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Addressing Learning Gaps in TLE Cookery Through Strategic Intervention Material Among Grade 10 Students at Sto. Niño National High School DepEd Batangas City

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Abstract

Cookery, as a core component of Home Economics, teaches students with essential knowledge and practical skills in food preparation and kitchen management. It aims to enhance their skills in preparing, cooking, and presenting different dishes while following appropriate food safety and sanitation standards. Despite these objectives, students often encounter learning gaps influenced by several factors, including limited comprehension of fundamental concepts, and challenges in understanding technical terms and procedures. Many students struggle to master some key competencies that hinder their progress and affect their overall achievement in the subject. As a result, the quarterly assessment reveals a low Mean Percentage Score (MPS) along with the students' least learned competencies.

This action research examined how effective the use of Strategic Intervention Materials is in addressing the least learned competencies in Cookery 10 during the first quarter (2025-2026) among Grade 10 students of Sto. Niño National High School. Using a descriptive research design, the study utilized Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) as an instructional tool to evaluate the effectiveness of SIMs in addressing the least learned competencies in Cookery. The purpose of this strategy was to find out how the application of SIMs could aid in improving students' knowledge and performance in areas of difficulty.

The research determined the least mastered competencies of the Grade 10 learners in TLE Cookery, as reflected by their low Mean Percentage Score (63.86%) on the First Quarter Test, which calls for specific instructional interventions. To bridge these gaps, Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) were introduced, leading to enhanced student performance. The results indicated that SIMs significantly improved students' understanding, interest, and motivation in studying Cookery.

Keywords: *Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs), Home Economics, Cookery, Mean Percentage Score (MPS), instructional materials, students' activities*

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Introduction

Cookery is one of the crucial components of Home Economics that provide students with foundational knowledge and hands-on experience in food preparation and kitchen management. It is designed to enhance students' competencies in preparing, cooking, and presenting a variety of dishes following food safety and sanitation standards. However, despite these efforts, many students still experience learning gaps due to numerous factors such as limited resources, understanding of core concepts, minimal exposure to actual cooking practices, and difficulties in understanding technical terms and procedures.

These concerns are reflected on DepEd Order No. 39, s. 2012 on Policy Guidelines for Addressing Learning Gap and Implementing the Reading-Writing Program for Secondary Schools (SY 2012-2013) states that DepEd recognized that many of the secondary schools develop and implement remediation programs for those students who were not achieving academically. In order to provide an organized method for addressing remediation activities, DepEd advises all its schools to plan for the implementation of a remediation program and to create Strategic Intervention Materials for the purpose of providing remediation interventions through teachers' worksheets that were focused the least mastered competencies.

Previous studies have highlighted that Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) improve students' academic performance. SIMs are instructional materials that can be used in combining with other teaching instrument to assist in the learning process. Suarez et al. (2020), confirmed that using SIMs is effective in improving students' academic performance especially concerning topics related to their least mastered skills. Department of Education (DepEd), as detailed in Memorandum No. 117, S2005, has conducted professional development workshops and seminars for educators to assist them in creating strategic intervention materials as a means of supporting and enriching student learning.

Lazo and De Guman (2021) also discussed that SIM provides additional learning opportunities for students to master competency-based skills they couldn't develop during regular class. It recommended that the development of SIM assist students in developing positive values and attributes; to develop SIM with more interactive and engaging instructional activities to increase student motivation, comprehension, and create critical and advanced thinking skills; and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of assessment methods and tools.

Strategic Intervention Materials are proven to enhance understanding and retention by catering to learners' specific needs and learning styles. It designed to simplify complicated concepts and provide students with more engaging, learner-centered experiences. This action research explores how SIMs were created and used as a targeted approach to address least learned competencies of Grade 10 students during first quarter. The study aims to improve student performance and educational outcomes in the subject of TLE Cookery. By integrating SIMs into the teaching of TLE Cookery, it also improves student comprehension, performance, and participation, ultimately bridging the gap between curriculum goals and classroom realities.

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This study aims to find out how effective Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) are in addressing least learned competencies in Cookery 10.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Based on the Mean Percentage Score (MPS), what are the least learned competencies of the Grade 10 students in Cookery?
2. What is the level of difficulty experienced by Grade 10 students in specific TLE Cookery competencies relative to:
   2.1 presenting egg dishes ;
   2.2 preparing starch and cereal dishes; and
   2.3 storing starch and cereal dishes
3. How effective are the different Strategic Intervention Materials among Grade 10 Students in terms of:
   3.1 written task; and
   3.2 performance task?
4. What challenges do students encounter in using Strategic Intervention Materials in learning TLE Cookery?
5. Based on the results of the study, what enhancements activities may be proposed?

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive research design to describe the level of difficulty encountered by students in selected Cookery competencies such as presenting egg dishes, preparing and storing starch and cereal dishes. This design is appropriate for systematically presenting the current state of learners' performance and difficulties. This study aimed to address learning gaps in TLE Cookery and evaluate the effectiveness of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) in improving the performance of Grade 10 students at Sto. Niño National High School, Batangas City.

Participants

The participants in this research were 43 Grade 10 students who chose Cookery course at Sto. Niño National High School for the academic year 2025–2026. These students were chosen as the main respondents since they participate directly in the Cookery lessons, consisting of both male and female students with diverse levels of academic performance.

Research Instrument

This study utilized a structured survey questionnaire as the main tool to collect quantitative data in students' perceptions regarding the level of difficulty they experienced in Cookery

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competencies, the effectiveness of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs), and the challenges they encountered in using them.

A **four-point Likert scale** was used to evaluate the level of difficulty experienced by grade 10 students in selected TLE cookery competencies and the effectiveness of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) in Learning TLE Cookery.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection process started with careful preparation of a survey questionnaire and Strategic Intervention Materials. The instruments used in this study were carefully developed to ensure validity and reliability. The SIMs were constructed based on the identified least learned competencies from the MPS and Item Analysis Record and were aligned with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). The questionnaire was designed to determine students' perceptions, difficulties, and experiences in using the SIMs. To ensure accuracy and clarity, the research instruments were reviewed based on the suggestions and recommendations of the School Head and Master Teacher of Sto. Niño National High School. After securing permission from the school head and obtaining parents' consent, the researcher introduced and implemented the Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) during class hours to 43 Grade 10 students. All collected data were compiled, organized, encoded, and analyzed using a four-point Likert scale for interpretation.

Data Analysis

The study utilized descriptive statistical tools, including **weighted mean, frequency, and percentage**, to analyze students' responses.

- **Weighted Mean** - measured the level of difficulty experienced by the students in specific Cookery competencies and effectiveness of SIMs in addressing least learned competencies.
- **Frequency and percentage -** used to analyze the challenges encountered by the students in using the SIMs. This method summarized and presented the students' responses in a simple and organized manner, highlighting the most common difficulties they experienced.

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Results

1. Least Learned Competencies of the Grade 10 students in Cookery

Table 1
First Quarterly Test Results in TLE Cookery 10

Score Range	F	P	R
Outstanding (45-50)	5	11.63%	2.5
Very Satisfactory (43-44)	4	9.30%	3
Satisfactory (40-42)	5	11.63%	2.5
Fairly Satisfactory (38-39)	2	4.65%	4
Did Not Meet Expectations (0-37)	27	62.79%	1
Total	43	100%	

Legend: *F – Frequency* *P – Percentage* *R – Rank*

Table 1 shows the performance of 43 students in the First Quarterly Test in TLE 10 Cookery. The results indicate that most students (27) did not meet the minimum learning standards, suggesting a lack of mastery in basic cookery concepts, especially in egg, starch, and cereal dishes. A small percentage achieved fairly satisfactory (4.65%) and very satisfactory (9.30%) levels, while 11.63% were rated satisfactory and another 11.63% attained an outstanding rating, reflecting better understanding and skills in the subject.

2. Level of Difficulty experienced by Grade 10 students in specific TLE Cookery competencies

2.1 presenting egg dishes

Table 2
Grade 10 Students Level of Difficulty in Presenting Egg Dishes

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Identify suitable plates using standard methods	3.21	Difficult	4
2. Hygienically and attractively arrange egg dishes with garnishes and accompaniments	3.30	Difficult	2
3. Apply plating techniques that enhance the overall presentation of egg dishes.	3.28	Difficult	3
4. Utilize garnishing and side	3.44	Difficult	1

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dishes that complement the egg dish appropriately.			
5. Observe occupational health and safety practices during food presentation.	2.98	Difficult	5
Composite Mean	**3.24**	**Difficult**	

Table 2 shows that Grade 10 students experienced a "Difficult" level of challenge in presenting egg dishes, with a composite mean of 3.24. The most difficult task was using appropriate garnishes and side dishes (WM = 3.44), followed by arranging dishes attractively (WM = 3.30) and applying plating techniques (WM = 3.28). Selecting suitable plates (WM = 3.21) also posed difficulty. The least difficult was observing health and safety practices (WM = 2.98), though still rated "Difficult." Overall, students need improvement in plating, garnishing, and presentation skills despite better competence in safety practices.

2.2 preparing starch and cereal dishes

Table 3
Grade 10 Students Level of Difficulty in Preparing Starch and Cereal Dishes

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. cook various types of starch and cereal dishes using different methods of cooking	3.47	Difficult	2
2. identify appropriate sauces and accompaniments for selected starch and cereal products	3.40	Difficult	3
3. Implement safety and hygiene practices in the kitchen	3.05	Difficult	5
4. Apply the different methods of cooking starch and cereal dishes	3.53	Very Difficult	1
5. plating and garnishing starch dishes	3.33	Difficult	4
Composite Mean	**3.35**	**Difficult**	

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Table 3 shows that Grade 10 students experienced a "Difficult" level of challenge in preparing starch and cereal dishes, with a composite mean of 3.35. Among the skills, applying different cooking methods was the most difficult (WM = 3.53), indicating struggles with various techniques due to limited knowledge, experience, and confidence. The other indicators also reflected difficulty, suggesting that students generally need more support and practice in preparing starch and cereal-based dishes.

2.3 storing starch and cereal dishes

Table 4
Grade 10 Students Level of Difficulty in Storing Starch and Cereal Dishes

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Identify the proper temperature to store starch and cereal products	3.55	Very Difficult	1
2. Explain how to maintain optimal freshness and quality according to standard procedures	3.52	Very Difficult	2.5
3. store starch and cereal according to standard operating procedures	3.52	Very Difficult	2.5
4. Apply correct techniques how to store starch and cereal dishes	3.16	Difficult	4
5. Understand the FIFO (First In, First Out) method for inventory rotation	2.93	Difficult	5
Composite Mean	**3.34**	**Difficult**	

Table 4 shows that Grade 10 students generally experience difficulty in storing starch and cereal dishes, as reflected by the composite mean of 3.34, interpreted as "Difficult." The most challenging skill was identifying the appropriate storage temperature (WM = 3.55), followed by explaining how to maintain freshness and applying standard storage procedures (WM = 3.52). These results indicate gaps in students' understanding of food safety principles, particularly temperature control and proper storage practices.

Applying correct storage techniques was also difficult (WM = 3.16), while understanding FIFO inventory rotation was the least challenging (WM = 2.93). Overall, the findings suggest limited mastery of storage concepts and procedures. The results highlight the need for more

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structured instruction and enhanced learning activities to improve students' skills in proper food storage practices.

3. Effectiveness of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs)

3.1 written task

Table 5
Effectiveness of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) in Learning TLE Cookery among Grade 10 Students in terms of Written Task

Indicators *Through the use of SIM, I*	**Weighted Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**	**Rank**
1. understood the lessons in TLE Cookery more clearly	3.81	Strongly Agree	1
2. found the written activities interesting and enjoyable	3.72	Strongly Agree	2
3. was able to follow the instructions easily	3.70	Strongly Agree	3
4. remembered important cooking terms and procedures better	3.60	Strongly Agree	4.5
5. became more motivated to study even outside of class hours	3.58	Strongly Agree	6
6. developed my critical thinking and creativity in answering tasks	3.60	Strongly Agree	4.5
7. performed better in my written assessments in Cookery	3.56	Strongly Agree	7
Composite Mean	**3.65**	**Strongly Agree**	

Table 5 shows that Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) are effective in written tasks, with a composite mean of 3.65 ("Strongly Agree"). The highest rating was for clearer understanding of lessons (WM = 3.81), followed by engaging and enjoyable activities (WM = 3.72). Motivation to study outside class (WM = 3.58) and improvement in written assessments (WM = 3.56) were slightly lower. Overall, SIMs enhanced understanding and engagement, with some need to further improve academic performance.

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3.2 performance task

Table 6
Effectiveness of Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) in Learning TLE Cookery among Grade 10 Students in terms of Performance Task

Indicators *Through the use of SIM, I*	**Weighted Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**	**Rank**
1. performed cooking tasks with more confidence.	3.56	Strongly Agree	7
2. applied the lessons I learned in actual cooking activities.	3.63	Strongly Agree	5
3. followed cooking procedures correctly and safely.	3.77	Strongly Agree	2
4. improved my skills in preparing and presenting dishes.	3.79	Strongly Agree	1
5. became more creative and resourceful in doing performance tasks.	3.58	Strongly Agree	6
6. worked well with my classmates during group cooking activities.	3.67	Strongly Agree	4
7. gained a deeper appreciation for Cookery as a practical skill.	3.70	Strongly Agree	3
Composite Mean	**3.67**	**Strongly Agree**	

Table 6 shows that Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) are effective in improving students' skills in TLE Cookery. The highest ratings were for improved dish preparation and presentation (WM = 3.79) and following procedures safely and correctly (WM = 3.77), indicating strong skill enhancement. However, confidence (WM = 3.56) and creativity (WM = 3.58) received lower ratings, suggesting the need to further develop these aspects. Overall, SIMs effectively improved technical skills, with room to enhance confidence and creativity.

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4. Challenges encountered students in using Strategic Intervention Materials

Table 7
Challenges Encountered by Students Using SIMs

Challenges	F	P	R
1. Some instructions in the SIMs are hard to understand.	2	5%	8.5
2. The activities in the SIMs are too many or time-consuming.	21	49%	2
3. I find it difficult to answer the activities without teacher guidance.	31	72%	1
4. Some terms or concepts used in the SIMs are unfamiliar or confusing.	1	2%	10
5. There are not enough examples or illustrations to help me understand the lesson.	19	44%	4
6. I experience difficulty in applying what I learned from the SIMs in practical cooking tasks.	2	5%	8.5
7. The SIMs requires materials that are not easily available at home or in school.	10	23%	6
8. I sometimes lose interest or motivation when studying the SIMs alone.	15	35%	5
9. The layout or format of the SIMs makes it hard to follow the lessons.	4	9%	7
10. I need constant guidance from the teacher to understand the SIM lessons.	20	47%	3

Legend: ***F – Frequency*** ***P – Percentage*** ***R - Rank***

Table 7 shows that the main challenge in using SIMs was difficulty answering activities without teacher guidance (72%), indicating reliance on teacher support. This was followed by activities being too many or time-consuming (49%), suggesting workload concerns. Meanwhile, few students reported issues with unfamiliar terms (2%) and layout (9%), indicating that the SIMs are generally clear and well-designed.

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5. Proposed enhancement activities

The findings of this study showed that while the Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) effectively enhanced students' understanding and performance in TLE Cookery, certain areas still need improvement—particularly in fostering learner independence, sustaining motivation, and ensuring clarity and engagement in the activities. To address this, the following enhancement activities are proposed:

a. **Real-Life Simulation Tasks** is an improvement method in TLE Cookery by connecting classroom theories with practical experience. Assigning home-based cooking activities using simple, accessible ingredients allows students to apply their learning in a familiar environment, reinforcing both skill development and confidence. To enhance involvement and responsibility, students are encouraged to record their cooking journey using photos or short videos. This offers a visual display of their development while also promoting a feeling of achievement and pride in their efforts.

b. **Demonstration teaching** is a key support strategy where teachers perform live or recorded demonstrations of cooking techniques, safety procedures, and step-by-step execution of skills. Students can gain a clearer understanding of expectations and processes, which helps reduce confusion. Demonstration teaching closes the gap between concept and skill, making learning more engaging, accessible, and effective.

c. **Collaborative Task** in food preparation and presentation involves a group of individuals working together to plan, prepare, and present a dish. This kind of activity highlights collaboration, interaction, and shared responsibility while also fostering practical skills in cooking, sanitation, and presentation.

d. **Project HANDS (Hands-on Activities for Nurturing Development and Skills)** in Technology and Livelihood Education. This project is designed to promote active learning, critical thinking, collaboration, and skill mastery through structured hands-on tasks and mini projects aligned with the TLE curriculum. Rooted in the belief that practical engagement is key to meaningful learning, this project emphasizes the development of 21st-century skills—critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, digital literacy, and problem-solving—through purposeful and skill-based activities. Expected outputs of this project are:
    - Improved Mean Percentage Score (MPS) in TLE
    - Intervention Plan for struggling learners
    - Students' Portfolio
    - Culminating Activity and EXHIBIT (different TLE areas/sectors outputs)
    - Addressed least learned competencies through intervention/remedial activities and strategic intervention materials (SIMs)

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Discussion

The findings emphasize the importance of providing targeted support to improve students' academic performance in TLE Cookery. Enhancing teaching-learning practices and utilizing Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) can effectively address specific learning gaps. Studies have shown that instructional materials significantly improve learning outcomes, particularly in mastering least learned competencies.

Research supports the effectiveness of SIMs as intervention tools. Studies by Banguis (2024) and Arpilleda (2021) highlight that instructional and intervention materials help students better understand difficult competencies and improve their performance. These materials are designed to target areas where students struggle most, ensuring focused and meaningful learning.

The use of SIMs is aligned with DepEd Order No. 39, s. 2012, which promotes remediation programs to address learning gaps. SIMs, as teacher-developed worksheets, provide structured and targeted support that helps students master competencies that are not fully understood during regular instruction.

The results also revealed that while students are generally competent in occupational health and safety practices, they need improvement in plating techniques for egg dishes. This indicates the need for enhanced instructional strategies and the use of varied learning resources to strengthen students' understanding. Adapted and contextualized materials, such as worksheets and guided activities, can cater to diverse learning styles and improve engagement.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the need for more practical and scaffolded learning experiences, especially in preparing starch and cereal dishes. SIMs can serve as effective supplementary tools that provide step-by-step guidance and engaging activities, helping students build confidence and improve their skills in these areas.

Several studies confirm that SIMs enhance student motivation, participation, and comprehension. They make learning more interactive and enjoyable, allowing students to better grasp complex concepts. As a result, students are more likely to improve their academic performance and master challenging competencies.

However, challenges in using SIMs remain, including the need for teacher guidance, clearer instructions, and appropriate activity design. Addressing these issues through teacher support, simplified content, and training can further strengthen the effectiveness of SIMs. Overall, integrating well-designed and contextualized SIMs is a powerful approach to improving student learning and closing performance gaps in TLE Cookery.

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Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher drawn the following conclusions.

1. The least learned competencies of the Grade 10 students in TLE Cookery were presenting egg dishes, preparing and storing starch and cereal dishes.
2. The respondents indicated that presenting egg dishes was generally difficult, while preparing and storing starch and cereal dishes posed a very difficult challenge.
3. The students strongly agreed that the Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) was effective in enhancing their learning and skills in both written and performance tasks showed that SIMs enhanced comprehension, engagement, and motivation in learning Cookery lessons.
4. The students have difficulties in using Strategic Intervention Material such as struggling to answer the activities without teacher guidance and feeling overwhelmed by the number of tasks included.
5. Enhancement activities may be proposed.

It is recommended that teachers may continue designing and utilizing Strategic Intervention Materials (SIMs) as an effective intervention tool to address the least learned competencies in TLE Cookery. To further improve their effectiveness, teachers may enhance the content and design of SIMs by simplifying instructions, contextualizing examples, and incorporating localized dishes that are familiar to students, making lessons more relatable and easier to understand.

In addition, teachers may integrate enhancement activities such as real-life simulation tasks, demonstration teaching, and collaborative activities to promote greater learner engagement, independence, and mastery of skills, while also providing continuous guidance and feedback to ensure full comprehension and application of concepts. Students, on the other hand, may be encouraged to actively participate in hands-on and collaborative learning experiences to strengthen their understanding of cookery concepts and techniques, as well as take responsibility for their own learning by practicing tasks beyond the classroom through home-based cooking activities. Finally, the proposed enhancement activities may be further verified to ensure alignment with established standards.

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