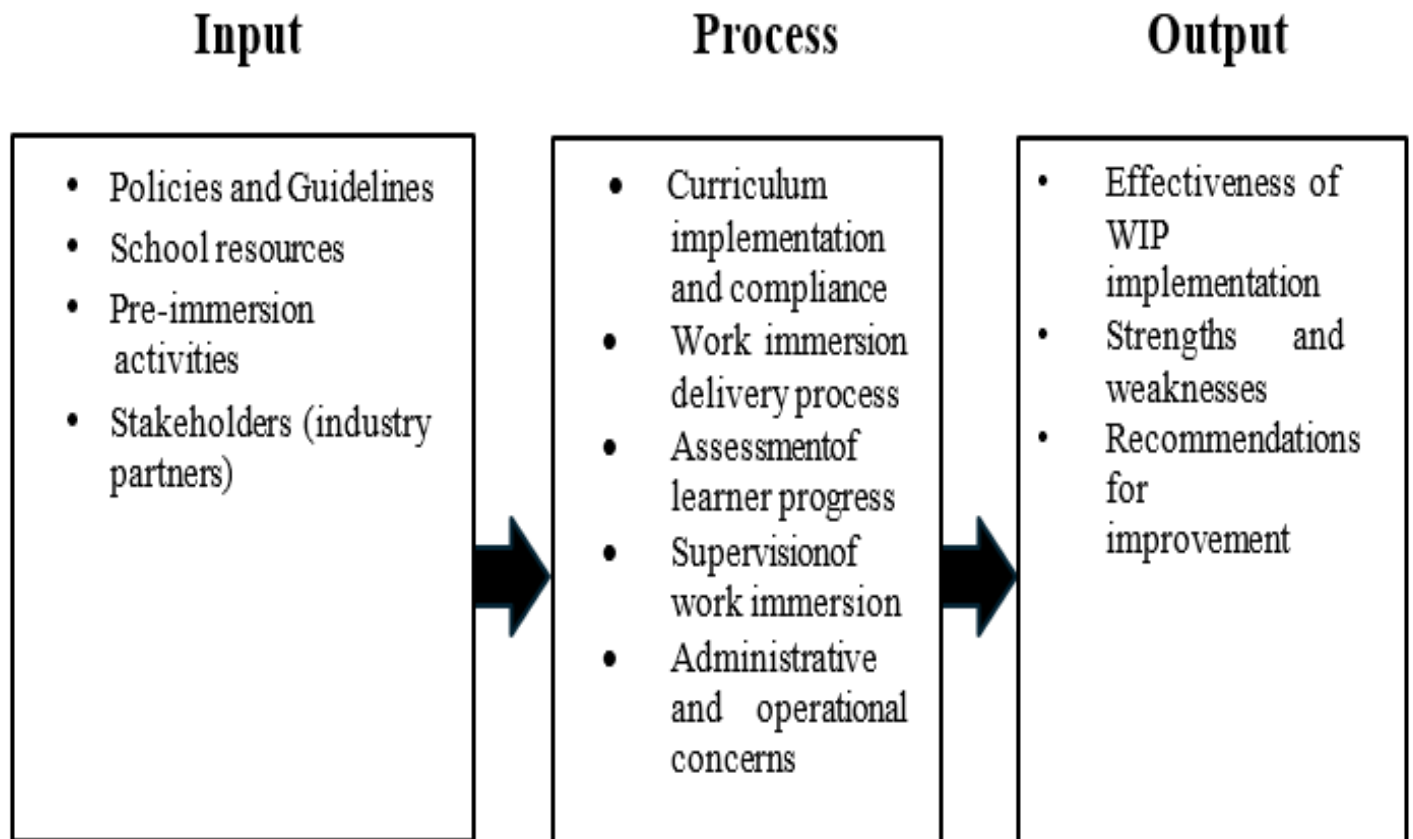


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

The input phase includes all the essential preparatory and contextual components that underpin the successful implementation of the WIP. This phase is grounded in the policies and guidelines governing work immersion, ensuring that all preparatory activities are systematically aligned with the standards set by the DepEd. Its effectiveness is further reinforced by the availability and adequacy of school resources—including trained teachers, instructional materials, facilities, and administrative support systems—which collectively facilitate the organized and efficient execution of pre-immersion processes.

A comprehensive set of pre-immersion activities is undertaken to promote students' holistic readiness for workplace exposure. These activities include orientations on work immersion guidelines and safety protocols, as well as career guidance and counseling sessions that equip learners with foundational knowledge, clarity of expectations, and informed decision-making prior to deployment. The phase also covers agreement signing among students, schools, and industry partners, along with initial engagements or orientations with partner organizations, which serve to formalize partnerships and acquaint students with their prospective workplaces.

Additional preparatory activities—such as workshops on professionalism, mock interviews, résumé preparation sessions, and the formulation of personal and professional learning goals—further enhance students' workplace competence, self-efficacy, and career preparedness. The issuance of the work immersion handbook, briefings on the legal and ethical dimensions of the program, and the completion of documentary requirements strengthen students' understanding of institutional policies, legal obligations, and compliance expectations. Collectively, these preparatory undertakings ensure that students are adequately equipped for meaningful and productive immersion experiences.

The process phase represents the actual implementation, supervision, and management of the WIP in alignment with the provisions of DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017. This phase involves curriculum-aligned delivery of the program, effective coordination with industry partners, supervision of students' workplace activities, and continuous monitoring and assessment of their performance and progress. Integral to this phase is the systematic collection and evaluation of data, wherein the researcher employed surveys and interviews to examine the fidelity of program implementation and to capture both quantitative and qualitative perspectives on its effectiveness.

The output phase focuses on the outcomes and insights derived from the evaluation. This includes determining the overall effectiveness of the WIP and identifying its strengths and areas for improvement. The outputs of the study are expected to contribute to the continuous improvement of the WIP, inform evidence-based policy decisions at both the school and division levels, and strengthen education-industry linkages aimed at enhancing students' employability and technical competencies.

Through this conceptual framework, the study illustrates the dynamic relationship among inputs, processes, and outputs in evaluating the implementation of the WIP. The policies and guidelines, school resources, pre-immersion activities, and availability of stakeholders (industry partners) serve as essential inputs that directly influence the quality and effectiveness of program delivery and supervision. The resulting outputs provide empirical evidence on the program's success and opportunities for enhancement. This systematic approach ensures that the evaluation encompasses both operational efficiency and educational impact, thereby contributing to the refinement of work immersion practices for ICT-CSS students. Ultimately, the framework underscores the WIP's fundamental objective of bridging the gap between academic instruction and real-world application-preparing learners to become competent, adaptable, and industry-ready graduates.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design, locale of the study, population and sampling procedures, research instruments, data gathering procedures, statistical treatment of data, and ethical considerations for this study.

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive research design, specifically the evaluation research approach, to assess the WIP for Grade 12 CSS students in public senior high schools within the SDOIN. The descriptive design was chosen to systematically analyze and describe the pre-immersion activities, the effectiveness of WIP implementation, and its strengths and weaknesses based on the perceptions of students, work immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and school heads/department heads.

A descriptive design was considered suitable for this research because it provides a comprehensive and systematic representation of existing conditions, enabling the study to evaluate how effectively the WIP achieves its objectives. This approach is well-suited for educational program evaluation as it identifies current practices, areas for improvement, and implementation gaps.

The descriptive design also facilitates the collection of quantitative data, enabling the researcher to analyze trends, relationships, and patterns among key variables. By gathering measurable data, this study presents empirical evidence of the program's effectiveness and supports evidence-based recommendations for improvement.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in selected public SHSs under the jurisdiction of the SDOIN. According to the SDOIN masterlist (2023), the division comprises fifty-four (54) senior high schools serving learners across the province. Among these, nine (9) SHSs offer the CSS specialization under the TVL-ICT strand.

The participating schools were purposively selected based on two primary criteria: (1) the school offers a TVL-CSS in the SHS and (2) with immersion subject in the second semester of the school year 2023-2024. These institutions represent the diverse contexts of public SHSs within SDOIN that implement the ICT-CSS specialization. Each school maintains strong linkages with local industries, computer service centers, and government or private ICT-related offices, providing students with authentic opportunities for hands-on training, workplace exposure, and professional mentorship aligned with their chosen field.

This locale was considered appropriate for the study because the SDOIN demonstrates a sustained institutional commitment to strengthening work immersion initiatives, focusing particularly on the enhancement of students' technical competencies, employability skills, and career readiness. The diversity among participating schools-ranging from urban to rural settings, varying student population sizes, and distinct industry partner networks-enabled the researcher to capture a comprehensive perspective on how the WIP is planned, implemented, and evaluated across different educational environments within the division.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The participants of this study were purposively selected based on their direct involvement in the WIP. A total of 208 Grade 12 CSS students, 9 work immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and 9 school heads/department heads from selected public SHSs under the SDOIN participated in the study. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that the respondents possessed relevant experiences and firsthand knowledge necessary to evaluate the program's implementation and effectiveness.

The Grade 12 CSS students were identified as the primary participants because they were directly involved in the WIP and could offer valuable insights into evaluating the program. Their perspectives were crucial in determining the effectiveness of the immersion experience in evaluating the program.

Meanwhile, the work immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers and school heads/department heads were included as secondary participants to offer a complementary perspective on program delivery. Their involvement provided essential information regarding curriculum alignment, instructional supervision, student performance monitoring, and administrative coordination with industry partners. Their professional observations contributed to a more comprehensive evaluation of how the WIP was planned, implemented, and managed across different school settings.

By focusing on participants with direct and substantial engagement in the WIP, this study ensured the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data that accurately reflected the program's outcomes. This purposive inclusion allowed for an in-depth and contextually grounded assessment of the WIP's implementation.

Research Instruments

This study utilized a structured research instrument specifically designed to gather comprehensive data on the implementation, strengths, weaknesses, and student perceptions of the WIP for Grade 12 CSS students. The instrument was developed to ensure the systematic collection of both quantitative and qualitative

information that would provide a holistic understanding of the program's effectiveness.

The first instrument, intended for CSS students and immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers was divided into three major sections. The first section gathered demographic information, including the respondents' basic profile and their role in the WIP (student or immersion teacher/coordinator/CSS teacher).

The second section focused on identifying the pre-immersion activities conducted by the school through a checklist designed to assess and identify the essential preparatory activities during the pre-immersion phase. This section included items that verified the conduct of key activities such as the orientation on Work Immersion Guidelines, students' orientation on safety protocols, and career guidance and counseling sessions. It also covered the agreement signing between students, schools, and industry partners; the introduction to work immersion partner organizations; and pre-immersion workshops on professionalism. In addition, the checklist examined the setting of personal and professional learning goals, the issuance of the Work Immersion Handbook, the briefing on the legal aspects of the immersion program, and the preparation of required documentary submissions, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of the pre-immersion process.

The third section evaluated the implementation of the WIP based on the provisions outlined in DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017, particularly those in Annex F: the Work Immersion Monitoring and Evaluation Tool with some modification. This section covered key domains such as curriculum alignment and compliance, delivery of immersion activities, monitoring of student progress, and supervision and coordination mechanisms.

On the other hand, a separate semi-structured interview questions were formulated to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the WIP. The interview questions aimed to gather valuable insights from CSS students, immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and school heads/department heads relative to the program's overall efficiency and relevance as well as to triangulate the quantitative data gathered.

These research instruments were carefully designed to ensure content validity and reliability, and were reviewed by field experts. To ensure internal consistency and reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha was computed during pilot testing. The instrument obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.87, indicating good reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to conducting this study, the researcher followed a systematic procedure to ensure the accurate and ethical collection of data. Initially, a formal letter requesting permission to conduct the study in selected senior high schools (SHSs) was submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of the SDOIN. Upon approval, similar requests were forwarded to the principals and officers-in-charge (OICs) of the selected public secondary schools to secure authorization to administer the research instrument to purposively selected respondents. Coordination with school heads was undertaken to schedule the data collection activities at times convenient for both the schools and the participants.

During data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation. Printed questionnaires were distributed, and respondents were given adequate time to complete them within a one-week period. This process ensured that participants could provide thoughtful and accurate responses.

To complement and validate the quantitative data, one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in person during the retrieval of the questionnaires. Participants for these qualitative sessions

were selected based on their willingness to participate, as indicated in their signed informed consent. The interviews were guided by a semi-structured protocol developed by the researcher, which allowed for flexibility in exploring participants' insights while maintaining consistency in the topics addressed.

The collected data were systematically organized and analyzed. Quantitative responses were tabulated and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools to assess patterns and trends. Qualitative data from interviews and discussions were analyzed using thematic analysis, with transcriptions reviewed to identify recurring themes, insights, and patterns in the participants' responses. This combined methodological approach ensured a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation of the WIP and its impact on Grade 12 ICT–CSS students.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data collected in this study were analyzed using appropriate quantitative methods to evaluate the implementation, effectiveness, and perceived relevance of the WIP for Grade 12 ICT-CSS students.

To identify the pre-immersion activities conducted by the school, frequency counts and percentages were utilized. This approach provided a clear overview of the extent to which preparatory activities, such as orientations, workplace readiness training, and partnership coordination, were implemented.

In addition, the level of effectiveness of the WIP was interpreted using the following range of means:

Range of Means	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
3.50 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)/Highly Effective
2.50 – 3.49	Agree (A)/Effective
1.50 – 2.49	Disagree (D)/Moderately Effective
1.00 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree (SD)/Ineffective

On the other hand, the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the WIP were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis following the model of Braun and Clarke (2016). The discussions illuminated critical issues surrounding the implementation of the WIP, particularly the processes and activities undertaken, the availability and engagement of industry partners, and the program's strengths and weaknesses in terms of partner involvement. The analysis also examined the conduct and effectiveness of pre-immersion activities, as well as logistical arrangements, including transportation and scheduling.

Themes were generated through a systematic examination of interview transcripts involving Grade 12 CSS students, immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers and school heads/department heads. The discussions primarily focused on the challenges, constraints, and concerns encountered during the implementation of the WIP. The thematic patterns that emerged were consistent with the analytical framework of Visitacion (2023), which was likewise grounded in Braun and Clarke's (2016) model.

The thematic analysis followed several key stages. First, the researcher transcribed all interview data and organized participant responses according to the guiding interview questions. Second, the transcripts were reviewed and coded to identify emerging patterns and recurrent ideas. Finally, through iterative analysis and refinement, the researcher defined and finalized the major themes and subthemes that best captured the participants shared experiences and perspectives.

Ethical Considerations

In conducting this study, the researcher followed established ethical principles to protect the rights and well-being of all participants. A formal request was submitted to the concerned authorities, to obtain permission to involve CSS students, immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and school heads/department heads as participants in the study. Additionally, participants were given an information letter outlining the study's purpose, their role, their right to withdraw at any time without consequence, and the opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification before participating. To maintain confidentiality, all collected data was handled with strict care and used exclusively for academic purposes. Respondents' identities were kept anonymous, and their responses remained confidential throughout the research process. Access to the raw data was limited to the researcher, and responses were securely disposed of after analysis to prevent unauthorized access.

Moreover, proper acknowledgment was provided for all sources of information, in accordance with the 7th edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style for both print and non-print materials.

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretations of Data

This chapter presents the results, analysis, and interpretation of the data collected through the research instrument used in this study. The findings are systematically organized and presented in tabular form to correspond with the specific research questions outlined in the statement of the problem. The chapter highlights the pre-immersion activities implemented in the schools, the perceived effectiveness of the WIP, and its strengths and weaknesses. Both quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the WIP.

Pre-Immersion Activities Implemented by Public Senior High Schools

This section discusses the pre-immersion activities conducted by public SHSs based on the responses of Grade 12 CSS students, and immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers.

Table 1 presents the extent of implementation of pre-immersion activities under the WIP for Grade 12 CSS students. The results show that career guidance and counseling sessions were conducted for all respondents (100%), indicating that the participating schools consistently provided opportunities for students to explore career options, gain awareness of industry trends, and make informed decisions about their prospective professional pathways. This high level of implementation reflects the schools' commitment to supporting students in aligning their academic preparation with future career goals.

Table 1. Pre-immersion activities in the WIP

Pre-Immersion Activities	Frequency	Percentage
1. Orientation on Work Immersion Guidelines (The objectives, expectations, and processes of the Work Immersion Program were clearly explained to the students.)	155	71.43%
2. Student's Orientation on Work Immersion Safety Protocols (The safety measures, potential risks, and emergency procedures were adequately discussed with the students prior to the immersion.)	155	71.43%
3. Career Guidance and Counseling Session (The school facilitated a session that provided useful insights on career choices, industry trends, and job opportunities for the students.)	217	100%
4. Agreement Signing Between Students, School, and Industry Partners (A formal agreement was established, clearly outlining the roles and commitments of all parties involved.)	199	91.71%
5. Introduction to Work Immersion Partner Organizations (The CSS students were properly familiarized with the industry partners and their respective roles in the Work Immersion Program.)	199	91.71%
6. Pre-Immersion Workshop on Professionalism (The students were clearly oriented on work ethics, attitudes, and communication skills prior to the immersion.)	155	71.43%
7. Setting of Personal and Professional Learning Goals (Students were provided guidance to align their personal career goals with their assigned immersion activities.)	155	71.43%
8. Issuance of Work Immersion Handbook (Students received a handbook containing the guidelines, policies, and expectations of the Work Immersion Program.)	99	45.62%
9. Mock Interviews or Resume Preparation Workshops (Students were provided training on job applications and interview skills prior to the immersion.)	199	91.71%

10. Briefing on the Legal Aspects of the Immersion Program (Students were informed about their rights and responsibilities before participating in the Work Immersion Program.)	199	91.71%
11. Preparing Documentary Requirements (Students accomplished and submitted parents' consent. Students were provided with insurance before participating in Work Immersion Program)	199	91.71%

N=217

A significant proportion of respondents (91.71%) reported participating in activities such as agreement signing between students, schools, and industry partners, introduction to work immersion partner organizations, mock interviews, résumé preparation workshops, briefing on the legal aspects of the immersion program, and preparing documentary requirements such as parents' consent and insurance coverage. This finding suggests that schools and industry collaborators ensured formal coordination and systematic orientation before deployment. These activities demonstrate strong compliance with the provisions of DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017, which emphasize partnership formalization, legal literacy, and readiness of learners for real-world immersion experiences.

In contrast, orientation on work immersion guidelines, safety protocols, pre-immersion workshops on professionalism, and setting personal and professional learning goals each recorded a 71.43% implementation rate. Although these activities were implemented in most schools, the relatively lower percentage compared to other components highlights the need for more consistent delivery. These sessions are critical in cultivating students' understanding of workplace ethics, safety procedures, and professional behavior - key competencies that influence their preparedness and confidence during immersion.

Meanwhile, the issuance of work immersion handbooks obtained the lowest implementation rate at 45.62%, suggesting that nearly half of the respondents did not receive printed or digital reference materials detailing program guidelines, policies, and expectations. The absence of such handbooks may limit students' capacity to review procedures independently, which could affect their awareness of institutional standards and immersion protocols.

Overall, the findings reveal that schools have effectively implemented most of the required pre-immersion activities, demonstrating commendable institutional compliance and student preparation for workplace exposure. However, inconsistencies in safety orientations, professionalism training, and the distribution of immersion handbooks indicate areas that require improvement. Strengthening these aspects could lead to a more comprehensive and standardized approach to pre-immersion preparation, thereby ensuring that students are fully equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to succeed in their work immersion experiences.

Perceived Effectiveness of the Work Immersion Program

This section discusses the effectiveness of WIP based on assessments made by students and immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers. The scope of evaluation includes curriculum implementation and compliance, the work immersion delivery process, assessment of student progress, and supervision of work immersion implementation as outlined in DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017.

Table 2 provides a comprehensive evaluation of the perceived effectiveness of WIP based on the agreement and perspectives of immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers and CSS students.

The overall mean rating of 3.77, interpreted as strongly agree (highly effective), suggests that all respondents generally perceive the work immersion program as effective. While immersion teachers tend to rate the effectiveness slightly higher (3.89, strongly agree/highly effective) compared to students (3.65, strongly agree/highly effective), the results generally show a strong agreement among the respondents in all indicators with ratings ranging from 3.52 to 3.89, except for Indicator No. 4.

Table 2. Perceived effectiveness of work immersion program.

Statements	Immersion Teachers / Coordinators / CSS Teachers		Students		Average Mean	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
The curriculum guide is being followed properly.	3.89	SA	3.65	SA	3.77	SA
The objectives of the program are achieved at the end of the semester.	4.00	SA	3.49	SA	3.75	SA
Specializations are aligned to the work immersion partner institution.	3.78	SA	3.58	SA	3.68	SA
Composite Mean of Curriculum Implementation and Compliance	3.89	SA	3.57	SA	3.73	SA
Activities of the students are programmed based on the competencies.	3.78	SA	3.05	SA	3.42	SA
Students are prepared before the actual work immersion.	3.67	SA	3.73	SA	3.70	SA
Students are being given feedback about their performance in the work immersion.	4.00	SA	3.73	SA	3.87	SA
Students' personal agenda/goals are being channeled for their knowledge, skills, and values development in the work immersion.	3.89	SA	3.76	SA	3.83	SA
Composite Mean of Work Immersion Delivery Process	3.93	SA	3.57	SA	3.70	SA

Students are oriented on how their performance will be measured.	4.00	SA	3.67	SA	3.84	SA
Assessment results are explained to the students, leading to their realization of the areas for improvement.	4.00	SA	3.72	SA	3.86	SA
0. Students can keep track of their progress in the work immersion.	4.00	SA	3.72	SA	3.86	SA
Composite Mean of Assessment of Students' Progress	4.00	SA	3.70	SA	3.85	SA
1. A clear monitoring plan (work immersion teacher, school partnership focal person, and school head) before the start of the work immersion is evident.	4.00	SA	3.78	SA	3.89	SA
2. The monitoring plan is properly implemented.	3.89	SA	3.72	SA	3.81	SA
3. Monitoring results are discussed with the concerned personnel to encourage actions needed to improve work immersion delivery.	4.00	SA	3.77	SA	3.88	SA
Monitoring results are utilized to improve work immersion delivery.	4.00	SA	3.74	SA	3.87	SA
4. Proper coordination, planning, and a feedback system are being enforced.	3.78	SA	3.77	SA	3.78	SA
5. Capacity building for work immersion is being conducted.	3.33	A	3.69	SA	3.52	SA
Composite Mean of Supervision of Work Immersion Implementation	3.83	SA	3.74	SA	3.79	SA
Overall Mean	3.89	SA	3.65	SA	3.77	SA

Legend	
Range of Means	Descriptive Interpretation (DI)
3.50 – 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)/Highly Effective (HE)

2.50 – 3.49	Agree (A)/Effective (E)
1.50 – 2.49	Disagree (D)/Moderately Effective (ME)
1.0 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree (SD)/Ineffective (I)

This indicator has an average mean of 3.42, which is interpreted as agree (effective). This suggests that there is a need for further improvement, especially in aligning student activities with competencies and enhancing capacity building efforts.

A closer look at the views of the students can be gleaned from their responses during the interview:

Tama po, sir. Kami po ay nadeploy sa ICT-related industry para sa work immersion. Pero po kung titingnan natin ang mga gawain doon, karamihan po ay hindi konektado po sa CSS. Kadalasan pong ginagawa naming ay ang pagphotocopy ng IDs, pagpriprint sa t-shirts, mugs, at ID lace gamit ang direct-to-film (DTF) at heat press. Gumagawa din po kami ng mga layout at designs ng stickers po. (That's right, sir. We were deployed to the ICT-related industry for work immersion. But if we look at the tasks there, most of them are not connected to CSS. What we usually do is photocopy IDs, print t-shirts, mugs, and ID lace using direct-to-film (DTF) and heat press. We also do layouts and designs for stickers.)

-CSS Student 2

Karamihan po sa mga gawain namin ay ang pagencode sa Word documents, pagprint, pagdisenyo ng certificates, pagphotocopy, paggawa ng tarpaulin layouts, pagedit ng 1x1 at 2x2 na larawan, pagputol at paglamine ng mga printed images, pagsublimate ng mga mugs, paggabay sa mga customers, pagbenta ng school supplies, at paglilinis sa workplace. Minssanan lang po kami sa paglilinis ng system unit, pagkukumpuni, at pagformat. (Most of our tasks are encoding Word documents, printing, designing certificates, photocopying, creating tarpaulin layouts, editing 1x1 and 2x2 images, cutting and laminating printed images, sublimating mugs, guiding customers, selling school supplies, and cleaning the workplace. We only occasionally help with system unit cleaning, repairs, and formatting.)

-CSS Student 3

These comments indicate a significant mismatch between the work immersion experiences provided to students and the core competencies expected in the CSS specialization. While students are engaged in various ICT-related tasks, most of these activities, such as photocopying, printing, designing layouts, and selling school supplies, are not related to the technical skills required for CSS, such as computer system assembly, repair, maintenance, and networking.

The overall result reveals a strong agreement among the respondents on most items, indicating a well-implemented work immersion program. However, there is a need for further improvement in some indicators, particularly in aligning student activities with competencies. This supports the findings of Cruz and De Guzman (2019) that closer coordination between schools and partner institutions is needed to ensure that WIP experiences align more closely with students' academic backgrounds. While the students generally felt that WIP helped improve their practical skills, many also noted gaps in the relevance of tasks assigned to their field of study.

Therefore, immersion teachers and SHS coordinators need to focus on measures that address the identified gaps between theoretical knowledge and practical application by allowing students to gain hands-on experience in real-world work environments aligned with their specific skills and competencies.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Work Immersion Program for TVL-ICT-CSS Grade 12 Students

This section presents, interprets, and analyzes qualitative data based on the interview transcripts. The data is presented through identified themes and codes.

Strengths

The strengths of the CSS program are outlined in Table 3, categorized under the main theme of effective support in immersion program. This theme includes specific codes such as student safety and security, on-site visit supervision, and comprehensive skills acquisition.

Table 3. Strengths of the CSS program.

Themes	Codes	Particulars
Effective support in immersion program	Student Safety and Security	Free students' insurance Allowable adjustment to students with special needs
	On-site Visit Supervision	Constant monitoring and evaluation
	Comprehensive Skills Acquisition	Students learned additional skills beyond CSS competencies, such as using application software like Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom, operating a heat press for printing, and installing CCTV and WIFI connections.

Student safety and security encompass the insurance coverage provided to all students before the immersion program, as well as the support given to students with special needs and comorbidities who participate in the program. Findings from the interviews indicate that certain schools provide complimentary insurance to students throughout the immersion program to ensure their well-being and adhere to DepEd's policies. These expenses are covered by the schools' MOOE.

Moreover, some students with special needs and comorbidities are assigned to the principal's office to assist with encoding school reports and troubleshooting computers, laptops, and printers instead of being placed in an industry setting. This information is supported by the statements made by the study participants.

The school provided free insurance for the learners as one of the requirements for the immersion program chargeable against the school MOOE.

-School Head A

The school has paid all the insurance coverage of the students.

-School Head B

The insurance policy of all Grade 12 students was paid by the school.

-Immersion Coordinator A

We have students with identified special needs and comorbidities. Therefore, we have deployed them to assist with encoding school reports and troubleshooting desktop computers, laptops, and printers in the office of the principal.

-CSS Teacher 1

The on-site visit and supervision refer to the monitoring and supervision conducted by the immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers during the work immersion of Grade 12 students.

Participants specified that they conducted surprise or scheduled visits to monitor the students' progress. This allows coordinators or teachers to assess how well students are applying classroom knowledge in a real-world setting and identify any gaps. Similarly, the activity also offers an opportunity to mentor students and provide immediate feedback on their performance. This reaction is evident from the statements provided by one participant of the study.

Our team provided a surprise visit to our students during their work immersion. We conducted a dialogue with them, along with the immersion training supervisor to address any specific concerns and provide technical assistance to our students.

-Immersion Teacher 1

During our onsite visits, we conducted short conferences at least twice a week for proper intervention and enrichment of students' performance.

-Immersion Coordinator B

We conducted on-site supervision and constant monitoring with the help of the head teacher in charge of SHS and the conduct of parent-student pre-immersion orientation.

-Immersion Coordinator C

This implies a proactive approach by the educational institution to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the work immersion program. The surprise visit demonstrates a commitment to student welfare, enabling real-time identification and resolution of challenges. Conducting dialogues with both students and their supervisors reflects an emphasis on collaboration, technical support, and continuous improvement, ensuring that the immersion aligns with learning objectives and industry standards.

This aligns with Republic Act No. 10533, which emphasizes that schools need to create an equitable learning opportunity for students through partnerships with industries and local organizations.

Additionally, Smitt and Betts (2019) underscored the importance of supervision during work immersion. Supervised immersion programs increase student confidence, skill acquisition, and adaptability in the workplace. The presence of free assistance ensures that students receive real-time guidance and feedback. This is also supported by the claim of Garcia et al. (2022) that programs with robust support systems, including visits and logistical assistance, have shown higher completion rates and better alignment with curriculum objectives.

Furthermore, comprehensive skills acquisition refers to the process in which Grade 12 immersion students gained a broad and in-depth set of skills, knowledge, and competencies during the immersion program. They were required to perform tasks both within and outside the CSS competencies. This process involved multitasking with both hardware and software practical applications. As a result, the students acquired multidisciplinary or diverse skills within and beyond their specialization.

Interestingly, the students developed CSS trade skills while working with their senior technicians. They also learned about network setup, and software installation. Other skills learned by them outside their specialization during their immersion included graphic design, software use, equipment maintenance, and other practical trade skills such as t-shirt printing, installing CCTVs, and sales management. These skills are evident in the shared statements of different groups of student participants.

Sadyang napakabless po namin dahil madami po kaming naaral na mga gawain sa aspeto ng CSS at iba pang gawain gamit ng ICT tools. Sa pamamagitan ng pagassist po namin sa aming mga senior technicians, mas nahasa pa po ang kakayahan namin sa paginstall ng system units, paglinis at pagkumpuni ng mga printers, pagactivate ng MS Office applications sa mga laptops, pagreformat ng system units sa mga desktop na kompyuter, paginstall ng printer at scanner drivers. Natutunan din po namin ang and paginstall ng Chrome. Kadalasan din ay nagpiprint kami ng documents, nagiinstall ng LAN cables, pagrepair sa networks at pagset up ng printer sharing. Higit sa lahat, natuto po kami sa paginstall at troubleshoot ng CCTV at pagset up ng WIFI connections na kung saan dito nakakonekta ang CCTV. (We are truly blessed because we have learned many tasks in the aspect of CSS and other tasks using ICT tools. By assisting our senior technicians, our ability to install system units, clean and repair printers, activate MS Office applications on laptops, reformat system units in desktop computers, install printer and scanner drivers has been honed. We have also learned how to install Chrome. Additionally, we frequently print documents, install LAN cables, repair networks and set up printer sharing. Above all, we have learned how to install and troubleshoot

CCTV and set up WIFI connections to which CCTV is connected.)

-CSS students-group 2

Laking pasasalamat namin sapagkat madami po kaming natutunan sa aming immersion. Sa pamamagitan nito, mas napalawak pa ang aming kaalaman sa ibang aspeto ng ICT. Natutunan po namin ang pagcut at pagprint mula sa DTF, pag-print sa t-shirts, mugs, and ID lace, pagcut, pagtrim at pagtahi ng damit, pagkacut ng stickers, pagprint ng logo sa t-shirts, pagprint ng tarpaulin, stickers, ID, at mga ID pictures. Natutunan din po namin ang pagfold at pagpack ng mga damit pagkatapos maiprint at matahi, paginstall ng mga signages, paggawa ng inventory sa mga bagong delivered items, pagcheck ng model at serial number ng mga laptops, monitors, speakers, headsets, CPU coolers, at USB drives, paggawa ng sales reports, pagbenta ng printers, laptops, routers, at access points. (We are very grateful because we learned a lot from our immersion. Our knowledge in various aspects of ICT was further expanded through this experience. We learned how to cut and print using DTF, print on t-shirts, mugs, and ID laces, cut, trim, and sew clothes, cut stickers, print logos on t-shirts, do tarpaulin printing, create stickers, IDs, and ID pictures. We also learned how to fold and pack clothes after printing and sewing, install signage, conduct inventory

on newly delivered items, check the model and serial numbers of laptops, monitors, speakers, headsets, CPU coolers, and USB drives, make sales reports, and sell printers, laptops, routers, and access points.)

-CSS Students-group 3

The findings underscore that work immersion provides students with valuable opportunities to acquire both CSS-specific trade skills and multidisciplinary skills beyond their specialization. The results highlight the importance of immersion programs that expose students to diverse practical experiences in order to broaden their skill sets and enhance their employability. However, schools need to consider industries that can help students bolster their CSS core competencies.

Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the CSS program are outlined in Table 4, thematically identified under one theme: challenges in work immersion program implementation.

Four specific codes include: (1) lack of industry partners in CSS; (2) insufficient time for work immersion; (3) alignment of industry tasks with CSS competencies; and (4) distance from home to work immersion site and travel expenses.

Table 3. Weaknesses of the CSS program.

Themes	Codes	Transcripts
Challenges in work immersion program implementation	Lack of Industry Partners in CSS	No immersion program for one school
	Insufficient Time for Work Immersion	Immersion program held in school Limited time frame for work immersion
	Alignment of Industry Tasks with CSS Competencies	Students' activities are beyond CSS competencies
	Distance from Home to Work Immersion Site and Travel Expenses	Long distance travel

One specific challenge in implementing the immersion program is the lack of industry partners in CSS. For instance, one school did not send students to any industry because there are no computer shops available in the municipality. Other schools had to place their students in government offices due to the limited ICT-

industry in the locality.

Unexpectedly, there is one group of students who have been deployed in the school assigned to cleaning the surroundings and comfort rooms, watering plants, and encoding and printing documents at the school's office. This has happened because different industries can no longer accommodate trainees, as they have already accepted many trainees from different schools. This lack of industry exposure results in a lack of real-life work experience.

Some of their statements are:

We do not have an immersion program since the computer shops in the municipality have closed and it would be difficult to find partners from other towns or in the city.

-Department Head A

We have recently assigned our students to various offices within LGU, as there are numerous trainees in the ICT-related industries.

-CSS Teacher B

We deployed some of your CSS students in the DPWH office.

-CSS Teacher C

Kami po ay nadeploy sa aming paaralan dahil sobra na po ang dami ng student trainees na nakalagay sa iba't ibang tanggapan mula sa aming paaralan at sa iba pang paaralan. Naatasan po kaming maglinis ng comfort rooms at sa grounds, magdilig ng mga halaman, at magencode at magprint ng mga documents sa tanggapan ng punong guro. (We were deployed in our school because there are too many student trainees placed in different offices from our school and other schools. We were assigned to clean the comfort rooms and the grounds, water the plants, and encode and print documents in the office of the head teacher.)

-CSS Students-group 3

In addition, student participants mentioned that the 80-hour timeframe for the immersion program is too short. They requested for a longer period to further enhance and develop their skills.

These sentiments are evident in their responses during the interview.

Hindi po sapat ang 80 na oras ng immersion. Kinakailangan pong dagdagan ang oras para mas lalo pa po kaming mahasa sa ibat ibang kasanayan. (The 80-hour immersion is insufficient. It is necessary to increase the time so that we can further refine various skills.)

-CSS Student 1

The three-week period of work immersion is insufficient. I believe that adding more time would allow us to learn more.

-CSS Student 2

Sa tingin ko po ay sadyang limitado yong walumpong oras na gugugulin sa work immersion. Kinakailagan itong dagdagan upang mas madami pa kaming matutunan. (I think that the 80-hours allocated for work immersion are insufficient. It is crucial to extend this time so that we can gain a more comprehensive learning experience.)

-CSS Student 3

According to DepEd Order 30, s. 2017, the minimum requirement for work immersion is 80 hours, with a maximum of up to 320 hours. The duration depends on the model chosen by the school, following the guidelines for work immersion as outlined in the said Order. Given this policy, the school has the discretionary power to retain or increase the duration of the immersion program.

Moreover, CSS students have raised concerns about the alignment of industry tasks with CSS competencies. Student respondents stressed the importance of carefully selecting industry partners and ensuring that workplace tasks are in line with CSS competencies to enhance the skills acquired in school.

It is worth noting that while some CSS-related tasks were completed during the work immersion, the majority of tasks fell outside the CSS competencies. These tasks included cutting and printing from Direct to Film (DTF), printing on t-shirts, mugs, and ID laces, cutting, trimming and sewing printed t-shirts, cutting stickers, printing logos for t-shirt printing, printing tarpaulins and stickers, taking ID pictures, installing signages, managing inventory of newly delivered items, checking models and serial numbers of laptops, monitors, speakers, headsets, CPU coolers, and USB drives, preparing sales reports, and assisting customers. These students shared:

Kinakailangan po na makasiguro ang paaralan na mas lalo pa pong mapagtibay ang aming mga natutunan sa CSS kapag kami po ay nalagay sa iba't ibang immersion center. (It is necessary for the school to ensure that our learning in CSS can be reinforced even more when we are placed in different immersion centers.)

-CSS Student 3

Ang paaralan ay dapat pumili ng isang industriya na mag-alok ng naaangkop na pagsasanayna nauugnay sa mga kasanayan naming mga mag-aaral ng CSS, dahil ang ilan sa mga gawain ay hindi angkop para sa CSS bagkos ito ay nakatuon sa paggamit ng software. (The school should select an industry that provides training relevant to the skills of our CSS students. Some tasks assigned during our immersion were not suitable for CSS students, as they are limited to using software.)

-CSS Student 4

Ang mga gawain na dapat isagawa sa panahon ng immersion po ay dapat na nakahanay at nakaangkla sa mga kasanayan ng CSS competencies. (The tasks that need to be completed during the immersion should be in line with and based on the skills of the CSS competencies.)

-CSS Student 5

Ang kadalasan naming ginagawa ay ang pagcut at pagprint mula sa DTF, pagprint sa t-shirts, mugs, and ID lace, pagcut, pagtrim at pagtahi ng damit, pagcitcut ng stickers, pagprint ng logo sa t-shirts, pagprint ng tarpaulin, stickers, ID, at mga ID pictures. Natutunan din po namin ang pagfold at pagpack ng mga damit pagkatapos maprint at matahi, paginstall ng mga signages, paggawa ng inventory sa mga bagong delivered items, pagcheck ng model at serial number ng mga laptops, monitors, speakers, headsets, CPU coolers, at USB drives, paggawa ng sales reports, pagbenta ng printers, laptops, routers, at access points.

(What we typically do is cut and print designs from DTF, print them on t-shirts, mugs, and ID lanyards, cut, trim, and sew clothing, cut stickers, print logos on t-shirts, print on tarpaulins, stickers, IDs, and ID pictures. Also, we have learned how to fold and pack clothes after printing and sewing, install signage, conduct inventory on newly delivered items, check the model and serial numbers of laptops, monitors, speakers, headsets, CPU coolers, and USB drives, create sales reports, sell printers, laptops, routers, and access points.)

-CSS Students-group 3

The findings reveal a noticeable mismatch between the tasks assigned to students during work immersion and the expected competencies in CSS. This suggests that immersion experiences were not always fully aligned with the technical skills outlined in the curriculum.

This mismatch may be attributed to structural and implementation-related factors. One key issue is the limited availability of industry partners that are directly aligned with CSS-related competencies. As a result, some schools are constrained to place students in available establishments, even when the assigned tasks are not fully relevant to their specialization.

In addition, weak coordination between schools and industry partners may contribute to the problem. Some partner companies may have limited understanding of the specific learning competencies required under CSS, resulting in students being assigned general or non-technical tasks instead of skill-based activities.

The data also suggest limitations in monitoring mechanisms during the immersion process. Although the Department of Education emphasizes competency-based implementation of work immersion, actual supervision may be affected by time constraints, workload of coordinators, and limited field monitoring, which may reduce alignment between intended and actual student tasks.

Furthermore, scheduling and operational constraints within partner establishments may influence task assignment, as students are sometimes given simpler duties to avoid disruption of regular workplace operations.

These findings indicate that the observed mismatch is influenced by systemic issues in implementation rather than isolated cases. This highlights the need to strengthen school–industry partnerships, improve coordination, and enhance monitoring systems to ensure that work immersion experiences are aligned with CSS competencies and the objectives of TVL education.

Furthermore, another challenge that students faced was the distance from their homes to their work immersion sites and the associated travel expenses. According to the interviews conducted, students from one school had to rent boarding houses in Laoag City for a period of two to three weeks during their work immersion, while students from another school commuted from their homes to Batac City.

Similarly, students from a different school traveled from their homes to Laoag City despite the long distance, incurring significant travel expenses. These challenges are evident in the shared statements of the participants.

Ang aming lugar ay matatagpuan sa pinakahilagang dulo ng Ilocos Norte. Isa sa mga hamon na kinaharap namin ay ang distansya mula sa aming tahanan hanggang sa work immersion site, dahil kami ay nakatalaga sa isang computer center sa Laoag City. Sa buong immersion namin sa trabaho, kailangan naming umupa ng boarding house at manatili doon ng dalawa hanggang tatlong linggo. (Our place is located at the northernmost tip of Ilocos Norte. One of the challenges we faced was the distance from our

home to the work immersion site, as we were assigned to a computer center in Laoag City. During our immersion work, we had to rent a boarding house and stay there for two to three weeks.)

-CSS Student 1

Our grade 12 students spent their work immersion in the City of Batac, so we expect that they spent a lot on transportation expense from Currimaog to Batac.

-CSS Teacher G

Naka-assign po kami sa Laoag City sa aming work immersion. Bale araw-araw po kaming umuuwi kahit malayo layo ang distansiya ng biyahe namin kaya malaki ang gastos sa pamasahe. (We have been assigned to Laoag City for our work immersion. Despite the long distance and high cost of fare, we travel home every day)

-CSS Student 2

The findings of the study reveal that the distance to work immersion sites and the corresponding travel expenses pose significant challenges for students. This indicates a critical need for strategic interventions, such as establishing partnerships with immersion centers located closer to schools or implementing financial assistance mechanisms. These measures would help alleviate the logistical and economic constraints experienced by students, thereby promoting more equitable and feasible participation in work immersion programs.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary and findings of this study, and the conclusions made from the findings. Recommendations are also forwarded in light of the conclusions drawn.

Summary

This study employed a descriptive research design anchored in evaluation research or program evaluation, with the primary objective of assessing the WIP for the TVL-ICT-CSS track in public senior high schools within the SDOIN. Two research instruments were utilized to gather empirical data from Grade 12 CSS students, immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and school principals/department teachers.

The first instrument was a survey questionnaire designed for students and immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers to determine the pre-immersion activities implemented by schools and assess the perceived effectiveness of the WIP. The second instrument consisted of a semi-structured interview guide developed to elicit deeper qualitative insights from participants, including school heads and department heads, particularly regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of the CSS track. Data collection was conducted face-to-face based on participants' availability and preference, through one-on-one interviews and small group discussions.

Participant selection employed purposive sampling and total enumeration. A total of 226 respondents participated in the study, comprising 208 CSS students, nine immersion teachers/coordinators/CSS teachers, and nine school heads/department heads.

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data on pre-immersion

activities were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The perceived effectiveness of the WIP was interpreted through Likert-scale responses using the range of means and corresponding descriptive interpretations. Qualitative data from interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and categories that reflected participants' views on the program's strengths and areas for improvement.

Findings

After a careful organization and analysis of the gathered data in this study, the following findings were noted:

The career guidance and counseling sessions are fully implemented (100%), demonstrating strong institutional support in helping students explore career options and align their academic preparation with industry needs. A high percentage of respondents (91.71%) also participate in agreement signing, introduction to partner organizations, mock interviews, resume workshops, legal orientations, and completion of required documents, indicating substantial compliance with DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017.

However, activities such as orientation on immersion guidelines, safety protocols, and professionalism workshops are implemented at a lower rate (71.43%). This low rating is associated with the fact that one school did not implement the WIP due to the non-availability of computer centers in the locality, as stated by one department head. The issuance of work immersion handbooks records the lowest implementation rate (45.62%), showing that many students lack access to reference materials needed to understand program procedures and expectations.

Generally, most required pre-immersion activities are implemented effectively. However, gaps in safety orientations, professionalism training, and handbook distribution indicate areas that require strengthening to ensure more consistent and comprehensive student preparation.

Some schools provide free insurance to students, chargeable against the school's MOOE, while in other schools, it is personally shouldered by the parents of the students.

On the other hand, the overall mean rating of 3.77, interpreted as strongly agree (highly effective), shows that respondents generally perceive the WIP as effective. Teachers rate the program slightly higher (3.89) than students (3.65), but both groups express strong agreement across most indicators (3.52–3.89). Only Indicator No. 4 records a lower mean of 3.42 (agree), indicating a need to better align immersion activities with required competencies and strengthen capacity-building efforts.

Student interview responses reveal that many assigned tasks—such as photocopying, printing, designing layouts, and selling supplies—do not match the technical skills expected in the CSS specialization, such as computer assembly, repair, and networking.

Overall, the program is perceived as effective, but improvements are needed to ensure that immersion tasks provide meaningful, competency-aligned, hands-on experiences for CSS students.

Conclusions

Based on the findings presented above, the following conclusions were drawn: The findings of this study show that the WIP for Grade 12 CSS students is generally well-implemented, with schools providing essential pre-immersion activities such as career guidance, counseling sessions, orientations, mock interviews, and resume workshops. These efforts have enabled students to explore career pathways,

understand workplace expectations, and prepare for industry exposure. High participation in agreement signing, partner orientations, legal briefings, and documentary completion further demonstrates strong compliance with DepEd Order No. 30, s. 2017.

Despite these strengths, several gaps require attention. Orientations on immersion guidelines, safety protocols, and professionalism are delivered inconsistently due to contextual limitations in certain schools, such as the absence of ICT-related industry partners. The limited distribution of work immersion handbooks—received by less than half of the respondents—restricts students' access to essential program information. Additionally, insurance coverage varies across schools, with some institutions providing free coverage while others are personally shouldered by students, highlighting the need for policy harmonization to support student safety and equity.

The study also reveals misalignment between immersion tasks and CSS competencies. Although the WIP is perceived as highly effective, student interviews show that many assigned tasks—such as photocopying, printing, and clerical work—do not reflect core CSS skills like computer assembly, repair, troubleshooting, and networking. This mismatch limits opportunities for meaningful, hands-on technical learning. Indicator No. 4, which pertains to task alignment, received the lowest rating, underscoring the need for improved competency-based placements and strengthened capacity-building efforts.

These findings strongly align with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) and Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT). The WIP provides students with concrete experiences that allow them to apply classroom knowledge, engage in reflective learning, and develop technical skills consistent with ELT. At the same time, the presence of workplace mentors supports observational learning, social modeling, and the development of professional behaviors as explained by SLT. Together, these theories affirm that immersion experiences are most impactful when students engage in authentic tasks and interact with competent role models.

In sum, while the WIP effectively fosters experiential and social learning, targeted improvements are needed to ensure more consistent implementation, equitable resource distribution, and stronger alignment between workplace tasks and CSS competencies. Enhancing industry partnerships, standardizing pre-immersion procedures, ensuring access to handbooks and insurance, and prioritizing competency-aligned placements will help create more meaningful, skill-based immersion experiences that truly support students' technical and professional development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, it is recommended that schools offering CSS specialization strengthen the consistency of pre-immersion orientations. This should focus on program guidelines, safety protocols, and professionalism by developing a standardized module to ensure uniform delivery across schools. Also, schools should create a handbook based on DepEd's policies and guidelines for the implementation of WIP. Providing printed copies to all students will support their understanding of program expectations and procedures, serving as a guide during the immersion program.

To enhance insurance coverage, school heads are encouraged to include free insurance for students in the Senior High School (SHS) Implementation Plan and the Project Procurement Management Plan (PPMP). By allocating specific funds for work immersion insurance in the PPMP, financial issues problems among learners can be reduced. Including this provision in school planning documents will not only improve the implementation of the WIP but also establish insurance coverage as a reliable and consistent aspect of SHS operations.

To address the mismatch between assigned tasks and CSS competencies, schools should carefully select and collaborate with external industry partners capable of offering activities aligned with the technical skills required in CSS, such as computer assembly, troubleshooting, and networking. Expanding partnerships with ICT-related industries, and LGUs is essential, especially for schools with limited local options.

Schools may also consider extending immersion hours beyond the minimum 80 hours to allow for deeper skills development, in alignment with DepEd guidelines. Logistical and financial challenges faced by students, such as long-distance travel and associated costs, necessitate school-initiated support systems, including transportation assistance or prioritizing partnerships with nearby centers.

Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen monitoring, feedback mechanisms, and capacity-building programs for teachers, coordinators, and industry mentors to ensure effective supervision and high-quality experiential learning.

Moreover, the enhancement of the WIP should be guided by experiential learning and social learning theories emphasizing hands-on tasks and meaningful mentorship to maximize learning through practice and observation. These recommendations aim to improve the alignment, relevance, and accessibility of immersion experiences, ensuring that students gain meaningful, competency-based, and industry-relevant learning outcomes.

Finally, for future researchers, further study may be recommended aligned with the CSS or other specializations in the TVL track to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program for better improvement in WIP delivery and include industry partners and workplace supervisors as respondents to obtain a more holistic assessment of immersion implementation and industry alignment.

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