

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HOUSEKEEPING DRILLING SKILLS IN INCREASING STUDENT ADAPTABILITY IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY -BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS

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Abstract

The hospitality industry demands professional, skilled, and adaptive human resources to meet guest needs. Vocational education in the hospitality sector needs to emphasize industry-based practical learning to prepare students to face the world of work. One method that can be used is housekeeping drilling skills, a repetition-based training that emphasizes consistency, speed, and precision in housekeeping skills. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the housekeeping drilling method in increasing the adaptability of the Room and Hospitality Management Division Study Program students who study Housekeeping courses at the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic. The research uses a qualitative approach with the research location at the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic, one of the vocational universities under the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia. Over six months, data were collected through in-depth interviews and direct observation of students who participated in housekeeping practices (April-September 2025). The analysis was conducted descriptively to understand students' experiences, perceptions, and challenges in drilling housekeeping skills. The study results show that the housekeeping drilling method improves technical skills, discipline, and students' adaptability to the dynamic hospitality work environment. Repetitive exercises strengthen the motor aspect and cognitive understanding related to industry operational standards. This study contributes to the development of a vocational curriculum. It enhances the synergy between educational institutions and the hospitality industry in producing more ready-to-use, competent, and adaptive graduates.

Keywords: housekeeping drilling skills; vocational education; student adaptability; industry-based learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality sector demands high standards of professionalism, mastery of standardised technical competencies, and adaptive capacity to respond to the dynamics of consumer demand. With competition in this industry globalising, vocational education institutions are not only obliged to deliver theoretical material but also must arm students with practical competencies in the current context. One of the strategic approaches widely implemented is *industry-based learning* programs, which focus on integrating direct field experience as a fundamental component of the educational curriculum.

In this context, the practice of housekeeping skills has an important role because it is one of the main pillars of hotel operations that directly affects the quality of service. Housekeeping drilling skills is a training method that focuses on repetition, accuracy, and consistency in practical housekeeping skills, such as cleaning and preparing guest rooms, maintaining linen, and

implementing standard operating procedures (SOPs). This drilling method is believed to be effective in shaping students' work speed, precision, and discipline, so they can be better prepared to face work challenges (Wan Nazriah Wan Nawawi, Z.Fuza, 2025). Not only training technical skills, drilling also fosters work habits that follow hotel industry standards. Students' adaptability in a hospitality work environment is an important aspect determining their success in an industry-based learning program. The hospitality world has the characteristics of a dynamic, demanding, and fast-paced job that requires speed in decision-making.

Students are expected to adapt to various complex and challenging situations through intensive and repeated housekeeping skills training. This aligns with the needs of industries that want a ready-to-use, solution-oriented workforce that can work under pressure and as a team from various social and cultural backgrounds (Yanan Chang, 2024). Furthermore, the effectiveness of drilling skills in the context of housekeeping can provide an overview of how structured practical learning can support the achievement of student competencies.

One of the main challenges in the learning process of housekeeping practice in vocational colleges is the limited time available. For example, at the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic, the practical hours of the housekeeping course for students of the room division study program only last 8 hours per week, while the average hotel management study program only lasts 4 hours per week. This is insufficient to equip students with adequate skills, especially in preparing and cleaning guest rooms. Limited practice opportunities cause students to be less optimal in demonstrating skills, practising repeatedly, and internalising operational standards that apply in the hospitality industry. This has implications for the low readiness of students when they have to face a real work environment that demands speed, precision, and consistency (Wayney Bailey, Kate Lavender, Andrew Loude, 2024).

In addition to the time factor, the number of students reaching more than 30 people in one practical class is also a challenge for lecturers. Learning activities become less effective because lecturers are required to divide concentrations and provide extra supervision to each individual. As a result, students' mastery of skills is often uneven; Some are growing rapidly, but some are lagging. This situation emphasises the need for alternative learning methods to address the time limitations, the number of participants, and the effectiveness of supervision in housekeeping practice activities. In addition to time constraints and many students, the availability of practical facilities is also a significant obstacle in housekeeping learning. Currently, the availability of guest house rooms, which only amount to three units for all students, causes the practice process to run inefficiently. Students have to wait their turn to prepare and clean the guest room, so much time is wasted just waiting. This condition reduces training intensity, even though housekeeping skills need repetition and consistency to be truly internalised according to hotel industry standards.

The limited practical facilities show a gap between the need for students to practice intensively and the facilities available in educational institutions. If not overcome, students will have difficulty achieving maximum competence, especially in terms of procedural accuracy, work speed, and the formation of professional work habits. Therefore, innovation in learning methods is needed by applying *housekeeping drilling skills* that allow students to practice more directed, intensive, and repetitive, even in conditions of limited facilities (Wijoyo, 2024)

Some previous studies have shown that repetitive exercise improves motor skills and strengthens cognitive aspects, such as understanding work procedures and consistent application of hygiene standards. Thus, this study is important to examine the extent to which drilling methods contribute to increased adaptability of students when placed in a real industrial environment. This paper aims to analyse the effectiveness of the housekeeping

drilling skills method in improving students' adaptability in industry-based learning programs in the hospitality sector.

By raising a perspective *beyond the classroom*, this research is expected to contribute to developing the vocational education curriculum, especially in designing learning strategies that align with the industry's needs. In addition, the results of this research can also be a reference for educational institutions and the hospitality industry in strengthening collaboration to produce competent and adaptive human resources. Furthermore, this research is highly urgent considering the gap between the skills obtained by students in college and the real demands in the hospitality industry. Many students have difficulty adapting in the field because they are not used to the fast work rhythm, high hygiene standards, and pressure from guests and hotel management. Students are expected to overcome these obstacles by emphasizing drilling skills in housekeeping and being more confident in undergoing an industry-based learning process. Ultimately, the results of this research are beneficial for academic development and have practical implications for the industrial world. Hotels as educational partners will acquire a more prepared and trained workforce, while educational institutions can increase the relevance of their curriculum. Thus, integrating drilling methods in housekeeping is one of the strategic approaches to bridge the gap between the world of education and the needs of the growing hospitality industry.

2. RESEARCH & METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach to analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of *Housekeeping Drilling* on students of the Room and Hospitality Management Division Study Program at the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on an in-depth understanding of students' experiences and perceptions. According to (Braun & Clarke, 2016), qualitative research is relevant to explore the meanings constructed by participants through hands-on experience, making it appropriate to examine the practice of vocational skills such as housekeeping.

The research was conducted at the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic, a vocational college under the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia, which has three majors with eight study programs, including the Room and Hospitality Management Division. The research lasted six months, from April to September 2025, and involved students who took the housekeeping course. The choice of this location is relevant because vocational education emphasises real-world practice-based learning. This aligns with the view (Yakin et al., 2023) that qualitative research in vocational education helps to understand how the practical process can improve student competence in the context of the real world of work.

The data collection technique used was *in-depth interviews* and direct observation. Interviews were conducted to explore students' perceptions, motivations, and challenges in carrying out *housekeeping drilling*, while observations were used to see the behaviors and skills shown in real life. Combining interviews and observations is very effective in qualitative research because it allows for data triangulation and provides a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied (Sutton & Austin, 2021). The data was then analyzed descriptively to find the drilling activities' pattern, meaning, and effectiveness.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study's Findings and Discussion section aims to present the results of field findings related to the effectiveness of *housekeeping drilling skills* in improving students' adaptability in hospitality industry-based learning programs. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews and direct observations conducted for six months on Diploma 3 students of the Room Division Study Program and Diploma 4 students of the Hospitality Management Study Program at the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic. These findings were then analysed qualitatively to explore drilling activities' patterns, meanings, and real contributions to developing students' technical skills, adaptability, and work readiness.

This section discusses the research results compared to previous theories and findings in vocational education and hospitality training. It aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how *drilling methods* strengthen the mastery of technical housekeeping skills and support the formation of disciplined attitudes, professional work habits, and readiness to adapt in a dynamic industrial environment. Thus, this section is expected to bridge the empirical results of the research with the academic perspective and practical needs of the hospitality industry.

A. The Effectiveness of Housekeeping Drilling in Improving Students' Technical Skills

The study results show that *housekeeping skill drilling activities significantly improve students' technical skills, especially in the preparation of guest rooms*. Based on interviews with students, this additional training provides a wider opportunity to understand each stage of the housekeeping work procedure. Students can learn theory and directly apply their knowledge to real practice to develop their technical skills faster and more deeply. This finding is in line with direct observation that shows that students can do *bed-making work* with neater results, faster, and in accordance with the hotel's standard operating procedures (SOP). The repetitive exercises provided through *drilling* have been shown to improve movement accuracy, hand coordination, and fine motor skills, which are much needed in preparing a guest room. This supports the opinion (Xiuqin Zhou, 2023) that repetition in vocational practice can improve skill consistency and work efficiency.

One of the important factors that makes *housekeeping drilling* more effective is a more relaxed learning atmosphere, which is not tied to the pressure of formal lecture time. Students revealed that the exercises after lecture hours gave them psychological comfort, so they were more focused on absorbing skills. This relaxed condition makes it easier for them to internalize work techniques and procedures. The self-determination theory also supports this, where intrinsic motivation will appear more when the individual feels comfortable and not depressed. Another finding was that fewer participants in each *drilling* session made the training process more effective. By dividing students into small groups, they can practice more freely, get more attention from lecturers or instructors, and do not have to wait too long for their turn (Kalaian et al., 2018) This creates a more personalized and intensive learning space, so students master skills faster. (Jane Sutton, 2021) affirms that in the context of qualitative research, intensive interaction in small groups improves the quality of participants' learning experience.

This effectiveness is increasingly evident from the significant difference between students who participate in *drilling* and those who only rely on formal practice hours. The students participating in the drilling show a more stable level of technical skills and are ready to be applied in the workplace. In observation, they seem more confident when making *the bed*, cleaning the bathroom, and arranging guest room equipment according to hotel standards. This supports research (Kevin Fuchs, 2022), which states that real-world practice-based learning in vocational education plays an important role in preparing student competencies according to the demands of the world of work.

In addition to the technical aspect, student involvement in *drilling* also benefits the mastery of work procedures. With the opportunity to practice repeatedly, students better understand small details previously often overlooked in large classroom practice. For example, how to fold the corner of the bed sheet, clean the glass without leaving stains, and hygienic steps in cleaning the bathroom.

These technical details are crucial in housekeeping operations, and can only be mastered through intensive training.

The success of *drilling* in improving students' technical skills can also be seen as a form of vocational learning innovation. In conditions of limited facilities—such as only three guest houses available for 30 students—the division of small groups in *drilling* is the right solution. This aligns with the findings (Zhao & Ko, 2024), which emphasize that innovation in training methods is essential to overcome the limitations of vocational education facilities, especially in hospitality. Regarding time effectiveness, *drilling* provides space for students to focus more without being distracted by the large number of participants. Observations show that they can complete tasks more quickly and accurately. This work speed is very important in the hospitality industry, where the standard of room cleaning time must be efficient while still maintaining quality. Thus, *housekeeping drilling* improves technical skills and familiarizes students with the work rhythms that apply in the industry.



Figure 1 : Students Skill Drilling Activity
Source: Authors, 2025

This discussion also showed that the success of *drilling* is not only the result of teaching methods, but also because of students' awareness that practical skills are the main asset in facing the world of hospitality work. They felt that regular practice hours were insufficient to achieve industry standards, so *drilling* became an important means of closing the gap. This supports the idea (Aithal & Shubhrajyotsna Aithal, 2020) that vocational curricula should always be oriented to the real needs of the industry to produce competent and ready-to-use graduates.

Thus, *housekeeping skills drilling* is effective in improving students' technical skills, both in terms of procedural accuracy, work speed, and mastery of housekeeping operational details. This approach solves the limited time, facilities, and number of practical participants in vocational learning. These findings reinforce the literature that intensive practice-based learning is a key strategy in preparing students for work demands in the competitive and dynamic hospitality industry.

B. Housekeeping Drilling makes a real contribution to students' readiness in the Industry-Based Learning (IBL) program.

The results of interviews and observations show that Housekeeping Drilling makes a real contribution to students' readiness in *the Industry-Based Learning* (IBL) program. Students feel more confident because they are used to doing housekeeping work procedures repeatedly. This training process trains technical skills and forms mental readiness to face real work situations. Thus, drilling serves as an important means of transition between classroom learning and industrial practice.

Students who participated in the drilling stated that they understood the work procedures faster when entering a star-rated hotel. This happens because basic skills, such as *making a bed*, cleaning the bathroom, and managing linens, have been internalized through intensive practice. With these provisions, they no longer need basic teaching from the hotel but only light assistance to adjust the standards of each hotel. This condition certainly saves time and resources for the industry (Evleeva, Evelina, Jessica Wickey Byrd, Stepen Praat, 2025) .

These findings align with *Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) theory*, which emphasises the importance of practical experience in shaping students' work readiness. (Janine Williamson, Karina Wardle, 2021) noted that a curriculum oriented towards collaboration between educational institutions and industry can reduce *the skills gap* while strengthening *work readiness*. In the context of this research, drilling serves as a form of initial integration that provides practical provisions before students actually enter the real world of work.

In addition to the technical aspect, drilling also helps students build the speed of social adaptation in the work environment. The observations show that students are more likely to interact with hotel staff and interns from other institutions. This social adaptability is very important, considering that the hospitality industry demands communication skills, teamwork, and flexibility to deal with the dynamics of diverse guests and colleagues. Recent research by (Masosusa et al., 2024) emphasizes that internship experience has a big role in increasing the *career adaptability* of hospitality students, especially in facing the challenges of professional identity and the transition process to the workforce. Drilling can be seen as a *pre-internship* that trains students to face this reality, so that when they enter IBL, they do not experience *culture shock* or significant adaptation difficulties.

Furthermore, intensive exercises on a small scale, such as those applied to Housekeeping Drilling, help students make more optimal use of their time. Each participant has the opportunity to practice longer and focus without the interruption of long queues. This pattern reflects the principle of *effective student-centered learning*, where students gain in-depth practical experience relevant to their competency needs. Students who are first able to demonstrate well can influence other friends to be able to do so immediately; this is a motivation between one student and another to jointly achieve the skills they need (Jesper Ericksen, 2024)



Figure 2 : Student Skill Drilling Activity
Source: Authors, 2025

Psychological factors also play an important role in the effectiveness of drilling. Students admitted they were more relaxed because the exercises were conducted after regular lecture hours, without the pressure of a formal curriculum. This more flexible atmosphere supports fun experiential

learning, while strengthening *intrinsic motivation*. This aligns with (Edward L. Deci, 2021)) in *Self-Determination Theory*, which emphasizes the importance of autonomy and comfort in improving learning outcomes. In addition, Housekeeping Drilling contributes to the efficiency of the industry. Hotels that are IBL partners are no longer burdened with providing basic technical teaching. With students who already have initial skills, the hotel can focus on getting used to specific work standards. This efficiency strengthens the partnership between educational institutions and industry, as emphasized in the triple *helix collaboration* model between academia, industry, and students.

These findings are also reinforced by studies highlighting the importance of practical experience in strengthening students' cross-cultural competencies and interpersonal skills. Studies during the COVID-19 pandemic yesterday showed that internship experiences involving multicultural interactions can improve communication skills and flexibility (Shuang Ren, Mohammad Tarikul Islam, 2023). Drilling, on a smaller scale, also contributes similarly by fostering interpersonal adaptation skills that are so much needed in the hospitality industry.



Figure 3 : Students Skill Drilling Activity
Source: Authors, 2025

Overall, housekeeping drilling has proven to be an effective strategy for increasing student adaptability, both technically and socially. Repetitive exercises strengthen basic skills, foster confidence, and accelerate students' adjustment to the industrial environment. This program shortens the student adaptation curve and supports the IBL program's overall effectiveness. Thus, drilling can be recommended as a model of continuous vocational learning that is relevant to the needs of the modern hospitality industry.

C. The Contribution of Housekeeping Drilling to Student Readiness in Industry-Based Learning Programs

The study results show that *Housekeeping Drilling* contributes significantly to increasing students' readiness to face *Industry-Based Learning (IBL)* and internship programs, which are mandatory parts of the curriculum at the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic. Interviews with students reveal that they feel more confident and ready to enter the real world of work because they have acquired basic housekeeping skills through intensive training (Ingrid Noguera, 2024). This indicates that the drilling method is an important bridge that connects theoretical learning in the classroom with the needs of industrial practice.

Observations in the field also show that students who take part in drilling are better able to master standard operating procedures (SOPs) than students who only rely on regular practice hours. They can set up rooms, make beds, and clean the room area according to the standards of star hotels.

With a solid mastery of basic skills, students can reduce their adaptation time when first placed in the hotel where they carry out the Industrial-Based Learning (IBL) or internship (*internship*) program.

The main contribution of drilling can be seen in *job readiness*, where students can display a professional, disciplined, and consistent attitude in carrying out their duties. This is important because the partner hotel expects interns to no longer be a burden regarding basic technical teaching. Students familiar with the drilling routine can be immediately directed to developing advanced skills, thereby increasing efficiency in the mentoring process in the industry.

This finding is in line with the *Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)* theory put forward by (Janine Williamson, Karina Wardle, 2021), which states that direct involvement in industrial practices—both through simulations and real experiences—strengthens students' work readiness. Drilling is one of the effective forms of WIL implementation because it trains students to face high working conditions, even before they go directly to the hotel.



Figure 4 : Students Skill Drilling Activity

Source: Authors, 2025

Students who participated in drilling also reported increased speed in understanding work instructions. They find it easier to adapt to the work rhythm of the hospitality industry, which demands speed, precision, and excellent service. The accompanying lecturer's observation that students seem to be more disciplined in time management and more structured in carrying out each housekeeping work procedure strengthens this (Calaco, 2024).

In addition to the technical aspect, drilling also contributes to forming *soft skills*. Students are trained to work in small groups, communicate effectively, and divide tasks fairly. This condition resembles a real situation in a hotel, where teamwork is an important factor in maintaining the quality of service (Hyojung Jung, 2023). Thus, drilling improves technical skills and interpersonal competencies that are urgently needed in the hospitality industry.

The partner hotels also benefit from the presence of students who already have good basic skills. The mentoring process, which used to take a lot of time to teach basic procedures, can now be focused on developing advanced skills, such as *guest interaction*, modern housekeeping technology, or handling guest complaints. This makes cooperation between campuses and industry more productive and mutually beneficial (Alireza Amrollahi, Hana Hadinejad, 2025).

These results are consistent with research (Ming Fang, 2024), emphasizing the importance of practical experience and internships in strengthening *students' career adaptability*. Drilling can be seen as *pre-internship training* that better prepares students to face real work demands. With these provisions, students are not only technically ready but also more resilient in dealing with work pressure.

From the perspective of vocational education, the contribution of drilling is very relevant to the main goal of vocational education, which is to produce ready-to-use labour. As (Hoeckel et al., 2010) approach, vocational education should focus on practical skills that can be directly applied in the world of work. Drilling in housekeeping answers this need by providing students with intensive, structured, and repetitive hands-on experience. Overall, the findings of this study confirm that *Housekeeping Drilling* not only improves students' technical skills but also strengthens their job readiness holistically. Students become more disciplined, confident, and adaptive to the demands of the industry. Thus, the drilling program is an innovative strategy in bridging the gap between classroom learning and real needs in the hospitality industry, while strengthening the quality of vocational education graduates.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions described, it can be concluded that the housekeeping skill drilling program has high effectiveness in improving student competence. Housekeeping skill drilling has proven effective in improving students' technical skills, especially in applying standard operating procedures such as preparing guest rooms and making beds. Repetitive exercises in small groups provide a more relaxed and focused learning atmosphere that accelerates the mastery of technical skills and operational details. Students participating in the drilling skills can show better work readiness and confidence, and be more adaptive when facing the dynamic hotel industry environment.

In addition to the technical aspect, this skill drilling program also plays a significant role in increasing students' social adaptability and mental readiness to face the Industry-Based Learning (IBL) program. Students who participate in drilling are more likely to adapt to working standards and establish effective interactions in the hotel environment, thus helping to reduce the gap between on-campus learning and real industrial practice. This program also makes a real contribution to students' readiness to enter the world of work, including developing professional attitudes, discipline, and soft skills such as teamwork and communication skills. This strengthens cooperation between educational institutions, such as the Makassar Tourism Polytechnic, and industry. It can also improve the efficiency of internship programs and is expected to produce ready-to-use graduates according to the demands of the modern hospitality industry. Overall, housekeeping skill drilling is an innovation of continuous vocational learning that is relevant to the needs of the modern hospitality industry. This program not only contributes to the improvement of the quality of students but also strengthens the partnership between educational institutions and the industrial world. In the future, developing similar models and/or sectors in the hospitality department can be an effective strategy in answering the challenge of competency gaps and strengthening students' readiness to face the world of work in the industry.

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