

ASSESSING THE COMPETENCY LEVEL OF GRADE ELEVEN STUDENTS IN TABLE SETTING AND NAPKIN FOLDING TECHNIQUES

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Abstract

This study aimed to assess the competency level of Grade 11 students in performing table setting and napkin folding techniques under the Food and Beverage Services (FBS) strand of the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track at Alos National High School. The research employed a descriptive quantitative method, utilizing a researcher-made survey questionnaire administered to 40 Grade 11 FBS students. The study focused on identifying the students' mastery level in specific skills and determining their challenges during performance tasks. Qualitative data were also gathered through interviews and classroom observations to support the findings.

Results revealed that while many students exhibited moderate to competent levels in basic table setting and napkin folding techniques, there were still gaps in mastery, particularly in following precise procedures and demonstrating confidence during practical assessments. The findings also indicated that students struggle with limited access to resources and hands-on practice opportunities. Teachers noted that translating this knowledge into actual performance remained challenging despite the students' theoretical understanding.

The study concluded that to enhance student preparedness, instructional strategies must be strengthened, experiential learning integrated, and competencies aligned with industry standards. A set of proposed instructional interventions, such as skill-based workshops, peer mentoring, and performance-based assessments, was recommended. The study also emphasized the importance of incorporating multiple teaching approaches grounded in relevant learning theories.

Keywords: Food and Beverage Services, Table Setting, Napkin Folding, Competency Assessment, TVL Strand, Senior High School, Instructional Strategies, Experiential Learning

4. Introduction

The Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track of the Department of Education (DepEd) plays a pivotal role in equipping senior high school students with industry-relevant competencies, contributing to the workforce readiness of Filipino youth (Nordin & Omar, 2024). Under the K to 12 Basic Education Program, enforced by Republic Act No. 10533 (2013)—also known as the *Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013*—the Senior High School (SHS) curriculum was expanded to include diverse tracks, one of which is TVL, where the Food and Beverage Services (FBS) strand resides. Complementing this, RA 7796 (1994), otherwise known as the *Technical Education and Skills Development Act*, underscores the importance of ladderized technical-vocational education and training, intertwining DepEd, TESDA, and labor sectors to foster competency-based learning.

Within the TVL track, students specialize in TESDA-aligned programs such as FBS (NC II), structured to instill both theory and practical execution of key tasks—among them, table setting and napkin folding—which are fundamental in hospitality service (Loquiente, 2016). The DepEd curriculum guide for FBS outlines these essential service competencies, reflecting industry benchmarks that senior high school students are expected to master. Further, DepEd Order No. 54, s. 2022 reiterates the imperative of aligning TVL specializations with TESDA Training Regulations and relevance to labor market demands. Likewise, DepEd Order No. 2020-035 highlights the Joint Delivery Voucher Program (JDVP-TVL), promoting partnerships with relevant institutions to enhance the delivery and quality of technical-vocational training.

Despite these policy frameworks and efforts, gaps remain in translating curriculum provisions into consistent mastery of practical competencies among learners. Several studies elucidate this challenge. For instance, Mark and Emmanuel (2019) study found that while TVL teachers in Camiguin generally possessed high competence in teaching 21st-century skills, they were significantly impeded by inadequate equipment and lack of focused training—factors that parallel the challenges faced in FBS instruction (Mark & Emmanuel, 2019). Similarly, research in automotive TVL programs in the Philippines identified misalignment between competency standards and industry needs, further underscoring the potential disconnect in vocational education. These findings suggest that even where policy and curriculum design are sound, implementation and outcomes remain uneven (Edralin & Pastrana, 2023).

Within FBS education, the ability of students to perform basic service tasks—specifically table setting and napkin folding—is foundational to their professional development in hospitality. However, anecdotal observations and internal assessments in many schools—including Alos National High School—indicate that students' theoretical understanding does not consistently translate into precise execution of these tasks (Fraser, 2020). Factors such as limited hands-on practice, resource constraints, and insufficient feedback emerge as barriers to competency. Notably, this practical gap reflects a broader tension noted in competency-based TVET: the persistent challenge of operationalizing industry standards within school contexts (Hamid et al., 2023).

This study thus seeks to address a critical and underexplored problem: to what extent do Grade 11 FBS students at Alos National High School demonstrate competency in table setting and napkin folding, and what factors influence their performance? By systematically assessing both theoretical understanding and practical execution, and by gathering insights from teachers, this study aims to illuminate key instructional and structural gaps. It will explore how DepEd policies—such as the JDVP, TESDA alignment, and learner-centered mandates—manifest in the classroom, and it will propose context-sensitive interventions that can enhance student skill acquisition (Raymunde et al., 2024).

This study occupies the niche by focusing on a specific yet vital dimension of FBS competency—table setting and napkin folding—at a particular school context (Alos National High School), using a descriptive design that integrates policy analysis, empirical assessment, and stakeholder perspectives. In doing so, it contributes to the literature by providing empirical insights into how TVL-FBS competencies are enacted in real classroom settings and by identifying actionable strategies to align practice with policy.

By engaging this niche, the study seeks to: (1) establish baseline competency levels among Grade 11 FBS students, (2) uncover practical challenges in skill acquisition, (3) examine alignment between students' theoretical knowledge and practical execution, and (4) propose instructional interventions grounded in DepEd and TESDA frameworks. The findings may inform school-level strategies and contribute to broader discourse on strengthening TVL implementation across the Philippines.

In sum, aligning with the CARS model, this introduction has established the broader context of TVL policy and curriculum, identified gaps in practice and implementation, and

positioned the present study's focus and contribution. The following chapters will articulate the research methodology, findings, and recommendations that arise from this investigation

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design to systematically assess the competency level of Grade 11 students in table setting and napkin folding techniques under the Food and Beverage Services (FBS) strand at Alos National High School. Descriptive research was deemed appropriate as it enables the collection, organization, and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive portrayal of students' skills and performance. Using survey questionnaires, observational checklists, and interviews, the researchers were able to capture the participants' theoretical understanding, practical application, and the challenges encountered in executing the tasks. The design also allowed for the use of statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to analyze trends and variations in competency levels, thereby facilitating an evidence-based discussion of the students' proficiency and the instructional gaps that need to be addressed.

2.2 Participants

The study comprised all forty (40) Grade 11 students enrolled in the Food and Beverage Services (FBS) strand at Alos National High School during the School Year 2024–2025. These learners were purposively selected based on their prior exposure to both theoretical instruction and hands-on training in table setting and napkin folding, ensuring that they possessed the foundational knowledge and experience relevant to the competencies being assessed. Their inclusion provided a focused and homogenous group representative of senior high school students pursuing the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track, specifically in the hospitality field. This selection ensured that the gathered data accurately reflected the proficiency levels within this specialization, allowing the study to generate valid insights that could inform targeted pedagogical interventions and align with the competency standards prescribed by the Department of Education and TESDA.

2.3 Instrumentation

The study utilized a combination of researcher-made and adapted instruments to comprehensively assess the competency level of the participants in table setting and napkin folding techniques. A structured observation checklist, aligned with the Training Regulations of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for Food and Beverage Services NC II, was employed to evaluate students' practical performance based on industry-standard criteria such as accuracy, neatness, sequence of procedures, and adherence to service etiquette. Additionally, a competency assessment rubric was developed to measure proficiency levels, ensuring both objectivity and consistency in scoring. To complement the performance evaluation, a survey questionnaire was administered to gather data on learners' self-assessed skills, perceived challenges, and learning experiences. The instruments underwent content validation by experts in the field of hospitality education. They were pilot-tested to ensure clarity, reliability, and alignment with the study's objectives, thus guaranteeing the credibility and accuracy of the collected data.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered from the study were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the students' competency levels in table setting and napkin folding techniques. Quantitative data from the observation checklist and

competency assessment rubric were processed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores to determine the overall proficiency levels and identify specific areas of strength and weakness. Meanwhile, qualitative data derived from open-ended survey responses and interviews were subjected to thematic analysis, allowing the extraction of recurring patterns and insights regarding the challenges faced by students and the instructional gaps observed by teachers. This mixed-method analysis ensured a holistic interpretation of the findings, enabling the triangulation of data to enhance validity and reliability, and providing a robust foundation for the formulation of targeted instructional interventions aligned with industry and educational standards.

3 Results

The study revealed that the overall competency level of Grade 11 Food and Beverage Services (FBS) students at Alos National High School in table setting and napkin folding techniques was at the developing stage. Quantitative data showed that only 35% of the respondents achieved a proficient rating in table setting, while the majority (55%) demonstrated developing skills, and 10% remained at the beginning level. Similarly, in napkin folding, 30% of the students achieved proficient performance, 60% were at the developing stage, and 10% were at the beginning level. These results suggest that although students possess foundational knowledge of the competencies, many struggle to translate this knowledge into precise and consistent execution, indicating a need for more focused and sustained skill-building activities.

Further analysis identified specific challenges that hindered mastery of the competencies. Qualitative data from interviews and open-ended surveys revealed that 70% of the students cited limited practice time as a significant obstacle. In comparison, 65% mentioned inadequate access to materials such as quality tableware, linens, and napkins. Additionally, 50% of respondents reported a lack of confidence in performing tasks, especially during assessments, which often led to errors in folding techniques, incorrect utensil placement, and poor time management during the activity. Teachers also highlighted that while lessons on table setting and napkin folding were included in the curriculum, inconsistencies in the scheduling and delivery of practical activities reduced opportunities for students to develop accuracy, speed, and confidence in their work.

The study further revealed a noticeable gap between theoretical knowledge and practical performance. While 80% of students could accurately recall the principles and steps of proper table setting and napkin folding during written or oral examinations, only 40% could execute these techniques correctly without supervision during performance assessments. This discrepancy underscores the need for more experiential learning opportunities, in line with DepEd's K to 12 curriculum emphasis on performance-based learning for Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) tracks. Moreover, the lack of alignment with TESDA's competency standards for Food and Beverage Services NC II may contribute to the performance gap, as students are not consistently exposed to industry-based performance benchmarks. These findings highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions, such as TESDA-aligned training modules, regular performance drills, and enhanced feedback mechanisms, to ensure students achieve the competencies necessary for future employment in the hospitality industry.

4 Discussion

The results of this study align with the findings of Sepulveda (2022), who examined the practical competencies of Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students in the Food and Beverage Services strand and found that a significant proportion of learners performed better in theoretical assessments than in practical demonstrations. Like the present study, their research revealed that while students could articulate the correct steps in table setting and napkin folding, execution errors persisted due to insufficient hands-on practice and limited access to proper training facilities. This parallel suggests that the gap between knowledge and skill execution is a

recurring challenge in TVL programs, highlighting the importance of strengthening experiential learning strategies in alignment with the K to 12 curriculum's emphasis on competency-based education.

Furthermore, the findings resonate with the work of Maroma et al. (2025), who emphasized that the mastery of hospitality-related competencies, such as table setting and napkin folding, requires consistent reinforcement through performance-based tasks and real-world simulation. Their study concluded that students who engaged in frequent, supervised practice sessions demonstrated higher proficiency levels and confidence compared to those with sporadic training. The present study similarly observed that limited practice time and material constraints hindered skill mastery, reinforcing the argument that sufficient resources and structured practice schedules are vital for developing industry-standard competencies, particularly in preparation for TESDA's National Certificate assessments.

In addition, the present study's results corroborate the observations of Frieson et al. (2019), who investigated skill development among senior high school students in the hospitality strand and found that practical performance significantly improved when teaching methodologies integrated formative feedback and peer evaluation. They argued that feedback-driven approaches not only corrected technical errors but also boosted students' confidence in performing skills under time pressure. The present study supports this assertion, as the lack of structured feedback mechanisms emerged as one of the factors contributing to students' inconsistent performance. These consistent findings across related studies strengthen the recommendation to incorporate more structured, resource-supported, and feedback-rich practical training in Food and Beverage Services programs to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and useful application.

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