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Workplace Exposure and Task Performance During Work Immersion as Predictors of Perceived Employability Skills Among Grade 12 Learners in Cabacungan National High School, Division of Surigao del Sur: A Predictive-Correlational Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study examined workplace exposure and task performance during work immersion as predictors of perceived employability skills among Grade 12 learners in Cabacungan National High School, Division of Surigao del Sur. Employing a quantitative predictive-correlational research design, the study involved 30 Grade 12 Home Economics learners who had participated in work immersion, with purposive sampling and total enumeration applied to the identified section. Data were gathered using an adapted learner questionnaire and analyzed through weighted mean, standard deviation, rank ordering, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple linear regression. Results showed very high levels of workplace exposure (M = 3.4667, SD = 0.2782), task performance (M = 3.4306, SD = 0.3269), and perceived employability skills (M = 3.4000, SD = 0.3506). Workplace exposure was positively and significantly related to perceived employability skills (r = .5715, p = .0010), while task performance demonstrated a strong positive and significant relationship with perceived employability skills (r = .7061, p = .000013). Workplace exposure and task performance were also strongly and significantly related (r = .8157, p < .001). Multiple regression revealed that the two predictors jointly explained 49.9% of the variance in perceived employability skills, F(2, 27) = 13.43, p = .000089. Task performance emerged as a significant predictor (B = .7696, p = .005), whereas workplace exposure was not significant when task performance was controlled (B = -.0169, p = .955). These findings emphasize that effective task performance during work immersion is particularly important in explaining learners' perceived employability skills and overall work readiness.

Keywords: *workplace exposure, task performance, work immersion, perceived employability skills, Grade 12 learners, work readiness, predictive-correlational research, senior high school, Surigao del Sur*

INTRODUCTION

Perceived employability skills have become an important educational concern in senior high school because learners are expected to complete basic education with not only academic knowledge but also the communication, teamwork, self-management, problem-solving, and planning skills needed for work and further training. In the Philippine senior high school context, employability is closely tied to the curriculum's school-to-work function, while recent evidence among Grade 12 learners shows that perceived employability skills can vary across domains, with planning emerging as one of the weaker areas. These

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conditions make perceived employability skills a relevant dependent variable for school-based research, especially in work immersion settings (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017; Isip et al., 2024).

At the global level, the development of employability skills remains urgent because many young people continue to face difficult school-to-work transitions. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2024a) reported that 64.9 million young people aged 15 to 24 were unemployed worldwide in 2023 and that the global youth unemployment rate stood at 13.0 percent, even if this was already the lowest level in 15 years. At the same time, the World Economic Forum (2025) reported that employers across more than 1,000 companies representing over 14 million workers identified analytical thinking, resilience, flexibility, agility, leadership, social influence, and technological literacy among the most important skills in the present and future labor market. These global patterns show that employability now depends heavily on both human-centered and workplace-relevant competencies, not merely on school completion alone (ILO, 2024a; World Economic Forum, 2025).

A similar concern is evident across Asia and the Pacific. The ILO (2024b) reported that the youth unemployment rate in Asia and the Pacific reached 13.7 percent in 2024, which was already more than three times the adult unemployment rate, while the region's jobs gap amounted to 164 million in 2023. In East Asia and the Pacific, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (2024) emphasized that transferable life skills such as problem-solving, negotiation, critical thinking, empathy, and communication function as the "glue" that helps young people use literacy, numeracy, digital skills, and job-specific competencies more effectively. Taken together, these regional findings suggest that schools in Asia must deliberately cultivate employability-related skills before learners enter actual labor-market environments (ILO, 2024b; UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, 2024).

In the Philippines, the issue of employability among senior high school learners remains significant despite some improvement in labor-market indicators. The World Bank (2024) noted that the country's youth unemployment rate declined from 10.2 percent to 8.7 percent between March 2023 and March 2024. However, national concern about the work-readiness of senior high school graduates persists. Orbeta and Potestad (2020) reported that many firms still perceived senior high school graduates as not work-ready, citing inadequate technical and behavioral skills as well as the insufficient length and quality of work immersion. In response, DepEd strengthened its policy attention to employability by signing an agreement in 2024 to enhance student skills and employability through improved work immersion and curriculum alignment, by moving to simplify the senior high school curriculum to allow greater focus on immersion, and by issuing the 2025 guidelines for the enhanced senior high school work immersion program in selected schools (DepEd, 2024a, 2024b, 2025a; World Bank, 2024).

The issue is also meaningful in the local context of Cabacungan National High School in Surigao del Sur, where learners are being prepared within the broader socioeconomic environment of Caraga Region. In 2024, Caraga posted a 96.1 percent employment rate, a 3.9 percent unemployment rate, and a 15.9 percent underemployment rate, while the services sector contributed 55.6 percent of the region's total output, indicating the importance of service-oriented and transferable workplace skills in the regional economy (Philippine News Agency, 2025). In nearby Surigao, Ariar et al. (2024) found that the work immersion learning experiences of Grade 12 students at St. Paul University Surigao were generally described as excellent, although pressure and insecurities remained common barriers. In another Mindanao-based study involving 362 Grade 12 students who completed an 80-hour immersion, both self-ratings and supervisor ratings of performance were outstanding, yet the relationship between self-ratings and supervisor ratings was not significant ($r = -0.008$, $p = .891$), suggesting that positive immersion exposure does not automatically translate into consistent assessments of workplace performance and readiness (Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024). These findings support the need for more context-specific inquiry in public-school settings in Surigao del Sur (Ariar et al., 2024; Philippine News Agency, 2025; Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024).

The present study is also grounded in the assumption that workplace exposure and task performance during work immersion may help explain differences in perceived employability skills. DepEd's Work

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Immersion Curriculum Guide states that work immersion exposes learners to work-related environments relevant to their specializations so they can enhance competence, apply knowledge, and develop proper work habits (DepEd, 2017). Empirical studies in the Philippines support this logic. Alinea et al. (2024) found that senior high school tech-voc students were perceived as well-prepared in general work habits, communication skills, and technical skills, although they were only marginally prepared in technology literacy. Jaime (2023) likewise reported significant relationships between aspects of work immersion implementation and employability competencies, while Garcia and Yazon (2020) found that stronger personal skills, technical skills, and work applicability during immersion were associated with higher employability. Still, recent studies have commonly examined employability in broad terms, focused on general immersion implementation, or used multi-source assessments, whereas limited evidence has specifically tested whether learner-reported workplace exposure and learner-reported task performance during work immersion jointly predict perceived employability skills in a rural public-school context such as Cabacungan National High School. This gap justifies the conduct of the present predictive-correlational study among Grade 12 learners in the said school (Alinea et al., 2024; DepEd, 2017; Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Jaime, 2023).

Literature Review

Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion

Workplace exposure during work immersion refers to the extent to which learners are introduced to, immersed in, and meaningfully engaged with actual workplace environments, routines, tools, processes, and interpersonal interactions related to their field of specialization. This meaning is strongly aligned with the Department of Education's Work Immersion Curriculum Guide, which states that senior high school learners are exposed to and become familiar with a work-related environment connected to their specialization so that they may gain relevant industrial skills, enhance technical knowledge, enrich communication and human-relations skills, and develop positive work habits and attitudes. In this study, the variable is measured through a researcher-made questionnaire adapted from these official work immersion expectations, making the construct policy-grounded and educationally defensible rather than merely impressionistic (DepEd, 2017, 2025).

The adapted instrument is conceptually anchored on the official structure of work immersion as presented in DepEd policies and guidelines. The first dimension, orientation and workplace familiarization, reflects the pre-immersion emphasis on expected behavior, work ethics, safety, rights and responsibilities, confidentiality, teamwork, and orientation to workplace rules and agreements. The second dimension, exposure to actual work processes and tools, reflects the curriculum expectation that learners encounter real work settings and apply school-based knowledge in authentic industrial or organizational tasks. The third dimension, interaction and participation in workplace activities, reflects the goal of helping learners engage with supervisors, workers, and workplace routines in ways that develop communication, human relations, and practical competence. Thus, workplace exposure in this study is not limited to physical presence in a partner institution; it is operationalized as a structured and multidimensional immersion experience that includes familiarization, authentic task exposure, and participatory engagement (DepEd, 2017, 2025).

International literature consistently presents workplace exposure as a central mechanism for bridging academic learning and real-world work performance. In a large U.S.-based quantitative study, Avleeva et al. (2025) analyzed survey data from more than 17,000 hospitality students using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling and found that internships significantly enhanced soft skills, with communication and organizational skills emerging as top predictors of internship performance. The study also emphasized that internship site evaluation strongly influenced students' perceived skill development, suggesting that the quality of the workplace environment matters as much as mere participation. Likewise, in Saudi Arabia, Alharethi et al. (2025) used a cross-sectional quantitative design and covariance-based structural equation modeling on 361 respondents and found that internship experience significantly

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predicted both students' ability to perform work tasks (β = 0.184, p = .017) and role clarity (β = 0.182, p = .012). These findings indicate that workplace exposure contributes not only to skill development but also to learners' understanding of how work is organized and what is expected of them in authentic settings (Alharethi et al., 2025; Avleeva et al., 2025).

Asian studies likewise show that meaningful workplace exposure supports learners' readiness, confidence, and career understanding. In Indonesia, Musa et al. (2025) employed a mixed-methods design with a survey of 100 undergraduate students and found high mean scores and significant correlations ranging from r = .66 to .74 between internship-related developmental domains and employability perceptions. Their regression analysis further showed that communication (β = .59), adaptability (β = .55), and software proficiency (β = .56) were key predictors of job readiness. The same study reported that 89% of respondents experienced increased professional confidence, 84% gained clearer career direction, 61% interacted with stakeholders outside their immediate supervisory circle, and 64% were exposed to new task domains beyond their prior academic preparation. Although conducted in higher education, these findings remain relevant because they show that exposure to diverse tasks, new environments, and wider workplace interaction can enrich students' developmental outcomes. In another Asian study, Pantaruk and Khuadthong (2025) reported through PLS-SEM that hospitality internship practices in Thailand had both direct and indirect effects on employability skills, reinforcing the value of structured workplace learning in the region (Musa et al., 2025; Pantaruk & Khuadthong, 2025).

Philippine and local studies show similar patterns while also pointing to implementation constraints that affect the quality of workplace exposure. In Sorsogon City, Figueras and Mendoza (2020) used a descriptive-survey design involving 28 work immersion teachers and found that schools generally implemented key exposure-related practices, including providing a checklist of requirements (M = 2.97), conducting pre-immersion orientation (M = 2.91), monitoring students' progress (M = 2.92), and coordinating with establishments (M = 2.84). However, the same study also identified limited partner institutions and transportation funds as among the top implementation problems. In Surigao, Ariar et al. (2024) conducted a quantitative descriptive study among 462 Grade 12 students and found that the overall work immersion learning experience was "excellent" with an overall mean of 3.46, although pressure and insecurities remained common barriers. In Cavite, Roble (2021) used a descriptive-correlational design with 84 TVL students and 18 employers and found that learners were immersed in actual work environments such as workshops, offices, and laboratories. The study further reported significant gaps between student competencies and employer expectations in communication (p = .005) and occupational health (p = .010), and it found that work immersion performance significantly differed by strand (p = .000) and specialization (p = .001). These Philippine studies suggest that workplace exposure is generally present and beneficial, but its educational value depends on factors such as partner quality, task relevance, supervision, and workplace alignment with the learner's strand or specialization (Ariar et al., 2024; Figueras & Mendoza, 2020; Roble, 2021).

Another Philippine study supports the need to examine workplace exposure not only as program compliance but as a substantive learning condition. Vecino and Doromal (2020) assessed the implementation of the senior high school work immersion program in selected public schools in Negros Occidental using a descriptive-comparative design and 204 implementers. Their study focused on curriculum compliance, work immersion delivery process, assessment of student progress, supervision, and administrative concerns, underscoring that work immersion quality depends on how systematically the program is delivered and supervised. This is consistent with more recent DepEd guidance, which recognizes that work immersion exists precisely to expose learners to work-related environments, but also acknowledges that limited hours and insufficient workplace engagement may weaken its intended outcomes. Taken together, both school-based research and policy documents suggest that workplace exposure should be understood as a measurable, multidimensional condition that can vary in depth, quality, and educational payoff across contexts (DepEd, 2025; Vecino & Doromal, 2020).

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Overall, prior literature and studies reveal that workplace exposure is educationally relevant because it gives learners opportunities to understand workplace expectations, encounter authentic tools and processes, and participate in real organizational interactions. International and Asian evidence shows that such exposure is linked to stronger work readiness, clearer role understanding, greater confidence, and broader employability-related development, while Philippine studies confirm that orientation, site coordination, monitoring, and relevance of placement are crucial to a positive immersion experience. At the same time, the literature also shows that workplace exposure is uneven in quality, with common issues involving limited partner institutions, misalignment of tasks, insufficient diversity of job functions, and unequal access to authentic work participation. These recurring findings justify treating workplace exposure as an important independent variable in the present study rather than as a simple background feature of work immersion (Alharethi et al., 2025; Ariar et al., 2024; DepEd, 2025; Figueras & Mendoza, 2020; Musa et al., 2025).

Dimensions of Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion. Workplace exposure during work immersion is better understood when it is examined through its specific dimensions because immersion is not limited to learner placement in a partner institution, but also includes preparation, authentic work engagement, and social participation in workplace life. In the DepEd Work Immersion Curriculum Guide, learners are expected to be exposed to a work-related environment relevant to their specialization, gain practical skills, and develop communication, human-relations, and work habits through structured immersion experiences. This view supports the treatment of workplace exposure in terms of orientation and familiarization, exposure to actual work processes and tools, and interaction and participation in workplace activities (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017).

Orientation and Workplace Familiarization. Orientation and workplace familiarization refer to the learner's initial induction into the host institution, including awareness of workplace rules, safety procedures, expectations, routines, organizational structure, and institutional culture. This dimension is important because it prepares learners psychologically and behaviorally before they begin actual immersion tasks. DepEd (2017) specifically includes expected behavior, work ethics, workplace safety, rights and responsibilities, confidentiality, conflict resolution, teamwork, and work immersion rules and regulations under pre-immersion activities, showing that orientation is a foundational part of meaningful workplace exposure. Empirical studies support this. In Saudi Arabia, Alharethi et al. (2025) used a cross-sectional quantitative design and covariance-based structural equation modeling among 361 hospitality students and found that internship experience significantly predicted role clarity ($\beta = 0.182$, $p = .012$) and ability ($\beta = 0.184$, $p = .017$), suggesting that clear orientation and structured workplace entry improve learner readiness. In the Philippines, Figueras and Mendoza (2020), using a descriptive-survey design with 28 work immersion teachers in Sorsogon City, found that pre-immersion orientation was implemented at a high level ($M = 2.91$), while the provision of requirements checklist was rated $M = 2.97$. Similarly, Vecino and Doromal (2020), in a descriptive-comparative study of 204 implementers in Negros Occidental, reported that work immersion implementation was generally evident but inadequate, indicating that orientation and familiarization practices are present but still need strengthening in some settings. These findings suggest that orientation and workplace familiarization are essential in helping learners adjust to the workplace and understand expected standards before engaging in actual immersion tasks (Alharethi et al., 2025; DepEd, 2017; Figueras & Mendoza, 2020; Vecino & Doromal, 2020).

Exposure to Actual Work Processes and Tools. Exposure to actual work processes and tools refers to the degree to which learners encounter real tasks, equipment, systems, procedures, workflow practices, and operational routines in the host institution. This dimension reflects authentic workplace learning because it allows students to apply school-based knowledge in concrete job-related situations. DepEd (2017) emphasizes that work immersion should expose students to actual work-related environments so

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they can gain relevant practical industrial skills and understand the application of classroom principles in real settings. International and Asian studies show that such task-based exposure contributes meaningfully to learner development. Avleeva et al. (2025) analyzed survey data from more than 17,000 hospitality students in the United States through PLS-SEM and found notable gains in communication and organizational skills during internships, with especially high ratings in adaptability and respect for diversity, indicating that authentic work settings promote skill growth. In Indonesia, Musa et al. (2025) used a mixed-methods design with survey data from 100 students and found high mean scores and significant correlations ranging from r = .66 to .74 between internship-related developmental domains and employability perceptions; the same study reported that 64% of respondents were exposed to new task domains beyond their prior preparation and 84% gained clearer career direction. In the Philippine context, studies on work immersion have likewise treated actual workplace conditions, tools, and work processes as central to immersion quality and learner performance, reinforcing the view that this dimension captures the practical depth of the learner's workplace exposure (Avleeva et al., 2025; DepEd, 2017; Musa et al., 2025).

Interaction and Participation in Workplace Activities. Interaction and participation in workplace activities refer to the learner's engagement with supervisors, co-workers, clients, and routine organizational tasks, as well as involvement in collaborative and service-related activities within the host institution. This dimension is important because workplace exposure is not only technical but also social; learners develop professional behaviors through communication, teamwork, and participation in real workplace relationships. DepEd (2017) explicitly states that work immersion should enrich learners' communication and human-relations skills and help them develop good work habits and attitudes, which indicates that meaningful interaction is a core immersion outcome. Empirical evidence supports this view. Avleeva et al. (2025) found that internship participation significantly supported soft-skill development among over 17,000 hospitality students, especially in communication, teamwork, and emotional intelligence. Musa et al. (2025) further reported that 61% of student respondents interacted with stakeholders outside their immediate supervisory circle and that 89% experienced increased professional confidence, suggesting that broader workplace participation strengthens interpersonal and self-development outcomes. In Surigao, Ariar et al. (2024) found through a quantitative descriptive design that the work immersion learning experiences of Grade 12 students were described as excellent, although pressure and insecurities remained common barriers, implying that the social and participatory side of immersion can be both developmental and demanding. Overall, these findings indicate that interaction and participation in workplace activities are vital in transforming immersion from simple observation into active, socially grounded learning (Ariar et al., 2024; Avleeva et al., 2025; DepEd, 2017; Musa et al., 2025).

Task Performance During Work Immersion

Task performance during work immersion refers to the extent to which learners effectively carry out assigned immersion tasks in accordance with expected standards, timelines, and responsibilities. This definition is consistent with the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire, in which task performance is defined as the proficiency with which individuals perform the core substantive or technical tasks central to their job, with emphasis on work quantity, work quality, job skills, and job knowledge (Koopmans et al., 2014; Lousã et al., 2024). In the present study, the variable was measured through a learner-answered task performance scale adapted from the task performance dimension of the IWPQ and contextualized to the school work immersion setting. As such, the instrument focused not on broad employment outcomes but on how Grade 12 learners perceived their actual execution of assigned tasks in the workplace.

The conceptual basis of the instrument may also be linked to DepEd's work immersion policy, which treats immersion as a structured learning experience in which learners are expected to apply school-based knowledge, observe workplace standards, and demonstrate appropriate work habits and behaviors in authentic environments (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017). In this study, task performance was operationalized through three dimensions: planning and timely task completion, quality and compliance of

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work output, and responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment. These dimensions reflect the logic of the adapted IWPQ task performance construct while aligning with DepEd's expectations that learners should perform assigned duties properly, comply with workplace procedures, and show work-related discipline and accountability during immersion (DepEd, 2017; Koopmans et al., 2014).

International studies show that learner performance in internships and related experiential settings is shaped by the quality, relevance, and structure of workplace tasks. In Saudi Arabia, Alharethi et al. (2025) used a cross-sectional quantitative design and covariance-based structural equation modeling with 361 hospitality students and found that internship experience significantly predicted students' ability to perform work tasks ($\beta = 0.184$, $p = .017$) and role clarity ($\beta = 0.182$, $p = .012$). In China, Liu et al. (2025) employed stratified multi-stage sampling with 403 railway electrical automation students and found that high-quality internships characterized by longer duration, task relevance, and technical depth directly improved academic performance ($\beta = 0.218$, $p < .001$), while internship experience remained significant in the interaction model ($\beta = 0.177$, $p < .001$). Although academic performance was the outcome in that study, the findings still support the importance of meaningful task execution and structured experiential work in producing better learner outcomes.

Asian and ASEAN evidence likewise suggests that actual task accomplishment and performance during internship or on-the-job training matter for student development. In Indonesia, Athallah Akbar et al. (2026) used a quantitative design with PLS-SEM on 113 university students who had completed internships and found that overall internship performance significantly mediated the relationship between soft skills and academic achievement, indicating that internship performance functioned as a meaningful experiential mechanism rather than a mere placement requirement. In Vietnam, Tran et al. (2025) conducted a quantitative study using nonprobability sampling among 335 participants and emphasized that on-the-job training improves students' real-world work experience and skill application, highlighting the importance of structured work-based performance opportunities in student preparation. Together, these studies suggest that task performance in workplace learning environments is influenced by both learner competencies and the design of the internship or immersion experience itself (Athallah Akbar et al., 2026; Tran et al., 2025).

Philippine and local studies provide more direct evidence on work immersion performance among senior high school learners. Saluria and Mariño (2024) used a descriptive-survey design with 94 senior high students at Saint Louis School of Don Bosco and found that the overall level of work immersion performance, as perceived by supervisors, was very high, with a composite mean of 3.70; among the strongest indicators were being well-groomed and well-presented ($M = 3.83$), being trustworthy and reliable ($M = 3.82$), and coming to the assigned office on time ($M = 3.81$). In Misamis Oriental, Tabaosares and Castillo (2024) studied 362 Grade 12 students using self-ratings and supervisor evaluations and reported outstanding supervisor-rated performance across work habits ($M = 4.85$), work skills ($M = 4.80$), and social skills ($M = 4.85$), with an overall rating of 4.83. However, the same study found no significant relationship between supervisor ratings and student self-ratings ($r = -0.008$, $p = .891$), suggesting that perceived performance and external evaluation may not always align.

Other Philippine studies further show that task performance varies according to context and implementation quality. Roble (2021), using a descriptive-correlational design with 18 employers and 84 TVL students, found no significant differences in work immersion performance when students were grouped by sex ($p = .277$) or socioeconomic classification ($p = .282$), but found significant differences by strand ($p = .000$) and specialization ($p = .001$), with ICT students performing significantly higher than Home Economics students. Cabile Jr. (2024), in a study of Grade 12 students in Tayabas using structured questionnaires and correlational analysis, found that students' quality performance in teamwork, communication, attendance and punctuality, productivity and resilience, initiative and proactivity, judgment and decision-making, and dependability was "Very Satisfactory," with an overall mean of 4.49. The same study also reported significant positive relationships between work immersion implementation and students' quality performance, with correlations ranging from $r = .492$ to $r = .641$. Likewise, Vibal and

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Madrideo (2025) reported that the work habit formation component was rated highest by both respondents and supervisors, while work skills were rated lowest, and that work immersion implementation had a significant relationship with acquired TVL skills. These findings suggest that task performance is not a simple or uniform outcome; rather, it is shaped by strand alignment, implementation quality, and the kinds of work tasks learners actually perform in the immersion site (Cabile Jr., 2024; Roble, 2021; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Overall, the literature shows that task performance during work immersion has been measured through different but related indicators such as work habits, work skills, punctuality, compliance, dependability, teamwork, initiative, and overall internship ratings. Across international, Asian, and Philippine studies, task performance has generally been examined using descriptive, correlational, or structural models, and the results consistently suggest that performance is influenced by internship quality, task relevance, supervision, soft skills, and implementation support. At the same time, some studies indicate that learner self-ratings may not always match supervisor ratings, and that performance may differ across strands and specializations. These findings justify the inclusion of task performance during work immersion as a major predictor variable in the present study (Alharethi et al., 2025; Cabile Jr., 2024; Roble, 2021; Saluria & Mariño, 2024; Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024).

Dimensions of Task Performance During Work Immersion. Task performance during work immersion is best understood through its specific dimensions because learner performance in the workplace is not a single behavior but a combination of how students plan and complete tasks, how well they meet expected standards, and how responsibly they carry out assigned duties. This dimensional view is consistent with the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire, which conceptualizes task performance as the effective execution of core duties, and with DepEd's work immersion framework, which expects learners to demonstrate appropriate work habits, compliance, and responsibility in authentic work settings (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017; Koopmans, 2015; Lousã et al., 2024).

Planning and Timely Task Completion. Planning and timely task completion refer to the learner's ability to organize work, sequence tasks properly, meet deadlines, observe punctuality, and finish assigned responsibilities on time. In work-based learning, this dimension is important because immersion sites operate through schedules, deadlines, and service routines, so learners are expected to manage time responsibly and complete tasks within expected periods. The task performance tradition underlying the IWPQ treats effective completion of core duties as central to performance, while work immersion policy similarly emphasizes discipline and observance of workplace standards among senior high school learners (DepEd, 2017; Koopmans, 2015). International evidence supports this emphasis.

In Saudi Arabia, Alharethi et al. (2025) used a cross-sectional quantitative design with structural equation modeling on 361 hospitality graduates and found that internship experience significantly improved both ability and role clarity, suggesting that structured workplace learning helps learners understand how to manage and perform assigned work more effectively. In the United States, Avleeva et al. (2025), analyzing survey data from more than 17,000 hospitality students through PLS-SEM, reported notable gains in organizational skills during internships, indicating that workplace learning contributes to planning- and time-related competencies.

In the Philippine context, Saluria and Mariño (2024) found through a descriptive survey of 94 senior high students that supervisors rated student work immersion performance as very high, while Vibal and Madrideo (2025) reported that work habit formation was the highest-rated acquired skill and that pre-work immersion and post-work immersion phases were both strongly implemented, with overall means of 4.48 and 4.42, respectively. These findings suggest that planning and timely task completion are strengthened when immersion is well organized and when learners are properly supported before, during, and after deployment (Alharethi et al., 2025; Avleeva et al., 2025; Saluria & Mariño, 2024; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

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Quality and Compliance of Work Output. Quality and compliance of work output refer to the learner's ability to produce accurate and acceptable work, follow instructions, adhere to workplace standards, and observe prescribed procedures in task execution. This dimension reflects whether students can translate classroom learning into dependable workplace performance. The IWPQ literature identifies task performance with the effective execution of core duties, while DepEd's work immersion framework expects learners to apply skills in real work settings and comply with workplace rules and expectations (DepEd, 2017; Lousã et al., 2024).

Quantitative studies show that the quality of output is shaped by the structure and relevance of the internship or immersion experience. Alharethi et al. (2025) found that internship experience significantly improved students' ability and role clarity, both of which are directly related to better-quality task execution. In the Philippines, Alcobendas (2022) used a descriptive design with Grade 12 ABM learners in Zambales and found that student-trainees performed very satisfactorily, showing good work ethics and personality suited to future employment. Tabaosares and Castillo (2024), in a study of 362 Grade 12 students in Misamis Oriental, found that students generally perceived their work immersion performance as outstanding, although self-ratings and supervisor judgments did not always align. In Marinduque, Peñarendonda (2023) reported that 54 Grade 12 TVL students showed good performance in technical, interpersonal, behavioral, and entrepreneurial skills, although communication and entrepreneurial skills were the least mastered. Taken together, these studies indicate that quality and compliance are recurring indicators of immersion performance, but they may vary according to immersion context, skill area, and the basis of evaluation used (Alcobendas, 2022; Alharethi et al., 2025; Peñarendonda, 2023; Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024).

Responsibility and Initiative in Task Accomplishment. Responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment refer to the learner's dependability, accountability, willingness to act, and readiness to perform tasks with minimal supervision. This dimension goes beyond simple task completion because it reflects proactive work behavior and ownership of assigned duties. In work immersion settings, responsibility and initiative are closely linked to professionalism, work ethics, and learner adaptability in real workplace environments, which DepEd identifies as intended outcomes of immersion. The IWPQ tradition also supports this view because task performance involves not only doing assigned work but doing it effectively and dependably as part of one's substantive role (DepEd, 2017; Koopmans, 2015).

International and Asian evidence points in the same direction. Alharethi et al. (2025) showed that internship experience improved work readiness dimensions associated with ability and role clarity, while Athallah Akbar et al. (2026) found that internship performance significantly mediated the link between students' soft skills and academic outcomes, indicating that initiative and responsible participation during workplace learning matter for broader development.

In the Philippines, Vibal and Madrideo (2025) found that work habit formation was the strongest acquired skill among senior high school respondents, while Saluria and Mariño (2024) reported very high supervisor-rated performance among work immersion students. Alcobendas (2022) similarly found that trainees displayed work ethics and personality appropriate for future employment. These findings suggest that responsibility and initiative are among the most visible indicators of strong immersion performance and are often reinforced by structured implementation, positive workplace expectations, and repeated participation in authentic tasks (Alcobendas, 2022; Alharethi et al., 2025; Athallah Akbar et al., 2026; Saluria & Mariño, 2024; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Perceived Employability Skills

Perceived employability skills refer to learners' self-assessed work-related competencies that support readiness for employment and effectiveness in workplace situations. In this study, the concept is anchored on the U.S. Department of Education's Employability Skills Framework, which organizes employability into broad domains such as applied knowledge, effective relationships, and workplace skills. Within that framework, communication, responsibility, self-discipline, flexibility, initiative,

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professionalism, problem-solving, and time management are treated as important employability-related competencies. Consistent with this view, the present study operationalizes perceived employability skills through the dimensions of communication skills, teamwork and working with others, self-management and professionalism, problem-solving and adaptability, and planning and time management. These dimensions are also consistent with recent senior high school employability studies in the Philippines that assessed students' self-perceived work-related skills using structured survey instruments (Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education [OCTAE], 2018).

The variable is described as *perceived* because it is measured through learner self-report rather than employer, teacher, or supervisor ratings. In other words, the study focuses on how learners judge their own readiness-related competencies based on their experiences and self-observations. This approach is supported by student employability research that uses self-perceived or self-assessed scales to capture internal confidence, self-belief in skills and abilities, and subjective evaluation of work-related competence. In senior high school research, this approach has already been used to assess employability-related domains such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, ICT, and planning skills, making learner self-assessment an acceptable way of measuring perceived readiness for work, especially in school-based quantitative studies (Botha, 2021; Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022).

International studies show that perceived employability is multidimensional and influenced by both personal and contextual factors. In South Africa, Botha (2021) used a quantitative cross-sectional survey with 241 undergraduate students and a 16-item self-perceived employability scale. The study found that students were relatively confident about their internal employability but less confident about their opportunities in the external labor market. Exploratory factor analysis extracted four factors that explained 56.94% of the total variance, while ANOVA results showed significant differences across faculties for academic engagement and performance (p = .037), university reputation (p = .019), and external labor market perceptions (p = .000). In Türkiye, Ergün and Şeşen (2021) studied 463 university students and used hierarchical regression analysis, finding that generic skills, academic performance, personal circumstances, and the external labor market had significant positive effects on perceived employability, with contextual factors exerting stronger influence than personal ones. These studies indicate that learners' perceptions of employability are measurable, structured, and shaped by both competencies and context (Botha, 2021; Ergün & Şeşen, 2021).

Asian and ASEAN studies similarly highlight the importance of skill-related and work-based factors in perceived employability. In Malaysia, Mohamad et al. (2025) used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling on data from 247 undergraduates in energy-focused universities and found that technical skills, soft skills, social mobility skills, and academic performance all shaped students' perceived employability. In Indonesia, Suyitno et al. (2025) used structural equation modeling with 403 university students and found that work-based learning did not have a direct effect on employability skills, but self-efficacy moderated the relationship between work-based learning and employability skills, while vocational identity and self-efficacy both directly influenced employability skills. These findings are important for the present study because they suggest that employability perceptions do not emerge from academic learning alone; they are also influenced by workplace-related experiences, confidence, and the learner's developing sense of competence and professional identity (Mohamad et al., 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Philippine and local studies provide direct evidence that employability skills among senior high school learners are measurable and often vary across domains. Roxas (2022) conducted a descriptive-quantitative study among 100 Grade 12 students using an adapted Student Employability Skills Questionnaire and found that perceived employability skills ranged from moderate to high. Information and Communications Technology skills obtained the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 3.39), while planning skills received the lowest mean ($\bar{x}$ = 2.65). Similarly, Isip et al. (2024) used a mixed-methods design with 224 Grade 12 students and found an overall moderate level of perceived employability skills (M = 3.17), with ICT skills

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ranking highest and planning skills lowest. Their comparative analysis also showed no significant difference by sex, $t(222) = 0.315$, $p = .753$, but significant differences by track or strand in communication skills, $F(5, 218) = 3.363$, $p = .006$, and teamwork, $F(5, 218) = 2.380$, $p = .040$. In another Philippine study, Alinea et al. (2024) examined 100 TVL students and 20 industry representatives using weighted mean and chi-square and found that students were perceived as well-prepared in general work habits, communication skills, and technical skills, but only marginally prepared in technology literacy. Taken together, these studies suggest that employability-related skills among Filipino senior high school learners tend to be moderate to favorable, but weaknesses often remain in planning, time management, and some technical areas (Alinea et al., 2024; Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022).

Overall, the prevailing evidence shows that perceived employability skills are commonly treated as a multidimensional construct that includes communication, teamwork, self-management, problem-solving, professionalism, and time management. International and Asian studies suggest that these skills are influenced by generic abilities, technical skills, work-based learning, self-efficacy, and contextual factors, while Philippine studies among senior high school learners consistently show moderate to high self-perceived employability, with ICT-related skills often ranking high and planning or time-management-related skills often ranking lower. This pattern supports the use of perceived employability skills as the dependent variable in the present study and justifies examining how work immersion-related variables may help explain variations in these learner-reported competencies (Alinea et al., 2024; Isip et al., 2024; Mohamad et al., 2025; OCTAE, 2018; Roxas, 2022; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Dimensions of Perceived Employability Skills. Perceived employability skills are best examined through their specific dimensions because learners' readiness for work is not reflected in a single competence, but in a cluster of interpersonal, personal, and workplace-related skills that function together in actual employment settings. The Employability Skills Framework of the U.S. Department of Education groups these competencies into areas such as effective relationships and workplace skills, while recent literature reviews likewise identify communication, teamwork, self-management, problem-solving, adaptability, and time management as among the most recurrent employability domains valued by employers. In the present study, perceived employability skills are therefore discussed through communication skills, teamwork and working with others, self-management and professionalism, problem-solving and adaptability, and planning and time management (Tushar et al., 2023; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education [OCTAE], 2018).

Communication Skills. Communication skills refer to the learner's ability to express ideas clearly through oral, written, and interpersonal forms of communication, as well as to listen actively and respond appropriately in workplace or collaborative situations. As an employability dimension, communication is consistently recognized as a core skill because it supports teamwork, customer relations, instruction-following, and problem-solving in the workplace. This importance is reflected in the OCTAE framework, which includes verbal communication, active listening, and written communication among essential employability behaviors. Empirical evidence also supports its importance. In Indonesia, Musa et al. (2025) used a mixed-methods design with a survey of 100 undergraduate students and found that communication was a key predictor of job readiness, with a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.59$. In the Philippine context, Yoshida and Guzman (2025) employed a descriptive-correlational design involving 330 students and 108 teachers and found a significant positive relationship between communication skills and work readiness, $r = 0.50$, $p < .01$, with non-verbal communication emerging as the strongest predictor, $\beta = 0.27$, $p < .001$. Similarly, Isip et al. (2024) found that Grade 12 learners had a moderate level of perceived communication skills, with an overall mean of 3.23, indicating that communication is already present among learners but still requires strengthening as a workplace competency (Isip et al., 2024; Musa et al., 2025; OCTAE, 2018; Yoshida & Guzman, 2025).

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Teamwork and Working with Others. Teamwork and working with others refer to the learner's capacity to collaborate, cooperate, build positive interpersonal relations, respect others, and contribute effectively to group tasks or workplace goals. This dimension is important because most workplace roles require people to coordinate with colleagues, accept feedback, share responsibilities, and adapt to group expectations. The employability literature consistently identifies teamwork as one of the most in-demand soft skills, and the OCTAE framework places it within effective relationships alongside leadership, negotiation, and conflict resolution. In Spain, De Prada et al. (2022) conducted an observational cross-sectional study among 615 university students and found that teamwork skills improved with academic year and were positively related to grade point average, while female students outperformed males in most teamwork dimensions except leadership. In Indonesia, Suyitno et al. (2025) used structural equation modeling with 403 vocational students and found that work-based learning, self-efficacy, and vocational identity significantly shaped employability skills, which the authors explicitly described as including teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. In the Philippines, Isip et al. (2024) reported a moderate overall mean of 3.30 for teamwork among Grade 12 learners, while Razote (2024) found that TVL graduates in Zamboanga City showed a high level of teamwork, with a mean of 3.6081, and that teamwork significantly differed by strand, $p = .021$, and by school typology, $p = .016$. These findings affirm that teamwork is a central employability skill that is measurable and educationally developable across contexts (De Prada et al., 2022; Isip et al., 2024; OCTAE, 2018; Razote, 2024; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Self-Management and Professionalism. Self-management and professionalism refer to the learner's capacity for self-discipline, emotional control, responsibility, work ethics, proper conduct, and personal regulation in carrying out school or workplace-related tasks. In employability models, these behaviors are closely associated with reliability, initiative, flexibility, and professionalism, all of which influence whether a learner can function effectively in a real work environment. The OCTAE framework includes personal qualities such as responsibility, integrity, self-discipline, adaptability, and professionalism, while related employability literature treats these attributes as essential for sustaining performance and workplace acceptance. Empirical evidence reflects this importance. In Indonesia, Musa et al. (2025) found that 89% of student respondents reported enhanced professional confidence after internship participation, suggesting that workplace experiences help strengthen personal regulation and professional identity. In the Philippine context, Alinea et al. (2024) found that 100 TVL students were perceived by themselves as well-prepared in general work habits, communication skills, and technical skills, although supervisors were more cautious in some areas. Razote (2024) also found that TVL graduates in Zamboanga City had a high level of personal management skills, with a mean of 3.4988, and that this dimension did not significantly differ by strand, $p = .777$, suggesting a relatively consistent level of self-management across groups. These findings indicate that self-management and professionalism are foundational employability dimensions that may be strengthened through both schooling and workplace exposure (Alinea et al., 2024; Musa et al., 2025; OCTAE, 2018; Razote, 2024).

Problem-Solving and Adaptability. Problem-solving and adaptability refer to the learner's ability to analyze situations, identify challenges, generate and evaluate solutions, make sound decisions, and adjust effectively to changing workplace conditions. These skills are highly relevant to employability because the modern workplace requires employees not only to complete routine tasks but also to respond flexibly to unfamiliar demands, shifting roles, and emerging problems. The OCTAE framework identifies problem-solving and decision-making as core employability processes, while current literature also treats adaptability as a vital work-readiness outcome. In South Korea, Lee and Lee (2024) examined a 16-week project-based learning program involving 97 youth and found that participants' self-reported problem-solving skills improved after the program, while problem-solving skills and career adaptability were predictive of employability. In Indonesia and Malaysia, Mahfud et al. (2024) used structural equation modeling with 476 vocational students and found that work-based learning, curriculum relevance,

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university support, and career self-efficacy directly influenced career adaptability, with self-efficacy showing a standardized regression weight of 0.357. In the Philippines, Isip et al. (2024) found a moderate mean of 3.07 for problem-solving skills among Grade 12 students, while Razote (2024) reported a high mean of 3.4625 for problem-solving skills among TVL graduates and found no significant difference by strand, $p = .825$, or school typology, $p = .498$. These findings show that problem-solving and adaptability are recognized employability dimensions that respond to educational and work-based interventions and remain important for school-to-work transition (Isip et al., 2024; Lee & Lee, 2024; Mahfud et al., 2024; OCTAE, 2018; Razote, 2024).

Planning and Time Management. Planning and time management refer to the learner's ability to organize work, set priorities, manage schedules, allocate time wisely, and complete tasks efficiently and on time. These are transferable workplace skills because employment settings require individuals to balance deadlines, resources, and responsibilities while maintaining productivity. The employability framework of OCTAE includes planning and organizing under workplace skills, reinforcing the idea that time and task management are integral parts of employability rather than merely academic habits. Empirical studies support this interpretation. In the Philippines, Roxas (2022) used a descriptive-quantitative design with 100 Grade 12 students and found that planning skills had a moderate overall mean of 2.65, making them among the weaker employability dimensions in the study, while time/self-management skills had a mean of 3.00. Isip et al. (2024) reported similar results among 224 Grade 12 learners, with planning skills obtaining an overall mean of 2.97 and time/self-management skills a mean of 3.18, both within the moderate range. Also in Surigao, Dacoylo et al. (2024) used a quantitative descriptive survey with 272 senior high school students and found that time management skills were often relevant to classroom performance, with no significant differences according to grade, sex, or gender. Taken together, these findings suggest that planning and time management are essential but often less developed employability dimensions among learners, making them important targets for school-based enhancement and workplace preparation (Dacoylo et al., 2024; Isip et al., 2024; OCTAE, 2018; Roxas, 2022).

Relationship Between Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion and Perceived Employability Skills

The conceptual basis for linking workplace exposure during work immersion with perceived employability skills rests on the idea that authentic exposure to real work settings helps learners internalize workplace expectations, practice relevant competencies, and develop stronger confidence in their readiness for employment. DepEd's enhanced work immersion guidelines explicitly state that work immersion allows learners to be exposed to and familiarized with work-related environments related to their field of specialization, helping them enhance technical knowledge and skills, enrich communication and human relations, and develop good work habits and attitudes. In the same memorandum, DepEd also noted that existing immersion hours were often seen by firms as insufficient for developing the competencies needed for work readiness, which implies that the depth and quality of exposure matter for employability-related outcomes. Similarly, Suyitno et al. (2025) argued that work-based learning is intended to enhance employability skills because it gives students opportunities to apply knowledge in real settings, build self-efficacy, and form a stronger vocational identity. Viewed together, these sources suggest that greater workplace exposure may strengthen learners' perceptions of their employability skills through real-world familiarity, repeated practice, participation in actual work routines, and professional socialization (Department of Education [DepEd], 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Several empirical studies report a significant positive association between workplace exposure or internship experience and employability-related outcomes. In Indonesia, Musa et al. (2025) used a mixed-methods design with survey data from 100 students and found high mean scores and significant correlations ranging from $r = .66$ to .74 between internship-related developmental domains and employability perceptions. Their regression analysis further showed that communication ($\beta = .59$), adaptability ($\beta = .55$), and software proficiency ($\beta = .56$) significantly predicted job readiness. In the United Kingdom, Hughes et

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al. (2023) conducted a longitudinal quantitative study involving 618 students and their line managers across three cohorts and found that students self-perceived gains across all eight competency domains between the start and end of the placement year, indicating that sustained placement exposure was associated with improved self-perceived competencies relevant to employability. These findings support the argument that meaningful immersion or placement experiences can positively shape how learners assess their work-related capabilities (Hughes et al., 2023; Musa et al., 2025).

Philippine evidence also points in the same direction, although the terminology used sometimes differs from the present study. Garcia and Yazon (2020), in a descriptive-correlational study of 324 senior high school graduates with an additional employability survey from 298 graduates, found that alignment-related variables were significantly correlated with employability indicators. Personal skills, technical skills, and work applicability were significantly associated with employability readiness, with coefficients ranging from $r = .360$ to .570 at the .01 level, and were also significantly related to extent of use of skills, status of employment, alignment of track, and salary. In another Philippine study, Vibal and Madrideo (2025) found that the level of implementation of work immersion phases was significantly related to acquired TVL skills. Their reported correlations showed that pre-work immersion was related to work habit formation ($r = .554$), work skills and competence ($r = .311$), and interpersonal and human relation skills ($r = .414$), while work immersion proper and post-immersion also showed significant positive relationships with these skills. Although these outcomes are not identical to perceived employability skills, they are clearly employability-related and suggest that stronger exposure-related implementation is associated with stronger skill development (Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Not all studies, however, found a direct significant relationship between workplace exposure and employability-related outcomes. Suyitno et al. (2025), using structural equation modeling on data from 403 university students in Yogyakarta, reported that work-based learning did **not** have a direct effect on employability skills, even though it influenced vocational identity and worked indirectly through self-efficacy. This suggests that workplace exposure alone may be insufficient unless it is accompanied by mediating psychological or developmental mechanisms. Similarly, Garcia and Yazon (2020) found that students' work immersion performance dimensions—work habits, work skills, and social skills—had no significant relationship with most employability indicators such as readiness, status of employment, alignment of track, waiting time, and salary; the only exception was a weak significant link between social skills and extent of use of skills ($r = .118$, $p < .05$). These nonsignificant findings may be explained by methodological differences, including the distinction between mere exposure versus the quality or alignment of that exposure, the use of self-report versus institutional or employer measures, and the possibility that employability develops through indirect rather than purely direct pathways (Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Suyitno et al., 2025).

The literature therefore presents a mixed but still meaningful picture. On one hand, studies such as Musa et al. (2025), Hughes et al. (2023), and Garcia and Yazon (2020) suggest that richer, more aligned, and more meaningful workplace exposure tends to coincide with stronger employability-related perceptions or outcomes. On the other hand, studies such as Suyitno et al. (2025) and portions of Garcia and Yazon's (2020) analysis show that exposure does not always produce a direct effect, especially when the exposure is measured broadly, when the immersion experience varies in quality, or when the outcome depends on intervening factors such as self-efficacy, vocational identity, or task alignment. DepEd's 2025 enhanced work immersion memorandum strengthens this interpretation by explicitly recognizing that the previous minimum 80-hour immersion requirement was often seen by firms as insufficient for developing the competencies needed for job readiness and by proposing longer, more competency-oriented, and more authentic workplace experiences. Overall, the pattern in the literature suggests that workplace exposure is potentially important for perceived employability skills, but its effect is likely to depend on the depth, authenticity, duration, and alignment of the immersion experience. This inconsistency justifies further

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testing in specific school contexts such as Cabacungan National High School (DepEd, 2025; Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Hughes et al., 2023; Musa et al., 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Relationship Between Task Performance During Work Immersion and Perceived Employability Skills

The relationship between task performance during work immersion and perceived employability skills is grounded in the idea that when learners perform workplace tasks effectively, they are more likely to develop and recognize transferable competencies such as communication, responsibility, adaptability, and time management. DepEd's work immersion curriculum guide states that immersion is intended to expose learners to work-related environments so they can gain practical skills, enhance technical knowledge, enrich communication and human-relations skills, and develop good work habits and attitudes. In the same way, the U.S. Department of Education's Employability Skills Framework treats employability as a combination of effective relationships and workplace skills, suggesting that consistent and competent task execution in real settings can reinforce learners' self-perceived readiness for work (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education [OCTAE], 2018).

Empirical studies generally support a positive link between performance in work-based settings and employability-related outcomes. In Indonesia, Rochmayanti et al. (2022) used an ex post facto quantitative correlational design among 64 vocational students, with 30 selected as the sample, and applied multiple linear regression. The study found that internship performance had a significant effect on work readiness, with a significance value of .016, and that internship performance together with work motivation explained 73% of the variance in work readiness. In a related Asian study, Musa et al. (2025) reported significant correlations ranging from $r = .66$ to .74 between internship-related developmental domains and perceived employability, while regression analysis showed that communication ($\beta = .59$), adaptability ($\beta = .55$), and software proficiency ($\beta = .56$) significantly predicted job readiness. Although the latter study measured broader internship-related development rather than task performance alone, it still supports the view that stronger workplace functioning is associated with stronger employability perceptions and readiness outcomes (Musa et al., 2025; Rochmayanti et al., 2022).

Philippine studies also point to a generally positive association, although the variables are sometimes framed in related rather than identical terms. Garcia and Yazon (2020) used a descriptive-correlational design involving 324 immersion students and 298 senior high school graduates and analyzed the data using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson *r*. Their study found that stronger personal skills, technical skills, and work applicability were associated with a higher extent of employability among graduates. Likewise, Jaime (2023) reported that work immersion implementation had significant relationships with employability competencies and that, for core competencies, students' progress and performance formed part of the significantly related implementation domains. In another Philippine study, Razote (2024) used a descriptive-correlational survey of 90 TVL graduates in Zamboanga City and found a strong significant relationship between employability skills and contextual performance, with $r = .875$ and $p = .000$. Since contextual performance includes behaviors such as following rules, volunteering for additional work, and cooperating with co-workers, it provides related evidence that stronger performance-related behaviors tend to accompany stronger employability skills (Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Jaime, 2023; Razote, 2024).

Some studies, however, suggest that the relationship is not always direct or consistent. Suyitno et al. (2025), using structural equation modeling with 403 state university students in Yogyakarta, found that work-based learning did not have a direct effect on employability skills, although it influenced employability indirectly through self-efficacy and vocational identity. This finding implies that participation and performance in work-based settings may not automatically translate into stronger employability unless learners also develop confidence and vocational self-concept. A related methodological concern appears in the work of Tabaosares and Castillo (2024), where the correlation between students' self-ratings and supervisors' ratings of work immersion performance was not significant ($r = -0.008$, $p = .891$). While that

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study did not test employability directly, it suggests that the way performance is measured may affect whether a clear relationship with employability is detected, especially when self-perceptions and external evaluations do not align (Suyitno et al., 2025; Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024).

Taken together, the literature presents a mixed but still meaningful pattern. Several studies indicate that stronger task execution, internship performance, or closely related performance behaviors are associated with better work readiness or employability-related outcomes, yet other studies suggest that this relationship may weaken or disappear when performance is measured differently, when immersion experiences are short, or when employability depends on mediating factors such as self-efficacy, role clarity, or vocational identity. DepEd itself has recognized that previous work immersion arrangements were often seen as insufficient for fully developing workforce competencies, which supports the view that the quality and depth of performance opportunities matter. Because of these inconsistencies, further testing remains necessary, particularly in specific school contexts such as Cabacungan National High School, where learner-reported task performance and perceived employability skills can be examined together through a predictive-correlational design (DepEd, 2025; Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Rochmayanti et al., 2022; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Relationship Between Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion and Task Performance During Work Immersion

The relationship between workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion may be explained by the idea that greater exposure to workplace routines, tools, expectations, and interactions helps learners become more confident, competent, and capable of carrying out assigned tasks. DepEd's work immersion policy states that learners are exposed to actual work environments related to their field of specialization so they can gain practical industrial skills, enhance technical knowledge, enrich communication and human-relations skills, and develop good work habits and attitudes. In a related internship framework, clear goals and workplace support were treated as major dimensions of work experience, and both were associated with the development of generic competencies among engineering interns, suggesting that better-quality exposure environments are linked to stronger performance-related capabilities (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017; Nogueira et al., 2021).

Empirical studies generally support a positive relationship between richer workplace exposure and better learner performance. In Portugal, Nogueira et al. (2021) validated the Work Experience Questionnaire among 447 engineering students and found that internship duration was positively and significantly correlated with generic competencies ($r = .167$, $p < .001$), while clear goals and work support were also positively associated with generic competencies in the correlation matrix. In the Philippines, Cabile Jr. (2024) examined Grade 12 students from public secondary schools in SDO Tayabas using a structured questionnaire and found that work immersion implementation—measured through adherence, exposure, quality of delivery, curriculum, process, assessment, and participant responsiveness—was significantly related to students' quality performance. Similarly, Vibal and Madrideo (2025), using a descriptive design among 2024 TVL graduates in Quezon Province, found that pre-work immersion was rated 4.48 and post-work immersion 4.42, both interpreted as strongly agree, and concluded that there was a significant relationship between the level of work immersion implementation and acquired TVL skills. Taken together, these findings suggest that stronger and more structured exposure conditions are generally associated with better work-related performance outcomes among learners (Cabile Jr., 2024; Nogueira et al., 2021; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Asian evidence also points in the same direction, although some studies frame the outcome as work readiness rather than task performance alone. In Indonesia, Rosyada and Suratman (2025) studied 129 management students and found that internship experience had a positive and significant effect on work readiness ($t = 5.426$, $p < .001$), while the work environment also had a positive and significant effect ($t = 3.351$, $p = .001$); together, internship experience and work environment explained 40.8% of the variance in work readiness. While work readiness is broader than task performance, the findings still support the view

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that better exposure conditions and workplace environments contribute to stronger workplace functioning among students (Rosyada & Suratman, 2025).

Not all studies, however, show a strong positive relationship between exposure and performance. In Quezon, Pestijo (2023) used a descriptive-correlational design with 57 Grade 12 work immersion students, a teacher-made questionnaire, pretest-posttest scores, and Pearson's *r* to examine the relationship between perceived work immersion phases and student performance. The study found that the relationships between perceived immersion phases and student performance were generally weak, negative, and not statistically significant, except for one significant negative correlation involving the appreciating phase and performance during immersion proper. The author noted that these weak correlations may not have practical significance and suggested that increasing task complexity across phases might partly explain the pattern. This result indicates that exposure alone may not automatically improve performance, especially when the exposure is measured through learner perceptions of phases rather than through the depth, authenticity, or alignment of actual workplace tasks (Pestijo, 2023).

Overall, the literature suggests a mixed but still important relationship between workplace exposure and task performance. Studies such as Nogueira et al. (2021), Cabile Jr. (2024), and Vibal and Madrideo (2025) support the idea that stronger implementation, clearer goals, better workplace support, and longer or richer exposure are associated with better competency or performance-related outcomes. In contrast, Pestijo (2023) found weak and largely nonsignificant relationships, showing that the effect may depend on how exposure and performance are measured. The inconsistency may be due to differences in sample type, context, immersion duration, whether outcomes are self-reported or supervisor-rated, and whether exposure is measured as implementation quality, work environment, internship duration, or perceived immersion phases. These methodological differences show why the relationship still merits investigation, particularly in context-specific school settings where workplace exposure and task performance can be examined using the same respondents and aligned dimensions (Cabile Jr., 2024; Nogueira et al., 2021; Pestijo, 2023; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Predictive Studies on Employability Skills

Prior quantitative studies show that single variables can meaningfully predict employability skills or closely related outcomes such as job readiness and work readiness. In Indonesia, Musa et al. (2025) used a mixed-methods design with 100 undergraduate students and applied descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression. Their findings showed that internship-developed communication skills (β = 0.59), adaptability and problem solving (β = 0.55), teamwork and collaboration (β = 0.53), and emotional regulation (β = 0.50) were all significant predictors of perceived job readiness, with correlations ranging from r = 0.66 to 0.72, $p < .01$. In the Philippine context, Yoshida and Guzman (2025) used a descriptive-correlational design involving 330 SHS-TVL students and 108 teachers, and found that communication skills significantly predicted work readiness, with the regression model explaining 52% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.52, p < .001$). Among the communication domains, non-verbal communication emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.27$, $p = .001$), followed by verbal communication ($\beta = 0.23$, $p = .001$) and active listening ($\beta = 0.22$, $p = .002$). These studies suggest that even a single work-related or transferable skill domain can significantly explain variations in employability-related outcomes among learners (Musa et al., 2025; Yoshida & Guzman, 2025).

Other studies, however, also show that not all single predictors have a straightforward direct effect on employability skills. Suyitno et al. (2025), using structural equation modeling with 403 state university students in Yogyakarta, found that work-based learning did not have a direct effect on employability skills, although it significantly operated through vocational identity and was strengthened by self-efficacy. This result implies that a predictor such as workplace learning or immersion exposure may still matter, but its effect can be indirect rather than purely direct. Such findings are important because they show that predictive studies on employability skills may produce different patterns depending on whether the predictor is a skill domain, a workplace-learning variable, or a psychological resource (Suyitno et al., 2025).

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A number of studies have also employed two or more predictors to explain employability or closely related outcomes. In South Africa, Seti et al. (2025) used multiple regression analysis to examine graduate employability among 150 employers and recruiters. The model included gender, computer skills, multilingual skills, academic performance, soft skills, hard skills, and institutional reputation as predictors. The results showed a strong overall model fit, with $R = 0.880$ and $R^2 = 0.774$, indicating that 77.4% of the variance in graduate employability was explained by the model. The study further reported that soft skills ($p = 0.010$) and hard skills ($p = 0.046$), along with multilingual skills and academic performance, significantly influenced employability. In Indonesia, Suyitno et al. (2025) likewise used multiple variables—work-based learning, self-efficacy, and vocational identity—and found that while work-based learning did not directly predict employability skills, self-efficacy and vocational identity played important direct or moderating roles. These findings show that employability is often best explained not by a single factor alone, but by a combination of school, workplace, and learner variables working together (Seti et al., 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Related Philippine evidence on employability-related outcomes also supports the use of multi-predictor approaches. Yoshida and Guzman (2025) found that multiple communication domains jointly predicted work readiness among SHS-TVL students, with the model explaining 52% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.52$, $F = 21.67$, $p < .01$). Likewise, Rochmayanti et al. (2022) reported that internship performance and work motivation together explained 73% of the variance in vocational students' work readiness, and internship performance alone remained a significant predictor ($p = .016$). Although these studies focused on work readiness rather than perceived employability skills per se, they remain relevant because work readiness and employability are conceptually close outcomes in school-to-work transition research. Collectively, they reinforce the value of examining multiple predictors when investigating learner preparedness for work and employment-related competence (Rochmayanti et al., 2022; Yoshida & Guzman, 2025).

These prior predictive studies support the use of a predictive-correlational design in the present research because they demonstrate that employability or employability-related outcomes can be statistically explained by workplace learning variables, skill domains, motivational factors, and other learner attributes. At the same time, the reviewed literature also shows an important gap: many studies either use one predictor only, focus on higher education or graduate populations, or examine broader work-based learning variables without simultaneously testing two immersion-specific predictors in a senior high school setting. The current study extends prior work by testing workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion as concurrent predictors of perceived employability skills among Grade 12 learners in Cabacungan National High School. In doing so, it contributes a more context-specific predictive model grounded in senior high school work immersion rather than in college internship or graduate employability contexts (Musa et al., 2025; Seti et al., 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025; Yoshida & Guzman, 2025).

Synthesis of the Literature and Research Gap

The reviewed literature shows that workplace exposure during work immersion is generally treated as a multidimensional learning condition that includes orientation and familiarization, exposure to actual work processes and tools, and interaction and participation in workplace activities. Across global, Asian, and Philippine studies, stronger exposure is commonly associated with better role clarity, richer soft-skill development, and more favorable readiness outcomes. At the same time, the literature indicates that exposure is more beneficial when it is authentic, well-structured, and aligned with learners' specialization rather than limited to simple placement in a host institution (DepEd, 2017, 2025; Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Musa et al., 2025; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

With respect to task performance during work immersion, prior studies consistently describe it through work habits, punctuality, quality of output, compliance with procedures, responsibility, initiative, and interpersonal effectiveness. International and Asian studies suggest that immersion or internship

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experience can strengthen ability, role clarity, and work readiness, while Philippine studies often report high to very high levels of student performance during immersion. However, some studies also show that performance ratings may vary depending on strand, specialization, or source of evaluation, and self-ratings do not always match supervisor ratings. This suggests that task performance is a meaningful but methodologically sensitive construct in work immersion research (Alharethi et al., 2025; Cabile Jr., 2024; Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

For perceived employability skills, the literature consistently treats the construct as multidimensional, with communication, teamwork, self-management or professionalism, problem-solving or adaptability, and planning or time management appearing as dominant domains. International and Asian studies show that employability is shaped by both learner factors and workplace-learning experiences, while Philippine studies among senior high school learners generally report moderate to high self-perceived employability. A recurring pattern in local evidence is that communication and ICT-related skills often rank relatively high, whereas planning and time-management-related skills tend to rank lower. Overall, the literature suggests that employability is measurable through learner self-report and is sufficiently variable to be examined as a dependent variable in quantitative school-based studies (Botha, 2021; Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022; Suyitno et al., 2025; Yoshida & Guzman, 2025).

A major point of consistency in the reviewed studies is that better immersion conditions and stronger work-related performance tend to support employability-related development. Research repeatedly suggests that authentic workplace exposure, meaningful participation, structured implementation, and stronger performance behaviors are associated with better work readiness, stronger skills, or more favorable perceptions of employability. This broad pattern appears in international internship studies, Asian work-based learning research, and Philippine work immersion studies, supporting the general assumption that immersion-related experiences matter for employability formation (Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Musa et al., 2025; Rochmayanti et al., 2022; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

However, the literature also contains contradictions, null findings, and mixed results. Some studies report that work-based learning or immersion does not directly predict employability skills, but instead works indirectly through self-efficacy, vocational identity, or other mediating factors. Other studies show weak or nonsignificant links between immersion phases and performance, or between student self-ratings and supervisor ratings. These inconsistencies may be due to differences in respondents, setting, immersion duration, instrument design, whether variables were measured through self-report or external ratings, and whether outcomes were defined as employability, work readiness, contextual performance, or acquired skills. Thus, although the literature generally supports the value of immersion, it does not yet offer a fully consistent account of how workplace exposure and task performance operate together in predicting employability-related outcomes (Pestijo, 2023; Suyitno et al., 2025; Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024).

Despite the growing body of work on immersion, performance, and employability, several areas remain underexplored. First, relatively few recent studies focus specifically on Grade 12 learners in public secondary school contexts similar to Cabacungan National High School. Second, much of the literature examines only one major predictor at a time, such as work-based learning, communication skills, or internship performance, rather than testing workplace exposure and task performance simultaneously. Third, although Philippine studies have assessed work immersion implementation, student performance, and perceived employability separately, there remains limited recent predictive-correlational evidence that uses the same variable structure and learner-answered dimensions employed in the present study. For these reasons, the current study addresses an important gap by examining the levels of workplace exposure, task performance, and perceived employability skills; testing the pairwise relationships among these variables; and determining the predictive influence of workplace exposure and task performance on the perceived employability skills of Grade 12 learners in Cabacungan National High School (DepEd, 2025; Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022; Suyitno et al., 2025; Yoshida & Guzman, 2025).

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Theoretical Framework

For this study, three theories provide a strong foundation for explaining the variables and their possible relationships: workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills. These theories help clarify how learners' actual workplace experiences may shape their work-related behavior and, in turn, influence how they perceive their readiness and competence for employment. Specifically, the study is anchored on Experiential Learning Theory, Campbell's Theory of Job Performance, and Human Capital Theory.

The first is Experiential Learning Theory by David A. Kolb (1984). This theory explains that learning occurs through the transformation of experience, in which individuals grasp and transform concrete experiences into knowledge, insight, and improved capability. In the present study, workplace exposure during work immersion reflects this process because learners are placed in actual work environments where they encounter routines, tools, expectations, and social interactions that go beyond classroom instruction. Through orientation, exposure to real work processes, and participation in workplace activities, learners gain firsthand experiences that can shape their understanding of work and strengthen their practical readiness. Thus, the theory supports the assumption that greater workplace exposure provides richer opportunities for learning and development through authentic experience.

The second is Campbell's Theory of Job Performance by John P. Campbell (1990). Campbell's framework views performance as behavior that contributes to organizational goals and explains that work performance is multidimensional. Later discussions of Campbell's framework identify dimensions such as job-specific task proficiency, non-job-specific task proficiency, communication, effort, discipline, and team performance, with task performance referring to the proficiency with which one performs central job tasks. In this study, task performance during work immersion is understood in this way, particularly through learners' planning and timely task completion, quality and compliance of work output, and responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment. The theory supports the idea that learner performance in immersion is not accidental but reflects how effectively learners carry out expected work behaviors in a real workplace setting.

The third is Human Capital Theory by Gary S. Becker (1964), later elaborated in the second edition of *Human Capital* (Becker, 1975). This theory explains that education, training, skills, and knowledge are forms of capital that increase an individual's productivity and value in the labor market. In the present study, perceived employability skills are viewed as learner-developed human capital, reflected in communication, teamwork, self-management and professionalism, problem-solving and adaptability, and planning and time management. The theory supports the expectation that learners who gain richer exposure and demonstrate stronger performance during work immersion are more likely to develop and perceive stronger employability-related competencies. In this

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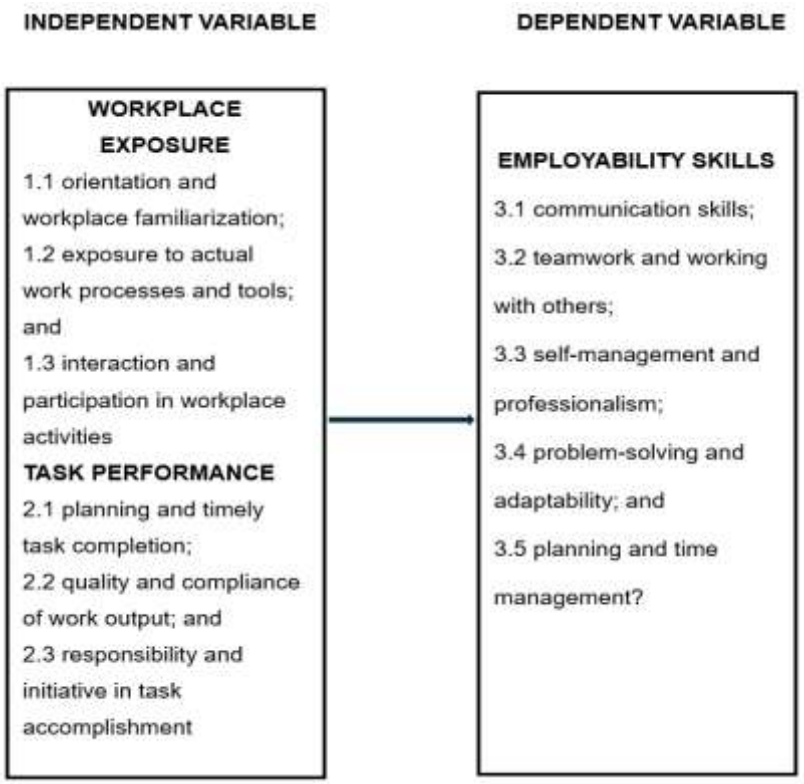

Figure 1. *Schematic Diagram of the Study*

way, Human Capital Theory helps explain why work immersion experiences may contribute to learners' perceived readiness for future employment.

Taken together, these theories provide a coherent basis for the study. Epstein's theory explains how learning support at home and communication with school reflect productive family–school partnership conditions. Baumrind's theory explains how parenting style shapes the behavioral and emotional climate that supports or hinders learning routines and discipline. Bronfenbrenner's theory explains why these home-based factors can translate into measurable differences in academic achievement, especially for young learners whose learning outcomes are highly sensitive to home and school environments (Epstein, 2011; Baumrind, 1966; Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine whether workplace exposure and task performance during work immersion significantly predict the perceived employability skills of Grade 12 learners in Cabacungan National High School.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of workplace exposure during work immersion among Grade 12 learners in terms of:
   1.1. orientation and workplace familiarization;
   1.2. exposure to actual work processes and tools; and
   1.3. interaction and participation in workplace activities?

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2. What is the level of task performance during work immersion among Grade 12 learners in terms of:
   2.1 planning and timely task completion;
   2.2 quality and compliance of work output; and
   2.3 responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment?
3. What is the level of perceived employability skills among Grade 12 learners in terms of:
   3.1 communication skills;
   3.2 teamwork and working with others;
   3.3 self-management and professionalism;
   3.4 problem-solving and adaptability; and
   3.5 planning and time management?
4. Is there a significant relationship between:
   4.1 workplace exposure during work immersion and perceived employability skills;
   4.2 task performance during work immersion and perceived employability skills; and
   4.3 workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion?
5. Do workplace exposure and task performance during work immersion, taken singly or in combination, significantly predict the perceived employability skills of Grade 12 learners in Cabacungan National High School?

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed quantitative research, which is appropriate when the researcher gathers numerical data and analyzes them statistically to describe conditions, determine patterns, examine relationships, and make predictions. Quantitative research commonly uses structured instruments, numerical scoring, and statistical procedures so that findings can be summarized objectively and interpreted on the basis of measurable evidence rather than narrative description (Bhandari, 2023a; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

More specifically, the study used a predictive-correlational research design. Correlational research investigates the relationship among variables without controlling or manipulating them, making it a non-experimental form of quantitative research. In predictive studies, regression analysis is used to estimate how one or more independent or predictor variables explain or predict a dependent or criterion variable. Thus, a predictive-correlational design is suitable when the purpose is not only to determine association, but also to test the predictive influence of selected variables on an outcome variable (Bhandari, 2023b; Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries [SESRIC], 2015).

In this study, the design was used to determine the level of workplace exposure during work immersion in terms of orientation and workplace familiarization, exposure to actual work processes and tools, and interaction and participation in workplace activities; the level of task performance during work immersion in terms of planning and timely task completion, quality and compliance of work output, and responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment; and the level of perceived employability skills in terms of communication skills, teamwork and working with others, self-management and professionalism, problem-solving and adaptability, and planning and time management. The correlational component was used to test whether significant relationships existed between workplace exposure and perceived employability skills, between task performance and perceived employability skills, and between workplace exposure and task performance. The predictive component was then used through regression analysis to determine whether workplace exposure and task performance, taken singly or in combination, significantly predicted the perceived employability skills of Grade 12 learners in Cabacungan National High School (Bhandari, 2023a, 2023b; SESRIC, 2015).

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The use of a predictive-correlational design is justified by the nature and objectives of the study. The study did not involve an intervention, treatment, or manipulation of learners' workplace exposure, immersion performance, or employability skills. Instead, it sought to describe the current levels of the variables, examine their statistical relationships, and determine whether the two independent variables could predict the dependent variable. Since the study intended to generate school-based quantitative evidence and prediction-based findings rather than establish direct cause-and-effect relationships, the predictive-correlational design was the most appropriate methodological choice for the present investigation (Bhandari, 2023a, 2023b; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Research Locale

This study was conducted in the Caraga Region (Region XIII), an administrative region in northeastern Mindanao created under Republic Act No. 7901. Based on the official regional profile of DepEd Caraga, the region is composed of the provinces of Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, and Dinagat Islands. As a region with both coastal and inland communities and a mix of urban and rural schools, Caraga provides a relevant context for examining school-based variables related to work immersion and learner employability development

Within Caraga, the study is situated in the Province of Surigao del Sur, which is served for basic education by the Department of Education, Schools Division of Surigao del Sur. The official DepEd directory identifies the division as one of the field offices under DepEd Caraga, with jurisdiction over public schools in the province. This division context is relevant to the study because it provides the institutional setting within which senior high school programs, including work immersion, are implemented and monitored

More specifically, the study was conducted in the Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur. The official provincial website describes Barobo as a municipality located in the central part of Surigao del Sur. As a municipality within the province, Barobo serves learners from local barangays and communities where senior high school learners participate in school-based and partner-institution-based experiences that may influence their workplace exposure, task performance, and perceived employability skills.

Figure 2. *Maps of the Philippines and Municipality of Barobo*

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The primary locale of the study is Cabacungan National High School, a public secondary school under the Schools Division of Surigao del Sur. DepEd records identify the school as Cabacungan National High School, School ID 304862, with location at Purok 2, Cabacungan, Barobo, Surigao del Sur The school was selected as the research locale because it is the actual school of the respondents and the setting where the Grade 12 learners involved in the study completed their work immersion experiences. Hence, it provides a fitting and context-specific site for examining workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills among the identified respondents.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were the Grade 12 learners of Cabacungan National High School, Schools Division of Surigao del Sur, who participated in work immersion during the conduct of the study. Based on the encoded dataset used for analysis, all respondents belonged to the Grade 12 Home Economics strand under one section, namely Section Pandeling, with a total population of thirty (30) learners. The learners themselves served as the respondents because all major variables of the study—workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills—were measured through learner-answered questionnaires. Their responses provided the primary data needed to determine the levels of the variables, their relationships, and the predictive influence of workplace exposure and task performance on perceived employability skills.

The study employed purposive sampling in identifying the target population, specifically the Grade 12 learners of Cabacungan National High School who had undergone work immersion and matched the objectives and variables of the study. Following this, total enumeration was applied, wherein all learners from the identified Grade 12 section were included in the data-gathering process. The final number of respondents consisted of those who voluntarily participated and submitted complete and valid responses, as reflected in the encoded dataset used for statistical analysis. In this case, all thirty (30) Grade 12 learners were included in the final dataset.

To ensure the validity and relevance of the data, inclusion criteria were applied. Only learners who were officially enrolled as Grade 12 students of Cabacungan National High School, belonged to the identified section, had participated in work immersion, voluntarily answered the questionnaire, and submitted complete and valid responses were included in the study. Learners who did not belong to the identified group or who would have submitted incomplete responses were to be excluded from the final dataset. However, based on the actual data gathered, all identified Grade 12 learners were included in the analysis.

The respondents were required to accomplish a structured, researcher-made questionnaire that measured workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills. Only complete and valid responses were encoded and included in the statistical analysis.

The population and sample distribution of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Respondents of the Study*

Grade 12 Learners	Population	Sample
Grade 12 Home Economics – Pandeling	30	30
Total Learner-Respondents	**30**	**30**

Note. *The respondents were identified through purposive sampling, specifically the Grade 12 learners of Cabacungan National High School who had participated in work immersion, with total enumeration applied to the identified section. The table reflects the Grade 12 population distribution based on the final encoded dataset used in the study.*

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Research Instrument

This study utilized a unified, adapted, and contextualized learner questionnaire designed to gather quantitative data on the three major variables of the study: workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills. A structured self-report questionnaire is appropriate in quantitative research because it allows variables to be measured through organized items, transformed into numerical scores, and analyzed statistically in an objective manner. In this study, the instrument was presented in matrix form so that the respondents could answer each statement in a consistent and standardized way (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Siedlecki, 2020).

The instrument consisted of three parts. Part I measured Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion in terms of orientation and workplace familiarization, exposure to actual work processes and tools, and interaction and participation in workplace activities. Part II measured Task Performance During Work Immersion in terms of planning and timely task completion, quality and compliance of work output, and responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment. Part III measured Perceived Employability Skills in terms of communication skills, teamwork and working with others, self-management and professionalism, problem-solving and adaptability, and planning and time management. The final questionnaire contained 39 items, with 12 items for Workplace Exposure, 12 items for Task Performance During Work Immersion, and 15 items for Perceived Employability Skills. Each item was rated on a four-point Likert scale: 4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Agree, 2 – Disagree, and 1 – Strongly Disagree. Responses were encoded and processed using an automated scoring workbook where weighted means were computed to determine the level of each dimension and variable.

The Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion component of the instrument was developed from the Department of Education Work Immersion Curriculum Guide, which emphasizes orientation, workplace rules and expectations, safety, actual workplace processes, and learner participation in authentic work activities. The Task Performance During Work Immersion component was conceptually adapted from the task performance dimension of the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) developed by Koopmans and colleagues, particularly the indicators related to planning work, prioritizing tasks, and performing work efficiently. The Perceived Employability Skills component was derived from the employability skills domains discussed by Orji (2013) and later adapted for Philippine senior high school learners by Roxas (2022), and was further aligned with the Employability Skills Framework of the U.S. Department of Education. These source bases provided the conceptual foundation for organizing the items and dimensions of the final instrument used in the study (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017; Koopmans, 2015; Koopmans et al., 2014; Orji, 2013; Roxas, 2022; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education [OCTAE], 2018).

As a researcher-made and contextualized instrument, the questionnaire was structured by directly aligning each item with the variables and dimensions stated in the Statement of the Problem. The content coverage of the instrument was therefore anchored on recognized policy and theoretical sources and localized to the actual work immersion experiences of Grade 12 learners in Cabacungan National High School. This alignment helped ensure that the items were relevant to the respondents, appropriate to the study locale, and consistent with the constructs intended to be measured in the investigation (DepEd, 2017; Koopmans, 2015; OCTAE, 2018).

For reliability, the accomplished questionnaires from the 30 Grade 12 learner-respondents were subjected to internal consistency analysis using Cronbach's alpha. Based on the actual dataset of the study, the computed alpha coefficients were .809 for Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion, .877 for Task Performance During Work Immersion, .916 for Perceived Employability Skills, and .945 for the overall instrument. These coefficients indicate that the questionnaire demonstrated good to excellent internal consistency. In social science research, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable evidence of reliability for Likert-type instruments (Taber, 2018).

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After finalization, the instrument was administered to the 30 Grade 12 learners of Cabacungan National High School who served as the respondents of the study. Only complete and valid responses were encoded in the automated scoring workbook and used for the statistical analysis. Thus, the research instrument used in this study may be considered researcher-made, adapted, contextualized, and reliability-tested, making it appropriate for gathering the data needed to answer the research problems.

Data Gathering Procedure

This study observed a systematic pre-data collection phase to ensure that the gathering of quantitative data would be ethical, organized, and aligned with school protocols. First, the researcher prepared and finalized the learner questionnaire on workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills, ensuring that the items were clear, context-appropriate, and arranged in a matrix-type Likert-scale format to support standardized responses and numerical scoring. The researcher also prepared the consent and assent procedures, coding sheet, and automated scoring workbook to facilitate confidentiality, orderly data processing, and accurate statistical treatment. Second, the researcher secured the necessary permissions from the Schools Division Superintendent and the school administration of Cabacungan National High School before the conduct of the study. Coordination was then made with the school head, class adviser, and other concerned personnel regarding the schedule of administration and the most feasible manner of distributing and retrieving the questionnaires without disrupting regular school activities. These procedures were consistent with quantitative data collection practices that emphasize structure, uniformity, and organized handling of responses.

During the actual data gathering, the researcher implemented informed consent and administered the research instrument in a manner that respected the rights of the respondents and the normal operations of the school. The Grade 12 learners were oriented regarding the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Only those who voluntarily participated were included. The questionnaires were then administered to all Grade 12 learners covered by the study, and the respondents were given sufficient time to answer the instrument independently. After completion, the accomplished forms were retrieved and checked for completeness and legibility to minimize missing or unusable data. Since work immersion is a formal component of the senior high school curriculum, the administration of the instrument was scheduled in a way that remained consistent with school and immersion-related procedures.

To protect confidentiality and comply with data privacy principles, the researcher used a coding system rather than the names of the respondents in encoding and processing the data. The accomplished questionnaires were handled only for research purposes, and access to the responses was limited to those directly involved in the study. This procedure was consistent with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which protects personal information and requires that data be secured and processed responsibly. Only the information necessary for the analysis of workplace exposure, task performance, and perceived employability skills was retained in the dataset.

After retrieval of the accomplished questionnaires, the researcher proceeded with data encoding, cleaning, and verification. The responses were entered into the automated scoring workbook, which generated dimension scores and overall scores for workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills based on the established scoring scheme. The researcher then checked the dataset for completeness, invalid entries, duplicated responses, and possible encoding errors. Only complete and valid responses were retained for the final statistical analysis. This process was important in ensuring the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the descriptive, correlational, and regression results generated from the study.

Finally, the cleaned dataset was subjected to statistical treatment aligned with the Statement of the Problem. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the levels of workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills across their

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respective dimensions. Correlational analysis was then used to determine whether significant relationships existed among the variables, while regression analysis was employed to determine whether workplace exposure and task performance significantly predicted perceived employability skills. The results were summarized and reported in aggregate form to preserve confidentiality and to present school-based quantitative evidence on the work immersion experiences and employability-related perceptions of the Grade 12 learners of Cabacungan National High School.

Statistical Treatment

/To answer Research Question 1 on the level of workplace exposure during work immersion in terms of orientation and workplace familiarization, exposure to actual work processes and tools, and interaction and participation in workplace activities, weighted mean and standard deviation were used. The weighted mean was applied to determine the average response for each dimension and for the overall variable, while the standard deviation was used to describe the variability or spread of the responses. Rank ordering was also applied to identify the highest and lowest dimensions of workplace exposure during work immersion based on the computed mean scores (Anthony, 2024; Siedlecki, 2020).

To answer Research Question 2 on the level of task performance during work immersion in terms of planning and timely task completion, quality and compliance of work output, and responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment, weighted mean and standard deviation were likewise used. Rank ordering was also employed to determine the highest and lowest dimensions of task performance during work immersion according to the computed mean scores. These descriptive statistics were appropriate because the study first sought to descry be the level and relative standing of the dimensions before examining relationships and prediction (Anthony, 2024; Siedlecki, 2020).

To answer Research Question 3 on the level of perceived employability skills in terms of communication skills, teamwork and working with others, self-management and professionalism, problem-solving and adaptability, and planning and time management, weighted mean and standard deviation were used. Rank ordering was likewise applied to identify the highest and lowest dimensions of perceived employability skills. These procedures were used to summarize the learners' responses in an organized numerical form and to show which employability dimensions were relatively stronger or weaker based on the computed descriptive values (Anthony, 2024; Siedlecki, 2020).

To answer Research Question 4 on the significant relationship between workplace exposure during work immersion and perceived employability skills, between task performance during work immersion and perceived employability skills, and between workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson r) was used. Pearson *r* was employed to determine the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the paired variables, and the significance of the relationships was tested at the 0.05 level of significance. This statistical treatment was appropriate because the study involved quantitative variables measured through numerical scores and sought to determine whether significant associations existed among them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Zaid, 2015).

To answer Research Question 5 on whether workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion, taken singly or in combination, significantly predict perceived employability skills, multiple linear regression analysis was used. This statistical procedure was employed to determine the predictive influence of the two independent variables on the dependent variable, both individually and collectively. The regression analysis generated the beta coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), adjusted R^2, F-value, and p-values, which were used to evaluate the strength and significance of the predictive model at the 0.05 level of significance. Multiple regression was appropriate because the study aimed not only to examine relationships but also to test whether the identified predictor variables significantly explained variation in perceived employability skills (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Zaid, 2015).

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study in the same sequence as the Statement of the Problem. The findings are presented in tables and are followed by analyses and discussions supported by related literature on workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills among senior high school learners (Alinea et al., 2024; Isip et al., 2024; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Problem 1. What is the level of workplace exposure during work immersion among Grade 12 learners in terms of the identified dimensions?

Table 1 presents the level of workplace exposure during work immersion among the 30 Grade 12 learner-respondents in terms of the identified dimensions. The overall weighted mean for workplace exposure was 3.4677 (SD = 0.2787), interpreted as Very High. Among the dimensions, Orientation and Workplace Familiarization obtained the highest mean (3.6333), while Exposure to Actual Work Processes and Tools obtained the lowest mean (3.3667). These results indicate that the learners generally experienced strong and favorable exposure to the work environment, especially in terms of orientation, rules, expectations, and workplace familiarization. This pattern is consistent with the work immersion framework of the Department of Education, which emphasizes orientation, workplace rules, safety, actual work processes, and authentic participation as integral parts of meaningful work immersion (Department of Education [DepEd], 2017, 2025).

Table 1. *Summary of Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion Levels (n = 30)*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Orientation and Workplace Familiarization	3.6333	0.3395	Very High	1
Exposure to Actual Work Processes and Tools	3.3667	0.3061	Very High	3
Interaction and Participation in Workplace Activities	3.4000	0.3322	Very High	2
Overall Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion	**3.4677**	**0.2787**	**Very High**	**—**

Note. Means were interpreted using the following scale: 3.25–4.00 = Very High, 2.50–3.24 = High, 1.75–2.49 = Moderate, and 1.00–1.74 = Low.

At the item level, the highest mean was obtained by Item 1 (3.8300), which stated that the learners were oriented about the partner institution's rules, expectations, and work procedures before or at the start of immersion. Other high-performing exposure indicators included understanding safety practices and workplace-task connections (Items 2 and 4, both 3.6300). In contrast, the lowest means were observed for Items 5 and 6 (both 3.2300), which dealt with observing actual workplace processes and exposure to workplace tools, forms, equipment, or digital platforms. These lower means suggest that while the learners were well oriented, the depth of their exposure to actual workplace operations and tools was comparatively less extensive. Similar findings were noted in Philippine work immersion studies showing that learners often report positive exposure and excellent experiences, but the quality and variety of actual workplace engagement may still vary by placement site and implementation context (Ariar et al., 2024; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Problem 2. What is the level of task performance during work immersion among Grade 12 learners in terms of the identified dimensions?

Table 2 shows the level of task performance during work immersion among the respondents. The overall weighted mean for task performance was 3.4307 (SD = 0.3269), interpreted as Very High. Among the dimensions, Responsibility and Initiative in Task Accomplishment obtained the highest mean (3.4917), while Planning and Timely Task Completion obtained the lowest mean (3.3750). The results indicate that

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the learners generally rated themselves highly in performing their assigned duties, particularly in terms of responsibility, initiative, and persistence in completing work. This pattern supports the view that task performance in work immersion reflects learners' ability to function effectively within a real work setting, especially when duties are clear and structured (Koopmans et al., 2014; Saluria & Mariño, 2024).

Table 2. *Summary of Task Performance During Work Immersion Levels (n = 30)*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Planning and Timely Task Completion	3.3750	0.3757	Very High	3
Quality and Compliance of Work Output	3.4250	0.3664	Very High	2
Responsibility and Initiative in Task Accomplishment	3.4917	0.3799	Very High	1
Overall Task Performance During Work Immersion	**3.4307**	**0.3269**	**Very High**	**—**

Note. Means were interpreted using the following scale: 3.25–4.00 = Very High, 2.50–3.24 = High, 1.75–2.49 = Moderate, and 1.00–1.74 = Low.

At the item level, the strongest indicators of task performance were following instructions correctly (Item 18, 3.6000), taking responsibility for assigned tasks (Item 22, 3.6000), remaining focused on important tasks even when work became difficult or repetitive (Item 24, 3.5700), and showing initiative when work needed to be done (Item 23, 3.5300). The comparatively lower means were found in checking work for errors before submission (Item 19, 3.2700) and performing duties with minimal unnecessary supervision (Item 21, 3.2700), suggesting that although performance was generally strong, some aspects of independent quality control and minimally supervised work could still be strengthened. This result aligns with Philippine evidence that work immersion students often receive very high or outstanding performance ratings, yet performance may differ across specific task behaviors, strands, and work settings (Tabaosares & Castillo, 2024; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Problem 3. What is the level of perceived employability skills among Grade 12 learners in terms of the identified dimensions?

Table 3 presents the level of perceived employability skills among the respondents. The overall weighted mean for perceived employability skills was 3.4000 (SD = 0.3509), interpreted as Very High. Among the dimensions, Teamwork and Working with Others obtained the highest mean (3.4777), while Problem-Solving and Adaptability obtained the lowest mean (3.3113). The findings indicate that the learners generally perceived themselves as highly employable in relation to the skill domains measured in the study. In particular, they felt more confident in collaborating with others and maintaining professional relationships than in adjusting to changing situations or solving work-related problems. This pattern is broadly consistent with senior high school employability studies in the Philippines showing that learners tend to rate interpersonal and general work-habit domains favorably, while some higher-order or planning-related skills may be relatively weaker (Alinea et al., 2024; Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022).

Table 3. *Summary of Perceived Employability Skills Levels (n = 30)*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Communication Skills	3.3780	0.4084	Very High	4
Teamwork and Working with Others	3.4777	0.4525	Very High	1
Self-Management and Professionalism	3.4667	0.4074	Very High	2
Problem-Solving and Adaptability	3.3113	0.4542	Very High	5
Planning and Time Management	3.3663	0.3953	Very High	3

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Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Overall Perceived Employability Skills	**3.4000**	**0.3509**	**Very High**	**—**

Note. Means were interpreted using the following scale: 3.25–4.00 = Very High, 2.50–3.24 = High, 1.75–2.49 = Moderate, and 1.00–1.74 = Low.

At the item level, the highest perceived employability indicators were showing respect for the ideas, roles, and contributions of others in the workplace (Item 29, 3.6000), being willing to learn from feedback and correct mistakes (Item 33, 3.6000), and listening carefully and asking questions when instructions were not clear (Item 26, 3.5700). In contrast, the lowest mean was recorded for expressing ideas clearly when speaking with supervisors, co-workers, or clients (Item 25, 3.2300), followed by adjusting when tasks, instructions, or work conditions change (Item 35, 3.2700). These findings suggest that the learners perceived themselves as strong in respect, receptiveness to feedback, and basic collaborative workplace behaviors, but somewhat less strong in assertive workplace communication and adaptability. Comparable local studies have likewise reported that employability-related self-assessments are generally moderate to high, with planning, time management, and some communication or adaptability-related indicators tending to receive comparatively lower ratings (Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022).

Problem 4. Is there a significant relationship between workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills?

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationships among the major variables. As shown in Table 4, workplace exposure during work immersion had a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with perceived employability skills ($r = 0.5715$, $p = 0.0010$). Task performance during work immersion had a high positive and statistically significant relationship with perceived employability skills ($r = 0.7061$, $p = 0.000013$). In addition, workplace exposure during work immersion had a very high positive and statistically significant relationship with task performance during work immersion ($r = 0.8157$, $p < .001$). These results indicate that higher levels of workplace exposure were associated with higher perceived employability skills and higher task performance, while stronger task performance was likewise associated with higher perceived employability skills.

Table 4. *Correlations Among Workplace Exposure, Task Performance, and Perceived Employability Skills (n = 30)*

Variable Pair	r	Strength	p	Decision at .05
Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion and Perceived Employability Skills	0.5715	Moderate Positive	< .001	Reject H0
Task Performance During Work Immersion and Perceived Employability Skills	0.7061	High Positive	< .001	Reject H0
Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion and Task Performance During Work Immersion	0.8157	Very High Positive	< .001	Reject H0

Note. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used. Correlations were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

The significant positive relationships in this study are consistent with prior evidence indicating that immersion-related variables and work-based learning experiences are related to employability-related outcomes. Studies by Garcia and Yazon (2020) and Vibal and Madrideo (2025) similarly found that better-aligned or better-implemented work immersion experiences were associated with stronger skills development and work-related outcomes. Likewise, Musa et al. (2025) reported significant positive correlations between internship-related developmental domains and job readiness, while Suyitno et al.

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(2025) showed that work-based learning remains important to employability, even when its effect may operate through intervening factors. Among the three relationships in the present study, the strongest association was between workplace exposure and task performance, suggesting that learners who experienced richer and more meaningful workplace exposure also tended to rate themselves higher in carrying out work immersion tasks effectively.

Problem 5. Do workplace exposure and task performance during work immersion, taken singly or in combination, significantly predict the perceived employability skills of Grade 12 learners?

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion significantly predicted perceived employability skills. As shown in Table 5, the overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 27) = 13.43$, $p = 0.000089$, with $R = 0.7062$, $R^2 = 0.499$, and adjusted $R^2 = 0.462$. This means that the two predictor variables, taken together, explained about 49.9% of the variance in perceived employability skills. The result indicates that the model had meaningful explanatory power for the dependent variable.

Table 5. *Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Perceived Employability Skills (n = 30)*

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
Constant	0.8183	0.5974	—	1.370	0.182
Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion	-0.0169	0.2966	-0.0134	-0.057	0.955
Task Performance During Work Immersion	0.7696	0.2528	0.7171	3.044	0.005

Note. The regression model was significant, with $R = 0.7062$, $R^2 = 0.499$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.462$, $F(2, 27) = 13.43$, and $p = 0.000089$.

At the predictor level, task performance during work immersion emerged as a statistically significant positive predictor of perceived employability skills ($B = 0.7696$, $\beta = 0.7171$, $t = 3.044$, $p = 0.005$). In contrast, workplace exposure during work immersion did not make a statistically significant unique contribution when task performance was already included in the model ($B = -0.0169$, $\beta = -0.0134$, $t = -0.057$, $p = 0.955$). This pattern suggests that although workplace exposure was significantly related to perceived employability skills at the bivariate level, its unique predictive effect diminished once the shared variance with task performance was taken into account. A plausible explanation is that task performance is a more proximal and behaviorally direct expression of learners' readiness-related competencies than workplace exposure alone. Similar predictive studies have shown that performance-related and work-based variables can explain employability or work-readiness outcomes, but the strength and uniqueness of predictors may vary depending on model structure, overlap among predictors, and the presence of mediating variables (Musa et al., 2025; Rochmayanti et al., 2022; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Overall, the respondents reported very high levels of workplace exposure during work immersion, very high task performance during work immersion, and very high perceived employability skills. Orientation and workplace familiarization was the strongest dimension of workplace exposure, responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment was the strongest dimension of task performance, and teamwork and working with others was the strongest dimension of perceived employability skills. These findings suggest that the Grade 12 learners generally experienced a favorable work immersion environment, performed their tasks positively, and perceived themselves as highly employable across the measured skill domains.

The inferential results further showed that all three major variables were significantly related to one another, while the predictive analysis demonstrated that workplace exposure and task performance, taken together, significantly predicted perceived employability skills. However, when both predictors were

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entered into the same model, task performance remained the only significant unique predictor. This implies that the practical behaviors learners demonstrate while performing actual immersion tasks may be more directly associated with how they evaluate their employability skills than exposure alone. In general, the findings support the educational value of work immersion as a school-to-work preparation mechanism and highlight the importance of strengthening not only workplace placement and exposure, but also the quality of learner task execution during immersion (DepEd, 2017, 2025; Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

Summary of Findings

The study examined the levels of workplace exposure during work immersion, task performance during work immersion, and perceived employability skills among Grade 12 learners using a quantitative predictive-correlational research design. Specifically, it determined the level of workplace exposure in terms of orientation and workplace familiarization, exposure to actual work processes and tools, and interaction and participation in workplace activities; the level of task performance in terms of planning and timely task completion, quality and compliance of work output, and responsibility and initiative in task accomplishment; and the level of perceived employability skills in terms of communication skills, teamwork and working with others, self-management and professionalism, problem-solving and adaptability, and planning and time management. It also tested whether significant relationships existed among the variables and whether workplace exposure and task performance significantly predicted perceived employability skills. The respondents were 30 Grade 12 learners with complete and valid responses. Statistical tools used included weighted mean, standard deviation, rank ordering, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, and multiple linear regression.

Findings

1. Level of Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion

1.1 The overall level of workplace exposure during work immersion was Very High, with an average weighted mean of 3.4667 (SD = 0.2782).

1.2 Among the dimensions, Orientation and Workplace Familiarization obtained the highest mean of 3.6333.

1.3 The dimension with the lowest mean was Exposure to Actual Work Processes and Tools with a mean of 3.3667.

1.4 These results suggest that the learners generally experienced strong orientation and meaningful workplace engagement, although direct exposure to actual processes and tools was relatively less pronounced than the other dimensions. This pattern is consistent with studies showing that work immersion often provides strong familiarization and socialization, while the depth of hands-on exposure depends on the quality and structure of the placement site (Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

2. Level of Task Performance During Work Immersion

2.1 The overall level of task performance during work immersion was Very High, with an average weighted mean of 3.4306 (SD = 0.3269).

2.2 Among the dimensions, Responsibility and Initiative in Task Accomplishment obtained the highest mean of 3.4917.

2.3 The dimension with the lowest mean was Planning and Timely Task Completion with a mean of 3.3750.

2.4 These findings indicate that the learners generally viewed themselves as responsible and dependable in carrying out workplace duties, although planning and time-related execution remained the relatively weakest area. The pattern is similar to previous work immersion studies in which responsibility, work habits, and initiative tended to be rated highly, while time management and scheduling demands varied depending on the work context (Saluria & Mariño, 2024; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

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3. Level of Perceived Employability Skills

3.1 The overall level of perceived employability skills was Very High, with an average weighted mean of 3.4000 (SD = 0.3506).

3.2 Among the dimensions, Teamwork and Working with Others obtained the highest mean of 3.4778.

3.3 The dimension with the lowest mean was Problem-Solving and Adaptability with a mean of 3.3111.

3.4 These findings suggest that the learners generally perceived themselves as highly employable, especially in interpersonal and collaborative skills, although they were relatively less confident in problem-solving and adaptability. This result is consistent with Philippine findings showing that employability skills among senior high school learners are often favorable overall, but some higher-order or self-directed competencies may develop less strongly than social and communication-related skills (Alinea et al., 2024; Isip et al., 2024; Roxas, 2022).

4. Relationship Among Workplace Exposure, Task Performance, and Perceived Employability Skills

4.1 The relationship between workplace exposure during work immersion and perceived employability skills was positive, moderate, and statistically significant ($r = .5715$, $p = .0010$).

4.2 The relationship between task performance during work immersion and perceived employability skills was positive, strong, and statistically significant ($r = .7061$, $p = .000013$).

4.3 The relationship between workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion was positive, very strong, and statistically significant ($r = .8157$, $p < .001$).

4.4 These findings indicate that richer workplace exposure and stronger task performance were associated with higher perceived employability skills. The pattern supports prior evidence suggesting that authentic work-based learning and stronger immersion performance are linked with employability-related outcomes, even if the strength of association may vary by context and measurement approach (Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Musa et al., 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025).

5. Predictive Influence of Workplace Exposure and Task Performance on Perceived Employability Skills

5.1 Multiple regression analysis showed that workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion, taken together, significantly predicted perceived employability skills, $F(2, 27) = 13.43$, $p = .000089$.

5.2 The regression model explained 49.9% of the variance in perceived employability skills ($R^2 = .499$, adjusted $R^2 = .462$).

5.3 Task performance during work immersion emerged as a significant positive predictor of perceived employability skills ($B = .7696$, $p = .005$).

5.4 Workplace exposure during work immersion did not emerge as a significant unique predictor of perceived employability skills when task performance was controlled ($B = -.0169$, $p = .955$).

5.5 These results indicate that while both variables are important at the correlational level, task performance is the stronger immediate predictor of perceived employability skills in this sample. The finding aligns with studies suggesting that workplace learning may influence employability most strongly when it is translated into concrete performance, competence enactment, and confidence in handling actual work tasks (Musa et al., 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025).

CONCLUSIONS

1. Overall Patterns

1.1 The Grade 12 learners of Cabacungan National High School manifested a very high level of workplace exposure during work immersion, indicating that they were generally well oriented, engaged, and exposed to authentic work settings.

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1.2 The learners likewise manifested a very high level of task performance during work immersion, showing that they generally perceived themselves as capable of performing assigned duties responsibly and with acceptable quality.

1.3 The learners also reported a very high level of perceived employability skills, suggesting that they viewed themselves as generally prepared in communication, teamwork, professionalism, adaptability, and time-related work skills.

2. Relationships Among Variables

2.1 Workplace exposure during work immersion had a significant positive relationship with perceived employability skills.

2.2 Task performance during work immersion had a significant positive relationship with perceived employability skills.

2.3 Workplace exposure during work immersion had a significant positive relationship with task performance during work immersion.

3. Predictive Influence

3.1 Workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion, taken together, significantly predicted perceived employability skills.

3.2 Task performance during work immersion was the significant unique predictor of perceived employability skills.

3.3 Workplace exposure during work immersion, although significantly related to perceived employability skills, did not significantly predict perceived employability skills when task performance was entered into the regression model.

4. Null Hypotheses

4.1 The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between workplace exposure during work immersion and perceived employability skills was rejected.

4.2 The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between task performance during work immersion and perceived employability skills was rejected.

4.3 The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between workplace exposure during work immersion and task performance during work immersion was rejected.

4.4 The null hypothesis stating that workplace exposure and task performance during work immersion, taken singly or in combination, do not significantly predict perceived employability skills was rejected. However, only task performance remained a significant unique predictor in the final regression model.

5. General Inference

5.1 The findings imply that the quality of learners' immersion experience matters, but actual task execution appears to be the more proximate determinant of perceived employability skills in this context.

5.2 The results further suggest that work immersion contributes to employability development not only through exposure to the workplace but more importantly through the learner's ability to perform tasks effectively within that environment.

Recommendations

1. Strengthening Workplace Exposure During Work Immersion

1.1 School heads, work immersion coordinators, and partner institutions may strengthen the depth of learners' exposure to actual work processes and tools, since this dimension obtained the lowest mean under workplace exposure.

1.2 Partner institutions may provide wider access to authentic work tasks, tools, and procedures so that learners move beyond observation and develop stronger familiarity with the realities of the workplace (Garcia & Yazon, 2020; Vibal & Madrideo, 2025).

2. Enhancing Task Performance During Work Immersion

2.1 Teachers and immersion coordinators may provide focused pre-immersion and on-site coaching on planning, scheduling, time management, and timely task completion, since this dimension obtained the lowest mean under task performance.

2.2 Schools may use task logs, simple performance checklists, and regular mentoring conferences to help learners monitor deadlines, prepare needed materials, and improve consistency in completing assigned tasks (Saluria & Mariño, 2024).

3. Improving Employability Skills Development

3.1 Since Problem-Solving and Adaptability obtained the lowest mean among the employability dimensions, enrichment activities may be developed to strengthen learners' confidence in handling changing instructions, work-related problems, and unfamiliar task demands.

3.2 Communication, teamwork, and professionalism may continue to be reinforced because these dimensions were among the strongest areas and can serve as foundations for improving the more challenging employability domains (Alinea et al., 2024; Isip et al., 2024).

4. Strengthening School–Industry Coordination

4.1 The school may review the quality and relevance of immersion placements to ensure stronger alignment between learner specialization, assigned tasks, and intended employability outcomes.

4.2 Stronger coordination with partner institutions may also be pursued so that learners are given not only safe and supervised placements but also meaningful performance opportunities that directly contribute to employability development (Musa et al., 2025; Suyitno et al., 2025).

Future Research

1. Future researchers may include a larger sample and multiple strands or schools so that the findings can be compared across different senior high school contexts and immersion arrangements.

2. Future studies may incorporate supervisor ratings, employer feedback, or mixed-methods approaches to complement learner self-report and provide a fuller understanding of workplace exposure, task performance, and employability development.

3. Future researchers may examine other possible predictors or mediating variables such as self-efficacy, vocational identity, work motivation, supervision quality, or partner-institution support to explain the portion of employability skills not accounted for by workplace exposure and task performance alone (Suyitno et al., 2025).

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