



EMPLOYMENT JOURNEY OF TECHNICAL TEACHERS: STORIES TO TELL

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Abstract:

This study sought to examine and evaluate the difficulties that Technical Teachers encountered in their search for employment, from obtaining licensure and competing with other graduates to securing the actual job itself. The study utilized thematic analysis and the descriptive phenomenological approach to explain the common experiences of the twelve graduates of the Bachelor of Technical Teacher Education program. This research delved into the experiences of these graduates as they navigated the job market. The past qualitative study highlighted the following: technical teachers faced significant challenges in securing employment. It was important to understand these challenges and support future technical teachers. The study also examined the challenges they faced, the coping strategies they adopted, and the insightful advice they provided for navigating the road to a fruitful teaching career. The recurring themes based on participants' coping strategies with the challenges included investing in professional development opportunities, tapping into support systems, possessing a positive mindset, and keeping the faith burning. The recurring themes based on participants' insights that they wanted to share with their fellow Technical Teacher students and graduates regarding what they had learned about their employability journey included the importance of college training and internships, the need for continuous learning in the field, and the vitality of working hard in the process. The difficulties and successes that Technical Teachers faced were highlighted by these recurrent themes. Additionally, more research on this topic could be conducted in the future to look more closely at the areas covered by the Technical Teacher Education program.

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1. Introduction

At the present time, obtaining employment after completing a degree is not guaranteed (Villanueva *et al.*, 2021). Additional qualifications to support your college degree would be highly needed. Studies have found that a degree, although necessary, is no longer the sole factor determining employability in today's rapidly changing job market (Jackson, 2021; Marcin *et al.*, 2017). The path to employment for many generations seemed straightforward (Hosseinioun *et al.*, 2023), get a decent education, finish the degree, and soon one will be looking for a stable job (Mina *et al.*, 2020; Peto *et al.*, 2015). However, in today's world, this once reliable process no longer guarantees a seamless transition from student to working professional. This shift is particularly evident in the area of technical education (Yana *et al.*, 2023; Lenci *et al.*, 2022). Even with a strong technical background, graduates of Technical Teacher Education often struggle to secure teaching positions. One of the primary problems is their lack of real-world experience and recognized certifications that are valued by employers or institutions (Cacho *et al.*, 2022).

Rajagani-Diwyaa (2014) noted that technical teacher graduates who do not possess sufficient training, qualifications, licenses, and practical classroom experience often struggle to secure employment. Consequently, these deficiencies in practical skills and recognized credentials contribute to a wide range of challenges that technical teachers encounter throughout their employment journey, making it difficult for them to establish and advance their careers in the field. Further, the rapid pace at which technology is evolving is also one of the factors (Sharma, 2023). This results in a continuous demand for new knowledge and skills for technical teachers (Tzortzi, 2022). Aside from that, there is intense competition with other graduates and teaching outside of the field is an issue (Salvador *et al.*, 2022). Beyond their technical expertise, technical instructors who lack licenses and qualifications face additional challenges. Certifications and licensing have become valuable credentials to the point of surpassing the weight of academic degrees alone (Matthew *et al.*, 2022). The necessity of prioritizing practical skills, hands-on experience, and the ability to apply knowledge in the real world, whether in technical or teaching settings, is crucial. According to Abood *et al.* (2021), a theoretical curriculum by itself is insufficient to give students the knowledge and abilities they need to succeed in their chosen fields. As stated by Rützmänn *et al.* (2012), technical teachers need to balance teaching and engineering skills, but education programs may not explicitly develop these attributes. This study explores the employment journey of technical teachers, including licensure exams, job competition, and challenges like limited teaching areas, licensing requirements, lack of training, and competition. The transition from academic achievement to professional success can be complex for graduates in technical fields.

When seeking employment, recently graduated teachers typically have to complete certain requirements and obtain certain certificates. These requirements and certifications play a vital role in the complex hiring process. A bachelor's degree is one of

the prerequisites; this is the first step in equipping future educators with the theoretical foundations and pedagogical understanding they need to deliver quality education (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). However, it doesn't stop there because extra credentials are required. In the Philippines, the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), formerly known as the Philippine Board Examination for Teachers (PBET), is a standardized test administered by the Professional Regulation and Commission (PRC) that certifies teacher education graduates' knowledge and authorizes them to teach (Acosta *et al.*, 2016). As per the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2015), all basic education teachers are required to obtain a teaching license in accordance with R.A. 7836, as they are expected to uphold the highest standards established by their profession. The purpose of the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) is to guarantee that candidates have the knowledge and skills required for the teaching profession by thoroughly assessing their competency in professional education and particular fields of expertise (Acosta *et al.*, 2016).

2. Literature Review

Another, Yorke *et al.* (2004) defined employability skills as a combination of personal qualities and practical abilities that make graduates more attractive to potential employers. Yorke pointed out that a crucial challenge for graduates in today's world is developing themselves to be readily employable. Moreover, universities need to bridge the existing gap between academic education and the professional world by ensuring their graduates possess the specific skills and attributes sought after by employers (Yorke *et al.*, 2004). However, the current challenges faced by Teacher Education, who often lack the specific skills and certifications demanded by the job market, highlight a disconnect between their educational experience and the needs of today's workforce (Jackson *et al.*, 2016). This underscores the importance of aligning curriculum design and skills development programs with current market demands to enhance graduates' employability (Louise *et al.*, 2023). Yorke and Knight (2004) also emphasized the significance of transferable skills like communication, problem-solving, and teamwork in boosting employability across various fields.

This presents another barrier to face by technical teachers; there is intense competition for teaching employment, especially in areas where there are numerous education graduates vying for the same posts. For instance, limited to teaching specific areas, Technical Teacher may find it more challenging to compete with major in TLE education teachers for the same positions. Knowing BSED-TLE caters for all of the four specializations in TLE and while the BTTE graduates have one focus of specialization. In conclusion, although Technical Teachers have a solid technical background, they could encounter several difficulties when looking for a teaching position. Graduates of the Bachelor of Technical Teacher Education program may need to acquire more teaching experience, career planning, seek further education, and consider other employment options to improve their prospects of finding a teaching position (Jackson *et al.*, 2020).

This study centers on the Consensus Theory of Employability proposed by Selvadurai *et al.* (2012). This theory emphasizes the importance of human capital development, specifically through acquiring general skills, as a key factor in ensuring technical teachers' employability and fostering career growth. This theory highlights the crucial role of well-qualified teachers. They act as an investment in the human capital of future professionals.

Acquiring information, skills, and experience is crucial to an individual's capacity to obtain and keep a job. According to this viewpoint, Technical Teacher Education graduates may face obstacles due to a lack of human capital (Hadia *et al.*, 2019) in the form of specific skills or certificates that are in great demand in the labor market. In conclusion, applying a theoretical lens to understanding the employment challenges faced by Technical Teacher Education graduates can provide insights into the factors that contribute to their difficulties in finding employment and succeeding in the workplace. This theoretical perspective can inform policy decisions and interventions aimed at improving the employment outcomes and well-being of Technical Teacher Education graduates.

The aforementioned discussion regarding employment challenges of Technical Teacher Education shows that there is a research deficit in understanding the professional paths of technical teachers, given the changing needs of the technical labor market and the difficulties experienced by these technical teachers. Although previous research has recognized the importance of supplementary education and real-world experience, little has been written about the unique challenges faced by technical teachers in finding work and advancing their careers. To close this gap, this study looked at technical teacher experiences in employment, identified the difficulties they encountered, investigated coping strategies, and extracted insightful information that helped them launch successful teaching careers in technical education.

This study aims to determine the employment journey of Technical Teachers and explore the difficulties that technical teachers encounter when looking for employment. It also aims to explore the coping strategies technical educators adopt to get through the challenges they face. The research also seeks to gather valuable insights from participants that can be shared with future technical teachers seeking teaching positions.

The findings of this study may be beneficial for various stakeholders in the education sector. For the Department of Education (DepEd), this may provide insights for developing policies and frameworks to enhance the employability and competence of technical teachers and other education-related graduates. Technical teachers and faculty, including BTTE undergraduate students, may benefit from increased attention to programs that improve their skills, knowledge, and competence, potentially increasing their employability in the teaching profession. Additionally, the study may allow researchers to investigate new information, ideas, and concepts related to technical teacher employability. It may also serve as a valuable reference for students and future researchers who wish to conduct more thorough research on the subject, providing them with a source of information and inspiration for further studies.

3. Objective of the Study

The following are the specific research questions of the present qualitative study:

3.1 General Objectives

- 1) To determine the employment journey of a Bachelor of Technical Teacher Education (BTTE), explore the challenges, coping mechanisms and insights of Technical Teachers in looking for a teaching job.

3.2 Specific Questions

- 1) What are the challenges experienced by Technical Teacher graduates in looking for a job?
- 2) How do they cope with these challenges?
- 3) What insights can the participants share with fellow Technical Teachers in looking for a teaching job?

4. Material and Instrument

The researcher utilized the researcher-made questionnaire, which was checked and validated by the four university-affiliated panel members and one external validator which has a general average rating of 9.14. The developed interview questions consisted of challenges faced by Technical Education graduates in applying to schools and other different educational institutions; the situations or factors affecting the employability journey of Technical Education graduates, and also the ways in which the graduates are doing to cope with encountered challenges in their employability journey. Mannan (2020) noted that the interview method pertains to a qualitative research approach that entails asking open-ended questions to engage respondents and gather information about a topic.

4.1 Research Participants

The intended research participants of the study included 12 Bachelor in Technical Teacher Education graduates (2017-2018) who are currently teaching in different schools in Region XI. The purposive sampling method was applied in the investigation. In order to address the study questions posed, this sampling strategy was used, in which each respondent was chosen based on a specific trait of interest. The study used the purposive sampling methodology to choose respondents, which is a sampling strategy in which each respondent is chosen based on a specific feature of interest in order to answer research questions (Benoot *et al.* 2016). To employ better match the sample to the goals and objective, therefore it will strengthen the quality of the research and the reliability of its data and results. Purposeful sampling is often employed in qualitative research to find and choose information-rich examples associated with the phenomenon that is relevant (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015).

The participants were chosen based on inclusion criteria, and the participants may be teachers working in secondary, technical-vocational, or even tertiary education. In addition, participants must have passed the Teacher Licensure Examination.

The following are the exclusion criteria: non-licensed teachers, who are employed in industry-related jobs, teaching overseas, volunteer teachers, and those who are teaching in Elementary Schools.

As part of the research ethics, participants were given pseudonyms to safeguard confidentiality. A volunteer may withdraw from a research project at any moment. The participant should notify the researcher of their intention to withdraw from the study. While it is not required, a participant may provide the research team with their reasons for withdrawing from the study. Furthermore, there was no compulsion during the selection process.

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4.3 Design and Procedure

A descriptive phenomenology research approach was employed in this study to uncover the difficulties, coping strategies, and insights of technical teachers. The research title highlights the importance of "stories to tell" suggesting the interest in finding out about the diverse and subjective experiences Technical Teachers face when hunting for employment. People's lived experiences are wonderfully captured by descriptive phenomenology (Sinfield *et al.*, 2023). This approach allows it to record not only the factual data but also the emotional aspects, challenges, and victories of the journey that technical teachers take. The descriptive research approach is a fact-finding investigation that includes an appropriate and accurate interpretation of findings (Pawar, 2020).

The following procedures were taken to collect the data:

Before starting the study, the researcher obtains UMERC certification. The researcher then wrote a formal letter addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent, Mr. Reynante A. Solitario, at the Division of Davao City, requesting permission to conduct the study in public secondary schools within Davao City. Upon receiving approval, the researcher seeks permission from the principals of the specific schools where participants will be recruited. Second, the researcher submits the letter requesting permission to conduct the study to the Dean of the College of Technology at the University of Southeastern Philippines. This is where the remaining participants will be

obtained. The researcher employs a specific selection process to choose participants for the research study. Some participants may also be recruited through referrals from existing participants. The researcher scheduled online interviews with the identified participants. The interviews were conducted using video conferencing platforms like Zoom and messaging applications like Messenger.

4.4 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the material acquired from the interview conducted with the study's target participants. According to Castleberry *et al.* (2018), the use of thematic analysis can be useful to researchers because it gives a more approachable type of analysis and does not necessitate a thorough theoretical and technological understanding of other qualitative methodologies. The steps involved in conducting a thematic analysis are familiarizing oneself with the data, assigning preliminary codes, searching for patterns or themes, defining themes, searching themes, produce a final report.

4.5 Trustworthiness of the Study

This research was presented and was assessed by a panel of specialists or committees about the subject covered and for further enhancement of the study for the study's dependability and trustworthiness. According to Lincoln *et al.* (1985), credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are all parts of what makes research trustworthy. The following guidelines for evaluation of the reliability and precision of qualitative data. The researcher conducts in-depth interviews with technical teachers, attentively listening to their experiences, both positive and negative. They strive to ensure that the teachers' voices are heard and that their experiences are accurately reflected in the final research findings. To enhance the dependability of the research, the researcher employs triangulation. This involves going beyond interviews with technical teachers.

The researcher interviewed a faculty member of the Program of Technical Teachers Education. By utilizing multiple data collection methods, the researcher gains a more comprehensive understanding of the technical teachers' experiences throughout their employment journey. In addition, a thorough discussion guide or set of respondent tasks to assure focused data collection, open-ended questions to elicit spontaneous and unbiased responses, digital recordings, meticulous transcript analysis, and comprehensive note-taking are all part of the research process.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

During the course of the preparation of this work, substantial ethical issues were observed. This entailed exerting every effort required to guarantee the well-being of the participants in this study, as well as ensuring that they were at ease and comfortable, particularly throughout the data collection procedure. For the protection of their subject, the researcher will take all required steps. All evaluations and interventions will be planned and carried out by the researcher in a way that causes the least amount of damage to the participants.

5. Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the challenges and experiences that the technical teachers shared during the in-depth interview and focus group discussion. They revealed four themes: Need for License, Training Experience, and Certifications, Lack of Work Experience, disconnect between college training and actual subjects taught and Limited work opportunities and competition with other graduates.

Table 1: Experiences and Challenges of Technical Teachers

Essential Themes	Need of License, Training Experience, and Certifications
	Lack of Work Experience
	Disconnect Between College Training and Actual Subjects Taught

5.1 Need of License, Training Experience, and Certifications

Based on the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion, participants expressed frustration with the lack of opportunities available to them, despite possessing the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in the field. They emphasized the importance of formal training programs and certifications, which would not only equip them with the latest pedagogical practices and skills but also serve as tangible evidence of their expertise. Additionally, the participants underscored the significance of gaining practical teaching experience, allowing them to refine their skills and develop effective classroom strategies. The following statements highlight the different responses to their struggles and challenges.

IDIP 2:

“By 2017 after na ko mag graduate nag apply ko dayon para makabalo ko unsay dagan sa DepEd sa ilang application. Na realized nako akong kulang kay teaching experience and other certificate na pinaka importante kung naan a tay NC II or seminars. Could be a plus factor sa imong pag panggaply. Kadto ra jud akong kulang. Mao jud tu nag hindered sa akoo.”

“By 2017, after my graduation, I applied to DepEd in order to be familiarized with their way of application. Then I realized I lacked teaching experience and other certificates. Like NC II's and seminars. These are the most essential in my application process. Which could be a plus factor in my application. That's all that I can think of that I lacked during that time. Which hindered me in my first application in DepEd.”

IDIP 7:

“Gusto ko sana sa Senior High Department kaso naa silay gina require. Para makasenior high teacher ka you need to finished Trainer's Methodology TM or at least naka master's ka or currently in taking masters. Technical graduates possible masulod dayon sa SH og mas higher pa ang sahud.”

“I wanted to work in the Senior High Department, but there are qualifications required. To be a Senior High teacher, you must have a trainer's methodology or be a graduate with

Masteral units. Technical graduates may have a better probability of becoming a senior high teacher. “

“Ang qualification jud. For you to be employed you have to have many qualifications na macheck for ranking for examples kadtong sa National Certificate (NC) II, Trainer’s Methodology (TM), same time kong nakamaster na ba ka mas higher ang chance nimo na ma employed. “

“You must have many qualifications checked for your ranking such as National Certificates (NC) II, Trainer’s Methodology (TM) and at the same time you must have a higher level of education like Masters and Doctorate degree for better chances of employment.”

FGD 1:

“Siguro maong na failed ko sa akoang first application sa DepEd maliban sa ana sa akong na experience sa akong demo-interview is kay wala koy mga certificates that time like NC II from TESDA. “

“Besides my performance during my demo teaching and demo interview, one of the reasons I failed in my first application to DepEd was that I lacked certain certificates at the time, namely NC II from TESDA.”

FGD 3:

“Naging hinderance sa akong kay wala koy NCII sa akoang application that time pag apply nako sa DepEd. Mao lang akong mahuna-hunaan. Kaluy-an nakaabot gihapon sa minimum requirement. “

“My only limitation is that I did not have any NCII on my application in DepEd at the time. Fortunately, I have completed the bare minimum requirement.”

FGD 4:

“The barrier that hindered me is makaingon kog is NCII jud. Sa scoring system sa DepEd 10 points dayon. Pareho sa ako a wala jud koy NCII. Naa koy trainings pero wala ko ka take og assessment. So dili ko NCII holder jud pero experience wise naa ko ana.”

“The barrier that hampered me was the lack of NCII. Because NCII is worth 10 points in DepEd’s scoring system. I, too, do not have an NCII. I had my training, but I was not assessed. So, I am not an NCII holder, I am experienced.”

A professional teaching position necessitates a specific set of skills and educational background, according to research by Mufidah *et al.* (2021). This result is consistent with the employability theory put forth by Junio-Sabio *et al.* (2020), which highlights the need to invest in human capital to obtain employment. As suggested by the research, technical teachers may be encouraged to seek out opportunities for professional development, licensure, and training to increase their employability (Okolie *et al.*, 2020). For instance, participant IDIP 2 recognized that one obstacle in the application procedure was their lack of teaching experience and necessary qualifications like NC II and seminars. In the

same way, many participants stressed that in order to increase work opportunities, a combination of National Certificates (NC), Trainer's Methodology (TM) certificates, and even graduate degrees is required. The study's findings also show that participants acknowledged the need to apply human capital theory, citing their desire to work as technical teachers.

The studies emphasize the significance of teachers' ongoing professional development in order to safeguard their employability. The role and human capital theories offer helpful frameworks for comprehending how education and employment are related. Technical teachers can close the skills-experience gap and put themselves in a better position to succeed in the highly competitive job market by actively obtaining these certifications and experiences. This guarantees highly educated technical teachers, and it will also help to sustain the level and excellence of technical education. Effective technical teachers are an important resource for schools, and in order for them to stay competent in their roles, they need to be encouraged to continue learning.

4.2 Lack of Work Experience

This highlighted one significant barrier to employment for technical teachers, which was their need for practical experience. Another hindrance faced by the technical teacher mentioned by the participants in landing a teaching job is a lack of work experience. The majority of the participants' answers revealed how important it is to have teaching experience or industry experience before starting a career in any educational institution. These will provide them with an advantage over their competitors in the aforementioned teaching profession. Possessing those experiences will be the easiest way to find work. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 2:

"Medyo lisud. Una nag apply kog DepEd after pag pasar nako sa LET pero wala jud ko na sulod kay wala koy experience. Mao tu medyo lisud pero nagita kog lain pamaagi. Akong una work kay nag barangay paid ko. Dili ni siya Local School Board (LSB) teacher lahi pud ni siya kay City paid. Mura ra kag volunteer teacher sa school and barangay mag pay sa imoha. Almost 2 years pud ko nag Brgy. Paid bago ko nag DepEd. guaranteed ang item diria and plus experience pud ni. Nag technical teacher pud ko sa ALS isa ka school year. Weekday's mag volunteer teacher ko then weekends mag ALS teacher ko."

"It's a bit difficult for me. First, after passing the LET exams, I applied to DepEd, but I was rejected because I lacked teaching experience. As a result, I'm having difficulty applying to DepEd. One thing I did was participate in Barangay Paid Teacher as a steppingstone to my DepEd path. A Barangay compensated Teacher is a volunteer teacher in public schools who is compensated by the Barangay, whereas Local School Board (LSB) Teachers are paid by the city. I had been a Barangay Paid teacher for two years before receiving my item from DepEd. Item is a grantee with teaching experience. I was also a Technical Instructor. "I also worked as a Technical Teacher in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) for a year." I worked as a volunteer teacher during the week and as an ALS teacher over the weekends."

FGD 1:

“TESDA. Factor pud kay wala koy teaching experience mao akong na realize bantug siguro wala ko na dawag sa akoang first application sa DepEd. “

“I recognize that one thing I lack is teaching experience, which is another reason I think my DepEd application failed.”

The participant's first attempt to become an employee of the Department of Education after passing the Teacher Licensure Examination, a requirement for becoming a licensed professional teacher in the Philippines. However, earning this significant license, the participant was rejected since they lacked actual teaching experience. Recognizing this shortcoming, the participant deliberately looked for other alternatives to gain the required experience and reinforce their employability inside DepEd. As a Barangay Paid Teacher, they carried out community-based teaching. Although the Local Barangay pays for this teaching position, it is generally viewed as a kind of community service and volunteer work. Nevertheless, it also acts as a vital stepping stone by giving the employee real-world teaching experience in public schools. This demonstrates that the graduates of technical teacher education have emphasized the value of having teaching experience.

Jackson & Tomlinson (2020) strengthen the claim by presenting data that shows graduates may need more transferable abilities that employers value due to an imbalance between their educational background and industry demands. This results in hardship with technical teachers without prior teaching and industry experience when applying. Another study by Arviv-Elyashiv *et al.* (2017) suggests that insufficient of work experience might be difficult for technical teachers. For practical application in the technical subjects, they intend to teach, they could find that their theoretical knowledge in their particular discipline is inadequate.

On the other hand, participants gave the importance of practicing teaching or practicum teaching during their college years. In the Philippines context, a teacher education program requires practicum teaching or practice teaching because it is an integral part since it is a good avenue for pre-service teachers to help and enhance their teaching skills and confidence and apply the theories and provides pre-service teachers with an opportunity to put the ideas, they have learned in to practice in an actual classroom setting. Technical teacher education is not permitted to graduate unless they have completed the hours that are required for practice teaching as well as for real classroom observation. Typically, pre-service student teachers complete their practicum teaching experience in adjacent public elementary and high schools, away from the campus. As mentioned by Tuli *et al.* (2009), practice teaching among pre-service teachers *“most important part of the teacher education program”*. With the help of this program, the student-teacher will understand how to handle and manage not just their daily lessons but the students and their classroom as well. As a result, one of the most important elements of each program for teachers is pre-service teacher training, which gives students in training the tools they will need to eventually obtain teaching licenses.

The findings of this study highlight the importance of technical teachers' work experience. The employment quest of technical teachers is severely hindered by this lack of experience (Ismajli *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, research indicates that practical experience gives technical teachers the pedagogical expertise and skills they need to close the knowledge gap between theory and practice in their chosen technical disciplines (Gu, 2014). Their ability to effectively translate complex technical topics into informative lessons for their students is based on their practical knowledge, which ultimately results in increased student achievement. Thus, one way to close this gap and improve the employability and efficacy of future technical teachers may be to provide opportunities for practical employment.

4.3 Disconnect Between College Training and Actual Subjects Taught

The theme of the disconnect between college training and actual subjects taught emerged as a third significant challenge faced by technical teachers in their employment journey. One of the realities in teaching that is faced by many, not just only the technical education graduates, is to teach subjects unrelated to their expertise. The difficulty of teaching subjects that might not be relevant to their area of expertise is one issue that concerns of teachers. Teachers in technical fields have a tendency to teach a wide range of subjects that may fall beyond the scope of their particular expertise or experience. This can present challenges for the teachers since they may not have the same degree of competency or confidence in these seemingly unrelated subjects. They may find it difficult to fully engage students in lessons on subjects in which they are not entirely familiar. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 2:

"Sa teaching field po kay sa BTTE we only have one specialization in the field of work especially in Junior High School versatile ta dapat which is wala na tudlo sa amo. Sa akoo na case abe ko ako tudloan kay HVAC-R whole duration sa akoo work. Wala ko kabalo magtudlo kog Horticulture, Plumbing og Dressmaking didtoa jud ko nag struggle. That time I was a newbie mao tung mga factors nag pa struggle sa akoo. Biskang nag study nako maglisud gihapon ko sa mga new concepts na akong na encounter. Lisud pasabut sa bata kay even me I don't know how to use a sewing machine but now I manage na unsa on."

"In terms of teaching, as a BTTE graduate, we only have one speciality in our field of work. We should be versatile, especially in Junior High School, which was not taught to us in college. In my instance, I anticipate that I will be dealing with HVAC R-related topics for the remainder of my employment. I did not expect to be handling Horticulture, Plumbing, and Dressmaking in the actual field, which is where I struggled the most. I was a beginner at the time. Even though I was learning those new fields, there were still points where I found it difficult due to the new concepts that I encountered. It is difficult to convey knowledge when the teacher does not understand how to use a sewing machine, but I have overcome that difficulty."

IDIP 3:

"First job nako is naging private school teacher then elementary teacher ko. Lahi ra jud kayo pag abot nako sa public kay Secondary ako gina handle. Sa akong first year sa public ma international teacher jud ka, naa na koy gina handle na Filipino and TLE."

"My first job was as a private school elementary school teacher. This is not the case when it comes to teaching secondary students. In my first year as a foreign instructor at DepEd, I taught Filipino and TLE subjects."

"Karun, wala nako na gamit akong skills. Siguro kung nag mapeh ko nagamit nako akong pag ka hilig sa volleyball and dancing skills nako. Kay lage dili ko confident mag teach sa akong major ship na Electronics. Dili baya jud in ana ka deep akong knowledge sa akong major. "

"I didn't practice my area of competence up until now. I regret not choosing to be a major in MAPEH. Despite the fact that dancing and volleyball were my strongest abilities. My limited expertise in my majorship made me decide not to practice it."

IDIP 4:

"Although lisud gud siya kay kung ikaw teacher dapat kabalo ka sa tanan mga 10 na specializations bisknag imong course kay nag focus lang jud sa isa. "

"Nevertheless, it is difficult because you must be familiar with ten or more specializations despite the fact that your undergraduate course concentrates on one major. "

The responses from the research participants reveal the challenges faced by Bachelor of Technical Teachers when entering the workforce, particularly regarding the specialization of their skills and the expectations of versatility in teaching different subjects. The participants express a concern common to many technical teachers: the narrow focus of their training. BTTE programs often prepare graduates to teach within a specific technical field, yet the reality of teaching, especially in secondary education, might require a broader skill set. They were supposed to teach HVAC because that is their area of expertise, but they ended up teaching dressmaking, horticulture, and plumbing instead. This mismatch caused significant struggles for the participants.

A participant expresses remorse for not pursuing degrees in Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health. This is because the participant had high talents in dance and volleyball, which are likely under the MAPEH area. This feeling suggests their innate skills and practical training are at odds. The participant's perception of the long-term effects of educational choices on their professional paths is demonstrated by their inability to practice in their area of competency due to low skill in their major of choice.

FGD 1:

"Aside ana katung na employed na jud ko sa wakas sa DepEd bale wala na gamit ako ang specialization. Nag handle kog lahi-lahi na subject naa koy TLE, ESP, MAPEH and AP. In terms sa ubang subjects need jud nako mag study kay dili ma kaya og dili jud."

“Competitor is one thing I considered. I didn’t use my specialism when I was working for DepEd. I work with a variety of topics, including TLE exploration, ESP, MAPEH, and Aral Pan. I really need to study for other classes, though.”

One of the realities in teaching that is faced by many, not just in technical education, is to teach subjects unrelated to their expertise. Teachers in technical fields have a tendency to teach a wide range of subjects that may fall beyond the scope of their particular expertise or experience. A study carried out in Samar, Philippines, by Boco *et al.* (2020) discovered that teachers who teach outside of their chosen field encounter challenges, self-doubt, and a loss of confidence. This presents challenges for the technical teachers since they may not have the competency and confidence in these seemingly unrelated subjects. Technical teachers in the Philippines deal with issues such as the type of school, limited facilities, and inadequate training, which causes them to take on employment or even teach outside of their area of competence (Salvador *et al.*, 2022). The study's participants explicitly stated having been placed in remote areas with limited facilities, like no electricity. Technical teachers' participants mentioned they were forced to teach outside of their field because they were assigned to remote areas with no electricity. Due to this situation, they are teaching subjects based on the resources that are available in the area rather than practicing their skills in electrical.

In addition, this problem arises from scheduling issues, uneven distribution of subjects and, above all, shortages of teachers (Hobbs, 2021). Additionally, a study from Coral (2023) mentioned teaching outside of a subject area is a common problem in education that mostly impacts remote learning environments and low socioeconomic areas. Teaching-out-of-field refers to assigning teachers to subjects outside their area of expertise. A potential deficiency of teaching out-of-field is a lack of subject knowledge and expertise. Lack of expertise in a certain subject can make it difficult for technical teachers to deliver accurate knowledge and in-depth skills, which eventually affects students' capacity to learn and academic progress.

It was also noted that one of the specific education-related courses that were found to be closely related or eligible to teach Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) subjects are those that are currently taking up Bachelor of Technical Teacher Education (BTTE), which is known to be a four-year ladderized degree program offered mainly in the college or tertiary level that is intended to provide students with the adequate and necessary knowledge and skills in order to make them eligible to teach technical-vocational courses such as those involved or concerned with automotive, civil, electrical, electronics, civil, computer and many more are among the components. Bachelor of Technical Teacher Education, being the flagship course, focuses on one major or specialization. I connect with this in the context of junior high and senior high basic education, as technical teachers tend to teach all four components of technology and livelihood education (TLE), namely home economics, agriculture arts, industrial arts, and entrepreneurship. As explained by Hobbs (2012), the practice of teachers who have no formal training or experience teaching students in disciplines other than their areas of expertise has been neglected.

As a result, there is a significant mismatch between the technical training that college graduates acquire and the subjects that workplaces assign them to teach. This mismatch presents a significant obstacle in their employment search and might result in emotions of unpreparedness and disappointment, as seen by the participants' emotional responses in this study. These findings are further supported by Abano *et al.* (2021), who explored the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers. This study highlights the adverse emotions that teachers will frequently experience: anxiety, stress and frustration. The link between the current study and the research of Abano *et al.* (2021) emphasizes how critical it is to close the gap between subject assignments and teacher qualifications. Better alignment of these variables will enable technical teachers to find employment more easily and provide them with the knowledge and self-assurance needed to teach their subjects effectively, which will ultimately benefit students by creating a more positive learning environment.

4.4 Limited Work Opportunities and Competition with Other Graduates

The theme of limited work opportunities and competition with other graduates emerged as a third significant challenge faced by technical teachers in their employment journey. The research participants' responses highlight how competitive the employment market is for technical education graduates and the challenges their curriculum structure presents in comparison to teachers with broader qualifications. Students in technical teacher education programs can primarily become profoundly competent in a single technical subject. However, when it comes to employability, this narrowed focus can become a disadvantage. Graduates with more specific technical teacher educations may be at a disadvantage due to this choice because their particular expertise may only be applicable to a limited number of teaching possibilities. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 3:

“So ang mga technical teacher education dili kaayo in demand tungod kay limit ang equipment, classroom or laboratories sa school. So kung unsa lang ang kaya sa school I provide which is available sa school mao pud ng dali mahatagan og Teaching Job mao ng para sa ako ang panan-aw. Sama nako major in electronics lisud kaayo mangita og school karon na nay gina offer na in ato an specialization. Aside ana, naa koy compentensya sa pag pangapply nako. Like BSED TLE, then ako BTTE graduate then sya jud tu mahatagan og priority kompara sa akoo. Tungod sila daghan sila area of specialization na ma cater unya ako na isa lang akong specialization. Mao tu ako challenges as a BTTE graduate.”

“Technical teacher education is in restricted availability in schools due to limited equipment, classrooms, and laboratories. As a result, what schools can provide in terms of amenities is also the type of job that a school seeks. Aside from that, BSED TLE and BTTE graduates face competition. It is clear that they are in favor due to the vast range of specialties that BSed TLE may give. My major is electronics, and it is tough to find a school that provides knowledge, which is something I consider during my career.”

FGD 2:

“One factor I think that contributed to my struggles first is lacking lang og opportunities. Lacking ang opportunities as Technical Teacher graduate or as major in electrical graduate. Ang facilities pud sa school kadalasan walay electrical laboratory mao pud dili ta or mi cater kaayo.”

“Lack of opportunities was one issue that I believe led to my initial difficulties. Lack of opportunities as a technical teacher with a graduate degree, or it might also be in my major as an electrical graduate. The facilities at some of the school majorities do not have electrical laboratories, so it is unable to accommodate us graduates.”

The participant's story highlights a structural issue: the conflict between the need for broad-based competencies and specialized knowledge in educational institutions and specialized expertise. It indicates a need to review and possibly reform technical education curricula in order to improve the employability of its graduates by expanding their skill sets within the context of technical education. Salimov (2018) said that the main barriers to finding employment are the limited amount of employment possibilities and the competitiveness among graduates. The participants mentioned that the lack of employment options in their field of expertise is another issue facing graduates in technical education.

The BSED TLE graduates, who have a more expansive majorship, are one of their main competitors. In contrast, a graduate in technical teacher education focuses exclusively on one field of study. This, as a result, causes technical teacher education to lose priority in terms of employability. The research participants' responses highlight how competitive the employment market is for technical education graduates and the challenges their curriculum structure presents in comparison to teachers with broader qualifications. Furthermore, students in technical teacher education programs can primarily become profoundly competent in a single technical subject.

However, when it comes to employability, this narrowed focus can become a disadvantage (Coenen, 2015). The participant notes that because of their more expansive majorship, graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Education program with a focus on Technology and Livelihood Education have a greater range of teaching competencies. Because of their more comprehensive education, BSED TLE graduates are more marketable on the employment market because they can teach a range of disciplines under the purview of TLE. Because it enables a more flexible distribution of instructional resources, employers in educational institutions frequently search for this adaptability when hiring. Graduates with more specific technical teacher educations may be at a disadvantage due to this choice because their particular expertise may only be applicable to a limited number of teaching possibilities. There are some possible alternatives to close this gap. According to Greenbank's (2014) research, it might be advantageous to support students in taking a future-focused approach to their education. This could involve broadening one's skill set. Technical teachers can take courses that give them additional technical abilities, which will enable them to adapt better to various teaching situations.

Table 2: Emerged themes on coping strategies with the challenges experienced by the Technical Teacher

Essential Themes	Investing in Professional Development Opportunities
	Tapping Support Systems
	Possessing a Positive Mindset
	Keeping the Faith Burning

4.5 Investing in Professional Development Opportunities

Investing in Professional Development Opportunities emerged as the first theme from the coping strategies responding to the challenges that I experienced as a Technical Teacher. One of the strategies for coping with the challenges faced by technical teacher graduates, as noted by the participants in this research study, is to apply for scholarships for skilled training, attend seminars, acquire teaching experience, and even pursue a master's degree. Professional development is crucial in bridging the gap indicated in research question no. 1. Experience, training, and seminars are vital in providing aspiring teachers with the skills and knowledge they need to be suitable candidates. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 6:

"Magkuha og NCII magtraining para ma puslan nimo sa field and mo taas imong ranggo. Tapos kailangan ka magmasteral para mo taas imohang ranggo og para ma regular ka sa school which is much better is naa pud ka ani."

"Earn an NCII certification that you may utilize in the workplace and get a license to teacher for career advancement. A master's degree is additionally required for promotion and regulation."

As the participant pointed out, obtaining an NCII certification is a big step for a technical expert and a powerful indicator of their proficiency and preparedness for the workforce. This certification is more than just a mark of honor; it is a flexible instrument that matches the high requirements for quality demanded by a wide range of fields. It provides people confidence and credibility, creating an atmosphere where superior technical performance is valued and acknowledged. Another participant mentioned,

IDIP 7:

"For me the biggest lesson that I learn is really to know the qualification in a certain job. To qualify for a job, you must have those qualities or requirements that they needed for the employment or position na imong gi na pangarap. You must have the skills in the criteria na need nila. Acquire certificates and acquire skills for me to qualify for that certain job."

"Knowing the requirements for a particular profession is, in my opinion, the most important lesson I have learned. You must possess the skills or qualifications required for the employment or position you desire in order to be qualified for one. You must possess

the abilities in the requirements that they need. Obtain credentials and develop my skills so that I am qualified for the position."

With the following statements from the research participants, it becomes clear that credentials are more than just formalities. It represents preparedness for the position one wants to play and is the language of expertise. Finding and acquiring the necessary abilities is, in the bigger picture of career objectives, both a foundation and the tool that transforms goals into real accomplishments. In addition,

IDIP 7:

"I should have finish tong TM kay if ever I have finish it siguro nasa Senior high na tana ko nag teach og much bigger ang pay. "

"My Trainer's Methodology (TM) training ought to be complete. If I ever finish it, I anticipate working as a teacher in a senior high school, where the pay is also higher."

One of the strategies for coping with the challenges faced by technical teachers, as noted by the participants in this research study, is to apply for scholarships for skilled training, attend seminars, acquire teaching experience, and even pursue a master's degree. It is essential to make a commitment to professional growth and lifelong learning. According to Al-Hinai (2007) and Collinson *et al.* (2009), teachers must improve their quality, renew their knowledge and advance their expertise. Aspiring educators can develop the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to meet the demands of the teaching profession and begin a rewarding career of continuous development in the honorable task of educating the next generation. As the teaching profession progresses quickly, pedagogical standards must be met, and high-quality education is required. Educators must deal with increasing standards in a continually evolving society (Bubb, 2003). This clearly shows how crucial for technical teachers is to upskill, get licenses, attend seminars, and seek master's degrees in order to improve their chances of landing an employment opportunity.

This study highlights how critical it is to provide aspiring technical teachers with the tools they need to succeed in their current roles. A well-rounded and competent teacher is shaped in large part by experience, specific training, and seminar participation. Professional development is now a need for both personal and professional progress in the twenty-first century, as noted by Foster *et al.* (2023) and Osias *et al.* (2023). This continuing education for professionals accomplishes two goals. First of all, it gives technical teachers the chance to improve their knowledge and abilities constantly. This guarantees that they stay up to date on developments in their area and are capable of efficiently converting complex technical concepts. Second, it makes it possible for teachers to keep up with breakthroughs in education, such as fresh approaches to instructions, innovative methods of integrating technology, and best classroom management techniques. Lastly, continuing education and training help technical teachers acquire new talents as well as hone their current set of hard and soft skills. In

addition, investing professionally will benefit both teachers and students, but above all, it will help them become more effective technical teachers.

4.6 Tapping Support Systems

A tapping Support System emerged as the second theme from the coping strategies responding to the challenges that I experienced as a Technical Teacher. Among the coping mechanisms employed by technical teachers to overcome obstacles, the majority of survey participants cited the help assisted by the support systems. Technical teachers may encounter numerous challenges throughout their careers. Managing these obstacles independently can be challenging, but having a solid support network can help a lot. You can get practical assistance, emotional support, and a feeling of community from your network of support. Technical teachers can succeed in their professions, overcome challenges, and remain resilient and motivated with these support systems. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 3:

“Support system sa family and friends in times na dili na nmo makaya. Lastly, prayer. Ampo jud Ginoo, isalig sa iyaha tanan. Ana pa gani just do your best and let God do the rest.”

“Another source of support in times of adversity is my family and friends. I prayed and surrendered everything to God. There is a verse that says, “Do your best and let God do the rest.”

IDIP 5:

“Finally, Akong mga friend pud, kay gina tabang ko nila og asa puwede pag apply og mga hiring.

Finally, my fellow classmates assisted me in keeping up to date on what positions were available.”

IDIP 6:

“Number 1 daghan jud kog mga friends kay kung naa koy problema sila akoang madaganan kay same lang man me og situation. Kami kami ra gihapon mga ka batchmate nako mga BTTE nag damay.”

“First and foremost, I have a large number of friends, which is advantageous because when problems come, I have friends to talk to because we are in comparable positions. My BTTE colleague also serves as my support system.”

Participants in the research emphasized the importance of social support networks, such as friends, family, and peers, in helping people deal with stress and overcome obstacles by providing both practical support and emotional support. Peer relationships and understanding are fostered when individuals, particularly those who are following comparable academic routes, share their experiences. They provide insights and spread employment information, acting as a support network to technical teachers.

They also mention another coping strategy that offers comfort and surrender, which is the spiritual aspect. "Do your best and let God do the rest" is a statement that highlights the harmony between one's efforts and faith, encouraging empathy and understanding. In addition,

FGD 3:

"What really help me kanang mga encouragements from may sa parents, sibling and friends. Salamat ko kay supportive pud akong parents. Ako pud mga igsuon nakasabot and at the same time gi tambagan ko kay sila pud mismo mga teachers kaya kasabot sila sa kaagi nako na teacher pud. Mga friends nako naka help pud sa mga words of encouragement nila sa akoo. "

"The encouragement from my parents, siblings, and friends is what really helps me. I am so grateful to my parents for their unwavering support. Since all of my siblings are teachers, they are able to aid me at the same time and understand me and everything I've gone through. Additionally, my friends support me by encouraging me."

Technical teachers may encounter numerous challenges throughout their careers. Managing these obstacles independently can be challenging, but having a solid support network can help a lot. You can get practical assistance, emotional support, and a feeling of community from your network of support. Technical teachers can succeed in their professions, overcome challenges, and remain resilient and motivated with these support systems. According to studies by Zhang (2018), teachers who have access to enough support during their employment quest have better career chances. Having a trusted companion with whom to share problems helps ease emotional anguish when faced with obstacles. As mentioned by the technical teachers, they are thankful to have a safe space to express vulnerabilities and be free from judgements to release their inner emotions. In this study, technical teachers stressed the value of having a safe space in which to vent frustrations and anxiety. As previously shown, participants valued having a judgment-free support system that let them let go of their emotional baggage. This is consistent with studies conducted by She *et al.* (2023), which discovered that robust social support networks are essential for preserving mental health and lowering feelings of hopelessness and anxiety.

Strong support networks provide many advantages that go well beyond improving people's quality of life. According to Winzenried (2014), family, friends, and mentors can offer support, insightful counsel, and constant reminders of one's own value. This is especially important in trying times since, as Harkey (2017) points out, having a solid support system is important for general health, particularly when confronting major challenges. Lastly, this study shows that having a solid support network greatly improves a technical teacher's employment path. This support system creates more resources and emotional support and contributes to the well-being and professional success of technical teachers.

4.7 Possessing a Positive Mindset

Possessing a Positive Mindset emerged as the third theme from the coping strategies for responding to the challenges that I experienced as a Technical Teacher. The participants essentially revealed that, in addition to technical skills, becoming a technical teacher also demands mental toughness and an optimistic outlook in order to overcome obstacles and find fulfillment in work. Finding a career as a technical teacher can be difficult and stressful. Aspiring technical teachers frequently face difficult obstacles on their path, and the anguish and rejection they experience can pierce them deeply. However, these difficulties also present chances for development, resiliency, and self-discovery. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDP 3:

"First, wala jud lain kundi imong sarili lang maka help. Naa koy mindset na positive thinker lang ko dapat. Even in negative situations. Isa sa siguro naka tabang sa akong kung gi unsa ko pag mold sa USEP. Dili man jud lalim ang kaagi sa USEP. Unya. Nakatabang tolerance sa stress. Katong mg ana again nako katung college years."

"First and foremost, nothing will help you except yourself. I believe that I must be an optimistic thinker. Even in bad situations, I have to look on the bright side. Another thing that helps me is my university, which allows me to grow. The obstacles I faced during my undergraduate studies at the University of Southeastern Philippines aided me in improving my stress tolerance."

IDIP 5:

"Maybe ang attitude to always look in the bright side. "

"I think being positive is something I must learn."

IDIP 6:

"Go with the flow lang jud sa plan and then everything you do dapat 100 percent jud ka og do your best kung ang outcome ana whether kay negative or positive at least you did your best."

"Constantly give it you're all since the opportunities are always there. Simply follow the flow and give your all to all you do. No matter the outcome—whether it's bad or good—do your best. "

As mentioned by the participants, they able to see the good news or as a positive side even in times of hardship in their employment journey. As a technical teacher seeking a job opportunity as a fresh graduate, it might be difficult, but their secret weapon is to keep a positive mind even in tough times.

The participants essentially revealed that, in addition to technical skills, becoming a technical teacher also demands mental toughness and an optimistic outlook in order to overcome obstacles and find fulfillment in the work. Finding a career as a technical teacher can be difficult and stressful. Aspiring technical teachers frequently face difficult obstacles on their path, and the anguish and rejection they experience can pierce them

deeply. In Teresa's (2017) study, positivity is essential for job seekers to maintain their health and optimism while navigating the highs and lows of the application process. However, these difficulties also present chances for development, resiliency, and self-worth discovery. On the other hand, cultivating a positive mindset can greatly influence their achievement.

A positive mindset is crucial for success and progress, especially in tough times (Keogh, 2009). Potential technical teachers face many difficult and sometimes emotionally exhausting challenges. Even so, these challenges may present chances for development. The participants stress how crucial it is to grow resilient and confident in oneself in order to overcome these obstacles. For a teacher to succeed, a growth mindset is also essential, as are realistic goals, perseverance, and introspection (Dweck, 2014).

4.8 Keeping the Faith Burning

Keeping the Faith Burning emerged as the fourth theme from the coping strategies responding to the challenges that I experienced as a Technical Teacher. According to the participants' statements, faith is an essential foundation for those who want to become technical teachers. They characterise faith as a source of meaning and purpose, giving one the will and inspiration to overcome challenges in the quest for a career as a teacher. It cultivates resilience and perseverance, enabling technical teachers to handle challenging circumstances and uphold their dedication to the field. Faith is significant because it gives life meaning and purpose. Participants mention that faith gives them a sense of purpose, fortitude, and perseverance that helps them overcome obstacles and mold themselves into fully committed technical teachers. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 3:

"Last is prayers jud. Importante kaayo na mag salig and ampo sa plano sa Ginoo sa imoha kay naa man tay kaniya-kaniyang timelime, mo abot lang jud ang para sa imoha na gi takna niya. "

"Another thing they should do is stick to their dreams and not give up easily when things get tough. Finally, we must have prayers. It is critical to have faith in God, as your time will come to shine."

IDIP 4:

"I've learned to never give up on things. Masking unsa man although sa sugod dli mn ihatag sa imoha sa first na gusto. Never give up kay nay right time for that which is mo abot ra jud sa imoha. Ang Ginoo nakabalo sa tanan kung wala pa nagihataga sa karun siguro naa siyay hataag na fit or mas mayo sa imohang journey kanang dili ka na mag lisud. I always trust God lang jud."

"I've learned not to give up on things. Although it is not always easy to obtain what you desire and enjoy. But never give up because your moment will arrive. God knows everything, and he is preparing something for you that you deserve and is worth after all of your journey. As a result, I constantly put my trust in God. "

The participants emphasize the transforming power of faith. It has the power to change their viewpoint and introduce them to opportunities and possibilities they might not have been aware of. Their widened outlook enables them to welcome obstacles and view them as chances for personal development. Their faith gives them the strength to overcome obstacles and they believe that they can succeed despite setbacks. The participants also say that faith is a source of hope, courage, and strength. It serves as a compass for them, providing solace and guidance while they negotiate the challenges of their chosen field of work. They are better able to overcome obstacles because they have a clear sense of direction. The research participants essentially depict faith as a driving force in their lives. It gives them the inner fortitude and optimism they need to keep going on their path to becoming effective technical instructors.

IDIP 7:

“Push through and have faith and then qualified yourself for that position in order for you to have higher chance of being by DepEd or any teaching establishment na nagapangita sa imoha.”

“In order to increase your chances of being hired by DepEd or any other teaching facility you are seeking for, persevere and have faith while also qualifying yourself for that role.”

As mentioned above, one of the reasons that are held onto by the participants is faith. Faith offers a source of courage and perseverance in the face of difficulties and setbacks in the employment journey of technical teachers. It was mentioned that it enables them to find hope even in the darkest of circumstances, to endure difficult times, and to be optimistic in the face of uncertainty that they have encountered. In the face of rejection and failure, faith provides a source of hope that gets them through the hard times. For technical teachers, faith is a potent weapon that influences both their professional lives and personal lives. Faith is a means of obtaining wisdom, reason, and factuality in the world, and it goes beyond a simple personal belief system (Krzysztof *et al.*, 2013). Faith may be an intangible but powerful fuel, it is essential in forming trust, resilience, a source of encouragement, a ray of hope, perseverance in the face of hardship and a reason for them to progress. It is said that the biblical phrase "Keep the Faith" is directly related to believing in a higher power and finding a reason to live and face uncertainty (Christopher, 2008).

Table 3 presents the themes that emerged for the third research question with the insights that they want to share with their fellow Technical Teacher Education students, graduates, teachers and community regarding what they have learned about their employability journey.

Table 3: Technical Teacher's insights gained during their employment journey.

Essential Themes	The Significance of College Training and Internship
	The Need for Continuous Learning in the Field
	The Importance of Persistence

4.9 The Importance of College Training and Internship

The theme of the importance of college training and internship emerged as the first significant insights gained during their employment. The majority of research participants stressed the value of internships and college education. Their college experience gave them the information and abilities needed to teach effectively. They also spoke highly of the effectiveness of their pre-service training, which gave them the opportunity to actively engage in typical classroom activities, witness typical classroom settings, and immerse themselves in the real world. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 3:

“Isa sa siguro naka tabang sa akong kung gi unsa ko pag mold sa USEP. Dili man jud lalim ang kaagi sa USEP.. Gipangikamotan nako na makuha kog og makabalo sa qualification sa usa ka teaching job. Dili lang atong na time sa pag pangapply nako even kadtong sa college palang gi huna-huna na nako. Dili man ko achiever atong College pero wala man sad ko nag pabaya sa akong grades. Dako bayag tabang sa pagpangapply imong College grades. College pa lang gi prepare na nako akong self para puhon in reality ready nako mo face sa real teaching world. Akong Internship or OJT dako kaayo og tabang sa pag mold sa akong. My NC II’s nakatabang jud as TLE teacher need jud kaayo.”

“Another thing that helps me is my university, which allows me to grow. I work hard to obtain the necessary qualifications for a teaching position. Not just when I applied, but also during my college years, I thought about and planned for my future. I may not have been an outstanding student in college, but I didn’t neglect my academics. During my college years, I already prepared myself to face the teaching world. My internship or on-the-job training was extremely beneficial in cultivating me. My NCII’s also benefit me as a TLE teacher.”

IDIP 5:

“Nakatabang sa ako ang OJT. Lage among school dili jud ma practice among skills kay lacking mig gamit. Sa OJT ma enhance jud like pa pile kag hollow block and pa koralon jud ka ka sa TESDA Korphil man ko nag OJT.”

“My OJT was extremely beneficial. Similar to what I previously stated, my school lacks the laboratory resources and equipment necessary to fully teach our talents and skills. I can state that during my OJT, my skills were enhanced. Like when I experienced to build a fence. TESDA Korphil served ground as my OJT, where I developed those skills.”

Based on the participants’ statements, it is evident that they take personal responsibility for their achievements. They admit they were not the best students, but they always put much effort into their academic performance to prepare to become teachers. The participant emphasizes how crucial it is to plan ahead. Throughout their undergraduate years, they actively pursued gaining the required qualifications for a teaching career, thinking about their future. Another essential component is revealed to be practical experience. The participants highlighted how much their internship and on-

the-job training (OJT) benefited them. This experience helped close the gap between theoretical understanding and real-world application, especially with practical skill development.

IDIP 7:

“Syempre pinaka main help jud is kadtong akong nahuman na degree. Nakatabang tong Field study og practicum para ma enhance among kaalamam. Especially kadtong nag demo teaching at the same time sa kadtong mga teachers na gihasa jud me niya during college. Most probably wala koy confidence mag demo teaching. At the same time pud kadtong mga gitudlo sa akoo na mga subject sa college. Without those prior knowledge lisud siya iapply dayon sa technical site without it maglisud jud kag tudlo. At the same time pud mas madali para sa akoo na makapagtudlo if maapply nato tong natud an nato sa college.”

“The completion of my degree program has been the most aid. Aside from that, the knowledge- enhancing field study (FS) and our practicum I participated in helped me learn widely. Particularly our demo-teaching is a huge help and with those professors who mentor us throughout college. If I don't go through those things, I most likely won't be confident in my demo-teaching. The knowledge and abilities I acquire while studying for our college courses. Without that prior understanding, it is challenging to teach, especially in technological environments. As a result of the knowledge I acquired in college, teaching is significantly simpler. “

A solid foundation created by college studies and internships is essential for technical teachers to succeed. This study underlines the crucial importance of internships, even as research by Yuanqi *et al.* (2022) emphasizes the necessity of college training in bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical abilities. The study's participants emphasized the significance of both components, emphasizing that a college education gave them the information and skill set needed to teach effectively.

However, the complexity of the classroom is beyond the scope of knowledge for teachers. Internships can be quite transforming in this situation. Internships, as noted by Yuanqi *et al.* (2022) and Danielle (2017), provide valuable opportunities for practical learning and the application of theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. Technical teachers can acquire hands-on experience in areas such as lesson planning, student interaction, classroom management, and navigating various aspects of school culture through internships. Before they enter the workforce, they can gain confidence and acquire the necessary abilities by immersing themselves in the pre-service teaching environment. Internships and education in college work together powerfully to provide technical teachers with the information and abilities they need to succeed in their careers. Internships offer the actual application, while college education supplies the theoretical framework. By using this combination strategy, technical teachers are guaranteed to be ready to take on the demands of their careers and succeed as teachers. Through the purposeful integration of both aspects into their academic programs, universities can enable the next generations of technical teachers to leave a lasting legacy on both the students and the educational system.

4.10 The Need for Continuous Learning in the Field

The theme of the need for continuous learning in the field emerged as the first significant insights gained during their employment. Technical teachers learned the need for and importance of continuous learning personally, professionally, and especially in their employment journey. This is especially critical given the rapidly evolving nature of new teaching strategies and technological advancements in the contemporary educational system. By expanding their expertise, technical teachers may better impart skills and knowledge, address more inquiries and offer pertinent examples and real-world applications in the teaching field. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 2:

“Just simple. Have your training, license, and teaching experience first jud. After ana proceed in masters so that they will the meet criteria in DepEd as of now. If nay trainings and seminars ma gamit sa teaching dapat ilahang grab. In my own opinion, papel mas kusgon run kaysa atong abilidad, Kung wala kay papel pero naa kay abilidad pildihun gihapon ka sa taong nay abilidad. “

“First, get your training, license, and teaching experience. Following that, proceed with masters so that they fulfill the DepEd criteria as of now. Take advantage of any free training opportunities that come your way. In my opinion, abilities will not ensure your success, but they should be backed up with qualifications, making them more valuable. Nowadays, paper weighs more than a skilled individual.”

IDIP 1:

“Prepare NCII edge para mag apply at the same time mag review more sa lahi pa na area of specialization.”

“Prepare your NC II so that you will have an advantage and a review in case you will be teaching in another area of specialization.”

FGD 1

“Kuha og inter jud og mga trainings and seminars if puwede bago pa ko ni graduate magkuha na ko ani or even before ko nangapply kay merit mana sa atoa gihapon. Para pud mas qualified ta sa teaching position na atoang gina apply.yan.”

“Before you graduate, enroll in trainings and seminars so you can demonstrate your knowledge to potential companies and educational institutions. In addition, we may be better qualified for the teaching position for which we are seeking.”

IDIP 3:

“Siguro akong dapat buhaton kay engage guro na ako self og workshop og unsa man para siguro ma hatwd akong communication skills para pud ma impress na nako akong employer or interviewers nako. Early career planning na makatabang sa akoa sa akong pag pangapply. Nagmasteral daan na diay dapat ko para pud sa promotion and points upon sa akong employment. Get NCII na align sa akoang area of specialization.”

"Maybe I should attend a program or something to assist me in improving my communication skills so that I can impress my employers or interviewers. Early career preparation will aid in my application. Have a master's degree before applying so that I can get a promotion and points on the job. Obtain NCII's that are related to my area of specialization."

The research participants stressed the importance of both qualifications and practical skills for technical teaching success. This entails getting certified, going after a master's degree, and actively engaging in educational initiatives. They encourage applying real-world knowledge to their education as well as personal development, such as NCII certifications from TESDA. Nevertheless, learning extends beyond initial credentials. In order to improve training in the end, the participants stressed the importance of lifelong learning and keeping up with new information and best practices throughout their careers. Technical teaching is presented as a profession requiring a constant dedication to learning and skill development.

IDIP 3:

"Akong ma share lang jud sa akong fellow BTTE graduate nila na tips are pagkuha og seminars, NCII, pagtudlo sa para naay kay teaching experience og gusto ka mag DepEd and faith sa Ginoo. Mag apil og mga seminars kay dagdag ni puntos and lamang sa imong mga kasabayan sa pag panngapply puhon. I grab ang opportunity kung naay mga libreng NCII sama sa TESDA naga hatag man jud na silage free NCII para equip ta magtudlo sa atong mga students and naa kay mapakita na papeles."

"What sentiments I would like to express with my fellow BTTE grads are to obtain certifications from seminars, have your NCII certificates, secure teaching experience if you want to be a DepEd teacher, and have faith in God. They should attend seminars since it will provide them an advantage over their competitors if they apply for teaching jobs as soon as possible. Take advantage of any free skill training opportunities, such as the NC II offered by TESDA. In order for us teachers to be prepared, we can teach such skills and give certificates as part of our application."

FGD 4:

"Magtraining og mag avail sila anang mga scholarship sa tesda kanang tag bulan og i-grab jud na nila bahalag dili related sa ilahang major kong dili related sa ilahang major mas maayo kay samot na og dili pa sila Board passer og nagreview pa sila atleast man lang naa silay knowledge bisag electrical, mechanical og civil kanang 3 makatabang na na sa ilaha sa board exam samut na og naay mga math related bitaw kay mao may napansin nako atong time sa board exam mga applied math sa technical terms, math math, estimate. Kana maoy nay ma suggests nako sa ilaha."

"Undergo a lot of training, make use of all TESDA scholarships, and pursue additional training that is not related to their scholarship. They will benefit from this when taking the board exam. This could serve as their reviewer as well. As a result of this, they will have expertise in areas like fundamental mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering, all of

which will be very helpful when it comes time to take their exam. Particularly calculation topics, as the majority of the topics on the exam that I had encountered which included math and involved a lot of the estimation process. That's the only advice I can give them."

Technical teachers learned the need for and importance of continuous learning personally, professionally, and especially in their employment journey. This is especially critical given the rapidly evolving nature of new teaching strategies and technological advancements in the contemporary educational system (Canaleta, 2012). By expanding their expertise, technical teachers may better impart skills and knowledge, address more inquiries and offer pertinent examples and real-world applications in the teaching field. Teachers who expand their areas of knowledge can foster a pleasant learning environment by projecting confidence and credibility into their instruction and, above all, their quality as a teacher. Technical teachers must improve their knowledge in all aspects in order to give accurate, quality, skills, comprehensive instruction, innovations, and best practices by continuously deepening their grasp of their teaching field.

The participants in this research, who were technical teachers, felt that in the rapidly changing environment of today in which there's a need for strong credentials and deepening expertise are crucial, that is why it is more important for teachers to be lifelong learners. As Rais (2020) and Yadi *et al.* (2017) emphasize, technical teachers must constantly adapt their skills and knowledge to meet the changing needs of technical education. Continuous learning enables technical teachers to advance their subject-matter proficiency, boosting their confidence and skill in their specialized fields of teaching. Additionally, it gives technical teachers the chance to broaden their knowledge and develop new skills in different areas. Teachers' professional growth depends on continuous learning since it improves their teaching strategies and expands their practical knowledge. Aside from that, technical teacher they would have an advantage over other applicants and also be beneficial to the school they are teaching at or about to enter. This also helps them to improve their personality continually and do justice to the teaching profession (Srinivasacharlu, 2019). Promoting professional and personal growth, continuous learning enables teachers to increase their knowledge base, pick up new abilities, and become more effective teachers overall.

4.11 The Importance of Perseverance

The theme of the importance of perseverance emerged as the first significant insights gained during their employment. Participants learned about vitality and perseverance during their employability journey. A recurring theme emerged from the experiences of the participants, which was the undeniable significance of working hard to determine their employability. They recognize that obtaining the essential knowledge, skills, and certificates, securing a license to teach, gaining teaching experience, and ultimately landing a teaching position involves a substantial amount of hard work. Highlights from the responses of the participants are as follows.

IDIP 4:

"I've learned to never give up on things. Masking unsa man although sa sugod dili mn ihatag sa imoha sa first na gusto. Never give up kay nay right time for that which is mo abot ra jud sa imoha. Ang Ginoo nakabalo sa tanan kung wala pa nagihataga sa karun siguro naa siyay hatag na fit or mas mayo sa imohang journey kanang dili ka na mag lisud. I always trust God lang jud. "

"I've learned not to give up on things. Although it is not always easy to obtain what you desire and enjoy. But never give up because your moment will arrive. God knows everything, and he is preparing something for you that you deserve and is worth after all of your journey. As a result, I constantly put my trust in God."

FGD 2:

"Not stop trying jud, try and try until you succeed mao pay ingon nila. Mo abot lang jud ang right time nimo and dili ma disappoint whatever outcome sa path na imong gi chose. While waiting sa imong gusto try to explore other opportunities as well. Its good pud for personal and career development."

"Not stop trying to get what you want, try and try until you succeed said by many. Given that you should not be disappointed with the outcome. Try exploring other opportunities as well. It's good for personal and career development."

FGD 3:

"Akong tip na mahatag sa ilaha basi sa akoang experience is dili lang jud mawad-an og paglaum. Tanan man makaagi og kalisod, kakapoy mao na ilang I remember dili lang kay selected or ikaw or siya tanan mo agi ana. Mafailed man mu bangon gihapon, Kay if you believe and trust God, He will give you what you prayed for and what you deserve."

"Based on my experience, I would encourage them to never give up hope. Everyone will face hardship and want to give up, but they will remember that this will not be experienced by a single individual or by you alone, but by everyone. If they fail, learn to fight because if they believe and trust God, he will someday give you what you prayed for and deserve."

According to the research, aspiring technical teachers face a number of challenges, such as acquiring the necessary knowledge and abilities, obtaining licenses and certificates, and gaining relevant teaching experience. The participants themselves recognise that reaching these milestones calls for a committed and continuous effort. This aligns with Wei-Tien's (2020) claim that obtaining a teaching career requires perseverance.

The experiences of the participants go beyond emphasizing the value of perseverance. Research by J.E. (2011) proposes a relationship between perseverance and vitality that includes both physical and mental health. This supports the idea that maintaining physical and emotional resilience in the face of adversity is just as important for technical teachers to have a successful career as dedication. The participants' unwavering dedication to persistence is an example to aspiring technical teachers. Their stories show how a rewarding career in teaching may be achieved through steadfast

dedication, lifelong learning, and obtaining the required certifications (Bassman, 2012). This is consistent with the findings of Ryosuke *et al.* (2020), who discovered a favorable relationship between persistence and success in obtaining teaching qualifications.

Perseverance is definitely important, but Fabelico (2020) reminds us that it's not the only factor that determines success. Thorough subject-matter expertise and learning management abilities are also essential elements of a well-rounded teacher.

In conclusion, there are many obstacles along the way that must be overcome in order to become a worthy technical teacher. The participant stories emphasize how important it is to work hard in order to obtain the required training, experience, and credentials. To become a qualified teacher, one must be dedicated, resilient, and committed to lifelong learning. The experiences of the participants serve as an inspiration of hope, encouraging upcoming generations of technical teachers to continue and realize their aspirations of molding young minds.

5. Implications and Concluding Remarks

5.1 Implication for Education Practice

Several practice implications can empower and encourage technical teachers in light of their experiences and challenges. According to the findings, BTTE programs should incorporate a larger range of pedagogical techniques and abilities to prepare graduates better to teach a range of courses in addition to their area of concentration. Incorporate important TLE subjects within the technical teacher curriculum, such as home economics, industrial arts, ICT, and Agri-fishery arts. The program's expansion can potentially improve technical teachers' flexibility and competitiveness in the labor market.

Additionally, it support technical educators to pursue lifelong learning by enrolling them in online courses, certification programs, and workshops that advance their pedagogical and technical proficiency. To help technical graduates become more qualified and prepared for teaching roles, provide review sessions and mock board tests to help them with their licensure exams. By addressing problems and putting solutions in place, technical teachers can better match the needs of the teaching profession. This results in a workforce that is adaptable to changing economic demands and supports career paths, effectively bringing a varied range of skills and knowledge to the field.

5.2 Implication for Future Research

The findings of the research highlight a number of areas for further investigation on the experiences of technical teachers. First, investigate particular challenges faced by technical teachers during their education and transition to the workforce, with an emphasis on the Philippine educational system, to give specific answers. Another is, to investigate the influence of additional pedagogical training, skill development, and teaching experiences included in Technical Teacher Education curricula on graduates' employability and effectiveness.

Lastly, research the role of subject-matter knowledge improvement and continual professional development for technical teachers using online resources, workshops, and

certification programs. Evaluate the possibility for curricular innovation in the Bachelor of Technical Teacher Education program by adding expanded teaching scopes and advanced pedagogical abilities. In addition, it assess how evolved teacher education, including practical experiences and pedagogical abilities, can lead to a stronger and diversified workforce that fulfills the demands of the present economic situation.

Each of these implications proposes a different perspective for in-depth research that can contribute considerably to the field of Technical Teacher Education and the broader educational landscape.

6. Concluding Remarks

As someone who has just entered the world of technical teaching, I just reflected that the knowledge gained in college education was insufficient when looking for a teaching job. Looking back, though having the necessary technical knowledge, successfully imparting those talents to others involves a different set of skills entirely. Certifications, training programs, and even greater classroom experience seem to prove essential. They provide you with the resources you require to close the knowledge gap with your students. Considering the difficulties that the study's participants had to overcome, it is evident how important it is to have those additional credentials. They not only help you become a more competent technical teacher, but they also increase your marketability as a candidate. All the credentials you can acquire will give you an advantage, as there can be fierce competition for teaching jobs.

The participants' aspirations to become technical teachers and their challenging journey resonated with me as well. They talked about their unwavering love for teaching, their commitment to lifelong learning, and their determination to succeed despite the obstacles. As a technical teacher and former applicant, I also went through a difficult time, applying to multiple schools, losing hope, regretting my degree, and even considering accepting jobs that were unrelated to my area of competence in order to obtain employment. It also taught me that this journey was a brutal teacher, piling rejections, doubts, and heartbreaking disappointments. Nevertheless, each one served as a reality check, reminding me and my fellow technical teacher that the power of hard work, unwavering passion, and belief in oneself is the key to achieving even the most ambitious dreams.

This research has been a real eye-opener. The significance of ongoing education and professional growth for technical educators has been emphasized, but the participants have also demonstrated the profession's constant devotion. Hopefully, with more awareness and support, we can bridge the gap between technical expertise and effective teaching, empowering technical teachers to thrive truly.

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