

Life and Career Skills, Employment Readiness, and Work Immersion Performance of Students: Basis for Program Enhancement

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the level of life and career skills, employment readiness, and work immersion performance of Grade 12 Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students and to examine the relationships between these variables. One hundred twenty-one Grade 12 students participated in the study. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed. Standardized questionnaires were used to assess life and career skills and employment readiness, while official work immersion performance ratings were used to measure students' workplace performance. The results showed that students had high levels of life and career skills and employment readiness, while their work immersion performance was outstanding. However, neither life and career skills nor employment readiness demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with work immersion performance. These findings suggest that perceived employability-related competencies alone may not sufficiently explain students' actual performance during work immersion. The absence of significant relationships may be associated with the generally high ratings of life and career skills and employment readiness, which may have resulted in limited variability among respondents, as well as the possibility that workplace-specific factors, technical competencies, task alignment, and differences in evaluation practices across industry partners may have had a stronger influence on performance ratings. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening work immersion programs through closer alignment between students' specializations and workplace assignments, consistent performance assessment procedures, and continued development of both technical and employability competencies.

Keywords: Life and Career Skills, Employment Readiness, Work Immersion Performance, Grade 12 Students, Work Immersion, Employability Skills.

INTRODUCTION

The work immersion program, as mandated by the DepEd Order No.30, s.2017, aims to equip Senior High School (SHS) students with the needed or necessary practical experience by allowing them to apply learned competencies in real-world or authentic work environments. However, the majority of SHS students are deployed to industries that do not reflect their field of specialization, resulting in underutilized skills and limited opportunities for work immersion and learning exposure, to ensure more relevant, impactful, and meaningful learning experiences for SHS students. This is now the current problem, which contradicts the main goal of work immersion for SHS students. Thus, this conflict may significantly affect the overall learning experience of SHS graduates, which can lead to a potential pitfall or defeat the purpose of the Work Immersion program as prescribed by the Department of Education (Tengco, 2025)).

According to the Cengage Group's 2025 Graduate Employability Report, hiring paths are becoming more limited and skill mismatches are making it more difficult for this year's graduates to find employment. The results highlight the critical need for greater cooperation to bridge gaps in job preparedness, even as organizations, employers, and graduates continue to struggle with misplaced expectations. There is a pressing need to reconsider how schools prepare students for future employment due to the expanding career preparation gap and the increasing demand for upskilling brought on by technological breakthroughs like artificial intelligence.

According to Andrew, cited in Jesanni and Angelli (2020), there should be appropriate methods for measuring employment readiness. This supports the need to create a particular measure of work readiness that will enable more efficient decision-making processes and possibly forecast long-term job capacity and performance. Many employers are willing to train high school seniors and sixth-form students to equip them with the critical skill sets required for employment because it is clear that employers are looking to hire a new generation of workers with appropriate job skills, or "soft skills" Pulnitiporn and Supakicco (2023).

Life and career skills are essential in today's world, as careers are no longer linear and people frequently need to adjust to changing work markets. According to Nittayaros, Ketchatturat, and Makmee (2025), these talents allow people to design meaningful professions, solve real-life problems, collaborate across cultural boundaries, and preserve well-being in the face of rapid change. Life and career skills stand out as being especially important for training people not only for work but also for successfully managing their personal lives within the broad framework of 21st-century abilities. A variety of characteristics, including flexibility, initiative, leadership, accountability, and interpersonal skills—all crucial for navigating both the workplace and everyday life—are included in life and career skills.

While there is an extensive body of research focusing on the acquisition of technical competencies and academic proficiency, there remains a notable scarcity of literature specifically examining life and career skills and employment readiness as direct predictors of work immersion performance among students. Thus, the present study sought to determine the life and career skills, employment readiness, and work immersion performance of technical-vocational livelihood students.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship between the life and career skills, employment readiness, and work immersion performance of Senior High School Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students in one of the public Senior High Schools in the Negros Island Region. The respondents consisted of one hundred twenty-one (121) Grade 12 TVL students. Since the entire population participated in the study, no sampling technique was employed.

Data were gathered using standardized questionnaires adopted from Nittayaros et al. (2025) to measure life and career skills and from Tangente and Ediang (2025) to assess employment readiness. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: the respondents' profile, life and career skills, and employment readiness. Work immersion performance was measured using the students' official work immersion performance ratings based on the standardized evaluation form used by the participating school. The ratings were completed by workplace supervisors who directly observed the students' performance during their immersion experience. The same evaluation criteria and rating scale were applied across private business establishments, government agencies, and non-government organizations to promote consistency and comparability in assessment. The use of common criteria provided a standardized basis for evaluating students' competencies and workplace behaviors across different immersion settings. However, differences in workplace context, assigned tasks, and supervisory practices may have influenced the ratings. The instruments had established psychometric properties, with a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.82 based on the evaluation of five experts and a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, indicating high reliability. Given these established validity and reliability measures, no further validation or reliability testing was conducted.

Before data collection, approval to conduct the study was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent and the principal of the participating public Senior High School. After obtaining the necessary permissions, the researcher sought the informed consent of the respondents and personally administered the questionnaires. The respondents were assured that their participation was voluntary, their identities would remain anonymous, and all information collected would be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for the purposes of the study. The collected data were organized, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to describe the respondents' profile. Mean and standard deviation were utilized to determine the levels of life and career skills, employment readiness, and work immersion performance. Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient was employed to determine the relationship between life and

career skills and work immersion performance, as well as between employment readiness and work immersion performance. The results of the study served as the basis for the conclusions and recommendations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

Profile	Category	f	%
Sex			
	Male	66	54.55
	Female	55	45.45
	Total	121	100.00
Average Family Monthly Income			
	Less than Php 10, 957 (Poor)	61	50.41
	Php 10, 957 – Php 21, 913.99 (Low Income but not Poor)	44	36.36
	Php 21, 914 – Php 43, 827. 99 (Lower Middle Income)	9	7.44
	Php 43, 828 – Php 76, 668. 99 (Middle Middle Income)	5	4.13
	Php 76, 669 – Php 131, 483. 99 (Upper Middle Income)	2	1.65
	Total	121	100.00
Specialization			
	Home Economics	40	33.06
	Industrial Arts	19	15.70
	Information and Communications Technology	62	51.24
	Total	121	100.00
Industry Partner for Work Immersion			
	Private Business Establishment	44	36.36
	Government Agencies	47	38.84
	Non–Government Organizations	30	24.79
	Total	121	100.00

Table 1 presents that in terms of sex, 66 (54.55%) are males and 55 (45.45%) are females. In terms of average family monthly income, the data reveal that a big percentage of the respondents with 61 (50.41%) are poor (with income less than Php 10,957.00), and 44 (36.36%) have low income but not poor (with income Php 10, 957 – Php 21, 913.99). on the other hand, 9 (7.44%) are lower middle income, 5 (4.13%) are middle-middle income, and only 2 (1.65%) are upper middle income.

Moreover, in terms of specialization, 40 (33.06%) of the respondents specialized in Home Economics, 19 (15.70%) specialized in Industrial Arts, and 62 (51.24) specialized in Information and Communications Technology. In terms of industry partner for work immersion, 44 (36.36%) of the respondents are assigned in a private business establishment, 47 (38.84%) are assigned in government agencies, and 30 (24.79%) are assigned in non-government organizations.

The data indicate that most of the respondents are males, poor with income less than Php 10, 957.00, specialized in Information and Communications Technology, and are assigned in private business establishments.

Level of Life and Career Skills of Students

Table 2. Level of Life and Career Skills of the Students.

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABILITY	4.10	.69	high
I can adapt to varied roles, jobs responsibilities, schedules, and context	4.32	.77	Very high
I can work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities	4.07	.82	High
I can incorporate feedback effectively	3.97	.91	High
I can deal positively with praise, setbacks, and criticism	4.00	.94	High
I can understand, negotiate, and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments.	4.12	.89	High
INITIATIVE AND SELF-DIRECTION	4.12	.70	High
I can set goals with tangible and intangible success criteria.	4.10	.83	High
I can balance tactical (short-term) and strategic (long term) goals.	4.10	.76	High
I can utilize time and manage workload efficiently (work Independently).	4.20	.84	High
I can monitor, define, prioritize, and complete tasks without direct oversight (Be Self-directed Learners).	4.17	.88	High
I can go beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise.	4.12	.92	high
SOCIAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS	4.27	.72	Very High
I know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak.	4.28	.98	Very High
I can conduct them in a respectable, professional manner.	4.40	.78	Very High
I respect cultural differences and work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds.	4.39	.93	Very high

I can respond open-mindedly to different ideas and values.	4.17	.87	High
I can leverage social and cultural differences to create new ideas and increase both innovation and quality of work.	4.11	.89	High
PRODUCTIVITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	4.19	.70	High
I can set and meet goals, even in the face of obstacles and competing pressure.	4.11	.85	High
I can prioritize, plan, and manage work to achieve the intended result (Produce Results).	4.17	.85	High
I can work positively and ethically.	4.38	.77	High
I can manage time and projects effectively.	4.25	.85	High
I can multi-task.	4.03	1.05	high
I can participate actively, as well as be reliable and punctual.	4.11	.93	High
I can present oneself professionally and with proper etiquette.	4.14	.93	High
I can collaborate and cooperate effectively with teams.	4.33	.86	Very High
I can be accountable for results.	4.22	.89	Very High
LEADERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY	4.07	.78	High
I can use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal.	4.07	.89	high
I can leverage strengths of others to accomplish a common goal.	3.93	.92	High
I can inspire others to reach their very best via example and selflessness.	4.09	.95	High
I can utilize time and manage workload efficiently (work Independently).	4.20	.84	High
I can monitor, define, prioritize, and complete tasks without direct oversight (Be Self-directed Learners).	4.17	.88	High
I can go beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise.	4.12	.92	High
I can demonstrate initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level.	3.98	.86	High
I can demonstrate commitment to learning as a lifelong process.	4.18	.87	High
I can reflect critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress.	4.08	.95	High

ETHICAL, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES	4.22	.71	Very high
I respect beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feeling and value.	4.40	.81	Very High
Have the ability to recognize the difference between right and wrong and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives.	4.32	.86	Very High
I have interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues.	4.07	.92	High
I have an understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage.	4.15	.88	High
I have the willingness to participate in, and respond to artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, and scientific opportunities.	4.16	.88	High
I have an interest in exploring and respecting cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept and respect diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.	4.21	.87	Very High
OVERALL MEAN_LIFE AND CAREER SKILLS	4.16	.64	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

The data in Table 2 reveal that respondents have a very high level of flexibility and adaptability in terms of life and career skills ($M=4.10$, $SD=0.69$). The statement "I can adapt to varied roles, job responsibilities, schedules, and contexts" yielded a mean score of 4.32 ($SD = 0.77$), which falls under the Very High descriptive interpretation. This indicates that the respondents possess a remarkably strong sense of adaptability and flexibility. Furthermore, the low standard deviation suggests a high level of consensus among the participants, proving that readiness to handle dynamic and changing environments is a consistent trait across the surveyed sample.

In terms of initiative and self-direction, students obtained a high level ($M=4.12$, $SD=.70$). The respondents demonstrated a high level of perceived competence in working independently, specifically regarding time utilization and workload management ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.84$). The low standard deviation indicates a strong consensus among the participants, suggesting that the majority feel confident in their ability to self-manage without close supervision.

Moreover, the respondents exhibited a very high level of social and cross-cultural skills, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.27\$. The low standard deviation ($SD = 0.72$) indicates a high degree of homogeneity in the responses, suggesting that the participants consistently perceive themselves as highly proficient in navigating social and diverse cultural environments. Regarding the respondents perceived professional conduct, the statement "I can conduct them in a respectable, professional manner" yielded a mean score of 4.40 ($SD = 0.78$), which descriptively translates to a "Very High" level. This statistical outcome indicates that the participants possess a remarkably strong conviction in their ability to maintain professionalism. Furthermore, the low standard deviation (< 1.0) suggests a high degree of consensus among the respondents, demonstrating that this strong sense of professional decorum is consistently shared across the sample group.

In terms of productivity and accountability, The students obtained a mean score of 4.19 (SD=.70) interpreted as high. This high mean score indicates that, on average, the participants strongly demonstrate traits associated with strong output, efficiency, and a high ownership of their responsibilities. They consistently meet expectations and remain answerable for their deliverables. The statement "I can work positively and ethically" obtained a mean score of 4.38, which translates to a High level of agreement. The standard deviation of 0.77 indicates a low variance in the responses, suggesting that the participants are relatively consistent and unified in their perception. This finding implies that the respondents possess a strong sense of professional integrity and a constructive attitude toward their work environment.

Moreover, students have a high level of leadership and responsibility (M=4.07, SD=.78). Respondents reported a high ability to work independently (Mean= 4.20, SD = 0.84), specifically noting that they can manage their workload and utilize time efficiently. This suggests strong self-management skills within the studied cohort.

In terms of ethical, moral, and spiritual values, students yielded a very high level (M=4.22, SD=.71). The statement "I respect beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest and respect for different people's feeling and value" obtained a mean score of 4.40 (SD = 0.81), which interpreted as very high. This result indicates that the respondents possess a profound level of respect for diverse religious and personal worldview perspectives. Furthermore, the low standard deviation suggests a high degree of consensus among the participants, showing that they consistently value empathy and inclusivity regarding other people's feelings and core values.

As a whole and as presented in Table 2, the respondents demonstrated a "High" level of Life and Career Skills, yielding a grand mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.64). This high mean indicates that the participants possess robust foundational skills necessary to navigate modern work and life environments, such as flexibility, initiative, social skills, productivity, and leadership. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 0.64 reveals a low variance in the responses. This suggests that the respondents' data points are closely clustered around the mean, indicating a strong consensus and consistency among the participants regarding their perceived life and career competencies.

Research indicates that members of Generation Z, who were born between 1995 and 2012 and are currently between the ages of 12 and 27, have traits that set them apart from earlier generations. They are growing up in a world where social media and technology are pervasive, which has led some to speculate that this environment encourages a "fast life strategy" with certain drawbacks (Twenge, 2023). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) places a strong emphasis on the necessity of educating students for an unpredictable future brought about by technology breakthroughs, globalization, and shifting labor demands. Curiosity, inventiveness, resilience, and the capacity for productive teamwork are among the abilities that students need. Their motivation needs to embrace the welfare of people and the environment in addition to academic achievement and a good salary.

The study's conclusions are corroborated by Nittayaros et al.'s (2025) evaluation of Thai high school students' life and career abilities. Overall, high school students had good life and career skills, according to their research findings (M=4.50, SD=0.62).

Level of Employment Readiness of Students

Table 3. Level of Employment Readiness of the Students.

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
CAREER ORIENTATION	4.19	.70	High
I will develop a career in my area of interest.	4.22	.55	Very High
I have my goal and will move toward it.	4.28	.76	Very High

I will take the initiative to pursue my own interests.	4.42	.72	Very High
I understand my own career interests.	4.33	.68	Very High
I know the job content and work environment of my ideal career.	4.21	.81	Very High
I have a clear goal for my future career direction.	4.18	.71	High
I have some understanding of the career I want to pursue.	4.17	.80	High
I know the kind of jobs that is suitable for me.	4.20	.68	High
CAREER PLANNING AND BELIEFS	3.99	.80	High
I am full of hope for my future.	4.15	.56	High
I am capable of developing a career in my area of interest.	4.17	.68	High
I am able to complete the task step by step in accordance with the plan.	4.18	.65	High
I will try my best to move towards the goal, regardless of what others may think.	4.31	.66	Very High
I am willing to spend time on developing my expertise and interest.	4.34	.67	Very High
I understand my competence at work.	4.15	.79	High
I have planned my career development over the next two years.	3.98	.90	High
I know how to write an appropriate job application letter and resume.	4.05	.88	High
I will try to improve my job interviewing skills.	4.25	.77	Very High
I know the appropriate dressing code for attending a job interview.	4.31	.77	Very High
I will practice the way to introducing myself before attending a job interview.	4.34	.77	Very High
I have no idea on how to prepare for a job interview.	3.30	1.24	High
JOB SEEKING SKILLS	4.10	.56	High
I know how to get information related to my future career development.	4.10	.68	High
Before applying for a job, I will have a self-evaluation to evaluate my strength and weakness.	4.31	.69	Very High
I will take initiative to collect information about job profile and the system of the company which I am interested in.	4.18	.71	High
I have started collecting information related to my career goals.	4.02	.89	High
I will keep an eye on the market information in relation to the job that I want to engage in.	4.09	.76	High

I know how to write an appropriate job application letter and resume.	4.05	.88	High
I will try to improve my job interviewing skills.	4.25	.77	Very High
I know the appropriate dressing code for attending a job interview.	4.31	.77	Very High
I will practice the way to introducing myself before attending a job interview.	4.34	.77	Very High
I have no idea on how to prepare for a job interview.	3.30	1.24	High
WORK ADAPTABILITY	4.10	.57	High
I will build good interpersonal relationships in workplace for better adaptation to a new working environment.	4.18	.72	High
I am confident that I can adapt to my work in future.	4.19	.73	High
If have queries on the assigned tasks, I will ask in an appropriate manner.	4.21	.77	Very High
I can identify work problems and solve them.	3.98	.76	High
Even if I don't like certain work instructions, I will still complete the task.	4.03	.86	High
I worry that my situation at work may fall short of expectation.	4.00	.81	High
OVERALL MEAN_EMPLOYMENT READINESS	4.14	.50	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

Based on the table 3 above, when it comes to employment readiness of students in terms of career orientation, the students obtained a mean of 4.19 (SD = .70) interpreted as high. The table reveals that the indicator "I will take the initiative to pursue my own interests" obtained a mean score of 4.42, which is descriptively interpreted as very high. This demonstrates that the respondents possess a robust sense of autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and self-direction. They do not merely wait for external direction; rather, they actively seek out and engage with opportunities that align with their personal and professional passions. The indicator "I have some understanding of the career I want to pursue," although interpreted as high, obtained the lowest mean of 4.17 (SD=0.80).

In terms of career planning and beliefs, the students obtained a mean of 3.99 (SD=0.80) interpreted as high. The indicator "I am willing to spend time on developing my expertise and interest" obtained the highest mean of 4.34 (SD=0.67), suggesting that the respondents possess a strong sense of intrinsic motivation and commitment toward personal and professional growth. They are highly conscious of the value of time investment as a vehicle for mastering skills and nurturing their passions. However, the indicator "I have planned my career development over the next two years" obtained the lowest mean, 3.98 (SD=0.90), though interpreted as high.

The employment readiness of students in terms of job-seeking skills is high (M=4.10, SD=.56). The statement "I will practice the way to introducing myself before attending a job interview" obtained a mean score of 4.34, which is verbally interpreted as Very High. This indicates that the respondents strongly agree on the importance of practicing self-introductions prior to an actual job interview, highlighting a proactive approach to career readiness. The standard deviation of 0.77 suggests a low dispersion in the responses. This implies that the participants' answers are relatively close to the mean, reflecting a strong consensus and shared agreement among the respondents regarding the necessity of verbal preparation. This high level of readiness suggests that the

respondents recognize that a first impression, specifically a structured self-introduction, is a critical determinant of interview success. Practicing this component allows applicants to manage anxiety, articulate their qualifications clearly, and project confidence.

In terms of work adaptability, the students obtained a mean of 4.10 (SD=.57) interpreted as high. The indicator "If I have queries on the assigned tasks, I will ask in an appropriate manner" obtained the highest mean of 4.21 (SD=0.77). The indicator "If I have queries on the assigned tasks, I will ask in an appropriate manner" obtained a mean score of 4.21 (SD = 0.77), which translates to a descriptive interpretation of Very High. This indicates that the respondents strongly manifest professional and appropriate communication behaviors when seeking clarification about their duties. Furthermore, the low standard deviation (0.77) suggests that the respondents' answers are closely clustered around the mean, reflecting a high level of agreement and consistency among them regarding this practice.

As a whole, the employment readiness of the students is high with a mean of 4.14 (SD=0.50). This high mean score indicates that the respondents possess a strong foundation in setting career goals, mapping out their professional paths, maintaining positive work beliefs, and adapting to changing workplace environments. They are not merely academically prepared, but are also psychologically and strategically oriented toward entering the workforce. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 0.50 reflects a low variance in the responses. This implies that the participants share a highly consistent and homogenous perspective regarding their readiness. There is a strong consensus among the respondents that they feel equipped and adaptable enough to meet the demands of their future careers.

Tran et al. (2022), who claimed that during the past 20 years, experts in Vietnam have paid more attention to issues related to student employability, contradict the study's conclusions. Research has examined graduates' lack of job skills and job preparation, which results in them falling short of employers' expectations (Tran, Ngo, Nguyen, Le, & Ho, 2022). Additionally, Tran, Vu, and Ngo (2021) found that graduate capabilities and employer demands are somewhat out of sync. In particular, graduates lack critical qualities like soft and professional abilities. Furthermore, research on employability in the post-Covid labor market and digital transformation was conducted to determine the necessary skills for graduates in response to today's changing labor market (Huynh & Nguyen, 2021). In-depth conclusions on digital skills and 4.0 skills have not been adequately stated, despite the fact that these writers mentioned the ability to meet employment needs in the digital transformation, including graduate capital, 4.0 skills, and qualities.

Additionally, governments in the Asia-Pacific area have been funding higher education because they think it would make their countries more competitive in the global economy (Mok et al., 2020). Nonetheless, there are still significant flaws in the way that higher education develops work-ready qualities. The complicated process of developing such talents and skills is frequently made worse by a lack of communication between academic institutions and business regarding the qualities and competencies that employers value in graduates. Businesses have been urging universities to incorporate more practical skill development into their curricula in order to better align graduates' talents with the necessary employability skills. According to this viewpoint, giving graduating professionals employable, industry-relevant skills is increasingly seen as a key responsibility of higher education institutions.

Level of Work Immersion Performance of Students

Table 4. Level of Work Immersion Performance of Students.

Level of Work Immersion Performance	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Outstanding	76	92.74	6.46	Outstanding
Very Satisfactory	32			
Satisfactory	10			
Fairly Satisfactory	3			

Did Not meet Expectation	0			
Total	121			

The data reveal that a significant majority of the grade 12 students performed exceptionally well during their work immersion. Out of 121 total respondents, 76 students achieved an "outstanding" performance level. This specific group obtained a high mean score of 92.74, with a standard deviation of 6.46. This relatively low standard deviation indicates that the scores within the outstanding group are closely clustered around the mean, suggesting consistent excellence among these top-performing students. This suggests that the students generally demonstrated strong performance during their work immersion experience. The results suggest that the students generally demonstrated competencies and workplace behaviors that were favorably evaluated during their immersion experience.

The study's conclusions are corroborated by Alawin-Ligwang's (2025) research, which found that students enrolled in the Home Economics strand at Tuguegarao City's Hotel Carmelita received a mean performance rating of 3.26, which is considered Very Satisfactory and close to the Outstanding range. Students enrolled in the Industrial Arts strand at the TESDA Provincial Training Center in Conner, Apayao, received a mean score of 2.49, which is considered satisfactory. The results also showed that although students showed strong competence and adaptability in real-world situations, difficulties arose in areas like lack of focus, poor communication skills, lack of confidence in completing the task, limited tools and equipment in the immersion venue, financial constraints, and adjustment to the new environment. It was also discovered that school work immersion coordinators face difficulties in coordinating with work immersion partner industries, such as signing memorandums of agreement, scheduling work immersion, and guaranteeing the safety and discipline of students off campus and visitation schedule because the coordinator is also responsible for other subjects.

Level of Life and Career Skills of

Students when Grouped According to Sex

Table 5.1. Level of Life and Career Skills When Grouped According to Sex.

Sex	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Male	66	4.13	.71	High
Female	55	4.20	.55	High
Total	121	4.16	.64	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

The data reveal that the overall level of life and career skills among the 121 respondents is high, as evidenced by a total grand mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.64). This indicates that the respondents generally possess strong capabilities in essential modern competencies, such as flexibility, initiative, social skills, productivity, and leadership. When segregated by sex, both groups achieved a qualitative interpretation of High. However, female respondents yielded a slightly higher mean score (M = 4.20, SD = 0.55) compared to their male counterparts (M = 4.13, SD = 0.71). Interestingly, the standard deviation for the male respondents (0.71) is higher than that of the females (0.55). This implies that there is greater variability or a wider spread of scores among the male respondents, meaning some males rated themselves significantly higher or lower. Conversely, the lower standard deviation among females indicates more consistent and homogeneous responses regarding their life and career skills.

Previous research (Nittayaros, 2025) supports the study's conclusions by highlighting five elements that are essential qualities for people who want to be successful in their careers. They make it possible for people to adjust to changing circumstances, take initiative in self-management and goal-setting, interact successfully

across cultural divides, maximize productivity, and demonstrate moral leadership. When combined, these skills guarantee that people can successfully negotiate the changing demands of the global workforce (Nittayaros, 2025). The capacity to engage in ongoing self-learning, successfully handle professional duties, and cultivate strong interpersonal interactions within society are further highlighted by life and career skills. Conflict resolution, issue solving, and the capacity to adapt to social and environmental shifts while abstaining from actions that can harm oneself or others are all included in this. Furthermore, these abilities are essential for equipping people to deal with modern social issues like gender roles, drug misuse, family dynamics, health concerns, media impacts, and societal and environmental problems.

Level of Life and Career Skills of Students when

Grouped According to Average Family Monthly Income

Table 5.2. Level of Life and Career Skills When Grouped According to Average Family Monthly Income.

Average Family Monthly Income	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Less than Php 10, 957 (Poor)	61	3.94	.66	High
Php 10, 957 – Php 21, 913.99 (Low Income but not Poor)	44	4.36	.58	Very High
Php 21, 914 – Php 43, 827. 99 (Lower Middle Income)	9	4.45	.44	Very High
Php 43, 828 – Php 76, 668. 99 (Middle Middle Income)	5	4.50	.34	Very High
Php 76, 669 – Php 131, 483. 99 (Upper Middle Income)	2	4.31	.18	Very High
Total	121	4.16	.64	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

The table shows that respondents belonging to the Middle Middle Income bracket (Php 43,828 – Php 76,668.99) garnered the highest mean score of 4.50 (SD = 0.34), interpreted as "Very High". Conversely, respondents from the Poor income bracket (Less than Php 10,957) registered the lowest mean score of 3.94 (SD = 0.66), resulting in a "High" interpretation. Interestingly, all brackets from "Low Income but not Poor" up to "Upper Middle Income" consistently achieved a "Very High" level of competency, with mean scores ranging from 4.31 to 4.50. Only the lowest socio-economic tier dipped into the "High" qualitative description. The findings suggest a positive relationship between financial capacity and the self-perceived mastery of life and career skills. While the "Poor" sector still demonstrates a proficient ("High") capability, the higher mean scores in more financially stable groups point toward the advantages that economic stability provides. Higher family income often guarantees better access to educational resources, extracurricular learning opportunities, technology, and environments that foster soft skills like leadership, adaptability, and productivity.

According to Pachauri and Kumar's (2024) study, pupils from higher SES backgrounds typically have superior Life Skills than those from lower SES backgrounds, which supports the study's conclusions. Within the NEP-2020 framework, their study examines students' life skills, academic discipline, and socioeconomic position in

a novel way. It distinguishes itself by looking at how these factors affect the development of life skills as a whole, offering a sophisticated understanding of their interconnectedness.

Level of Life and Career Skills of Students

when Grouped According to Specialization

Table 5.3. Level of Life and Career Skills When Grouped According to Specialization.

Specialization	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Home Economics	40	4.34	.62	Very High
Industrial Arts	19	4.00	.56	High
Information and Communication Technology	62	4.09	.65	High
Total	121	4.16	.64	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

The "Very High" rating observed in the Home Economics cohort suggests that the curriculum and practical applications inherent to HE—such as hospitality, resource management, and interpersonal communication—natively align with and strongly reinforce core life and career skills (e.g., leadership, social skills, and flexibility). On the other hand, while ICT and Industrial Arts students also demonstrated proficient ("High") capabilities, their slightly lower mean scores might indicate that these programs are heavier on technical or hard skills, sometimes placing less immediate emphasis on soft skills compared to HE.

The standard deviation scores show that ICT (SD = 0.65) and Home Economics (SD = 0.62) have slightly wider variations in responses compared to Industrial Arts (SD = 0.56). This implies that while the scores of Industrial Arts students are more tightly clustered around their mean, the skill levels within the ICT and HE tracks are more diverse, pointing to varying levels of student engagement or prior skill development within those groups.

In support of the findings of the study, NCFSE (2023) suggests that including activities in the classroom to develop and enrich the life skills of students will make them future-ready. The WHO's definition of life skills education includes abilities that help instructors become more flexible and positive role models.

According to NEP 2020, it is essential to build and instill skills like critical thinking, communication skills, cooperation, teamwork, empathy, etc. in the current teaching community to improve their competency and adaptation to changing scenarios. In addition to helping students study, life skills help them become competent, independent, and skilled individuals, all of which will improve their ability to meet the skill requirements of their future careers (Pachauri and Kumar, 2024).

Level of Life and Career Skills of Students when

Grouped According to Industry Partners for Work Immersion

Table 5.4. Level of Life and Career Skills When Grouped According to Industry Partner for Work Immersion.

Industry Partner for Work Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Private Business Establishment	44	4.29	.50	Very High

Government Agencies	47	4.06	.70	High
Non-Government Organizations	30	4.13	.69	High
Total	121	4.16	.64	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

As indicated in Table 5.4, the overall mean score for the 121 respondents is 4.16 (SD = 0.64), which yields an overall interpretation of High. This suggests that, regardless of the specific industry hosting the students the students generally reported high levels of life and career skills across the different industry partner settings. Private Business Establishments: This group yielded the highest mean score of 4.29 (SD = 0.50), qualitatively interpreted as Very High. Notably, this group also demonstrated the lowest standard deviation, indicating that the students' scores were the most consistent and closely clustered around the mean. The Very High level of life and career skills observed in students assigned to Private Business Establishments suggests that the corporate environment may offer robust, fast-paced, and highly structured skill development. Private enterprises often emphasize strict performance metrics, customer service, efficiency, and adaptability, which inherently forces students to rapidly sharpen their professional and interpersonal skills.

On the other hand, while both Government Agencies (Mean= 4.06) and NGOs (Mean= 4.13) still achieved a high rating, their scores were slightly lower than those of the private sector. The bureaucratic nature and structured hierarchy often found in government offices might limit the scope of diverse, hands-on tasks assigned to immersion students. Similarly, the project-based or community-centric focus of NGOs requires a specific set of soft skills that may be perceived differently by students compared to standard corporate competencies.

In support to the findings of the study, according to Abriola (2025), industry exposure plays a crucial role in shaping career-ready students by equipping them with knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors necessary to succeed in the workforce. Career-ready students possess a blend of industry-specific knowledge, such as understanding of business regulations and trends, as well as technical proficiency which are vital in their careers. Through internships, networking events, and work immersion programs, students gain practical experiences that allow them to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. The exposure helps them develop critical soft skills such as communication, problem solving, and teamwork which are highly valued by the employers. These experiences foster professionalism, adaptability, and leadership potential, traits that are essential in navigating the dynamic work environment.

Level of Employment Readiness of

Students when Grouped According to Sex

Table 6.1. Level of Employment Readiness of Students When Grouped According to Sex.

Sex	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Male	66	4.11	0.55	High
Female	55	4.19	0.44	High
Total	121	4.14	0.50	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

As shown in Table 6.1, the overall mean score for the employment readiness of the 121 student respondents is 4.14 (SD = 0.50), which qualitatively translates to a "High" level of readiness. This indicates that, regardless of

sex, the students generally perceive themselves as well-equipped, capable, and prepared to enter the workforce. Female respondents (N = 55) obtained a slightly higher mean score of 4.19 (SD = 0.44), interpreted as a "High" level of employment readiness. The lower standard deviation suggests that the responses among female students were more homogenous or tightly clustered around the mean. The marginal difference between the two means suggests that both male and female students share a similarly high perception of their preparation for future employment. This uniform readiness could be attributed to equal exposure to academic training, career development programs, and internships provided by the institution, which benefit all students regardless of gender.

The findings of the study agreed to the study of Kenaphoom (2025) which found out that students were generally "Employment Ready" (M=4.0111), exhibiting strong workplace ethics, adaptability, and motivation. However, specific gaps were identified in practical job-seeking skills, stamina for prolonged work periods, and problem-solving abilities. Statistical analysis showed no significant differences in employment readiness based on sex or age, indicating equitable opportunities across demographic groups. Conclusion: The study concludes that while the HUMSS strand equips students with foundational employment readiness, targeted interventions are needed to address specific skill gaps.

Level of Employment Readiness of Students When

Grouped According to Average family Monthly Income

Table 6.2. Level of Employment Readiness of Students When Grouped According to Average Family Monthly Income.

Average Family Monthly Income	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Less than Php 10, 957 (Poor)	61	4.01	0.54	High
Php 10, 957 – Php 21, 913.99 (Low Income but not Poor)	44	4.30	0.44	Very High
Php 21, 914 – Php 43, 827.99 (Lower Middle Income)	9	4.19	0.51	Very High
Php 43, 828 – Php 76, 668.99 (Middle Middle Income)	5	4.22	0.23	Very High
Php 76, 669 – Php 131, 483.99 (Upper Middle Income)	2	4.28	0.06	Very High
Total	121	4.14	0.50	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

As displayed in Table 6.2, the overall composite mean for the respondents' level of employment readiness when grouped by family income is 4.14 (SD = 0.50), which is interpreted as High. This indicates that, regardless of their socioeconomic background, the students generally feel well-prepared, confident, and equipped with the necessary skills to transition into the professional workforce.

A closer look at the breakdown reveals that the largest group of respondents belongs to the "Less than Php 10,957 (Poor)" bracket (N = 61). This group registered the lowest mean score of 4.01 (SD = 0.54), interpreted as High. While still a strong score, it suggests that students from financially challenged households may perceive slightly more barriers or possess marginally less access to supplemental career-readiness resources compared to their peers.

The result of the study does not agree to the findings of Agussalim (2024) which indicate that both work skills and family socioeconomic status do not play a substantial role in determining work readiness. On the other hand,

having an entrepreneurial mindset has a noteworthy and positive effect on work readiness. Furthermore, it was observed that job skills and family socioeconomic status indeed influence work readiness, with entrepreneurial attitude serving as a key factor. The entrepreneurial mindset heavily shapes the work readiness of vocational high school graduates.

Level of Employment Readiness of Students when Grouped According to Specialization

Table 6.3. Level of Employment Readiness of Students When Grouped According to Specialization.

Specialization	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Home Economics	40	4.24	0.51	Very High
Industrial Arts	19	3.87	0.42	High
Information and Communication Technology	62	4.16	0.50	High
Total	121	4.14	0.50	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

Among the three disciplines, Home Economics (N = 40) registered the highest mean score of 4.24 (SD = 0.51), yielding a descriptive interpretation of Very High. This suggests that students under this specialization perceive themselves as highly proficient in the practical, interpersonal, and technical competencies demanded by hospitality, tourism, or consumer sciences. The hands-on, highly interactive nature of Home Economics training likely contributes to this elevated sense of professional readiness.

The largest demographic in the sample belongs to the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) specialization (N = 62), which obtained a mean score of 4.16 (SD = 0.50), interpreted as High. This solid rating highlights the students' confidence in navigating the rapidly evolving digital landscape, tech-driven workspaces, and technical demands specific to IT industries. As illustrated in Table 6.3, the overall composite mean for the respondents' level of employment readiness across all specializations is 4.14 (SD = 0.50), which is verbally interpreted as High. This indicates that regardless of their specific track, the students generally feel well-equipped, capable, and confident in their knowledge and skills as they prepare to enter their respective industries. The findings of the study do not support the findings of Fenech (2020) in their study titled "Work Readiness Across Specialization". Their main finding is that specializations in tertiary education vary not only in terms of curriculum, technical knowledge, skills and abilities taught, but also in the preparation for employment which influences the perceptions of graduating students of their work readiness.

Level of Employment Readiness of Students when Grouped According to Industry Partner for Work Immersion

Table 6.4. Level of Employment Readiness of Students When Grouped According to Industry Partner for Work Immersion.

Industry Partner for Work Immersion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Private Business Establishment	44	4.17	0.45	Very High

Government Agencies	47	4.12	0.57	High
Non-Government Organizations	30	4.14	0.48	High
Total	121	4.14	0.50	High

Legend: (4.21--5.00)-Very High; (3.41-4.20)-High; (2.61-3.40)-Moderate; (1.81-2.60)-Low; (1.00-1.80)-Very Low

As displayed in Table 6.4, the overall composite mean for the students' level of employment readiness across all industry partners is 4.14 (SD = 0.50), which is interpreted as High. This indicates that regardless of the type of institution where the students underwent their Work Immersion, they generally felt well-prepared to enter the workforce.

Private Business Establishments group yielded the highest mean score of 4.17 (SD = 0.45), yielding a verbal interpretation of very high. This suggests that students immersed in private commercial sectors perceived themselves to be exceptionally prepared for employment. Government Agencies group obtained the lowest mean score among the three at 4.12 (SD = 0.57), which is still interpreted as High. Notably, this category also showed the highest standard deviation (0.57), indicating a slightly wider variance in the students' readiness experiences within public sector placements.

The finding that Private Business Establishments yielded a "Very High" readiness level can be attributed to the higher mean among students assigned to private business establishments may reflect differences in workplace exposure, assigned tasks, or opportunities to practice workplace competencies. However, these possible explanations were not directly examined in the present study.

The findings of the study are not consistent with the findings of Aradillos (2025), that explored the impact of the Work Immersion Program on the job readiness and skills development of the senior high school students. Results revealed that the Work Immersion Program was perceived as highly impactful in developing workplace competencies and values; however, certain areas, such as computer literacy, the alignment of immersion sites with student specialization, and exposure to diverse job functions, required improvement. Students were rated as moderately ready for employment, indicating a need for additional support in practical and digital skills. The study found significant relationships between the work immersion program and students' job readiness and skills development. The results underscore the importance of refining work immersion strategies to better prepare students for the demands of the modern workplace. The study recommends the regular review and enhancement of immersion programs to ensure their relevance, responsiveness, and alignment with labor market needs and student career aspirations.

Relationship between Life and Career

Skills and Work Immersion Performance

Table 7. Relationship Between the Life and Career Skills of the Students.

Variables	Test Statistic (r_s)	p-value	Decision for H_0	Interpretation
Life and Career Skills and Work Immersion Performance	0.045	0.623	Failed to Reject H_0	Not Significant

The findings revealed no statistically significant relationship between students' life and career skills and their work immersion performance ($r_s = 0.045$, $p = 0.623$). This suggests that higher perceived life and career skills did not necessarily result in higher workplace performance. One possible explanation is the generally high level of life and career skills among the respondents ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.64$), which may have restricted variability and

created a possible ceiling effect. When students report similarly high levels of these competencies, the variable may have limited ability to distinguish differences in actual workplace performance.

Furthermore, life and career skills are broad competencies, whereas work immersion performance may depend more directly on technical competence, task-specific skills, and the alignment between students' specializations and assigned workplace tasks. Students may demonstrate adaptability, initiative, and interpersonal skills but still differ in their ability to perform specific technical duties. Differences in workplace settings, assigned tasks, and supervisory practices may also have influenced students' performance ratings (Garcia & Yazon, 2020). Thus, work immersion performance may be shaped by multiple factors beyond students' perceived life and career skills.

Overall, the findings suggest that work immersion performance is influenced by multiple factors rather than life and career skills alone. Thus, work immersion programs should develop employability skills alongside technical competencies and provide students with relevant workplace assignments, meaningful tasks, and adequate supervision to help them effectively apply their skills in actual work settings (Mariano & Tantoco, 2023).

Relationship between Employment

Readiness and Work Immersion

Performance

Table 8. Relationship Between Employment Readiness and Work Immersion Performance of Students.

Variables	Test Statistic (r_s)	p-value	Decision for H_0	Interpretation
Employment Readiness and Work Immersion Performance	0.077	0.403	Failed to Reject H_0	Not Significant

The findings also showed no statistically significant relationship between employment readiness and work immersion performance ($r_s = 0.077$, $p = 0.403$). This indicates that students' perceived readiness for employment did not necessarily translate into higher workplace performance. One possible explanation is the difference between perceived readiness and demonstrated workplace competence. Students may feel prepared for employment based on their career goals, job-seeking skills, and adaptability but may still require technical training and practical experience to perform effectively in specific work environments.

One possible explanation is the difference between perceived readiness and demonstrated workplace competence. Students may feel prepared for employment based on their career planning, job-seeking skills, and adaptability but may still need further technical training and practical experience to perform effectively in specific work environments. Studies on TVL students emphasize the importance of competency development and alignment with employers' expectations in preparing students for work immersion and future employment (Roble, 2023).

The generally high level of employment readiness ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 0.50$) may have also restricted variability and produced a possible ceiling effect, limiting the ability to detect differences in work immersion performance. Moreover, actual performance may depend more directly on technical competence, specialization-specific skills, task alignment, and workplace conditions. Differences in supervision, assigned responsibilities, and opportunities to demonstrate competencies may also have contributed to variations in performance ratings. Thus, employment readiness may support workplace adjustment without necessarily serving as a direct indicator of students' assessed work immersion performance.

Work immersion performance may also involve technical, interpersonal, entrepreneurial, and behavioral skills, suggesting that actual workplace performance is multidimensional rather than dependent on employability skills alone (Peñarendonda, 2023). Differences in workplace settings, assigned tasks, and supervisory practices may also influence students' performance ratings.

Overall, the findings suggest that employment readiness is only one of several factors that may contribute to work immersion performance. Work immersion programs should therefore strengthen employment readiness alongside technical competencies and provide students with relevant workplace assignments and authentic opportunities to apply their skills (Chummani et al., 2025; Roble, 2023).

Taken together, the findings indicate that the students possess a strong foundation of transferable competencies and perceive themselves as generally prepared for future employment. However, these competencies do not automatically translate into higher work immersion performance. This distinction is important for educational practice because employability skills and actual workplace performance represent related but distinct dimensions of student development. Students may demonstrate confidence, adaptability, interpersonal abilities, and career awareness while still requiring opportunities to strengthen technical competencies and apply their skills in authentic and specialization-aligned work settings.

The findings further emphasize the importance of viewing work immersion as a contextual learning experience rather than simply an extension of classroom instruction. Students' performance may depend on whether their assigned tasks are aligned with their specialization, whether they receive appropriate supervision and feedback, and whether the workplace provides meaningful opportunities to practice their competencies. Consequently, improving work immersion outcomes requires more than developing students' perceived employability skills. Schools and industry partners should work collaboratively to ensure that immersion placements provide appropriate tasks, clear expectations, constructive supervision, and opportunities for students to demonstrate both technical and transferable competencies.

The absence of significant relationships between life and career skills, employment readiness, and work immersion performance also suggests the need for a more comprehensive understanding of workplace learning. Students' performance may be influenced by a combination of individual, instructional, organizational, and contextual factors. Future research should therefore examine not only students' perceived competencies but also how these competencies are demonstrated in specific workplace contexts. This may provide a clearer explanation of why students with similar levels of perceived readiness can receive different performance evaluations during work immersion.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The student population is slightly male-dominated and predominantly comes from economically challenged backgrounds, with the vast majority falling into the poor and low-income brackets. Academically, more than half of the students are concentrated in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and the deployment of students across private, government, and non-government sectors indicates a well-distributed and diverse work immersion partnership network.

The students possess a strong foundation in life and career skills, demonstrating that they are well-adjusted, productive, and accountable individuals. Notably, their highest competencies lie in social and cross-cultural skills and ethical, moral, and spiritual values.

The students are highly prepared to enter the workforce. They exhibit a clear understanding of their career paths (career orientation), possess a strong belief in their career goals (career planning), and maintain the flexibility required to adjust to workplace demands (work adaptability).

The students achieved an outstanding level of performance during their work immersion.

The students exhibit a generally high level of life and career skills, highlighted by a consistently high performance across genders where females slightly lead males, alongside exceptional readiness among those from the middle-middle income bracket, students specialized in Home Economics, and those trained in private business establishments.

The findings conclude that the students possess a high level of overall employment readiness, which is particularly pronounced among female respondents, those from low-income but not poor families, students specializing in Home Economics, and those immersed within private business establishments.

There was no statistically significant relationship between students' life and career skills and their work immersion performance.

There was no statistically significant relationship between students' employment readiness and their work immersion performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future studies may include students from multiple schools, Schools Divisions, or regions to improve the external validity and generalizability of the findings. Researchers may also employ mixed-methods approaches that combine quantitative measures with interviews or focus group discussions involving students, teachers, work immersion coordinators, and workplace supervisors. Such approaches may provide deeper insights into the roles of technical competence, workplace supervision, task alignment, workplace conditions, and other contextual factors that influence work immersion performance beyond students' self-reported life and career skills and employment readiness.

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