

Exploring Teaching Experiences of Newly Hired Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) Teachers in the Intermediate Level

Donnabell L. Labian

donnabell.latoza@deped.gov.ph

Cogon Elementary School, Palo II District, Palo, Leyte, 6501, Philippines

Abstract

Effective teaching in Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) is essential for developing students' practical skills and preparing them for real-world tasks. However, newly hired TLE teachers face challenges that affect lesson delivery and student engagement. This study explored the teaching experiences of TLE teachers in the intermediate level of a public elementary school in Leyte Division. Guided by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, the study emphasizes the importance of collaboration, mentorship, and scaffolding in professional growth. Using semi-structured interviews with six new TLE teachers and thematic analysis, four major challenges emerged: diverse student abilities, limited instructional resources, classroom management, and time constraints. To cope, teachers improvised materials, planned lessons carefully, established structured routines, collaborated with peers, and designed engaging, interest-based activities. The study recommends structured mentorship, continuous professional development, improved resources, stronger collaboration networks, and greater parent-community involvement to enhance the competence and effectiveness of newly hired TLE teachers.

Keywords: TLE teachers, Social Constructivism, challenges, cope, mentorship, instructional resources

1. Introduction

The transition from pre-service training to actual classroom teaching presents numerous challenges for the transition from pre-service training to actual classroom teaching presents significant challenges for newly hired teachers, particularly in specialized subjects such as Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE). In public intermediate schools, novice TLE teachers are tasked with delivering both conceptual knowledge and hands-on skill development while managing classroom behavior and limited instructional resources (Valdez & Dominado, 2020; Mananay & Sumalinog, 2023). Research shows that beginning teachers frequently encounter stress, high workloads, and insufficient mentoring, which can impact their instructional effectiveness and professional growth (Vocations and Learning Teachers' Self-Efficacy Study Group, 2023). Local studies further reveal that teacher induction programs often face implementation gaps, leaving new teachers with inadequate support in navigating their early career challenges (Beñalet et al., 2024).

This study is guided by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, which emphasizes that learning and development occur through social interaction, collaboration, and scaffolding. In the context of teacher development, novice educators benefit from mentorship, peer collaboration, and scaffolded professional learning opportunities that bridge the gap between pre-service knowledge and classroom practice (Mabunda & McKay, 2024; Sydnor, Davis, & Daley, 2024). Applying this framework to TLE instruction highlights the importance of

guided support and collaborative problem-solving in helping new teachers develop both instructional competence and classroom management skills.

Despite growing literature on novice teacher experiences, there is a notable research gap regarding newly hired TLE teachers at the intermediate level, particularly in the Philippine public school system. Most studies focus on general education teachers or broad novice teaching experiences, leaving limited understanding of the unique pedagogical and logistical demands of TLE, which combines theory with performance-based skill development. This gap underscores the need for localized research to explore the professional experiences, coping strategies, and support systems of these teachers.

This study focuses on newly hired TLE teachers with one to three years of teaching experience in selected public intermediate schools. Specifically, the study seeks to explore the common teaching experiences of newly hired TLE teachers in teaching intermediate grade level in terms of challenges, coping strategies, and their recommendations” to strengthen the support system to help them adapt to their roles.

2. Methodology

1.1. Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative exploratory research design. The approach was appropriate because it sought to explore and describe the lived experiences of newly hired TLE teachers in their natural school settings. It aimed to capture the difficulties they faced, the strategies they employed to cope, and suggestions for strengthening the support system. In this study, the qualitative method allowed for an in-depth understanding through rich narrative data.

1.2. Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public intermediate schools under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education within Region VIII. These schools offered Technology and Livelihood Education as part of the standard curriculum for intermediate learners. The locale was chosen due to the presence of newly hired TLE teachers and the accessibility of participants for data collection.

1.3. Research Participants

The participants consisted of six newly hired TLE teachers who had been teaching for one to three years at the intermediate level. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who met the inclusion criteria: (1) currently employed as TLE teachers in public schools, (2) assigned to intermediate grade levels, and (3) with no more than three years of teaching experience. Teachers with more than three years of experience excluded in this study.

1.4. Research Instrument

A semi-structured interview guide was utilized to gather deeper insights into teachers’ personal experiences and coping mechanisms. The interview questions were validated by three (3) experts to ensure their validity and reliability. Questions will be open-ended to allow respondents to elaborate on their responses.

1.5. Data Gathering Procedures

First, permission letters were sent to the Schools Division Office and the participating school principal. Once approval was obtained, the researcher briefed the participants about the study and distributed informed consent forms. Next, selected participants were invited for interviews, which were recorded—with permission—to ensure accuracy of transcription. Finally, all data were organized, checked for completeness, and prepared for analysis.

2.6. Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected from the interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and carefully reviewed to gain a clear understanding of the participants' responses. Meaningful statements were coded and grouped into categories to identify recurring themes related to the teachers' experiences, challenges, coping mechanisms, and recommendations. The themes were then reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the participants' perspectives and aligned with the study's objectives.

2.7. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical standards by ensuring voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity of all participants. Prior to data collection, each participant signed an informed consent form after the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their rights as respondents were clearly explained. They were likewise informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or consequences.

All collected data were treated with strict confidentiality and were stored securely. No identifying information was disclosed in any part of the report, and the data were used solely for research purposes.

2.8. Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the study was ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was ensured through the accurate transcription of interviews, rigorous data analysis, and the use of direct participant quotations to support the findings. Transferability was achieved by providing comprehensive descriptions of the research context and participants. Dependability and confirmability were maintained by documenting the research procedures and ensuring that the findings were grounded in the participants' responses.

2.9. Reflexivity

The researchers recognized that their own experiences and beliefs could influence how the data were interpreted. To reduce bias, they focused on accurately representing the participants' responses during data collection and analysis. They also reflected on their assumptions to ensure that the findings were based on the participants' actual experiences. This helped maintain fairness and objectivity in the study.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study on the teaching experiences of newly hired Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) teachers at the intermediate level. The results are organized according to key themes that emerged from the participants' narratives, including instructional practices, classroom management, and the integration of practical skills. Each finding is interpreted in relation to existing literature and the local educational context, highlighting the challenges, coping strategies, and support systems that shaped the experiences of novice TLE teachers.

Experiences Encountered by the Newly Hired TLE Teachers

Theme 1: Diverse Learning Abilities among Students

The newly hired TLE teachers often experience challenges because of the diverse learning abilities of their students. Differences in the way students understand concepts and execute performance tasks affected the pace and effectiveness of instruction, specifically in performance-based subjects like TLE. Recent research shows that differentiated instruction remains important in resolving differences in learning needs, allowing teachers to adapt content, processes, and learning activities according to students' readiness, interests, and

abilities (Smale-Jacobse et al., 2019). This theme emphasizes the significance of adapting teaching strategies to accommodate a wide range of learning styles and skill levels in the intermediate classroom, as reflected in the participants' responses below.

Significant Response: "Managing diverse learning abilities among students." [P₁, L₁₅]

Significant Response: "Different learning levels of students." [P₂, L₁₇]

Significant Response: "Some learners grasp practical tasks quickly, while others struggle with basic tool handling." [P₃, L₂₀₋₂₁]

Theme 2: Limited Instructional Resources and Materials

The challenges faced by the newly hired TLE teachers included the insufficiency of instructional resources and materials. The availability of tools, equipment, books, and teacher guides hampers the successful conduct of hands-on activities, which are important to practical, performance-based learning. Current research underscores that sufficient instructional resources and well-equipped learning environments are critical in enhancing teaching quality and student engagement, particularly in technical and vocational education (OECD, 2020). Studies have also shown that the availability and use of instructional materials significantly influence students' engagement and achievement in practical learning (Belisario & Paglinawan, 2025). Moreover, access to electronic and digital instructional tools has been linked to higher levels of active learning, motivation, and independent learning in vocational settings (Firdaus, Syafrizal, & Nulhakim, 2024; Pan & Filippova, 2024). This theme focuses on the value of providing adequate resources to support both teaching and learning in specialized subject areas, as expressed in the participants' responses below.

Significant Response: "Limited instructional materials and tools for hands-on activities." [P₁, L₁₅₋₁₆]

Significant Response: "Lack of materials in EPP book." [P₂, L₁₇₋₁₈]

Significant Response: "Limited tools and equipment make it difficult to conduct effective hands-on activities." [P₃, L₂₁₋₂₂]

Significant Response: "Lack of resources such as books and ICT equipment." [P₅, L₂₆]

Significant Response: "Lack of facilities and equipment." [P₆, L₂₈]

Theme 3: Classroom Management and Engagement

Classroom management and student involvement emerged as significant challenges for newly hired TLE teachers at the intermediate level. Managing larger classes while encouraging active participation in hands-on activities is essential for effective learning, particularly in skill-based subjects. Current research shows that beginner teachers often face difficulties in maintaining classroom management and sustaining student involvement, and that structured classroom management practices positively influence both teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Sabornie & Espelage, 2021). Structured classroom management practices—such as establishing clear routines, setting expectations, and using positive behavior support—positively influence both teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Emmer & Stough, 2022; Wang et al., 2023). Additionally, studies show that student-centered instructional approaches, including cooperative learning and interactive task design, significantly enhance learner involvement and motivation (Hattie & Donoghue, 2023). Research further suggests that ongoing professional development in classroom climate and engagement strategies can improve novice teachers' confidence and instructional outcomes (Oliver & Reschly, 2024). This theme highlights the importance of providing new teachers with effective strategies to manage diverse classroom dynamics and promote active learner involvement.

Significant Response: "Adjusting to classroom management in a larger class size." [P₁, L₁₆]

Significant Response: "Students who are not very interested in hands-on tasks." [P₂, L₁₈]

Significant Response: "Balancing Theory and Practical Activities." [P₄, L₂₅]

Theme 4: Time Constraints

Limited instructional time posed a significant challenge for newly hired TLE teachers, particularly in accomplishing practical, hands-on activities. Performance-based subjects like TLE require sufficient time for students to practice and develop competencies; however, rigid schedules and short class periods often restrict these opportunities. Recent studies indicate that insufficient instructional time can negatively impact student achievement and instructional quality, highlighting the importance of effective time management and lesson structuring (Kraft & Monti-Nussbaum, 2020). This theme underscores the need to allocate adequate time and organize lessons strategically to support both theoretical understanding and practical skill development.

Significant Response: "Limited time for activities." [P₂, L₁₈]

Significant Response: "Time constraints (limited time allocated for practical activities)." [P₆, L₂₈₋₂₉]

Coping Strategies of Newly Hired TLE Teachers

Theme 1: Use of Improvised or Low-Cost Materials

In order to make up for a shortage of resources, newly hired TLE instructors frequently used inexpensive or homemade materials for hands-on instruction. Despite the absence of formal gear, these methods enabled teachers to continue hands-on instruction, making sure that students were still able to participate in skill-based learning. Recent studies highlight that teacher creativity and resourcefulness are crucial strategies in situations with few instructional resources, allowing for meaningful and successful learning experiences without depending entirely on traditional methods (König, Jäger-Biela, & Glutsch, 2020). Furthermore, studies suggest that adapting locally available materials and integrating low-cost technology not only maintains engagement but also fosters problem-solving skills and innovation among students (Pan & Filippova, 2024; Subban, Suprayogi, Preston, & Ratri, 2024). This theme highlights the practical approaches teachers adopt to overcome material constraints and maintain instructional effectiveness.

Significant Response: "Use improvised or low-cost materials for practical lessons." [P₁, L₃₂]

Significant Response: "I use available and low-cost materials." [P₂, L₃₅]

Significant Response: "Improvising materials to be used in teaching and for practical activities." [P₆, L₄₄]

Theme 2: Lesson Planning and Preparation

The importance of meticulous lesson planning and material preparation has been stressed by the newly hired TLE teachers as key techniques for dealing with a variety of learners and time restrictions. Clear instructions and distinct activities allowed teachers to teach more successfully, making sure that both practical tasks and theoretical concepts were addressed. Recent studies have revealed that novice teachers' teaching self-assurance, classroom management skills, and capacity to foster practical learning are all greatly improved by structured lesson preparation, particularly in skill-based disciplines (Kaufman, Opfer, & Heffernan, 2020). This theme emphasizes the way that methodical planning promotes both teacher preparedness and better student learning results.

Significant Response: "Prepare differentiated activities to address varied learning needs." [P₁, L₃₁₋₃₂]

Significant Response: "I prepare simple and clear instructions." [P₂, L₃₅]

Significant Response: Plan and prepare materials ahead of time. Lesson planning, classroom management, and time pressure." [P₃, L₃₈₋₃₉]

Theme 3: Classroom Management and Student Support

The newly hired TLE teachers said that important strategies for keeping the classroom in order and assisting students include establishing clear routines, giving explicit instructions, organizing pupils into groups, and offering additional support. These techniques helped handle a range of learning abilities and made sure that

every student could engage in theoretical and practical tasks. Recent studies emphasize the importance of structured classroom management techniques combined with customized support for new instructors to improve student participation, reduce disruptions, and improve learning outcomes (Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, & Sugai, 2020). This theme underscores the importance of combining clear routines with individualized support to enhance classroom effectiveness.

Significant Response: "Establish clear classroom rules and routines to maintain discipline." [P₁, L₃₂₋₃₃]

Significant Response: "I group students so they can help each other. I give extra guidance to slow learners." [P₂, L₃₅₋₃₆]

Significant Response: "Start with clear routine." [P₃, L₃₉]

Theme 4: Collaborating with Colleagues

In order to handle the difficulties of teaching at the intermediate level, newly hired TLE teachers often depended on the help and cooperation of their coworkers. By soliciting counsel, exchanging ideas, and picking up knowledge from seasoned educators, they were able to enhance their teaching methods, classroom management, and implementation of real-world activities. Recent studies emphasize the importance of structured classroom management techniques combined with customized support for new instructors to improve student participation, reduce disruptions, and enhance learning outcomes (Simonsen, Myers, & Briere, 2020). This theme highlights the importance of supportive professional networks in fostering teacher development and addressing classroom challenges.

Significant Response: "Seek advice from experienced colleagues and attend training or seminars." [P₁, L₃₃₋₃₄]

Significant Response: "Collaborate with colleagues to share ideas and resources." [P₄, L₄₁]

Significant Response: "Asking help and advice from any colleagues makes teaching TLE easier." [P₅, L₄₃]

Theme 5: Engaging Students through Relevance and Interest

Emphasized by the newly hired TLE teachers was the pedagogical relevance of connecting lessons to students' interests, experiences, and real-world scenarios to keep them engaged in both theoretical and practical tasks. The use of content that relates to students' lives helped to inspire them and encourage active engagement, especially in practical, skill-based courses. Recent studies have demonstrated that using real-world examples and contextualizing lessons greatly improve students' understanding, participation, and retention of information (Holmes, Wieman, & Bonn, 2020). This theme emphasizes the role of relevance and meaningful learning in promoting student involvement and improving instructional effectiveness.

Significant Response: "I also make the lesson more interesting by giving real-life examples." [P₂, L₃₆₋₃₇]

Significant Response: "I try to incorporate their interests or current events into the topic." [P₄, L₄₀₋₄₁]

Significant Response: "Time management, for me to be able to finish the lesson or activities on time" [P₆, L₄₄₋₄₅]

Participants' Recommendation to Strengthen the Support System for the Newly Hired TLE Teachers

Theme 1: Structured Mentorship and Professional Development

The participants emphasized that structured mentorship programs and professional development activities are essential for supporting newly hired TLE teachers. Mentorship and training tailored to the specific needs of TLE teachers help enhance instructional skills, classroom management, and confidence in delivering both theoretical and practical lessons. Recent research indicates that comprehensive induction programs and sustained professional development significantly improve novice teachers' effectiveness, job satisfaction, and

retention rates (OECD, 2020). This theme underscores the importance of organized support systems to guide new teachers in specialized, skill-based subjects.

Significant Response: "Strengthening support systems for newly hired teachers through structured mentorship programs and regular professional development activities tailored to livelihood education." [P₁, L₄₇₋₄₈]

Significant Response: "Establish peer mentoring for TLE teachers to share resources and ideas." [P₄, L₅₈]

Significant Response: "There is a need for mentorship programs to teachers who lack knowledge and skills in teaching TLE." [P₆, L₆₄₋₆₅]

Theme 2: Adequate Instructional Materials and Resources

The participants highlighted the critical need for sufficient instructional materials, tools, and equipment to effectively deliver TLE lessons. The availability of appropriate resources supports both theoretical instruction and hands-on activities, enabling teachers to achieve learning objectives and enhance student outcomes. Recent research emphasizes that adequate educational resources and well-equipped learning environments significantly influence instructional quality and student engagement, particularly in technical and vocational education (UNESCO, 2021). This theme underscores the importance of allocating sufficient resources to strengthen teaching and learning in specialized subject areas.

Significant Response: "Schools may also allocate sufficient instructional materials and functional tools for TLE subjects." [P₁, L₄₉]

Significant Response: "The school should give more materials for EPP." [P₂, L₅₂]

Significant Response: "You cannot teach computer properly if you have a board and chalkboard and chalk. You cannot teach what you don't have. Provide books and other materials." [P₅, L₆₁₋₆₂]

Theme 3: Collaboration and Networking among Teachers

The participants stressed the need of fostering idea and resource sharing among teachers as well as foster the growth of professional support networks. By working together with coworkers, newly hired TLE teachers may enhance their teaching methods, solve classroom issues, and develop their confidence in presenting both theoretical and practical courses. Recent research suggests that structured peer collaboration and professional learning groups are major factors in promoting teacher professional development, instructional effectiveness, and long-term school development (Admiraal et al., 2021). This theme underscores the value of structured support networks in strengthening teaching effectiveness and promoting continuous teacher growth.

Significant Response: "Fostering collaboration among teachers through Learning Action Cells (LAC)" [P₁, L₅₀]

Significant Response: "Teachers should work together and share ideas." [P₂, L₅₂₋₅₃]

Significant Response: "Focus on building a strong support network, structured systems and continuous improvement." [P₃, L₅₆₋₅₇]

Theme 4: Engagement of Parents and Community Partners

To improve learning and support systems for the TLE subject, the participants emphasized the significance of including parents and local businesses. In addition to helping instructors deliver engaging lessons, involving parents in their children's education and collaborating with community groups offers students more resources, educational opportunities, and incentives. Recent research confirms that robust relationships between the school, family, and community have a positive impact on student outcomes, engagement, and general school performance (Ma, Shen, Krenn, Hu, & Yuan, 2020). This theme underscores the role of collaborative networks in creating a supportive and resource-rich learning environment for both teachers and students.

Significant Response: “Parents should support their children at home. Good communication between teachers and parents is important.” [P₂, L₅₃₋₅₄]

Significant Response: “Collaborating with local businesses to provide opportunities for students.” [P₄, L₅₈₋₅₉]

This study revealed challenges encountered, coping strategies and participants’ recommendation to strengthen the support system for the newly hired TLE Teachers. Indicating resiliency and resourcefulness of the participants continuously teaching despite these challenges.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study reveals that newly hired intermediate-level TLE teachers encounter some challenges, such as a range of student learning capabilities, a lack of instructional resources, classroom management challenges, and time limitations for hands-on activities. Teachers used methods like improvising inexpensive resources, planning lessons carefully, establishing explicit routines, working with coworkers, and connecting lessons to students’ interests and real-world experiences to manage. To improve support networks, participants stressed the significance of organized mentorship programs, specialized professional development, adequate instructional resources, cooperative teacher networks, and the involvement of parents and community partners. These results show that a combination of resource provision, professional guidance, and collaborative networks is necessary to help novice TLE teachers improve their instructional effectiveness, encourage student involvement, and promote continuous professional development.

4. Recommendations

Considering the data, it is advised that schools establish organized induction and mentorship programs to assist newly hired TLE teachers in gaining classroom management and instructional proficiency. Priority should also be given to ongoing professional development events that are specific to TLE and concentrate on time management, differentiated instruction, and practical teaching methods. To ensure the efficient delivery of practical, performance-based instruction, schools should provide adequate instructional materials, instruments, and resources. Learning Action Cells (LAC) and professional learning communities can be used to promote teacher collaboration, which can improve teaching methods and offer crucial peer support. Lastly, by enhancing collaborations with parents and local community stakeholders, students can gain better access to resources and authentic learning experiences, which will improve their practical skills and the overall delivery of the TLE subject area. Future researchers may utilize the findings of this study as baseline data to guide more comprehensive investigations involving a wider scope, larger sample size, or different educational contexts.

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