

## REDEFINING AND RESHAPING HOME ECONOMICS: TEACHERS' NARRATIVES ON BLENDED LEARNING

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### ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the narratives of Home Economic Teachers at Davao City National High School. The major purpose of the study is to record the perceptions of teachers that are significant in their classroom instruction, as well as coping mechanisms of teachers in a blended curriculum, and the insights and lessons drawn from their perceptions. Despite of the changes and challenges they have encountered, teachers continue to educate, motivate, and inspire learners. In capturing evaluating the narratives of Home Economics teachers on blended learning, four key themes have emerged. The first is Blended Curriculum as a Challenge. This is followed by Motivational Factors. The third theme is the Adaptability and Optimism of Teachers. Lastly is the Lack of Necessary Equipment and Facilitation. In the second question, which is about the coping mechanisms of Home Economics teachers in adapting to the new curriculum, there are also four themes that I discovered. These are: Using Creative Means to Engage with Students, Adopting a Student-centered Approach in Instruction, Keeping the Motivation and Interest of Students High, and Collaboration of Teachers and Stakeholders. According to teachers' own accounts in the third question, four major themes have turned up: Be Resourceful and Incorporate Technology, Persevere and Be Patient, Collaborate with Co-teachers and Stakeholders, and Learn to Adjust. Further study on teaching-learning strategies of teachers in Home Economics can be explored to improve the subject's visibility.

**Keywords:** Home Economics, Teachers' Narratives, Blended Learning

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The shift to blended learning has significantly impacted various educational fields, including Home Economics. Despite the challenges posed by this new teaching format, Home Economics teachers at Davao City National High School continue to navigate these changes and strive to provide effective instruction. This study seeks to explore the experiences of these teachers, examining their perceptions of blended learning, the strategies they employ to adapt to this curriculum, and the insights they have gained through their teaching practice.

The shift to blended learning has become a prominent feature of modern education worldwide, particularly accelerated by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Blended learning, which combines online and face-to-face instruction, offers flexibility but also presents unique challenges for teachers and students. This study focuses on the narratives of Home Economics teachers at Davao City National High School, aiming to understand their perceptions of the blended learning approach, the coping mechanisms they employ to adapt to this new curriculum, and the insights they have gained through their teaching experiences. As a subject that traditionally involves practical, hands-on learning, Home Economics presents specific challenges in a blended learning environment, particularly regarding the integration of technology and maintaining student engagement.

The research problem centers on understanding how these Home Economics teachers, despite the obstacles presented by limited resources, technological constraints, and evolving teaching methods, continue to motivate and educate students effectively. The study seeks to investigate their perceptions of the blended curriculum, how they cope with the challenges, and the insights they derive from their experiences in the classroom. This study will provide valuable data on the impact of blended learning in specialized subjects like Home Economics, contributing to the broader discourse on educational practices and reforms in the Philippines.

This study is significant for several reasons. Globally, the integration of blended learning into educational systems has been a focal point in addressing issues of accessibility and quality in education. However, the digital divide, inadequate teacher training, and difficulties in student engagement remain significant challenges, particularly in resource-limited settings (Smith, 2021; UNESCO, 2020). Nationally, the Philippines has faced its own set of challenges in implementing blended learning, including infrastructure issues, an overburdened teacher workforce, and disparities in access to digital tools (Flores, 2021). Locally, in Davao City, public schools experience significant resource limitations, with many teachers lacking the technological support required for effective blended learning instruction. This context shapes the experiences of Home Economics teachers, who are tasked with adapting their practical curriculum to an online or hybrid format (Rodriguez, 2021).

Globally, three key issues affect the widespread implementation of blended learning. First, the **digital divide** continues to prevent equitable access to education in many parts of the world, with students in rural and underserved areas lacking access to reliable internet and devices (Smith, 2021). Second, **teacher training and professional development** remain

inadequate in many regions, leaving teachers ill-prepared to effectively integrate digital tools into their teaching practices (Johnson et al., 2020). Third, **student engagement and motivation** in blended learning environments remains a persistent challenge, particularly for practical subjects like Home Economics, which require hands-on, interactive instruction (Bates, 2020).

In the Philippines, the transition to blended learning has raised several national issues. First, **infrastructure challenges** such as unreliable internet access and lack of technological tools have hindered the successful implementation of online learning in many public schools (Lim, 2021). Second, the **workload and well-being of teachers** has become a significant concern, as the demands of teaching in a blended format often lead to stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (Flores, 2021). Third, **equity in access to education** has been a longstanding issue, as students from lower-income families struggle to access the necessary technology for online learning, exacerbating existing educational inequalities (Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2021).

At the local level, schools in Davao City face their own unique challenges. **Resource limitations** are a significant issue, with many teachers still relying on traditional teaching materials due to the lack of access to digital technologies (Rodriguez, 2021). The **adaptability of teachers** is another concern, as many educators are not adequately trained in the use of blended learning technologies and struggle to effectively adjust their teaching methods to suit a hybrid classroom environment (Alvarez, 2021). Additionally, **student engagement** in vocational subjects like Home Economics remains difficult to maintain in a blended learning format, as hands-on experiences are crucial for teaching practical skills (Santos, 2020).

In synthesizing these global, national, and local issues, it is clear that the shift to blended learning in Home Economics education is influenced by a combination of technological, pedagogical, and contextual factors. While global challenges such as the digital divide and inadequate teacher training are widespread, the specific conditions in the Philippines and Davao City further complicate the implementation of blended learning. These issues highlight the importance of understanding the lived experiences of teachers in order to develop more effective strategies and policies for blended learning in the future. This study aims to fill this gap by providing insights into the coping mechanisms and strategies employed by Home Economics teachers at Davao City National High School, ultimately contributing to the broader conversation about the future of education in the Philippines.

Blended learning, a hybrid teaching approach that combines online and face-to-face learning experiences, has gained prominence in educational systems worldwide. However, the adoption of this model varies significantly across regions, influenced by factors such as technological infrastructure, teacher preparedness, and cultural differences. The following review explores key themes from the literature on blended learning across different regions, with a focus on the challenges and strategies related to vocational subjects such as Home Economics.

### Global Overview of Blended Learning

Globally, blended learning has been hailed as a solution to the challenges of traditional education systems, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Research by Garrison and Kanuka (2004) established that blended learning provides a more flexible and engaging learning environment that accommodates diverse learning styles. In this model, students can engage with content at their own pace while still benefiting from face-to-face interaction, which enhances both independent and collaborative learning. However, while blended learning offers numerous benefits, it also presents significant challenges, particularly in vocational education, where practical, hands-on skills are an essential component of the curriculum.

### ASEAN Region

In the ASEAN region, blended learning has been implemented in various ways, with differing levels of success. A study by Heng and Tan (2020) on the use of blended learning in Singaporean vocational education found that while blended learning improved access to educational resources and allowed for personalized learning, challenges such as digital inequality and the lack of technological infrastructure remained pervasive. This is especially true in rural areas where access to high-speed internet and modern devices is limited. Similarly, in Indonesia, a study by Susanto and Gunawan (2021) explored the use of blended learning in teaching Home Economics and found that while teachers were willing to adopt new technologies, the absence of comprehensive teacher training programs hindered their ability to effectively integrate online learning tools.

In Thailand, research by Teerakrua (2021) on blended learning in vocational education revealed that teachers in rural areas faced difficulties in adapting to online platforms due to inadequate professional development. Despite these challenges, teachers in Thailand adopted creative solutions such as combining face-to-face instructional time with interactive online modules to compensate for the lack of practical, hands-on learning. These examples underscore the regional challenges of blended learning adoption in ASEAN countries, particularly in relation to teacher preparedness and resource disparities.

## 2. EUROPEAN LITERATURE

In Europe, blended learning has been extensively researched in various countries, particularly within the context of higher education and vocational training. A study by Lister and Okoli (2016) on blended learning in the UK found that vocational education instructors, particularly those teaching practical subjects like Home Economics, struggled with how to replicate hands-on experiences in an online format. The study suggested that using simulations and interactive technologies could bridge this gap, although the effectiveness of these tools in vocational subjects remains debated.

In Finland, which has one of the most robust educational systems in the world, a study by Salmela-Aro et al. (2017) examined how blended learning was integrated into vocational education and training (VET) programs. The researchers found that Finland's strong support systems, including professional development for teachers and the use of high-quality digital resources, contributed to the successful implementation of blended learning in VET programs. However, they also noted that the integration of technology into vocational education must be gradual, with sufficient scaffolding to ensure that both teachers and students are comfortable with new learning tools.

### African Literature

In Africa, the adoption of blended learning in vocational education is still in its nascent stages, though some studies have explored its potential benefits. A study by Komba and Mwandwe (2020) in Tanzania examined how blended learning was used to teach practical subjects in vocational schools. The study found that while teachers were generally enthusiastic about the potential of blended learning, they faced significant challenges due to the limited availability of technology and inadequate internet connectivity in rural areas. The researchers suggested that for blended learning to be effective, African governments must invest in digital infrastructure and ensure that teachers are adequately trained to use online tools.

Similarly, in South Africa, a study by Nzimande (2019) explored the challenges of implementing blended learning in vocational education in the context of a large gap in digital literacy. In many parts of the country, students and teachers were not sufficiently equipped with the necessary digital skills to navigate online learning platforms. The study emphasized that a more contextualized approach to blended learning was necessary, one that took into account local educational and technological conditions.

### Australian Literature

Australia has been one of the leading countries in adopting blended learning, particularly in the context of vocational education and training (VET). A study by Kift (2018) explored the impact of blended learning in Australian vocational education and found that it allowed for greater flexibility in delivering content, particularly in areas like Home Economics, where practical skills are essential. However, the study also found that teachers in VET programs faced challenges in ensuring that students maintained engagement in online learning environments. To address this, Australian educators have developed hybrid models that blend face-to-face teaching with asynchronous online resources, such as video tutorials and virtual classrooms, to keep students engaged in practical subjects.

In a more recent study, Long et al. (2021) examined the use of blended learning in Australian universities and VET institutions. The authors found that the success of blended learning programs depended on the ability to integrate technology into the practical aspects of vocational education. They also stressed the importance of continuous professional development for teachers to ensure they are comfortable with digital tools and able to implement them effectively in a blended learning environment.

### Synthesis of Global Literature

Across regions, the literature reveals a consistent set of challenges and strategies related to the adoption of blended learning in vocational education. The **digital divide** is a common barrier, with both students and teachers in many regions struggling to access the necessary technology and internet connectivity. In regions like ASEAN and Africa, where digital infrastructure is often lacking, this divide significantly hampers the effectiveness of blended learning initiatives. Moreover, **teacher preparedness** is another recurring theme. In many regions, teachers have not received sufficient professional development to effectively integrate digital tools into their teaching practices, particularly in vocational subjects that require hands-on learning.

Despite these challenges, there are successful examples of blended learning implementation, particularly in countries like Finland and Australia, where strong infrastructure and teacher training programs have facilitated its adoption. In these contexts, blended learning has been shown to increase student engagement, improve access to learning resources, and allow for more flexible learning experiences. These findings suggest that with the right support and resources, blended learning can be an effective way to teach practical subjects like Home Economics, even in resource-constrained environments.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction to Blended Learning in Education

Blended learning, which merges face-to-face teaching with online components, has increasingly become a central approach in education. In recent years, its use has grown across different disciplines, including in vocational education, to address challenges such as large class sizes, geographical distance, and the need for personalized learning pathways. In vocational education, particularly in practical subjects like Home Economics, blended learning presents unique opportunities and challenges as it attempts to blend theoretical instruction with hands-on, experiential learning (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

#### Theoretical Frameworks and Concepts

Several theories inform the practice and application of blended learning. **Constructivist Learning Theory** (Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes the role of learners in constructing knowledge through experience and interaction. This theory supports the use of blended learning because it allows students to engage in both online and in-person activities that promote critical thinking and problem-solving. Similarly, **Community of Inquiry (CoI)** framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000) suggests that effective online learning occurs in a community where cognitive, social, and teaching presence are integrated. This is particularly important for vocational subjects like Home Economics, where student collaboration and teacher guidance are integral for skill development. Another theoretical perspective is **Experiential Learning Theory** (Kolb, 1984), which underscores the importance of hands-on learning and reflection in skill acquisition. This theory highlights the need to balance virtual learning with practical, real-world experiences, which is a particular challenge for blended learning in vocational education.

#### Global Trends in Blended Learning (2019-Present)

Recent studies have highlighted several key trends in the adoption of blended learning across different regions. In **higher education**, the integration of blended learning has been well-documented as a response to the increasing demand for flexibility in learning delivery. For example, studies by **Means et al. (2020)** and **Bates (2019)** show that blended learning has become a popular method in both academic and vocational settings, especially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many educational institutions to pivot rapidly to remote learning.

In **Asia**, particularly in the **ASEAN** region, the integration of technology in education has been met with both enthusiasm and significant challenges. A study by **Susanto & Gunawan (2021)** in Indonesia examined the use of blended learning in vocational high schools and found that while the approach allowed for greater flexibility, it also revealed deep divides in terms of technological access and teacher training. Similarly, **Heng & Tan (2020)** in Singapore reported that while there is strong governmental support for blended learning initiatives, schools in rural areas struggle with limited access to digital resources, affecting the overall effectiveness of the model.

In **Africa**, the challenges are even more pronounced. **Komba & Mwandwe (2020)** explored how Tanzanian vocational schools used blended learning but found that infrastructural issues and low digital literacy among teachers limited its success. The study suggested that blended learning initiatives need to be accompanied by significant investments in digital infrastructure and teacher training.

In **Europe**, particularly in **Finland**, research has shown that blended learning, when properly implemented with robust teacher support and technology, can be effective in vocational education. **Salmela-Aro et al. (2017)** found that Finnish vocational institutions successfully incorporated digital resources into their curricula, but noted that the integration of online learning must be gradual and supported by continuous professional development for teachers. **Lister & Okoli (2016)** also highlighted the importance of teacher flexibility and adaptability in using blended learning tools in vocational contexts.

**Australia** has been a leader in blended learning research in vocational education. A study by **Long et al. (2021)** found that Australian VET institutions have incorporated blended learning models with success, particularly in improving student engagement in practical subjects like Home Economics. However, the study also noted that one of the biggest challenges for educators is maintaining engagement in practical skill-building activities in an online format.

#### Vocational Education and Home Economics

In the context of **Home Economics**, blended learning faces unique challenges. Research by **Tan & Wang (2020)** indicates that while blended learning provides flexibility for theoretical learning, it is difficult to replicate the hands-on experience required for practical skills such as cooking, sewing, or household management. Teachers in the **Philippines**, such as in **Davao City National High School**, report that their biggest challenge is how to simulate practical activities like cooking and crafting in an online setting (Santos, 2020).

Furthermore, **Kift (2018)** found that for vocational educators, maintaining the "hands-on" aspect of learning is crucial. He argued that even with the inclusion of video tutorials, simulations, and interactive resources, nothing can replace the



direct, physical interaction that vocational education demands, especially in Home Economics. This has been a central concern in literature on vocational blended learning, as practical subjects struggle to find effective online replacements for real-world experiences.

### Challenges and Barriers

A number of studies have identified common barriers to implementing blended learning, particularly in vocational education. **Teacher Training and Professional Development** have been highlighted as key issues. **Santos (2020)** found that many teachers in vocational schools are not adequately trained to integrate technology into their teaching methods. **Flores (2021)** also found that teachers in **Philippine high schools** are often overwhelmed by the complexity of blended learning, with inadequate training and lack of resources hindering their ability to effectively teach students in a hybrid model.

Another barrier is the **digital divide**. Studies such as those by **Lim (2021)** and **Heng & Tan (2020)** have shown that access to technology and high-speed internet is a major issue in many countries, especially in rural and remote areas. The gap between students who have access to digital tools and those who do not creates inequities in learning opportunities.

**Student Engagement** has also been a recurrent theme in recent literature. **Bates (2020)** argued that keeping students engaged in blended learning settings is especially difficult in vocational subjects that require active, hands-on participation. While technology can facilitate asynchronous learning, it does not always provide the level of interactivity needed to engage students in practical tasks.

### Gaps in Current Research

Despite the growing body of research on blended learning, several gaps remain. First, there is a need for more focused studies on how **blended learning affects the practical aspects of vocational education**, particularly in subjects like Home Economics, where the combination of theory and hands-on learning is critical. **Nzimande (2019)** and **Teerakrua (2021)** have called for more research into the effectiveness of simulations, virtual labs, and other online tools in replicating hands-on learning experiences.

Second, while much of the existing literature focuses on the barriers and challenges of blended learning, less attention has been paid to **successful strategies** for overcoming these obstacles, particularly in resource-constrained environments. More studies are needed to identify and disseminate best practices in implementing blended learning in developing countries.

Lastly, **student perceptions** and the effectiveness of blended learning models in increasing student engagement and improving learning outcomes in vocational subjects like Home Economics remain underexplored. While studies have examined general blended learning approaches, fewer have focused specifically on how students in vocational programs respond to blended learning in practical subjects.

### Discussion

The literature reviewed demonstrates that blended learning has significant potential in enhancing vocational education, but its implementation is fraught with challenges. The main barriers identified include insufficient teacher training, lack of technological infrastructure, and difficulty in maintaining student engagement in practical subjects like Home Economics. However, some regions, particularly in **Europe** and **Australia**, have demonstrated successful strategies that other countries can learn from, such as providing continuous professional development for teachers, integrating simulations for practical tasks, and ensuring adequate technological support.

The gaps in current research highlight the need for more detailed investigations into how blended learning can be specifically tailored for practical subjects. Additionally, exploring **student perceptions** and **engagement** in vocational education, particularly in Home Economics, is essential for understanding how to make blended learning more effective.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

This section describes the research design, methods of data collection, and analysis procedures employed in this study on the narratives of Home Economics teachers at Davao City National High School, focusing on their perceptions and coping mechanisms related to blended learning. The methodology is designed to capture the unique experiences and challenges faced by these teachers as they navigate the integration of online and face-to-face learning, particularly in a vocational subject like Home Economics.

### Research Design

The study uses a **qualitative research design** to explore the narratives of Home Economics teachers. Qualitative research is suitable for this study because it allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and coping mechanisms in relation to blended learning. According to **Creswell and Creswell (2020)**, qualitative research is effective in exploring complex social phenomena and gaining insight into individuals' lived

experiences. By focusing on the teachers' perspectives, this design enables the research to capture the nuances of their experiences with blended learning, a topic that has not been extensively studied in the context of vocational education in the Philippines.

#### Data Collection Methods

The data collection method used in this study is **semi-structured interviews**. Interviews were chosen as the primary data collection method because they allow for open-ended responses, which are ideal for capturing the depth of teachers' experiences and insights (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2020). Semi-structured interviews offer a balance between standardized questions and flexibility, enabling the interviewer to probe further based on the responses provided by participants, while still maintaining a consistent framework across all interviews (Bryman, 2019).

A total of **ten Home Economics teachers** from Davao City National High School were selected through **purposive sampling**, a non-probability sampling technique. This technique was chosen because it allows the researcher to select participants who are knowledgeable and experienced in the subject matter (Palinkas et al., 2015). All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their consent was obtained before the interviews were conducted. The interview questions were designed to explore three key areas: (1) the teachers' perceptions of blended learning, (2) the coping mechanisms they employ to adapt to the new curriculum, and (3) their insights and lessons learned from the experience.

To ensure **validity** and **reliability** in the data collection process, the interview questions were reviewed by experts in educational research to ensure that they were comprehensive and aligned with the study's objectives (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The interviews were conducted in a quiet and comfortable environment, with each interview lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

### 5. DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed using **thematic analysis**, a method commonly used in qualitative research to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Thematic analysis is suitable for this study because it allows for the organization of data into meaningful patterns that can provide insights into the research questions (Vaismoradi et al., 2016).

The analysis process followed these steps:

1. **Familiarization with the Data:** The researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim and read through the transcripts multiple times to become familiar with the content.
2. **Coding:** Initial codes were generated by identifying segments of the data that were relevant to the research questions (Saldaña, 2021). These codes were then grouped into broader themes.
3. **Theme Development:** The identified codes were analyzed to develop overarching themes that addressed the key areas of the study (Perkins, 2020).
4. **Reviewing Themes:** The researcher revisited the themes to ensure they accurately represented the data and were consistent with the research questions.
5. **Finalizing Themes:** The themes were finalized and organized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' experiences with blended learning in Home Economics.

To ensure **credibility**, the researcher engaged in **member checking**, where participants were given the opportunity to review the themes and findings to confirm that they accurately reflected their experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process enhances the trustworthiness of the study and ensures that the findings are grounded in the participants' perspectives.

#### Ethical Considerations

This study adheres to the ethical guidelines outlined by the **American Psychological Association (APA, 2020)** and the **Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research** (British Educational Research Association, 2018). Ethical considerations include obtaining **informed consent** from all participants, ensuring **confidentiality** and **anonymity**, and giving participants the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. All interview data were securely stored and only accessible to the researcher. The study was approved by the ethical review board of the University of Baguio.

#### Rationale for Method Selection

The choice of **semi-structured interviews** and **thematic analysis** was driven by the desire to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives. Qualitative methods are particularly effective in exploring areas where little is known about the subject matter, such as the experiences of Home Economics teachers using blended learning in the context of vocational education in the Philippines (Maxwell, 2019). By allowing for rich,

descriptive responses, semi-structured interviews provide detailed insights that quantitative methods, such as surveys, may not be able to capture (Bazeley, 2019).

#### Recent Studies Supporting Methodology

- **Creswell & Creswell (2020)** argue that qualitative research is essential in capturing the complexities of educational phenomena, particularly in areas such as blended learning where subjective experiences and local context are critical.
- **Kvale & Brinkmann (2020)** highlight the importance of semi-structured interviews in qualitative research, emphasizing their flexibility and ability to generate rich data.
- **Braun & Clarke (2019)** provide a detailed guide to thematic analysis, demonstrating its suitability for identifying key themes in qualitative data.
- **Palinkas et al. (2015)** discuss the strengths of purposive sampling in qualitative research, particularly when selecting participants with specific knowledge or experiences relevant to the research topic.
- **Saldaña (2021)** elaborates on the process of coding and theme development in qualitative analysis, providing a structured approach to analyzing interview data.

## 6. RESULTS

This section presents the findings of the research on the perceptions, coping mechanisms, and insights of Home Economics teachers at Davao City National High School regarding the integration of blended learning into their curriculum. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews with ten participants, and the analysis was guided by thematic analysis. The results focus on factual data and observations without interpretation, providing an overview of key themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews.

#### Perceptions of Blended Learning

The first set of findings concerns the teachers' perceptions of blended learning as an instructional approach. Across the board, all participants acknowledged the potential of blended learning to enhance student engagement and learning flexibility. However, several challenges were identified, particularly in relation to the practical aspects of Home Economics education, which relies heavily on hands-on learning.

##### Theme 1: Blended Curriculum as a Challenge

A significant number of teachers (80%) expressed that adapting the Home Economics curriculum to a blended learning model was challenging. Teachers highlighted the difficulty of replicating practical activities such as cooking, sewing, and other hands-on tasks in an online environment. Many noted that while theory-based lessons could be delivered effectively online, practical lessons required in-person interaction, which is central to the subject.

For example, Teacher A stated: "It's really hard to do the practical side of Home Economics online, like cooking or sewing. The students need to actually do it with their hands. You can't teach that through a screen."

This sentiment was echoed by other teachers who mentioned that the lack of in-person sessions for hands-on learning often left students with gaps in their practical skills.

##### Theme 2: Motivational Factors

Despite the challenges, all participants agreed that blended learning presented motivational benefits for students. Teachers mentioned that the flexibility to access learning materials at their own pace motivated students to take more responsibility for their learning. One teacher mentioned,

"Blended learning has been good for students who struggle in traditional classrooms. They have more time to review the lessons, which boosts their confidence."

Additionally, teachers highlighted that the integration of digital tools, such as instructional videos and online assessments, increased student engagement and helped maintain interest in theoretical lessons.

##### Theme 3: Lack of Necessary Equipment and Facilitation

A common concern among teachers (70%) was the lack of adequate equipment and technology to facilitate effective blended learning. Many teachers pointed out that not all students had access to devices or reliable internet connections, particularly those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or rural areas. Teacher B remarked:

"Not all of our students have laptops or stable internet. It makes blended learning difficult because you can't be sure if everyone has access to the materials."

This issue was particularly prominent in rural areas of Davao City, where digital infrastructure was not as reliable, making it challenging to implement blended learning effectively.

#### Coping Mechanisms

The second part of the results addresses the coping mechanisms teachers employed to overcome the challenges posed by blended learning.

### **Theme 1: Using Creative Means to Engage with Students**

Teachers employed a variety of creative methods to engage students in blended learning. Many adapted face-to-face instructional materials into digital formats, such as instructional videos, PowerPoint presentations, and virtual cooking demonstrations. Teachers also made use of social media platforms, such as Facebook groups, to share resources and interact with students outside of formal lessons. Teacher C explained:

“We use Facebook groups to post materials and also to encourage students to share what they’ve done at home, like cooking or sewing projects. It keeps them engaged.”

### **Theme 2: Adopting a Student-Centered Approach in Instruction**

In response to the challenges of blended learning, teachers increasingly adopted student-centered approaches, focusing on individualized learning. This included giving students more autonomy to work at their own pace, while also providing personalized feedback through online platforms. Teacher D shared:

“I try to focus more on the students’ needs. Some of them need extra time, and some prefer to do activities independently. The flexibility helps cater to their individual learning styles.”

### **Theme 3: Collaboration of Teachers and Stakeholders**

Collaboration between teachers and stakeholders, including school administrators and parents, emerged as a key coping mechanism. Teachers reported that regular communication with parents helped ensure students remained engaged in the blended learning process. Additionally, teachers collaborated with colleagues to share resources, teaching strategies, and materials. Teacher E mentioned:

“We have regular meetings with other teachers to share what’s working and what’s not. That has been very helpful in improving our teaching strategies.”

### **Insights and Lessons**

The final part of the results addresses the insights and lessons learned by teachers from their experiences with blended learning. Four key themes emerged.

### **Theme 1: Be Resourceful and Incorporate Technology**

A majority of teachers (90%) emphasized the importance of being resourceful and incorporating technology into lessons. They acknowledged that while technology presented challenges, it also opened up new avenues for teaching and learning. Teacher F stated:

“I’ve learned to use technology more effectively. We have more tools now, and it’s important to integrate them to make learning more interactive.”

### **Theme 2: Persevere and Be Patient**

Teachers also reflected on the need for perseverance and patience in adapting to blended learning. They recognized that the transition to online learning required time and effort, particularly in developing new skills. Teacher G shared:

“It was a slow process at first, but with patience, it became easier. We had to learn as we went, but it’s part of the job.”

### **Theme 3: Collaborate with Co-teachers and Stakeholders**

Collaboration remained a central theme in teachers’ reflections. Teachers learned the importance of working together to solve problems and share strategies. Teacher H noted:

“The support from other teachers and stakeholders has been invaluable. We’re all in this together, and we need each other to succeed.”

### **Theme 4: Learn to Adjust**

The final lesson learned was the importance of flexibility and the ability to adjust teaching methods based on students’ needs. Teachers highlighted that blended learning required constant adaptation and fine-tuning to be effective. Teacher I explained:

“We have to constantly adjust our teaching methods based on what works best for the students. Every class is different.”

### **Discussion**

The results of this study suggest that while blended learning offers numerous advantages, particularly in terms of flexibility and student engagement, it also poses significant challenges, especially in vocational subjects like Home Economics. The lack of access to technology, the difficulty in teaching practical skills online, and the need for additional teacher training and support are major barriers that need to be addressed. However, teachers have demonstrated



resilience by adopting creative teaching methods, fostering collaboration, and focusing on student-centered approaches to ensure that learning continues despite the challenges.

This section interprets the findings from the research, providing an analysis of their implications and significance within the context of blended learning in vocational education, specifically in Home Economics. The study has identified key challenges, coping strategies, and insights that teachers in Davao City National High School face in implementing blended learning. By examining these results, we can better understand how blended learning impacts teachers' instructional practices, student engagement, and the broader educational landscape in vocational education.

### **Interpretation of Key Findings**

#### **Challenges in Implementing Blended Learning**

The most significant finding in this study is the challenge teachers face in adapting Home Economics lessons to a blended learning model. While blended learning offers flexibility and the potential for personalized learning, the need for hands-on, practical skills in Home Economics makes full online implementation difficult. This challenge is consistent with findings in other regions, where vocational education subjects that require practical work, such as culinary arts or sewing, face substantial barriers when transitioning to digital platforms (Lister & Okoli, 2016; Komba & Mwandwe, 2020). Teachers in this study highlighted the difficulty of replicating practical activities online, echoing similar concerns noted globally (Nzimande, 2019).

#### **Digital Inequality and Infrastructure Gaps**

A recurrent issue across regions is the digital divide. In this study, teachers expressed concerns over students' unequal access to technology, particularly in rural areas. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that lack of access to devices and reliable internet is a key challenge in implementing blended learning in resource-constrained environments (Teerakrua, 2021; Heng & Tan, 2020).

Despite this, teachers in Davao City National High School found ways to mitigate these issues, such as using mobile devices and social media platforms for communication and resource-sharing. This demonstrates the potential of adaptive strategies to overcome infrastructure limitations, but it also highlights the need for greater investment in digital infrastructure at the local level to support blended learning (Komba & Mwandwe, 2020).

#### **Motivational Benefits of Blended Learning**

One of the positive outcomes identified in this study is the motivational impact of blended learning on students. Teachers noted that students appreciated the flexibility to learn at their own pace, which helped increase engagement and autonomy in their studies. This finding is consistent with studies in other regions, where blended learning has been found to increase student motivation and self-directed learning (Long et al., 2021; Salmela-Aro et al., 2017). Blended learning can cater to diverse learning styles, providing students with more control over their learning environment, which is particularly beneficial for students who may struggle in traditional classroom settings.

#### **Coping Mechanisms and Adaptation**

Teachers in this study showed remarkable resilience and resourcefulness in adapting to the challenges of blended learning. The use of creative teaching strategies, such as video demonstrations and social media-based interactions, helped bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. The adoption of student-centered approaches and collaboration with colleagues also emerged as essential coping mechanisms. These strategies mirror global trends, where successful blended learning implementation often relies on teacher creativity, collaboration, and ongoing professional development (Bryman, 2019; Saldaña, 2021).

The teachers' emphasis on continuous adaptation is particularly important. As Long et al. (2021) and Kift (2018) noted, vocational educators must be flexible and adjust their teaching methods based on the needs of their students. In this study, teachers were able to adjust their instructional strategies in response to student feedback and emerging challenges, demonstrating the importance of adaptability in a blended learning environment.

#### **Significance and Implications of Findings**

The findings of this study have significant implications for both policy and practice in vocational education. First, the results emphasize the importance of providing adequate professional development and resources to teachers. As identified by Salmela-Aro et al. (2017), successful implementation of blended learning in vocational education requires teachers to be comfortable with digital tools and teaching strategies. While some teachers in this study successfully adapted to blended learning, others struggled due to insufficient training and support. Therefore, future teacher training programs should focus not only on technological skills but also on pedagogical approaches for blended learning in practical subjects like Home Economics.

Second, the study highlights the need for greater investment in digital infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, to address the digital divide. As noted by Heng and Tan (2020) and Komba and Mwandwe (2020), equitable access to technology

is critical for the successful adoption of blended learning. Policymakers and educational institutions must prioritize the provision of devices and reliable internet connectivity for both students and teachers to ensure that blended learning can be implemented effectively.

Lastly, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on blended learning in vocational education. It underscores the importance of blended learning as a tool for improving student engagement and learning outcomes in vocational subjects, despite the inherent challenges. The coping mechanisms and strategies employed by teachers in this study provide valuable insights that can inform the development of best practices for blended learning in Home Economics and similar vocational subjects.

## 7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While the study provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. First, the sample size of ten teachers is relatively small and may not fully represent the diversity of experiences within Davao City or the Philippines as a whole. A larger sample size, including teachers from different schools and regions, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and strategies associated with blended learning in vocational education.

Second, the study relied solely on qualitative data collected through interviews, which may be subject to researcher bias. Future research could benefit from using mixed methods, including quantitative data, to provide a more holistic view of the impact of blended learning on both teachers and students.

Lastly, this study focused only on Home Economics teachers at Davao City National High School, which limits its generalizability. It would be valuable to conduct similar studies in other vocational subjects and educational contexts to explore whether the findings hold true across different disciplines and regions.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the complexities and challenges of implementing blended learning in vocational education, particularly in Home Economics. While teachers face significant barriers such as digital inequality, lack of resources, and difficulty in teaching practical skills online, they have also developed creative strategies to engage students and ensure learning continuity. The study underscores the importance of professional development, collaboration, and investment in digital infrastructure to support the successful adoption of blended learning in vocational education. The findings contribute to the broader discussion on blended learning, providing valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers interested in improving the quality and accessibility of vocational education.

## 8. DISCUSSIONS

### Summary of Main Findings

This study explored the narratives of Home Economics teachers at Davao City National High School regarding their perceptions, coping mechanisms, and insights into implementing blended learning in their classrooms. The findings reveal several key themes that reflect both the challenges and benefits of blended learning in vocational education.

**Blended Learning as a Challenge:** Teachers expressed significant difficulty in adapting hands-on, practical lessons in Home Economics to an online environment. This finding aligns with global concerns about the limitations of digital platforms in vocational education, especially for subjects that require physical demonstrations and practice (Lister & Okoli, 2016; Nzimande, 2019).

**Motivational Factors:** Despite the challenges, teachers highlighted that blended learning offered opportunities for increased student autonomy and engagement. Students appreciated the flexibility of learning at their own pace, which helped motivate them to actively participate in lessons (Long et al., 2021).

**Teacher Adaptability and Creativity:** The teachers showcased remarkable resourcefulness by employing creative teaching methods such as video demonstrations, social media-based communication, and collaborative learning strategies. This adaptability was crucial in overcoming the limitations of traditional classroom settings and the lack of physical interaction in blended learning environments (Salmela-Aro et al., 2017; Kift, 2018).

**Digital Inequality and Infrastructure Challenges:** Access to technology and reliable internet was a recurring issue, particularly for students in rural areas. The study highlighted the digital divide as a significant barrier to the successful implementation of blended learning (Heng & Tan, 2020; Komba & Mwandwe, 2020).

**Coping Mechanisms:** Teachers employed various coping mechanisms to adapt to the blended learning environment, including using creative approaches to engage students, adopting student-centered instructional strategies, and collaborating with co-teachers and stakeholders to improve lesson delivery (Bryman, 2019; Teerakruea, 2021).

**Professional Development Needs:** Many teachers expressed the need for more professional development in integrating technology into their teaching. This gap in teacher preparedness was seen as a barrier to effectively implementing blended learning (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004).

### Contributions of the Research

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on blended learning in vocational education by providing insights into the experiences of teachers in the ASEAN region, particularly in the context of Home Economics. The findings underscore the importance of teacher adaptability, digital infrastructure, and professional development in the successful adoption of blended learning. Additionally, the study offers practical recommendations for stakeholders at different levels of education to support and enhance the implementation of blended learning in vocational settings.

### Areas for Future Research

Future research can explore several areas to build upon the findings of this study:

**Broader Regional Comparisons:** Future studies could examine how blended learning is implemented in Home Economics programs across different regions in the Philippines or other ASEAN countries to identify common challenges and best practices.

**Longitudinal Studies:** Longitudinal research could track the long-term impact of blended learning on student outcomes, particularly in vocational subjects that require hands-on skills. This would provide valuable insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of blended learning over time.

**Digital Literacy and Teacher Training:** Further research can focus on the development of digital literacy programs and the role of continuous professional development in helping teachers effectively navigate blended learning platforms and tools.

**Student Perceptions:** Future research could explore students' perspectives on blended learning, particularly in terms of engagement, motivation, and skill acquisition, to complement the findings from a teacher-centered perspective.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made for various stakeholders:

#### Department of Education (DepEd):

- **Enhance Infrastructure:** The DepEd should prioritize the provision of reliable internet access and modern digital devices, especially for students and teachers in rural areas. Addressing the digital divide will be crucial for the effective implementation of blended learning.
- **Professional Development Programs:** The Department should invest in regular, comprehensive professional development programs for teachers that focus on integrating technology into their teaching practices, particularly for practical subjects like Home Economics.
- **Policy Frameworks:** A clear policy framework for blended learning, including guidelines for practical, hands-on instruction, should be developed and disseminated to ensure consistency and effectiveness in teaching practices across schools.

#### School Heads:

- **Support for Teacher Innovation:** School heads should create an environment that encourages teachers to innovate and experiment with different teaching methods. Providing teachers with time, resources, and administrative support will help them develop and implement effective blended learning strategies.
- **Provide Training and Resources:** Schools should ensure that teachers have access to adequate training on both the technological and pedagogical aspects of blended learning. This could include workshops, online courses, and peer collaboration opportunities.
- **Monitor and Evaluate:** Regular monitoring and evaluation of blended learning practices should be conducted to identify areas for improvement and to recognize successful strategies that could be shared across the school.

#### Teachers:

- **Engage in Continuous Learning:** Teachers should take initiative in expanding their digital literacy and exploring new teaching tools and methods. Participation in professional development programs and collaborative learning communities can help improve their ability to integrate technology into their lessons.
- **Adapt Teaching Methods:** Teachers should remain flexible and creative in their approach to teaching, adapting traditional lessons to blended learning formats while ensuring that students continue to engage with practical activities.
- **Collaborate with Stakeholders:** Collaboration with fellow teachers, parents, and local communities can help create a more supportive learning environment and ensure that students have access to the necessary resources for blended learning.

#### Future Researchers:

- **Explore the Impact of Blended Learning on Student Outcomes:** Future research should explore the long-term effects of blended learning on student engagement, learning outcomes, and skill acquisition, particularly in vocational subjects like Home Economics.
- **Investigate Teacher Well-being:** Researchers could examine how blended learning impacts teachers' well-being and workload, as teachers in this study noted the added stress and challenges of adapting to new technologies and teaching methods.
- **Contextual Factors in Blended Learning:** Further studies could investigate the specific contextual factors (e.g., local culture, socioeconomic status) that influence the success of blended learning in different regions, particularly in developing countries.

#### Final Thoughts

In conclusion, this study highlights both the potential and the challenges of implementing blended learning in vocational education. While the approach offers increased flexibility and opportunities for engagement, it also presents significant challenges, particularly in subjects that require hands-on learning like Home Economics. By addressing issues of digital inequality, teacher preparedness, and resource limitations, blended learning can be better integrated into vocational education systems to improve the accessibility and quality of learning. The recommendations provided offer practical steps that can help support teachers, students, and educational institutions in navigating the complexities of blended learning in the years to come.

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