

The Role of TESDA Short Courses and Diploma Programs in Equipping Learners with Skills for the Hospitality and Service Industry in the Three Branches of Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology Inc: Basis for an Enhanced Curriculum and Industry Partnership Plan

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Abstract

This study assessed the role of TESDA short courses and diploma programs in equipping learners with the competencies required for the hospitality and service industry in the three branches of Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc. Specifically, it examined the extent to which the programs developed learners' technical competencies, customer service skills, ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, confidence in performing industry-related tasks, and readiness for employment or entrepreneurship. It also evaluated the effectiveness of the current curriculum in terms of alignment with TESDA competencies, integration of hands-on and experiential learning, inclusion of industry standards and best practices, support for collaborative and problem-solving activities, and learner satisfaction and perceived relevance of training. The study employed a quantitative descriptive research design using a validated structured questionnaire administered to learners and teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, composite mean, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Findings revealed that respondents generally agreed that TESDA short courses and diploma programs effectively equipped learners with the competencies required in the hospitality and service industry. Likewise, the current curriculum was perceived to be effective in preparing learners for employment through competency-based instruction, practical training, and industry-relevant learning experiences. The study further identified opportunities for strengthening curriculum alignment with evolving TESDA standards, expanding industry partnerships, enhancing experiential learning opportunities, and promoting entrepreneurship. Based on the findings, an Enhanced Curriculum and Industry Partnership Plan was proposed to further improve learners' employability, technical competence, and overall readiness for careers in the hospitality and service sector.

Keywords: TESDA Short Courses, Diploma Programs, Hospitality And Service Industry, Competency-Based Training, Curriculum Effectiveness, Industry Partnership, Employability, Experiential Learning, Technical Competencies, Hospitality Education.

Introduction

The hospitality and service industry continues to be one of the world's fastest-growing employment sectors, requiring professionals who possess not only technical expertise but also customer-oriented attitudes, adaptability, communication skills, and workplace professionalism. The rapid evolution of hospitality operations, driven by globalization, technological innovation, and increasing customer expectations, has compelled educational institutions to produce graduates who can readily respond to industry demands. Consequently, technical and vocational education has become increasingly important in preparing learners with competencies that promote employability, entrepreneurship, and lifelong learning.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been recognized globally as a critical strategy for developing a skilled workforce capable of supporting sustainable economic growth. According to UNESCO (2022), TVET equips learners with industry-relevant competencies through practical and competency-based learning experiences that facilitate school-to-work transitions and improve labor market outcomes. Similarly, the International Labour Organization (2022) emphasized that competency-based education reduces skills mismatch by aligning educational outcomes with employer expectations, thereby enhancing workforce productivity and employment opportunities.

In the Philippines, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) serves as the lead government agency responsible for implementing competency-based technical education and skills development programs. Through its competency-based training framework, TESDA ensures that learners acquire measurable knowledge, skills, and work values consistent with national competency standards. The agency's Training Regulations and competency assessment system emphasize practical performance, industry certification, and workplace readiness, enabling graduates to meet the evolving requirements of both local and international labor markets. TESDA's current development agenda likewise

underscores stronger industry collaboration, curriculum responsiveness, and continuous improvement of training quality as essential components of workforce development.

Hospitality education particularly benefits from competency-based instruction because success within the industry depends largely on the effective integration of technical and interpersonal competencies. Learners are expected to demonstrate proficiency in food and beverage services, housekeeping, front office operations, customer relations, workplace communication, and problem-solving while maintaining professionalism and ethical standards. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory posits that meaningful learning occurs through concrete experiences, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation, making experiential learning a fundamental element of hospitality education. Likewise, Human Capital Theory suggests that investments in education and skills development enhance productivity, employability, and economic value, reinforcing the significance of quality technical-vocational training in developing competent hospitality professionals.

Previous studies consistently demonstrate the positive contribution of competency-based education to workforce readiness. Paryono (2017) reported that competency-based TVET effectively develops technical competence and improves graduates' employability through industry-aligned instruction. Similarly, Okolie et al. (2020) found that practical training, authentic assessment, and workplace exposure significantly improve learners' confidence, technical proficiency, and career readiness. These findings suggest that effective curriculum implementation plays a central role in ensuring that learners acquire competencies demanded by employers.

Customer service competencies have likewise received considerable attention in hospitality education. Zeithaml and Gremler (2021) argued that effective hospitality professionals must possess excellent communication skills, empathy, interpersonal competence, and problem-solving abilities to deliver high-quality customer experiences. Baum (2021) further emphasized that confidence, adaptability, and professionalism are essential employability attributes within the hospitality workforce because employees frequently encounter dynamic operational environments requiring immediate decision-making and customer engagement. Collectively, these studies indicate that hospitality education should cultivate both technical competence and essential soft skills to prepare graduates for diverse workplace situations.

Curriculum quality likewise remains a significant determinant of learner success. Biggs and Tang (2022) explained that constructive alignment between learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment methods enhances meaningful learning and competency development. In technical-vocational education, curriculum effectiveness depends on its alignment with competency standards, integration of experiential learning, incorporation of industry best practices, support for collaborative learning, and responsiveness to changing workplace requirements. Strong partnerships between educational institutions and industry stakeholders further strengthen curriculum relevance by providing learners with authentic workplace experiences, internships, mentoring opportunities, and exposure to current industry practices.

Within the Philippine context, TESDA-accredited institutions have increasingly strengthened competency-based instruction by integrating practical learning with industry certification. Existing literature highlights that institutions offering hospitality-related TESDA qualifications enable learners to acquire competencies in food and beverage services, front office operations, housekeeping, and customer service while enhancing employability through competency assessment and industry immersion. Moreover, collaborations between educational institutions and hospitality organizations have been shown to improve graduate preparedness by exposing learners to actual workplace standards and professional practices.

Despite these developments, limited empirical research has examined the combined influence of TESDA short courses, diploma programs, curriculum effectiveness, and industry partnerships on learners' competency development within private technical-vocational institutions. Existing studies have generally focused on graduate employability, competency assessment, or individual training programs, while relatively few have comprehensively evaluated technical competencies, customer service skills, application of theoretical knowledge, confidence in performing industry-related tasks, and readiness for employment alongside curriculum effectiveness and institutional partnerships. This gap highlights the need for institution-based evidence that can inform curriculum enhancement and strengthen collaboration between schools and industry partners.

Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc., through its three branches, offers TESDA-accredited short courses and diploma programs designed to prepare learners for careers in the hospitality and service industry. As the institution continuously expands its technical-vocational offerings, systematic evaluation of these programs is necessary to determine the extent to which they equip learners with industry-relevant competencies and whether the current curriculum adequately supports competency development and workforce preparedness. Such evaluation also provides valuable evidence for improving instructional practices, strengthening industry engagement, and ensuring that graduates remain competitive in an increasingly demanding hospitality sector.

Against this backdrop, the present study examined the role of TESDA short courses and diploma programs in equipping learners with skills for the hospitality and service industry in the three branches of Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc. Specifically, it assessed learners' acquisition of technical competencies, development of customer service skills, ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings, confidence in performing industry-related tasks, and readiness for employment or entrepreneurship. It likewise evaluated the effectiveness of the current curriculum, examined its relationship with learners' competency development, identified implementation challenges, and proposed an Enhanced Curriculum and Industry Partnership Plan to further strengthen competency-based hospitality education and improve graduate employability. The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on competency-based technical-vocational education and provides practical insights for educational institutions, curriculum developers, TESDA administrators, industry partners, and policymakers seeking to improve the quality and relevance of hospitality education.

Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to determine the role of TESDA short courses and diploma programs in equipping learners with skills for the hospitality and service industry in the three branches of Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc. The descriptive approach was used to assess learners' competencies and curriculum effectiveness, while the correlational approach examined the relationship between curriculum effectiveness and learners' competency development.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the three branches of Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc., a private institution offering TESDA-accredited short courses and diploma programs in the hospitality and service industry. The institution was selected because it provides competency-based training aligned with TESDA standards and serves as an appropriate setting for evaluating learners' skill development and curriculum implementation.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study consisted of 80 participants, comprising 60 learners enrolled in TESDA short courses and diploma programs and 20 teachers from the three branches of Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc. The teachers were purposively selected based on their experience and direct involvement in teaching and assessing learners in hospitality and service industry programs. Their participation provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the TESDA curriculum and the extent to which the programs equipped learners with the knowledge, skills, and competencies required by the hospitality and service industry.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study utilized purposive sampling to select respondents who met the established inclusion criteria. Learners currently enrolled in TESDA hospitality programs and faculty members actively teaching these courses during the conduct of the study were included because of their direct involvement and experience with the competency-based training program.

2.5. Research Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire based on TESDA competency standards, relevant literature, and related studies. The instrument measured learners' technical competencies, customer service skills, practical application of knowledge, confidence, employment readiness, and the effectiveness of the current curriculum. It was validated by experts and pilot-tested to establish its validity and reliability before administration.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, permission was secured from Director of TESDA and the school administration and the concerned campus officials. After obtaining approval, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents, explained the purpose of the study, obtained their informed consent, collected the completed questionnaires, and prepared the data for statistical analysis.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using frequency and percentage to describe the respondents' profile, weighted mean and composite mean to determine learners' competencies and curriculum effectiveness, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r) to examine the relationship between curriculum effectiveness and learners' competency development. All statistical tests were interpreted at the 0.05 level of significance.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical research principles by ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and the exclusive use of data for academic purposes. Considering the researcher's affiliation with Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc., appropriate measures were implemented to minimize potential bias, including anonymous data collection, objective statistical analysis, and the assurance that participation or responses would not affect the respondents' academic or employment status..

Results and Discussion

3.1 Level at which TESDA Short Courses and Diploma Programs Equip Learners with Skills for the Hospitality and Service Industry

Table 1 presents the summary of the level at which TESDA short courses and diploma programs equip learners with skills for the hospitality and service industry. The overall composite mean of 2.97, interpreted as Agree, indicates that the respondents generally perceived the programs as effective in developing the competencies required for employment in the hospitality and service sector. Among the assessed dimensions, acquisition of technical competencies ranked first with a composite mean of 3.07, followed by development of customer service skills with 3.00, confidence in performing industry-related tasks with 2.95, readiness for employment or entrepreneurship with 2.93, and ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings with 2.89. These findings imply that the competency-based approach of TESDA effectively develops learners' technical and interpersonal competencies while indicating opportunities to further strengthen experiential learning and entrepreneurship education. The findings support the competency-based training framework of TESDA, which emphasizes industry-aligned instruction and performance-based assessment to develop job-ready graduates. They likewise affirm the findings of UNESCO (2022) that Technical and Vocational Education and Training enhances employability through practical skills development, Paryono (2017) that competency-based education improves technical competence and workplace preparedness, Okolie et al. (2020) that practical training strengthens learners' confidence and employability, and Kolb (2015), who emphasized that meaningful learning occurs when theoretical knowledge is reinforced through authentic hands-on experiences.

Table 1

Level at which TESDA Short Courses and Diploma Programs Equip Learners with Skills for the Hospitality and Service Industry

Dimension	Composite Mean	Descriptive Interpretation	Rank
Acquisition of Technical Competencies	3.07	Agree	1
Development of Customer Service Skills	3.00	Agree	2
Confidence in Performing Industry-related Tasks	2.95	Agree	3
Readiness for Employment or Entrepreneurship	2.93	Agree	4
Ability to Apply Theoretical Knowledge in Practical Settings	2.89	Agree	5
Overall Composite Mean	2.97	Agree	

3.2 Level of Effectiveness of the Current Curriculum in Preparing Learners for the Hospitality and Service Industry

Table 2 presents the summary of the level of effectiveness of the current curriculum in preparing learners for the hospitality and service industry. The overall composite mean of 2.99, interpreted as Agree, indicates that the respondents generally perceived the curriculum as effective in equipping learners with the competencies, knowledge, and practical skills required by the hospitality and service industry. Among the dimensions, integration of hands-on training and experiential learning ranked first with a composite mean of 3.03, followed by support for collaborative and problem-solving activities with 3.02, learner satisfaction and perceived relevance of training with 2.99, inclusion of industry standards and best practices with 2.98, and alignment of curriculum with TESDA competencies with 2.95. These findings imply that the curriculum effectively promotes experiential, collaborative, and industry-oriented learning, although continuous curriculum review and stronger alignment with evolving TESDA competency standards remain necessary. The results support the competency-based training framework advocated by TESDA and affirm UNESCO (2022), which emphasizes that TVET curricula should integrate practical learning and industry relevance to enhance employability. Likewise, the findings are consistent with the studies of Paryono (2017), Okolie et al. (2021), and Claxton (2021), which concluded that competency-based curricula, experiential learning, and active collaboration with industry partners significantly improve learners' technical competence, workplace readiness, and career preparedness in the hospitality and service sector.

Table 2

Level of Effectiveness of the Current Curriculum in Preparing Learners for the Hospitality and Service Industry

Dimension	Composite Mean	Descriptive Interpretation	Rank
Integration of Hands-on Training and Experiential Learning	3.03	Agree	1
Support for Collaborative and Problem-Solving Activities	3.02	Agree	2
Learner Satisfaction and Perceived Relevance of Training	2.99	Agree	3
Inclusion of Industry Standards and Best Practices	2.98	Agree	4
Alignment of Curriculum with TESDA Competencies	2.95	Agree	5
Overall Composite Mean	2.99	Agree	

3.3 Relationship between the skills acquired through TESDA programs and the effectiveness of the current curriculum.

Table 3 presents the relationship between the skills acquired through TESDA programs and the effectiveness of the current curriculum. The results revealed that alignment of the curriculum with TESDA competencies demonstrated a significant positive relationship with learners' skills, with an r -value of 0.313 and a p -value of 0.029, while support for collaborative and problem-solving activities also showed a significant relationship, with an r -value of 0.298 and a p -value of 0.037, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. In contrast, integration of hands-on training and experiential learning ($r = 0.145$, $p = 0.186$), inclusion of industry standards and best practices ($r = 0.126$, $p = 0.242$), and learner satisfaction and perceived relevance of training ($r = 0.112$, $p = 0.266$) did not show significant relationships, resulting in the acceptance of the null hypothesis for these dimensions. These findings imply that curriculum alignment with TESDA competency standards and the promotion of collaborative and problem-solving learning experiences are the curriculum components most strongly associated with learners' skill development. The results support the competency-based education framework of TESDA, which emphasizes curriculum alignment with industry standards, and are consistent with the findings of Paryono (2017) and Okolie et al. (2021), who reported that competency-based curricula and collaborative learning significantly enhance learners' technical competence, employability, and workplace readiness

Table 3

Relationship between the skills acquired through TESDA programs and the effectiveness of the current curriculum.

	r value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Alignment of curriculum with TESDA competencies	0.313	0.029	$p < 0.05$, Reject H_0	Significant
Integration of hands-on training and experiential learning;	0.145	0.186	$p > 0.05$, Accept H_0	Not Significant
Inclusion of industry standards and best practices;	0.126	0.242	$p > 0.05$, Accept H_0	Not Significant
Support for collaborative and problem-solving activities;	0.298	0.037	$p < 0.05$, Reject H_0	Significant
Learner satisfaction and perceived relevance of training	0.112	0.266	$p > 0.05$, Accept H_0	Not Significant

3.4 Challenges are encountered by teachers and school administrators in equipping learners with skills for the hospitality and service industry.

Table 4 presents the challenges encountered by teachers and school administrators in equipping learners with skills for the hospitality and service industry. The overall composite mean of 2.94, interpreted as Agree, indicates that the respondents generally acknowledged the presence of challenges that moderately affect the effective implementation of TESDA short courses and diploma programs. Among the identified challenges, motivating learners to actively engage in technical training, customer service exercises, and professional skill development ranked highest with a mean of 3.15, followed by constraints in time and curriculum scheduling with 3.02, shortage of qualified trainers or industry-experienced instructors with 2.94, limited access to modern equipment, facilities, and technology with 2.84, while ensuring consistent alignment of the curriculum with rapidly evolving industry standards obtained the lowest mean of 2.78, although still interpreted as Agree. These findings imply that learner motivation, resource limitations, instructional capacity, and curriculum responsiveness remain key concerns that may affect the quality of competency-based hospitality education. The findings are consistent with Tracey (2021), who emphasized that hospitality education institutions must continually adapt to

evolving industry demands through updated curricula, qualified instructors, and relevant learning resources. Likewise, UNESCO (2022) highlighted that adequate facilities, competent trainers, and strong industry linkages are essential for effective Technical and Vocational Education and Training, reinforcing the need for continuous institutional improvement to enhance learner preparedness and employability.

Table 4

Challenges are encountered by teachers and school administrators in equipping learners with skills for the hospitality and service industry.

Indicators	Mean	DV
Address limited access to modern equipment, facilities, and technology necessary for hands-on training and simulation of real-world hospitality operations.	2.84	Agree
Overcome constraints in time and curriculum scheduling that restrict the integration of practical, experiential, and industry-based learning opportunities.	3.02	Agree
Manage a shortage of qualified trainers or industry-experienced instructors who can effectively deliver competency-based education aligned with TESDA standards.	2.94	Agree
Ensure consistent alignment of the curriculum with rapidly evolving industry standards, best practices, and employer expectations.	2.78	Agree
Handle challenges in motivating learners to fully engage in technical training, customer service exercises, and professional skill development due to varying levels of interest, aptitude, or preparedness.	3.15	Agree
Composite Mean	2.94	Agree

3.5. Proposed Enhanced Curriculum and Industry Partnership Plan

Programs or Projects	Objectives	Activities	Persons Involved	Success Indicators
1. Curriculum Enhancement and Alignment Program	To revise and update the curriculum to meet current TESDA competency standards and industry needs.	Conduct curriculum review workshops; align learning outcomes with TESDA standards; integrate updated modules and practical components.	School administrators, TESDA representatives, hospitality instructors	Updated curriculum approved and implemented; positive evaluation from TESDA and industry partners.
2. Industry Linkages and Partnership Program	To establish partnerships with hotels, restaurants, and tourism establishments for training and employment opportunities.	Forge MOUs with industry partners; organize job immersion and internship programs; hold industry forums and consultations.	School heads, TESDA officials, HR managers of partner establishments	Number of formalized partnerships; increased learner internship placements and employment rates.
3. Teacher Upskilling and Certification Project	To improve teachers' technical skills and industry knowledge through training and certification.	Conduct TESDA-accredited training sessions; send instructors to industry immersion or seminars; provide NC II/III assessments.	Teachers, TESDA trainers, industry experts	Teachers gain TESDA certifications; enhanced instructional competence and learner performance.
4. Experiential Learning and Simulation Program	To enhance learners' hands-on experience and practical application of hospitality skills.	Establish training laboratories (front office, housekeeping, food service); conduct simulation activities and skill competitions.	Teachers, learners, industry coaches	Improved learner performance in practical tasks; increased competency assessment pass rate.

5. Career Readiness and Entrepreneurship Development Project	To prepare learners for employment or entrepreneurship in the hospitality sector.	Conduct career orientation, entrepreneurship workshops, and business plan competitions; invite guest speakers from the industry.	Teachers, guidance counselors, industry professionals	Higher employability rate; learners demonstrate entrepreneurial mindset and readiness.
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Conclusions & Recommendations

The study concludes that TESDA short courses and diploma programs effectively equip learners with the competencies required in the hospitality and service industry. The findings demonstrate that the programs successfully develop learners' technical competencies, customer service skills, workplace confidence, and readiness for employment or entrepreneurship through a curriculum aligned with TESDA standards and supported by competency-based and experiential learning approaches. Moreover, curriculum alignment with TESDA competencies and collaborative learning significantly contributes to learners' skill development, although challenges related to learner motivation, instructional resources, qualified trainers, and continuous curriculum responsiveness highlight the need for ongoing program enhancement to sustain its relevance and effectiveness.

It is recommended that Holy Trinity School of Science and Technology, Inc. continuously strengthen its TESDA programs by enhancing industry partnerships, expanding work immersion and experiential learning opportunities, regularly reviewing and updating the curriculum to align with evolving TESDA standards and hospitality industry trends, and investing in modern training facilities and faculty development. The institution should also establish stronger industry-based assessment and feedback mechanisms to ensure graduates possess competencies that meet employer expectations, while future researchers may conduct similar studies in other TESDA-accredited institutions to validate and extend the findings

Compliance with ethical standards

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